

Public Document Pack

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Date: Tuesday, 12 October 2021

Dear Sir or Madam

The Executive – Wednesday, 20 October 2021, 2.30 pm – New Council Chamber - Town Hall

A meeting of the Executive will take place as indicated above.

Please Note that any member of the press and public may listen in to proceedings at this meeting via the weblink below –

<https://youtu.be/k-PPx1Ss5ls>

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Executive

Councillors:

Donald Davies (Chairman), Mike Bell (Vice-Chairman), Steve Bridger, Mark Canniford, Ashley Cartman, Catherine Gibbons, Bridget Petty and Mike Solomon.

All other Members of the Council (for information)

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

Agenda

1. **Addresses by Members of the Public (ESO 6)**

The Executive, at the discretion of the Chairman, will hear up to four people, each of whom must be a resident or a business ratepayer or an elector, who wish to address it in accordance with the Executive Standing Orders, on matters that affect the area or its residents and over which the Executive has powers and duties. The Chairman will select the order of the matters to be heard. Each person will be limited to a period of three minutes and this part of the meeting must not exceed fifteen minutes.

Requests to speak must be submitted in writing to the Monitoring Officer, or the officer mentioned at the top of this agenda letter, by noon on the day before the meeting and the request must detail the subject matter of the address.

2. **Apologies for absence**

3. **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 meeting 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.

4. **Minutes - 8 September 2021 (Pages 7 - 16)**

8 September 2021, to approve as a correct record (attached)

5. **Non-Executive Councillors' Addresses**

Non-Executive Councillors wishing to address the Executive are required to notify the contact officer mentioned at the top of this summons letter by noon on the day before the meeting. A total of fifteen minutes will be allocated to hear all addresses.

6. **Matters referred to the Executive and not dealt with elsewhere on this agenda**

None

7. **West of England Sub-Region: items not dealt with elsewhere on this agenda**

8. **Forward Plan dated 1 October 2021 (Pages 17 - 34)**

(attached)

- 9. Update on the Development of a Joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with the West of England Combined Authority and Bus Operators** (Pages 35 - 110)

Report of Councillor Davies (attached)

- 10. Contract Award for the Design & Build (Stage 2) of the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion (WHAE)** (Pages 111 - 122)

Report of Councillor Gibbons (attached)

- 11. Commissioning Plan for the Provision of In-home Lifts** (Pages 123 - 128)

Report of Councillor Bell (attached)

- 12. 2021/22 Budget Monitoring - Month 5** (Pages 129 - 170)

Report of Councillor Cartman (attached)

- 13. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Revenue Budget Update** (Pages 171 - 184)

Report of Councillor Cartman (attached)

- 14. North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) Annual Report 2020/21** (Pages 185 - 210)

Report of the Director of Adult Social Services (attached)

- 15. Draft Calendar of Executive Meetings 2022/23** (Pages 211 - 214)

Report of the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer (attached)

- 16. Oral reports of Executive Councillors**

Executive Councillors might report orally on matters in progress. Such reports will be for information only and no material decisions can be made arising from them.

- 17. Urgent business permitted by the Local Government Act 1972 (if any)**

For a matter to be considered as an urgent item, the following question must be addressed: "What harm to the public interest would flow from leaving it until the next meeting?" If harm can be demonstrated, then it is open to the Chairman to rule that it be considered as urgent. Otherwise the matter cannot be considered urgent within the statutory provisions.

Exempt Items

Should the Executive 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 Executive 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

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Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Executive

Wednesday, 8 September 2021

New Council Chamber - Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.15 pm

Councillors:

P Donald Davies (Chairman)

P Mike Bell (Vice-Chairman)

P Steve Bridger

P Mark Canniford

P Ashley Cartman

A Catherine Gibbons

P Bridget Petty

P Mike Solomon

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Councillor Peter Bryant

Officers in attendance: Jo Walker (Chief Executive), Amy Webb (Director of Corporate Services) Lucy Shomali (Director of Place), Nicholas Brain (Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Mike Riggall (Information and ICT Security Manager)

Partaking via Microsoft Teams – Cllrs Robert Payne (Assistant Executive Member), Nicola Holland (Assistant Executive Member)

Sheila Smith (Director of Children's Services), Hayley Verrico (Director, Adult Social Services), Alex Hearn (Assistant Director, Placemaking and Growth), John Flannigan (Community and Environment Services Manager), Frankie Mann (Active and Sustainable Travel Manager), Michèle Chesterman (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer)

EXE Chairman's Welcome

35

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this face-to-face meeting of the Executive in the New Council Chamber. He explained that given the public health recommendations to exercise caution and the Council's own health and safety advice, it had been necessary to limit the number of councillors, officers and members of the public in attendance in the Chamber to ensure the meeting could take place safely. Councillors had been asked to submit any questions on agenda items in advance and these questions would be dealt with under the relevant

agenda item.

The option to join the meeting via Microsoft Teams was being tried for those members and officers who did not yet feel comfortable attending in person, and they would be able to partake but will not be “in attendance formally” and, if a Member of the Executive would not be able to vote or count to the quorum of the meeting.

This meeting was being streamed live on the internet and a recorded version would be available to view within 48 hours on the North Somerset Council website.

EXE 36 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda item 3)

None

EXE 37 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 (Agenda item 4)

Resolved: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

EXE 38 Forward Plan dated 1 September 2021 (Agenda item 8)

Councillor Davies presented the forward plan.

Resolved: that the forward plan be noted.

EXE 39 Contract Award for 0-19 Public Health Nursing Services and Healthy Child Programme (Agenda item 9)

Councillor Bell presented the report. He referred to the fact that Members would be aware that local authorities were responsible for commissioning public health nursing services for children aged 0-19 (health visitors and school nursing services). 0-19 Public Health Nursing services delivered universal and targeted services in line with the national Health Child Programme (HCP) to children and families from the antenatal period until 19 years with the aim of improving outcomes and reducing inequalities.

The current contract with Sirona Care and Health expired at the end of March 2022 and as a result of a procurement process Sirona Care and Health had secured the new contract which would run from 1 April 2022 for a period of 5 years with the possibility of a further extension of 2 years.

Councillor Bell referred to the wide range of services for children and young people aged 0-19 covered under the contract and the success of the programme. He thanked staff in the Public Health Team, Children’s Services and procurement for their hard work. Members looked forward to continuing to work with Sirona Care and Health moving forwards and providing the right kind of support and services that parents and families needed to give children and young people in North Somerset the healthiest start possible.

In discussing the report Members noted that there had been pressure across the health and care system in relation to the availability of appropriate staff and recruitment and retention was an important aspect of the proposals that Sirona

Care and Health had put forward. Members looked forward to working with Sirona Care and Health with a longer-term commitment over the 5 to 7 years and were hopeful to embed new ways of working to make the environment of North Somerset more attractive to potential recruits. Key to this was the monitoring process and members were assured of the good relationship between the public health team and Sirona Care and Health which would make this possible.

Members welcomed the fact that as part of the procurement process some climate change and environmental implications had been incorporated which was encouraging and a good sign that in partnership with health colleagues and other contractors the council's climate ambitions could be taken forwards.

Resolved: that the Executive approves the award of the 0-19 Public Health Nursing & Healthy Child Programme contract to Sirona Care & Health C.I.C (Company number 07585003. Registered office: Sirona care & health, 2nd Floor, Kingswood Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 9TR) for the period of 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2027 (five-years), with the option of a further two-year extension until end 31st March 2029 (seven-years). The annual contract value is £3,577,359 – with a maximum total value of £25,042,000 over seven years.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 40 Approval of North Somerset Travel Plan SPD for Public Consultation (Agenda item 10)

Councillor Canniford presented the report. He referred to the fact that the council had undertaken a comprehensive review of the existing Travel Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Members were informed that the current SPD dated back to November 2010 and required updating, particularly in light of the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Members noted that historically travel plans had been included as part of the council's conditions but with very little enforcement or monitoring. The current proposal went further to allow developers to outsource the writing of those plans. It was proposed that an implementation service, paid for through S106 contributions would see the council carrying out some of that work if the developers chose to use the local authority. This would allow the council to help write the plans, charge the appropriate fees and also monitor travel plans in the future.

Councillor Bell encouraged members participate in the consultation and in particular drew their attention to the level of fees proposed in the consultation and the risk assessment.

In discussing the report members suggested the travel plans should be renamed green travel plans. Reference was made to the threshold of 40 being too high.

Members also commented on the size of businesses that needed to follow travel plans.

Councillor Davies urged everyone who had an impact on travel to respond to the consultation as it would set the future pattern for the organisation and more importantly for residents of North Somerset.

Resolved: that the draft Travel Plan SPD be approved for public consultation.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 41 North Somerset Green Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2031 (Agenda item 11)

Councillor Solomon presented the report. He emphasised the importance of the North Somerset Green Infrastructure Strategy being in place in terms of the council achieving its bids and grants and also for future generations to be able to access green space. He acknowledged the fact that the strategy was ambitious but that it was important to be ambitious in this instance.

At the invitation of Councillor Solomon, Councillor Petty spoke on the report. She welcomed the work that had taken place and the importance of having strategies in place to manage open spaces. She highlighted the importance of a document and a strategy being in place that reflected the ambitions of the organisation and recognised both the climate emergency and the nature emergency declaration. She referred to the importance of the engagement process including inputs from the Citizens Panel, town and parish councils and community groups. She noted that a long-term objective and strategy was required when increasing biodiversity and implementing changes to the natural environment which was why it was appropriate for this to be a long-term document.

Members welcomed the strategy and thanked officers for their hard work in bringing to fruition. Reference was made to the early engagement with the CCO Policy and Scrutiny Panel and the deep engagement that took place with local groups.

A discussion took place on the importance of urban tree planting, including encouraging new developers to plant trees and the development of wild life corridors which helped to protect and enhance species. Members also felt it was important that private domestic gardens were considered as a key element of green infrastructure. It was hoped that the strategy could be used, through the planning process, to ensure that developers, when designing gardens, encouraged biodiversity. Members were hopeful that the council would use the strategy to encourage people, where possible, to manage existing gardens well. The reporting process was also discussed including obtaining information on the state of nature in North Somerset.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Community and Environment Service Manager spoke. He informed members that the actions in the report were spread

across several teams in North Somerset over a ten year period. It was suggested that liaison take place with scrutiny panels to discuss the best way forward to achieving the targets in the strategy.

Resolved: that the Council adopts the North Somerset Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) appended to this report.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 42 Affordable Housing Delivery: Updates and Award of Grant (Agenda item 12)

Councillor Canniford presented the report providing an update on the delivery of affordable housing across North Somerset, including information on the Delivery Partnership with Alliance Homes. In addition, the report included information about the use of S106 commuted sums to support delivery of affordable housing by Registered Partners. Members were informed the report sought authorisation for a programme of grant awards to support the delivery of an expected 176 affordable homes at schemes in Weston and Portishead.

The critical need for such provision was highlighted with the average cost of a house in North Somerset being 9.47 times higher than the annual wage and the waiting list for social and affordable rented homes in North Somerset being about 2500 people and growing by 100 a month.

Councillor Canniford provided details on the new housing developments in Marina Gardens in Portishead and Diamond Court in Weston. He explained that the scheme in Portishead was particularly welcome due to the fact that there had been very little housing in Portishead for 20 years. The scheme at Diamond Court provided extra care which would also have a benefit the pressures on the budget. Both projects were very near completion which meant that new residents would be able to move into them quickly. He hoped the Council would whole heartedly support the proposals to bring new housing to much needed residents of North Somerset. He thanked the Head of Development and her team for the considerable amount of work that went into the report and also colleagues in the housing associations.

Members welcomed the report and noted the progress being made to deliver more affordable homes. The ambition to deliver 150 homes per annum was discussed and the fact that the housing needs register was rising by 100 a month gave a perspective on the scale of the challenge. Members noted the fact that house prices continued to rise and that for some this would be a good thing whilst for those trying to get on the housing ladder for the first time it was a major issue. Pressures in terms of the rented housing market were discussed and the critical need to deliver more homes, more quickly and investigate imaginative ways to do that. Whilst members felt it was positive that the council was investing its money, S106 funding and funding from the government into pump priming the supply it was felt that more could be done and members were encouraged to look at imaginative ways of putting more capital investment into affordable housing to

further stimulate supply.

Resolved:

(1) to note and endorse progress on delivery of affordable housing across North Somerset.

(2) subject to the schemes securing planning consent, and to the parties entering into contractual funding agreements (in a form agreed by the Director of Place and the Assistant Director Legal & Governance), to approve the following programme of grants to Registered Providers of affordable housing:

- £1,270,000 to NSAH (Alliance Homes) Ltd, for the delivery of affordable housing at Marina Gardens, Portishead.
- £495,000 to Housing 21, for the provision of Extra Care units at the Diamond Court scheme in Weston-super-Mare.
- £29,000 to Curo Places Ltd, for the delivery of affordable housing at Harbour Crescent, Portishead.

Full details of the Registered Providers are given in section 6 below.

(3) subject to the schemes securing planning consent, and to the parties entering into contractual funding agreements, to approve an increase to the council's overall capital programme of £1,794,000, to be wholly funded by Affordable Housing S106 commuted sum contributions as per section 5.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 43 Acceptance of Community Renewal Fund (Decision in Principle) (Agenda item 13)

Councillor Canniford presented the report which set out the background of the Community Renewal Fund, provided information about the local assessment process, the submission of North Somerset's package of proposals to MHCLG and details of the successful award of funding to deliver these projects. Members were made aware that North Somerset Council was waiting to find out if it had been successful in the award of Community Renewal Funding. It had been anticipated that the council would be made aware of the outcome of the bid at some point in late August/early September. Officers were in regular contact with the government to ascertain the timeline for the announcement but there had been no announcement as yet. In order to ensure the council could mobilise its CRF activities as quickly as possible, the report sought a decision in principle to accept the funding should it be awarded.

Members were informed that the projects would invest in skills, local businesses and communities helping people to get back into employment or improve their employment. The CRF grants aimed to support responses to local challenges. North Somerset Council, with partners, had submitted a package of proposals.

Out of the eight proposals two had failed for not meeting conditions. It was reported that all proposals were taken through a strict checklist of conditions and that it had been a transparent process. Members were asked to make proposals or make organisations aware of those proposals.

In discussing the report Members thanked partner organisations involved and possible alternative ways of funding the projects if the funding was not received.

Resolved: that, subject to the successful award of community renewal funding, the Executive

(1) accepts the offer of funding of £2.87m from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); and

(2) approves the associated amendments to the revenue budget as outlined in section 5.5.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 2021/22 Budget Monitoring - Month 4 (Agenda item 14) 44

At the invitation of Councillor Cartman, the Director of Corporate Services presented the report which provided a summary of the council's financial position after the first four months of the 2021/22 financial year and included details relating to key issues, known pressures as well as the potential risks that had been identified at this point in time. Members were informed that this was the first report of the new financial year and so efforts had focused upon material areas of the council's budget or those which continued to be impacted by Covid-19.

Members' attention was drawn to the Revenue and Capital Budget forecast for Quarter 4 July 2021 outlining the key elements of the budget totalling £177m for this financial year which also included an element of Covid support grant carried forward from the previous year of nearly £5m. The forecast for the year end was overspend of £2.299m. However, taking into account those Covid allocations from the grant of £1.181m, that brought the overspend forecast to £1.118m. Mitigations were being investigated in order to reduce that and members could seek comfort from the fact that the budget contingency was being held at this stage.

The Director of Corporate Services directed members' attention to the key drivers for the spend in each directorate. She referred to adult social care particularly around systemic pressures in numbers and needs for adult service users, partially due to Covid and mitigated through that grant but there were still remaining pressures. In the Place directorate, again, there was a significant impact on the sales, fees and charges income; Members noted that unfortunately, it had been confirmed that there would be no further compensation from central government for loss of income beyond the end of June 2021. There were also some significant pressures in Home to School Transport and that forecast would evolve now the school term had started and what those needs might be particularly for the special

education needs block.

Members were provided with an update on the earmarked reserves position. They were significantly higher for the year end 2020/21 due the Covid grants but those pressures were not going away in this financial year and there were ongoing cost implications and so a pragmatic view was advised in relation to releasing those over time. Finally, members were provided with information on the capital programme over the next 5 years which for 2021/22 amounted to £91m. There was some work going on to ensure that the Council aligned its capital monitoring activities and refined the forecast and in particular how financial risks were articulated back into that programme.

Councillor Cartman thanked the finance team for their work on the report and noted that it was good news with less than 1% variant on the four year outcome which was testament to the good work and culture and controls of the council. However, he stressed the fact that there were still a number of risks.

Resolved: that the Executive is asked to;

- (1) Note the projected revenue and capital budget forecasts as detailed within the report,
- (2) Approve the amendments to the capital budgets as detailed within Appendix 4.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 45 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022-25 Update (Agenda item 15)

Councillor Cartman presented the report which provided an update with regards to assumptions which underpinned the council's medium-term financial plan, covering the 3-year period to 2024/25, which was last considered by the Executive in February 2021. The council recognised the importance of aligning limited resources and allocating them to the priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, which meant that it continually reviewed all aspects of financial planning and considered new risks, issues and challenges as they emerged. This was essential given the uncertainties, pressures and impacts which had arisen as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In presenting the report, Councillor Cartman stressed the need to improve the consultation process and to consult with citizens and residents more frequently. This included parish and town councils and partners in the community to see what more could be done and this included members. He referred to proposals in the report to undertake this over the autumn period and he welcomed the involvement of Executive colleagues in this process.

At the invitation of Councillor Cartman, the Director of Corporate Services provided an update for members. She explained that the position was uncertain

and was a programme in development. It was slightly more promising for 2022/23 than had been thought in February 2021 but it would still be a challenge to find the efficiencies and transformations given the pressures faced. On the point of engagement, she directed members' attention to Section 3.7 of the report (page 342) which provided an outlined proposed engagement programme explaining how town and parish Councils and the citizens engagement panel would be used to inform wider consultation etc.

Councillor Cartman thanked the Director of Corporate Services and her team for their hard work on the report.

Resolved: that the Executive is asked to note;

(1) The updated range of revenue budget projections and engagement plans within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as detailed within the report;

(2) The process, next steps and timescales for finalising the MTFP for the period 2022 to 2025, and also for setting the revenue budget for the 2022/23 financial year.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out in the report and discussed above.

EXE 46 Oral reports of Executive Councillors (Agenda item 16)

Councillor Solomon provided an update to members on green waste and re-wilding. He referred to the fact that the decision had been made to suspend garden waste for two weeks. He explained that the waste teams in North Somerset had been under pressure for weeks and had done an exemplary job of working very hard to clear normal waste and garden waste but over the last week the Council had lost four drivers. As members were aware there was a national shortage of HGV drivers and the council was lobbying the government to see if it could be made easier for foreign nationals to return to the country and obtain work permits to help prop up the ailing transport system. Members were informed that it had been a difficult decision and it was understood that residents who had paid for the service would be frustrated but it was unfortunately beyond the local authority's control. The council would be investigating forms of compensation and over the next couple of weeks looking at options to clear the green waste. Members of the public could also still visit North Somerset amenities to drop off green waste or compost it (information on which was available via the website).

In terms of re-wilding, Councillor Solomon reported that the council was preparing to plant around 4,900 trees over the winter period bringing the total to 32,000 trees planted. This was below the anticipated 50,000 trees but there had been pockets of resistance to this. He informed members that conversations were taking place with these areas to ascertain whether the resistance was genuine or whether people viewed it as an excuse not to trim or cut the grass which was not the reason it was being done. There were two sets of volunteers engaged in re-wilding - North Somerset volunteers (400 in number) with 10 volunteers participating in

each session and the Re-wilding Champions Lottery Project which comprised a group of volunteers engaged in monitoring wildlife and witnessing the difference re-wilding was making to biodiversity in the district.

Councillor Petty reflected on the fact that across North Somerset there were more groups who wished to stand up, organise events and make things happen in relation to climate emergency. She referred to the recent festival of community of faith and of green issues 'Love Cleeve' which was a successful event discussing smart living. She also reminded members of the council competition 'Picture This'. Members would have seen it on social media or on the website and asked the question 'What could life in a carbon neutral North Somerset look like'. She urged all artists and creative folk both younger or older and school children alike to take time to pass on their thoughts and insights. That also tied in with North Somerset Arts week which was also coming back. Members were provided with an update on The Great Big Green Week (18 to 23 September 2021). It was described as a cross party, comprising many organisations, national run of events taking place around the country and there were community events in Clevedon and other areas. The week would be used to provide an update climate report at the full Council meeting and Councillor Petty explained that she would be hosting a Facebook live event where Executive members would be available to answer questions about their work on climate emergency in North Somerset Council.

Councillor Davies updated Members on events taking place in the Great Big Green Week across the whole of North Somerset. He also mentioned a Facebook Live event taking place at 6.00 pm on Thursday 9 September 2021 involving executive members which would provide an opportunity for people to ask them questions online. He thanked officers for their work over the summer. He noted that it had been quite a difficult challenging time with an autumn which would be equally as challenging. He also thanked the residents and businesses of North Somerset for having provided holiday fun for residents and people of the whole country to enjoy their vacations.

Chairman



Forward Plan

for the four-month period commencing on

1st November 2021

published on 1 October 2021

This Forward Plan gives details of decision items to be presented during the forthcoming four months.

Councillors are invited to review the items and to consider whether any of them should be referred for scrutiny or discussed with the appropriate Executive Member.

Executive Members (8) (revised portfolios as announced at Council on 20 April 2021)

Leader of the Council - Councillor Don Davies: external liaison including strategic partnerships: Local Enterprise Partnership, North Somerset Partnership, Joint Executive Committee (WECA and North Somerset Council), Alliance, Police; strategic policy/corporate plan development, forward programme and strategic review; strategic communications and marketing (with Deputy Leader and Executive Member Engagement); strategic transport - transport policy, public transport, home to school transport, bus and rail strategy.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing - Councillor Mike Bell: adult social care; Health and Wellbeing Board; public health and regulatory services; NHS, health and liaison; emergency management; housing solutions, private sector housing and unauthorised encampments.

Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning – Councillor Catherine Gibbons: children and young people's services; education and skills; further and higher education liaison.

Executive Member for Corporate Services – Councillor Ashley Cartman: finance – revenue, capital programme and income generation; procurement; legal and democratic services (including electoral and registrar); property and asset management – financial business cases & financing; ICT, digital and customer services; lead for business support contracts – Agilisys and Liberata; human resources and organisational development; shareholder representative role for council companies.

Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Engagement – Councillor Bridget Petty: climate and ecological emergency; community engagement and consultation; town and parish liaison; North Somerset Together; voluntary sector liaison.

Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy – Councillor Mark Canniford: Placemaking and development - placemaking strategies, culture strategy, Weston placemaking delivery, Tropicana and Playhouse Theatre, strategic events programme, visitor economy development, development and commercial programme, affordable housing delivery; planning - policy, spatial planning, building control; economy and recovery - inward investment, business development and engagement, employment, high street and town centre renewal; parking strategy.

Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services – Councillor Mike Solomon: libraries; community venues; safer communities; environmental services - recycling and waste minimisation, waste and street cleansing contracts, enforcement strategy; highways operations and parking - highway network management, highway maintenance contract, streetlighting, parking management; highway technical services and delivery - liveable neighbourhood schemes, active travel schemes, highway structures; open spaces and natural environment – sports and leisure centre contracts, flood risk management, seafronts parks and lakes operational management, crematoria and cemeteries, marine environment.

Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery – Councillor Steve Bridger: major infrastructure project delivery – HIF, Metrowest, major schemes; property technical services and project delivery - strategic asset planning, corporate estate (including allocation/appropriation of assets between council directorates/functions), accommodation strategy project delivery, capital projects delivery.

The items and the final decision taker are indicative. Decision making is subject to the Constitution.

Copies of documents listed can be obtained by contacting the officer named in the attached schedules. Other relevant documents may be submitted to the decision maker and can be requested from the named officer as they become available or may be available on the Council's website www.n-somerset.gov.uk

November 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Executive meeting scheduled for November)

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
09/11	Make the Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan	Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan (referendum version)	Council	No	Place Scrutiny Panel chair has confirmed that no panel involvement is necessary (04/06/21)	Contact: Celia Dring 01934426244
09/11	Adoption of the Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD following public consultation	Executive Report 28/04/21 Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD (in progress)	Council	No	Formal pre-consultation SPEDR input 10th March 2021 Informal post-consultation Place Panel engagement meeting 8th September 2021	Contact: Jack Wyatt
09/11	Procurement Strategy for Energy Supply Contract	Decision CSD61 – Award of Energy Supply Contracts	Council	No	Liaising with PCOM and Place P&S Panel Chairmen to agree scrutiny arrangements	Contact: Elaine Braund 01275 884195 Holly Wilkins

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
09/11	A38 MRN Scheme: Approval of Commissioning Plan for Professional Services and Design & Build Contractor	Director Decision 19/20 DE295 https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/19-20%20DE%20295.pdf	Council	No	Place Panel briefed in July and queries/concerns addressed in writing & circulated to all Panel Members. No further briefing proposed.	Contact: Konrad Lansdown: 07917 184804

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
09/11	Commissioning plan approval for the procurement of Independent Fostering Agencies for foster care placements for children and young people (new entry)	<p>Director Decision CY17 Director Decision PC13 North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 https://nsomerset.sharepoint.com/sites/the-source.authoring/Documents/Corporate%20Plan%202020_24.pdf#search=corporate%20plan Children's Annual Directorate Statement 2021-2022 https://nsomerset.sharepoint.com/sites/the-source.authoring/Documents/Childrens%20Annual%20Directorate%20Statement%20DRAFT.pdf#search=childrens%20directorate%20plan South West Sub-Regional Commissioning Group Market Position Statement for Independent Fostering Provider Placements for Children & Young People - B:\P&C\Childrens Commissioning Team\Childrens Contracts & Grants\0 PlacementsTeam\1_IF AFramework\ 2022-onwards</p>	Council	No	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel Chair, Cllr Griggs, has confirmed no formal panel involvement required but requested a summary of the commissioning plan is shared with panel members prior to full council meeting	Contact: Amy Hamilton 01275 888715 Alison Stone 01934 426035

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
09/11	Birnbeck Pier (new entry)	Report to Council 14/07/20 – Birnbeck Pier, approval to make Compulsory Purchase Order	Council	Yes	Informal briefing of Place Panel Chairman	Contact: Rachel Lewis 01934 426465

November 2021

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/11	Approval of the Fair Access Protocol for School admissions if the majority of schools want to consult on the current policy	Fair access protocol North Somerset Council (n-somerset.gov.uk) 2021 CY29 Fair Access Protocol decision – Director non-Key Decision to make changes legally required for September School Admissions Code	Executive Member (Cllr Gibbons)	No	Meeting of the CYPS Panel School Organisation Steering Group planned for September	Contact: Felicity Williamson 01275 884502 or 07500 882436
01/11	Public Health & Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy	Regulatory Services Enforcement Procedure 2015 regulatory services enforcement procedure_0.pdf (n-somerset.gov.uk)	Executive Member (Cllr Bell)	No	Briefing note/meeting ASH Panel WG and Health Overview Panel (detailed arrangements to be finalised)	Contact: Jane Day 01934 634528
01/11	Agreement to Direct Award a Reablement Services Contract to Access Your Care (new entry)	TEC Reablement Pathway	Director of Adult Social Services (key decision)	No	ASH Panel commissioning working group to be engaged prior to 21/10/21	Contact: Gerald Hunt 01934 634803

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/11	Award of Construction Contract for Building Improvement Works at the Sovereign Centre, WsM (new entry)	<p>Commissioning Plan <u>Report to Executive: 3rd February 2021</u></p> <p>Subject of Report: Approval of Business Plan for the Sovereign Centre and Commissioning Plan for appointment of consultants and contractors to undertake works to convert vacant retail space into new mixed-use space and approval of Commissioning Plan for appointment of an operator to manage the space</p> <p>Procurement Plan for the provision of fit out works in units 16/17 and 24/25 to provide workspace provision, units 10a and 8a for the bike hub provision and the whole food court at the Sovereign Centre, WsM</p>	Director of Place	No	Place P&SP Chair has confirmed that panel involvement is not necessary for this award	Contact: Elaine Braund 01275 884195 Geoff Wall 01275 884730

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/11	Approval of the funding and prioritisation process for the Neighbourhoods & Transport Capital Works Programme 2022-25 (revised entry previously listed for January)	Executive Member Decision Notice for the (previously named) Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme 2021-24: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/DP355%20JLTP%202021-24.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Solomon)	No	A briefing will be offered to the Place Policy & Scrutiny Panel in October/November (before any decision is made by the Executive Member)	Contact: Lindsay Margerison 01934 888 888
01/11	Joint Procurement and Commissioning Plan for Bus Shelter Advertising Concession Contract (new entry)	Commissioning Plan. Executive 23 October 2019 Bus shelter advertising concession 2018 (not awarded)	Executive Member (Cllr Davies)	No	The Chairman of the Place Scrutiny Panel has been briefed.	Contact: Carl Nicholson. 01275 882935

December 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Council meeting scheduled for December)

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/12	Adoption of inward investment approach across North Somerset, including new brand identify and vision for Junction 21 Enterprise Area and North Somerset External Funding Toolkit and prospectus	J21EA revisioning prospectus North Somerset External Funding Toolkit and prospectus	Executive	No	Item discussed at formal Place Scrutiny Panel on 14 th July 2021	Contact: Victoria Barvenova
08/12	2021/22 Month 6 Budget Monitor	Previous Budget Monitor reports to Executive	Executive	No	PCOM November	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
08/12	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Revenue Budget 2022/23	Previous Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan reports to Executive	Executive	No	PCOM November – consideration of draft MTFP and savings plans	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
08/12	Approval of the council's Digital Strategy (Information & ICT Strategies for noting) (new entry)	Digital Strategy 2021-2024 Information Strategy 2021-2024	Executive	No	Dedicated PCOM Scrutiny session on Thursday 17 June 2021	Contact: Simone Woolley 01934 427370 Mike Riggall 01934 426385

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/12	Approval of Local Plan Consultation Draft for consultation (previously listed for October)	Challenges and Choices consultations 2020. North Somerset Local Plan: report to Executive 28/04/21	Executive	No	Place Scrutiny workshops (July to October).	Contact: Michael Reep 01934 426775
08/12	Commissioning Plan approval for joining an Alternative Learning Provision Framework in 2022, which will be led by Bristol City Council and joined by North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council (new entry)	Bristol City Council's Commissioning Strategy (final sign off 5 th October 2021). Bristol's current Commissioning Strategy can be found here Microsoft Word - ALP Draft Commissioning Strategy v2 (citizenspace.com)	Executive	No	Commissioning Plan to be shared with CYPS Panel before it goes to the Executive	Contact: Charlotte Badger 07776170298 Alison Stone

December 2021

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/12	Award of new library book supply contract	Provision of Physical Library Books to CUSP for Adults and Children's stock (expiry 22/9/2021) Procurement Options Appraisal by Nena Beric, Service Manager, Commercial & Procurement, Somerset County Council 08.07.21 Executive member decision DP164 COMMISSIONING / PROCUREMENT PLAN FOR THE PROVISION OF PHYSICAL LIBRARY BOOKS (CHILDREN'S AND ADULTS) THROUGH THE CUSP PURCHASING CONSORTIUM AND ESPO (EASTERN SHIRES PURCHASING ORGANISATION) FRAMEWORK	Director of Place (key decision)	No	The Chairman of the Place Panel will be briefed regarding potential panel member engagement which if required will take place during November	Contact: Emma Wellard 01934 426477

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/12	Approval to publish a notice to seek an expansion of Baytree Special School	www.n-somerset.gov.uk/baytreeconsultation Decision No 2019/pc19 - https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/councillors-committees/decisions-meetings/executive-member-decisions/2019-executive-member-decisions/july-2019-executive-member-decisions Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel – 20 June 2019 - http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29644.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Gibbons)	No	Report to the CYPS Panel – 20 June 2019 - http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29644.pdf Updates to the CYPS Panel School Organisation Steering Group – 19 September 2019 16 December 2019 10 June 2020 26 November 2020 19 January 2021 25 May 2021	Contact: Sally Varley 01275 884857 or 07917 587280
01/12	MetroWest Phase 1 – Implementation Agreement with Network Rail (previously listed for September)	19 July 2021 report to Full Council 23 February 2021 report to Full Council and 10 November 2020 report to Full Council	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Briefing given to Place Scrutiny Panel on 8 th June 2021	Contact: James Willcock 01934 426414
01/12	Council tax-base setting 2022/23 (new entry)	Previous EM Decision Notice December 2020	Executive Member (Cllr Cartman)	No	Not applicable	Contact: Mark Anderson 01934 634616

January 2022

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Executive meeting scheduled for January)

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
11/01			Council			

January 2022

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/01	Approval of the Neighbourhoods & Transport Capital Works Programme 2022-25 (brought forward to November)	Executive Member Decision Notice for the (previously named) Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme 2021-24: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/DP355%20JLTP%202021-24.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Solomon)	No	A briefing will be offered to the Place Policy Scrutiny Panel in December 2021/January 2022.	Contact: Lindsay Margerison 01934 888 888
01/01	North Somerset Community & VC school admissions policies for 2023/24 academic year – decision to set following consultation	<u>2020-21 admission arrangements and policies North Somerset Council (n-somerset.gov.uk)</u> <u>School Admissions Code</u>	Executive Member (Cllr Gibbons)	No	Meeting of the CYPS Panel School Organisation Steering Group planned for January / February	Contact: Felicity Williamson 01275 884502 or 07500 882436

February 2022

1. Council and Executive Items

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
02/02	2021/22 Month 8 Budget Monitor (new entry)	Previous Budget Monitor reports to Executive	Executive	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
02/02	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Revenue Budget 2022/23 (new entry)	Previous Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan reports to Executive	Executive	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
02/02	Capital Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Capital Strategy (new entry)	Previous Capital Budget and Capital Strategy reports considered by the Executive	Executive	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
02/02	Fees and Charges 2022/23 – to seek Executive approval for any increases in charges over 10% or generating estimated additional income over £300,000 (new entry)	Report to Executive 12/04/16	Executive	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
02/02	Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 (new entry)	Previous annual strategy setting reports to the Executive and Audit Committee	Executive	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
15/02	Council Tax Setting 2022/3 (new entry)	Previous MTFP reports considered by the Executive and Council Tax Setting report 2021/22	Council	No	Awaiting information	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618

February 2022

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/02						

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2021

Subject of Report: Update on the Development of a Joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with the West of England Combined Authority and Bus Operators

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Councillor Donald Davies, The Leader of the Council, with Executive Member responsibility for Strategic Transport

Key Decision: Yes

Reason: The Bus Service Improvement Plan is expected to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the Local Authority.

Recommendations

- (i) That the Executive note the work that has been done on the development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan;
- (ii) That the Leader of the Council, as the responsible Executive Member for Strategic Transport; Transport Policy, Public Transport, Home to School Transport, Bus and Rail Strategy, be delegated authority to approve the final version of the BSIP for submission to government by 29 October 2021,

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 In March 2020, the Government announced [£3billion for buses](#), heralded as ‘the most ambitious shake-up of the bus sector in a generation’ (gov.uk). This was supported by the publication of the Government’s [Bus Back Better – a National Bus Strategy for England](#), announced on 15 March 2021. This process is mandatory as a condition of receiving any further subsidy and grants to support bus services, without which we would see the rapid decline of the current commercial network in the Local area, due to the lasting effects of the pandemic that has seen 1/3 regular patronage disappear.
- 1.2 Since then, North Somerset has been preparing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), as required by the strategy, which is due for submission at the end of October 2021 and has begun to implement an Enhanced Partnership, which is due to commence April 2022. As approved by the Executive in June 2021, these are being done in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority.

1.3 This report summarises progress on the development of the BSIP and the work with the combined authority and seeks approval to submit the document by the deadline of the 31st October 2021.

2. Policy

2.1 The national Government's [*Bus Back Better – a National Bus Strategy for England*](#) is consistent with the following NSC and West of England policies & plans:

- The [*North Somerset Council \(NSC\) Corporate Plan 2020-24*](#)
- The [*West of England Bus Strategy \(2020\)*](#);
- The [*West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 \(JLTP4\) \(2020\)*](#);
- NSC's Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 1) and the Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2 and 3) scheme package;
- The emerging [*NSC Local Plan 2038*](#).

2.2 For more detail on how the national bus strategy and resulting workstreams are consistent with the above NSC and West of England plans and policies, please see Appendix 1 below.

3. Details

Bus Strategies

3.1 *Bus Back Better - a National Bus Strategy for England* (NBS) was published in March 2021 and highlights the failings and negative features of the deregulated market that has been in place outside London since 1986 and sets out a new vision for a cohesive network of attractive, high-quality bus services.

3.2 The overall vision and aims of the NBS are:

- To get overall bus patronage back to its pre-Covid level and then exceed it;
- To make the bus a practical and attractive alternative to the car for more people;
- To make buses more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper;
- To offer a London-style bus network: fully integrated services, simple multi-modal tickets, more bus priority measures, high-quality information for passengers, services that keep running into the evenings and at weekends and turn-up-and-go frequencies in cities;
- Significantly more ambitious bus priority schemes in cities and congested places, taking a whole-corridor approach to improve journey times and punctuality;
- To create a virtuous circle: increasing usage, but also reducing operating costs so better services can be sustained without permanently higher subsidy.

3.3 The West of England Bus Strategy, covering North Somerset, was adopted in June 2020 after extensive consultation. It contained an analysis of the local bus network and set out proposals to reshape and develop the network to make it more efficient and more attractive to passengers within the existing envelope of funding. One of the core principles would be frequent radial and orbital bus services connecting at interchange hubs. Publication of the NBS has provided an opportunity to review the West of England Bus Strategy in the light of the impact of the pandemic and use it as the basis for our Bus Service Improvement Plan, review and re-set our targets, and bid for funding to deliver improvements.

Bus Service Improvement Plan

- 3.4 The NBS requires local transport authorities (LTAs), which North Somerset Council is, to develop an ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in collaboration with local bus operators, highway authorities, community transport bodies and local businesses, services, and people. Guidance on development of a BSIP was published in May 2021 and guidance on bidding for funding was published in August 2021. The final plan must be submitted to Government and published by North Somerset Council and The WECA before the 31/10/2021.
- 3.5 Baroness Vere wrote to all LTA Leaders on 6 September 2021 highlighting the importance of the BSIP process, and articulating the deadline for publication and submission as the 31/10/2021. The full letter is reproduced in Appendix 2.
- 3.6 Government makes it clear in its guidance that BSIPs should be outlines rather than detailed and granular documents. Any commitments in them will not be taken as definitive or immutable. Even so, the guidance is very explicit about the features that the bus network must have to meet the vision of the National Bus Strategy and the content of a BSIP. It must include proposals to restore and improve the local bus network to the standard described in paragraph 1.2, estimate the costs of so doing and, in addition, it must:
- Take account of cycling and walking schemes, complementing those forms of travel;
 - Include targets for punctuality, journey times and patronage with reporting of progress against those targets every six months;
 - Be updated annually and reflected in the Joint Local Transport Plan.
- 3.7 The proposed BSIP will aim to achieve a more co-ordinated network with convenient and reliable bus services, affordable fares with daily and weekly capping and simplified payment systems. Details of the proposed features of the future West of England bus network are in Appendix 1. Our BSIP will set out the measures that we and bus operators will take over time to deliver that. Ultimately, though, what can be achieved will depend on (i) the level of funding awarded by Government and (ii) the recovery of demand for bus services after the pandemic.
- 3.8 By early September 2021, bus patronage in the West of England was at roughly 63% of its pre-Covid level. Recovery has been slow, and passenger numbers have been consistently lower than in other city-regions. Recently, a survey of local employers and large retailers across the West of England was completed to try to gauge the longer-term impact of changes in lifestyles on public transport.
- 3.9 At its meeting on 23 June 2021, the Executive approved a recommendation for North Somerset Council (NSC) and the West of England Combined Authority to work together on submission of a joint BSIP and to publish a formal Notice of Intent to develop an Enhanced Partnership (see below) as the delivery model. That Notice was published on 28 June 2021.
- 3.10 Engagement has taken place with officers of Somerset County (and Wiltshire and Gloucestershire County Councils in the context of the joint BSIP) on cross-boundary issues and officers continue to liaise closely with them.

- 3.11 One of the mandatory requirements of a BSIP is to include an assessment of the local bus network as it stands and to set targets for improvements. Progress towards those targets must be reported every six months. The assessment must take account of the views of passenger groups, MPs, the business sector etc. We invited views from these stakeholders in July/August 2021 and the results will help inform the priorities for investment.
- 3.12 The funding arrangements, despite guidance issued in August, remain unclear and therefore it is difficult to estimate how much funding the West of England BSIP might secure and consequently what might be available for either revenue support of bus services or capital investment in infrastructure. This is further complicated by the fact that the process for allocating capital to the Combined Authority is going through a separate process which is running alongside the BSIP called City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).
- 3.13 Uncertainty with regards the BSIP funding also makes it difficult to set out precise deliverables. However, the following is a summary of some of the key aspects in the BSIP and where appropriate how it relates to North Somerset:
- We have developed a proposed network of services with frequency standards matched to the population densities. The ambition is that all communities above 1,000 population will have the opportunity to access an hourly bus service on Mondays to Fridays between 0700 and 1900;
 - We want higher bus frequencies in our towns and urban areas, offering a good range of destinations and connections. We therefore aim to increase the frequency of several routes across the West of England over the next 5 years;
 - We want bus services to support the 24/7 economy, so we will develop standards for early morning, evening, night and weekend services.
 - We want fares to be simple, cheaper and affordable with multi-operator ticketing as standard and envisage reduced fares being delivered for local travel in Portishead, Nailsea and Clevedon;
 - We want family travel to be affordable, so we will work with bus operators to explore ways of achieving that.
 - We will present our bus network as a single system with every vehicle and bus stop identifiable as part of the network;
 - We will commit to excellent standards of information and customer care in a Bus Passenger Charter.
 - We want bus journeys to be reliable and consistent and therefore propose significant investment in infrastructure over the next 5 years to help speed up services and improve punctuality. We have identified the A370 and A369 corridors as high priorities for investment with further improvements delivered in our other main towns and villages.
 - We want every bus stop to act as a shop window for our bus services, with all 5000+ stops in the West of England being improved over the next 5 years and new stops created promptly to serve areas of growth and development;
 - To match the local, regional and national aspirations of the Climate Emergency We want every bus to meet Euro VI emission standards and be zero emission by 2033, with the first electric buses entering service within 2 to 3 years.
- 3.14 A working draft of the BSIP is included in Appendix 3.

Enhanced Partnership

- 3.15 The delivery model for the West of England BSIP will be an Enhanced Partnership (EP). It has the potential to bring about improvements quickly and it puts in place a framework under which future improvements can be delivered as and when funding becomes available. Details of the features of EPs are in Appendix 4.
- 3.16 Government expects all LTAs to have an initial EP in place by April 2022, apart from those that have published an intention to develop franchising of bus services, and it has made continued payment of discretionary funding to bus operators and LTAs conditional on development of a BSIP and EP.
- 3.17 Government strongly recommends that the initial EP should “memorialise” all existing agreements such as quality partnership schemes, voluntary partnership agreements, traffic regulation conditions, current expenditure on bus service support, traffic regulation orders for bus priorities, bus shelter maintenance expenditure etc. and so the issues associated with this are being investigated.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Extensive public consultation was carried out on the West of England Bus Strategy in February / March 2020 and nearly 2,000 responses were received and being used to also support the development of the BSIP. This is summarised in Appendix 5. In view of the short timescale, public consultation is not possible for the BSIP, but the views of passenger groups, MPs and the business sector are being sought and considered in preparation of the BSIP. We invited views from these stakeholders in July/August 2021 and received 55 responses. The results will help inform the priorities for investment.
- 4.2 As part of the statutory process to make an EP, a short consultation on the content of the EP Plan and the first EP Scheme must be carried out with bus operators, organisations that represent passengers, neighbouring local authorities, the Traffic Commissioner, the Police, Transport Focus and the Competition and Markets Authority. One of the purposes of this exercise is to give bus operators an opportunity to object formally to any proposed features of the EP.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The estimated cost for developing a joint BSIP and EP is £800k. The Department for Transport has already paid £100k Capability Funding to both the West of England CA and North Somerset Council (NSC) with a further £63k being paid to NSC. The West of England CA has made an application to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for the balance. In the event that bid is unsuccessful additional funding would be sought from the combined authority. The capability funding, as well as existing funding should be sufficient to cover NSC costs for 21/22
- 5.2 There will be a requirement for additional staff resources at both WECA and NSC to service the joint EP after it has been made and to carry out the ongoing reporting and review work arising from the joint BSIP. The extent of this requirement and the associated cost will become clearer as current work progresses. The council is working on the assumption that these costs will be funded by the BSIP funding allocation.

- 5.3 In the context of significant change to the system, the overall aim is to manage public transport costs within existing budgets, recognising that there may need to be changes to individual items from its adoption in April 2022 to its renewal in April 2027. The BSIP includes a hierarchy of delivery methods, where acceptable levels of commerciality cannot be achieved with a cost effective and sustained use of resources, alternatives will be implemented.
- 5.4 Funding to deliver the BSIP will be the subject of bids to the CRSTS and the £3 billion Transformation Funding. The capital element for the West of England CA will be funded by the CRSTS. The capital element for NSC and the revenue element for both areas will be funded by Transformation Funding. The BSIP will explicitly highlight the need for the various funding streams between The WECA and NSC to be equal, to avoid any cliff edge funding for the network of services for the duration of the transformation funding and Enhanced Partnership between 2022 and 2027.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

- 6.1 North Somerset Council are both the highway and transport authority and so have the legal powers to amend the highway and transport network, under the Council's powers as Local Highway Authority ([Highways Act 1980](#)).
- 6.2 In the West of England the transport authorities, who have responsibility for planning transport improvements, are: North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA, who are the regional transport authority covering the administrative areas of Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire). The highway authorities, with responsibility for maintenance of and the delivery of improvements to the public highway, are: Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils.
- 6.3 Enhanced Partnerships are enshrined in the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017). Government has published detailed guidance on the statutory process to develop an EP and on its expectations for Bus Service Improvement Plans. The guidance is being followed.
- 6.4 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being developed between the West of England CA and North Somerset Council to cover the work on the BSIP and EP. The Executive meeting on the 21st June delegated agreement of the MOU to the Executive Member (in consultation with the Director of Place and Assistant Director Legal & Governance).

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 7.1 If approved, progressed, and delivered, the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will overhaul the existing bus network to provide improved bus service and bus infrastructure provision. If the aims of the national bus strategy, through our BSIP, are achieved then there will be a significant increase in the proportion of trips by bus, replacing trips otherwise undertaken by the more polluting (and less space-efficient) single petrol/diesel car trips. Taking a local bus emits a little over half the greenhouse gases of a single occupancy car journey and also help to remove congestion from the roads (*BBC – J. Timperley, 2020 – article [here](#)*). Additionally, all specific infrastructure projects will undertake a more detailed environmental assessment.

7.2 Improvements to our bus network and services will therefore enable a shift to cleaner transport choices such as the bus ((and active travel to get to the bus network wherever possible) and as we electrify) our bus fleets, further emissions savings will be made.

8. Risk Management

8.1 The key risks that the recommendations will address are:

- (i) Potential loss of discretionary funding from Government to support commercial bus operators and our bus service contractors during recovery from the pandemic;
- (ii) Potential loss of opportunity to bid for Transformation Funding to make longer-term improvements to the bus network and help support recovery after April 2022;
- (iii) North Somerset Council would be required to find substantial revenue funding to continue to support some essential local bus services in the absence of a commercial provision, this would create additional pressures that are not able to be resolved within our current resources, leading to an accelerated and sustained decline in our bus local bus provision.

8.2 The risks associated with implementation of the recommendations *and appropriate mitigations* are:

- (i) Potential loss of discretionary funding from Government to support commercial bus operators and our bus service contractors during recovery from the pandemic;
 - *Publish Bus Service Improvement Plan and continue development of an Enhanced Partnership*
- (ii) Insufficient revenue budget in longer-term to maintain enhanced bus network after the initial Transformation Funding ends in 2027;
 - *Maintain regular dialogue with bus operators through the EP. Use our evaluation tool to help prioritise bus revenue support if necessary.*
 - *Promote the network to build patronage and reduce the need for public subsidy*
 - *The BSIP and EP contain mechanisms to formally postpone, vary or cancel elements of the Partnership.*
- (iii) Insufficient revenue budget to maintain enhanced bus network if demand recovers more slowly than anticipated;
 - *Maintain regular dialogue with bus operators through the EP. Use our evaluation tool to help prioritise bus revenue support if necessary.*
 - *Invoke Adjustment mechanisms to re-align resources.*
- (iv) Award of Transformation Funding at much lower level than bid based on BSIP, leading to insufficient funding to deliver full BSIP.
 - *Adjust delivery programme to match award and seek funding from other sources.*

9. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? **No**

9.1 One of the key drivers of the national bus strategy 'Bus Back Better' is to improve accessibility for all. This includes the need to improve the access to bus information for residents with sight or hearing impairments, physical accessibility improvements in getting to bus stops, the waiting and boarding facilities at stops and interchanges and also the vehicles themselves, such as consistent local branding of stops and services, up to date accessible timetable and route information at bus stops, same

evening and weekend frequencies as day time, universal ticketing and easy smart payment options, and more marketing campaigns to promote existing and new routes. Furthermore, one of the actions for national government as part of the strategy is to review eligibility for free bus travel for disabled people to ensure that the strategy helps to improve the equality of opportunity and help disabled people participate fully in public life.

- 9.2 The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), once prepared, will include a number of key objectives, including but not limited to:
- high quality bus service;
 - high quality waiting environment;
 - high vehicle standards.
- 9.3 More specific attributes are contained under each objective, including:
- Bus stops, bus stations and interchanges to be accessible, safe and inclusive by design with good facilities;
 - Good pedestrian accessibility to adjacent residential areas and passenger destinations.
 - Full accessibility with ample areas for pushchairs and luggage in addition to the wheelchair space and audio/ visual next bus stop announcements
 - Setting a basic minimum standard of accessibility to network from rural areas;
 - Easy access to information via Travelwest website and app, including times, accessibility information, fares and live running.
- 9.4 These are just some of the objectives and attributes set to be included within our BSIP that show the level of commitment to improving equality and accessibility to a vastly improved bus network, all through the direction of the national bus strategy.

10. Corporate Implications

- 10.1 The development of a BSIP and delivery of an EP from April 22 is a significant reshape of how public transport is planned and delivered in England, with Government clear that there will be 'no return' to a situation where services are planned on a purely commercial basis with little or no engagement with, or support from, LTAs.
- 10.2 More focused to [NSC Corporate policies](#), the national bus strategy (via our more specific BSIP for North Somerset and the West of England) will set out a new vision and action plan to achieve a cohesive network of attractive, high quality bus services to kickstart a new era for bus travel as an option for all. This helps hit all three Corporate Plan priorities of being:
- Open (with the open sharing of bus data helping to improve bus services further including accessibility and journey planning);
 - Fair (by significantly improving equality and accessibility to and on the bus network);
 - Green (with the more people using the bus instead of private car, this has a huge potential to save significant carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions).
- 10.3 More specifically, the [NSC Corporate Plan 2020-24](#) sets out to achieve 'A transport network that promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel' and by 2023, to see 'More people using the bus network, and improvements in reliability and passenger

satisfaction'. Through delivering showcase bus corridors, as well as other measures that will be detailed in the BSIP, the Corporate Plan aims to see:

- An increase in bus patronage;
- The delivery of at least one new showcase corridor by 2023, and;
- Measures to enable the unhampered movement of buses.

10.4 Preparing and then delivering a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with WECA and bus operators and preparing a joint Enhanced Partnership (EP) would be consistent with and add further weight to our Corporate Plan aims for bus service improvements shown above.

11. Options Considered

11.1 NSC attempt to undertake an Enhanced Partnership (EP) and BSIP alone and not with WECA. This is not consistent with the guidance, which states that:

'...particularly where local economies and travel patterns overlap significantly...we expect LTAs to collaborate to resolve any cross-boundary issues. Where all, or the vast majority of, services in one area run across the border into another area (for example a small unitary authority with services running into a shire authority), we would expect a single BSIP to be produced. We also expect to see shared arrangements across any areas wishing to become new or expanded MCAs in the future.'

11.2 It is also logical to undertake a joint EP and BSIP as our public transport works very much as a regional, West of England wide network with most of our routes, certainly the key corridor routes, radiating cross-border from Bristol. The BSIP will also form as a bidding document that will be used to lever in additional funding and investment to improving our bus network, and an NSC-only BSIP will not carry the same weight or attractiveness as a joint plan with our West of England neighbours.

Authors:

Colin Medus (Head of Public Transport Transformation – Place Directorate)

Appendices

Appendix 1	Policy alignment between Bus Back Better and NSC and West of England plans and policies
Appendix 2	Letter from Baroness de Vere
Appendix 3	West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan (final working draft)
Appendix 4	Features of Enhanced Partnerships
Appendix 5	West of England Bus Strategy and JLTP4 consultation summary

Background Papers:

- [Executive Report of 23rd June 2021](#)
- [The national bus strategy: Bus Back Better \(March 2021\)](#)
- [National Bus Strategy: Bus Service Improvement Plans \(May 2021\)](#)
[Guidance to all local authorities and bus operators \(Department for Transport, May 2021\)](#)
- [The West of England Bus Strategy \(June 2020\)](#)
- [The West of England Joint Local Transport Plan \(JLTP4\) \(March 2020\)](#)
- [Bus Services Act 2017 – New powers and opportunities](#)

- [Guidance on Enhanced Partnerships](#)
- [Guidance on Franchising Schemes](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Policy alignment between Bus Back Better and NSC and West of England plans and policies

The [West of England Bus Strategy](#), consulted upon extensively in January 2020 and adopted in June 2020, considers options to improve the bus network and set out how further growth in bus usage can be encouraged. The strategy includes proposals to create better, faster, more reliable and more accessible services across Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Through this strategy, North Somerset Council (NSC) and WECA aimed to see bus passenger numbers double by 2036 (from a 2011 baseline), although this needs to be reviewed in light of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The [West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 \(JLTP4\)](#), consulted upon extensively in January 2019 and adopted in March 2020, sets out the region's priorities for improving bus travel to be a serious alternative to the private car. Policy W1, aims to:

'Provide more public transport options and improve service quality.'

This is supported by three main interventions to support the delivery of the policy:

- Provide high quality and reliable mass and rapid transit;
- Support and enhance existing public transport services, and;
- Improve the availability and accessibility of accurate travel information and ticketing.

The bus service improvement policies and interventions contained within both the West of England Bus Strategy and the JLTP4 are consistent with the direction of the national Government's [Bus Back Better – a National Bus Strategy for England](#). The vision and aims of this positive new strategy are set out in the Summary section above.

The [North Somerset Council \(NSC\) Corporate Plan 2020-24](#) sets out to achieve 'A transport network that promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel' and by 2023, to see 'More people using the bus network, and improvements in reliability and passenger satisfaction'. Through delivering showcase bus corridors, as well as other measures that will be detailed in the joint BSIP, the Corporate Plan aims to see:

- An increase in bus patronage;
- The delivery of at least one new showcase corridor by 2023, and;
- Measures to enable the unhampered movement of buses.

Preparing and then delivering a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with WECA and preparing an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with WECA and bus operators would be consistent with and add further weight to our Corporate Plan aims for bus service improvements shown above.

The BSIP guidance emphasises that this is not just a bus strategy for buses, but part of an integrated approach to improving the overall transport network via increasing opportunities to use lower-carbon and more space-efficient forms of transport as a realistic alternative to the private car. Further to this, the BSIP guidance is also clear that 'Government will also take into account an LTA's performance with respect to the policies set out in the Strategy when considering funding allocations for wider, non-bus local transport schemes.' It is therefore even more important that we are well coordinated in our approaches to first and last mile trips to and from the bus network. This includes having up to date, best practice policies adopted accompanied by already-identified interventions to improve active travel, the rail network and other transport options. This will ensure that we are planning for and

provide a coordinated, interchange nodes approach to our bus service improvement planning.

Our success with the Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 1) and the Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2) in 2020 should stand us in good stead in terms of our reputation with the Department for Transport. On this workstream, NSC was one of two authorities in England to receive more funding than bid for due to the strength and ambition in both bids and we are underway with consultation before delivery later in 2021-22.

In policy terms, our newly adopted NSC Active Travel Strategy (ATS) is clear on the importance of linking active travel infrastructure and awareness improvements to public transport corridors and interchanges as the first and last mile of all public transport journeys. This Active Travel Strategy demonstrates to national government that we are ready with our local policies in place to accompany this major increase of investment in our bus network with serious and ambitious active travel improvements alongside. This is consistent with the guidance we have had so far on preparing a BSIP; interlinking public transport and active travel for more space-efficient, cost-efficient, active and lower carbon journeys. A link to our Emerging ATS is available in the Background documents section below.

North Somerset Council are also underway with developing the new Local Plan, which will set out the policies and sites for residential and employment development, including required transport improvements to facilitate these, up to 2038. At the 28 April 2021 NSC Executive Committee Meeting, Members unanimously endorsed the preferred spatial strategy for our Local Plan, following full public and stakeholder consultation on both the Challenges and Choices facing North Somerset as part of [developing the plan](#).

The Local Plan will be a full plan with detailed policies on the approach to various forms of development and will set out the overall spatial strategy; where NSC recommends growth should be encouraged to meet the need for the houses, infrastructure, jobs and services North Somerset will need. This will be consulted upon later in 2021 but will work in tandem with the BSIP as both are developed throughout Summer and Autumn 2021. This collaboration across the two plans has already begun.



Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Minister for Roads, Buses and Places

Great Minster House
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London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
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Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

To: To Local Transport Authority Leaders
(in England, outside London)

6 September 2021

Dear Councillors,

Bus Service Improvement Plans and future government funding

I am writing to you today with regards to the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs), which I have asked all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to publish and send to the Department by 31 October.

The National Bus Strategy, published in March, sets out why a BSIP is essential. It is a shared vision for transformed bus services which are key to delivering wider societal and economic goals, and the extent of its ambition will influence how the £3 billion of funding for buses is allocated. I expect your authority to produce an ambitious and challenging Improvement Plan, in keeping with the notification of intent it published on the 30 June.

Where LTAs are not also highways authorities, please forward this letter to elected leaders of your Local Highways Authorities, since they will be crucial in delivering bus priority measures. As stated in the BSIP guidance, close co-operation with authorities that have relevant highways and traffic powers is essential.

Buses support the local economy by improving connectivity and reducing congestion, which affect all road users and cost urban economies at least £11 billion a year. Buses can be key to levelling-up, with users disproportionately drawn from less advantaged social groups and places.

However, buses should not be seen or promoted only as transport for those without an alternative. There is clear evidence that they can be made attractive enough to draw people away from their cars, for example by installing bus priority lanes, reviewing parking policies and increasing frequency of services. For this reason, buses are also vital in ensuring the economy meets its target for Net Zero carbon emissions.

Buses can also play a greater role in enabling access to work. In cities outside London, 77% of jobseekers do not have regular access to a car, van or motorbike. Having found employment, affordable bus travel helps ensure that work pays and can be sustained for everyone.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach here. The crucial test is whether the BSIP delivers for the community it serves, and whether the views of operators have been listened to and taken into account. In assessing the overall quality of BSIPs, the Government will give particular weight to measures which support local bus markets as they emerge from the pandemic, for example bus priority and targeted fares reductions. This will help to ensure the best outcomes for current and future bus users.

I look forward to seeing your plans for genuinely transformational changes to bus services, which should ensure everyone finds travel by bus simple, quick and affordable. I would like to thank you for all of your efforts in developing your BSIPs at pace to meet the deadline for submission of 31 October 2021.

*Yours,
Charlotte*

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON

Appendix 3: Working Draft of BSIP

ITEM 5

JOINT PLANNING, HOUSING & TRANSPORT BOARD

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Addition to Bus Service Improvement Plan report circulated previously

**APPENDIX 4 TO JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT
BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (BSIP)
15 OCTOBER 2021**

WORKING DRAFT OF FINAL BSIP

Please note that this document is still to be fully edited and designed professionally

West of England

Bus Service Improvement Plan

October 2021

Foreword

Our joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is our response to the National Bus Strategy and it follows on from our own West of England Bus Strategy, which was adopted last year. The BSIP sets out our ambition to get back to the strong, steady growth in bus use that we had prior to the pandemic and to move forward on decarbonising our transport system as part of our commitment to tackle the climate emergency.

Our BSIP proposes a partnership with bus operators to make the most from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and Bus Transformation Fund investment and bring about a major uplift in the quality and coverage of the whole local bus network.

We are very well-placed to deliver our proposals because we have a strong track record of working across the region and a good relationship with local bus operators. The Greater Bristol Bus Network, metrobus and complementary programmes of bus investment drove improvements in bus journey times, punctuality, vehicle emissions and passenger information - all contributing to a consistent growth in passenger numbers.

We've all been affected one way or another by the pandemic. It has changed the way society operates - especially in working patterns and the need to travel. Some of that change will be permanent and it means that we can no longer leave the provision of bus services largely to commercial decisions by the operators. From now on, Local Transport Authorities will have a much greater say in how the bus network responds to the changing needs of residents and businesses. This point is made by the Government in the National Bus Strategy and it's why they expect us to produce a BSIP in collaboration with operators.

Undoubtedly, the car remains the greatest competitor to the bus and it will remain dominant unless the bus 'offer' is improved dramatically. To make the bus a natural choice, it has to be convenient - taking our residents where they want to go at times they need to travel; bus journey times must be competitive with the car; there has to be easy access to information to find the right bus and know when it's coming; bus travel has to be good value for money - with easy payment and flexible ticketing; and - most importantly - it should be clear who is responsible for public transport and who to go to when things go wrong.

Our shared ambition is to achieve all these outcomes and make the bus a viable option for far more of our residents, to help us tackle traffic congestion, air pollution, carbon emissions, and the social and economic challenges facing us all in the coming decade.

Signature

DAN NORRIS
Mayor of the West of England

Signature

CLLR DON DAVIES
Leader, North Somerset Council

Executive summary

Our aim for the West of England is achieve at least 100 million bus passengers per year within 10 years. To help achieve this:

- We want everyone in the West of England to have access to a bus or dial-a-ride service, with all communities above 1,000 population having at least an hourly bus service on Mondays to Fridays between 0700 and 1900;
- We want higher bus frequencies in our towns and urban areas, offering a good range of destinations and connections. We therefore aim to increase the frequency of at least 20 bus routes across the West of England over the next 5 years;
- We want bus services to support the 24/7 economy, so we will develop standards for early morning, evening, night and weekend services. We aim to spend at least an additional £2 million securing improvements to these services over the next 12 months;
- We want fares to be simple, cheaper and affordable with multi-operator ticketing as standard;
- We want family travel to be affordable, so we will work with bus operators to explore ways of achieving that.
- We will present our bus network as a single system with every vehicle and bus stop identifiable as part of the network;
- We will commit to excellent standards of information and customer care in a Bus Passenger Charter.
- We want bus journeys to be reliable and consistent with at least £200 million invested in infrastructure over the next 5 years to help speed up services and improve punctuality;
- We want every bus stop to act as a shop window for our bus services, with all 5,000 stops in the West of England being improved over the next 5 years and new stops created promptly to serve areas of growth and development;
- We want every bus to meet Euro VI emission standards by 2023 and be zero-emission by 2033, with the first electric buses entering service within 2 years.

Section 1 - Overview

This West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is produced jointly by the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council in their role as local transport authorities.

The decision to produce a joint BSIP was a natural one, given the history of joint working in the sub-region and the operational features of bus services in the area.

Also, North Somerset Council has an aspiration to join the West of England Combined Authority and therefore, to be consistent with the BSIP guidance, wants to ensure that it meets its BSIP obligations by working in partnership.

The two partners adopted a Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4) in March 2020 and a joint Bus Strategy in June 2020.

Travel patterns in the region are based predominantly around the wider Bristol Travel-to-Work area and this aligns well with the two partners' outer boundaries. The principal local bus operator - First West of England Ltd t/a First Bus - covers the whole of this area too, with some overlap into Somerset and Wiltshire. Apart from the Weston-super-Mare town network, the majority of bus services from North Somerset run into the West of England CA area.

Other benefits from developing a joint BSIP include efficiencies for both partners and bus operators by avoiding duplication, simplifying engagement and discussion and planning investment. We have a strong track record of success in working with bus operators to deliver public transport initiatives - such as the Greater Bristol Bus Network, Bath Rider and AvonRider ticket schemes, Bath Transport Package and metrobus. The impact of this partnership working is illustrated in the consistent growth in bus patronage locally - contrary to the national trend outside London.

The area to be covered by the first Enhanced Partnership Scheme will be the whole area covered by this BSIP - that is the combined areas of the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council. This includes the urban areas of Bath, Bristol, Chipping Sodbury, Clevedon, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Nailsea, Portishead, Radstock, Thornbury, Weston-super-Mare and Yate, and the surrounding rural areas. A map of the geographical area is attached in Appendix 1.

The West of England BSIP will cover the period up to 2030, with delivery in two phases:

- (i) up to 2025
- (ii) from 2025 onwards

Delivery of the first phase will depend on the award of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) (for capital expenditure in the West of England CA area) and Transformation Funding (for capital expenditure in the North Somerset Council area and revenue expenditure in both areas).

Delivery of the second phase will depend on the availability of future streams of funding. CRSTS covers the period from 2022 to 2027 and a bid was submitted in September 2021.

Delivery of both phases will also depend on organic growth as the local bus market recovers from the pandemic, adjusts to changes in lifestyles and takes advantage of the new funding opportunities to meet the aspirations of the National Bus Strategy.

The West of England BSIP will be reviewed jointly by officers of the West of England CA and North Somerset Council in October every year, updated and reported to the West of England Transport Board (comprising the Mayor of the West of England and the Executive Members for Transport of Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South

Gloucestershire Council). Updated versions of the BSIP will be published, along with six-monthly reporting of progress towards targets, on the websites of the West of England CA and North Somerset Council.

The West of England BSIP will be aligned with the Joint Local Transport Plan, Local Cycling & Walking Investment Programme, Bath Transport Delivery Action Plan and Bristol Transport Plan by specific cross-references in future revisions to those documents. It will serve as the 18-month review of the West of England Bus Strategy - to which the LTAs were committed.

Section 2 - Current bus offer to passengers

The principal local bus operator is First Bus, which carries 90% of total passenger journeys. Its vehicles are garaged at 4 depots in the area and 1 in Somerset. There are 16 other bus operators locally and 3 long-distance coach operators, some of whose services are partly registered.

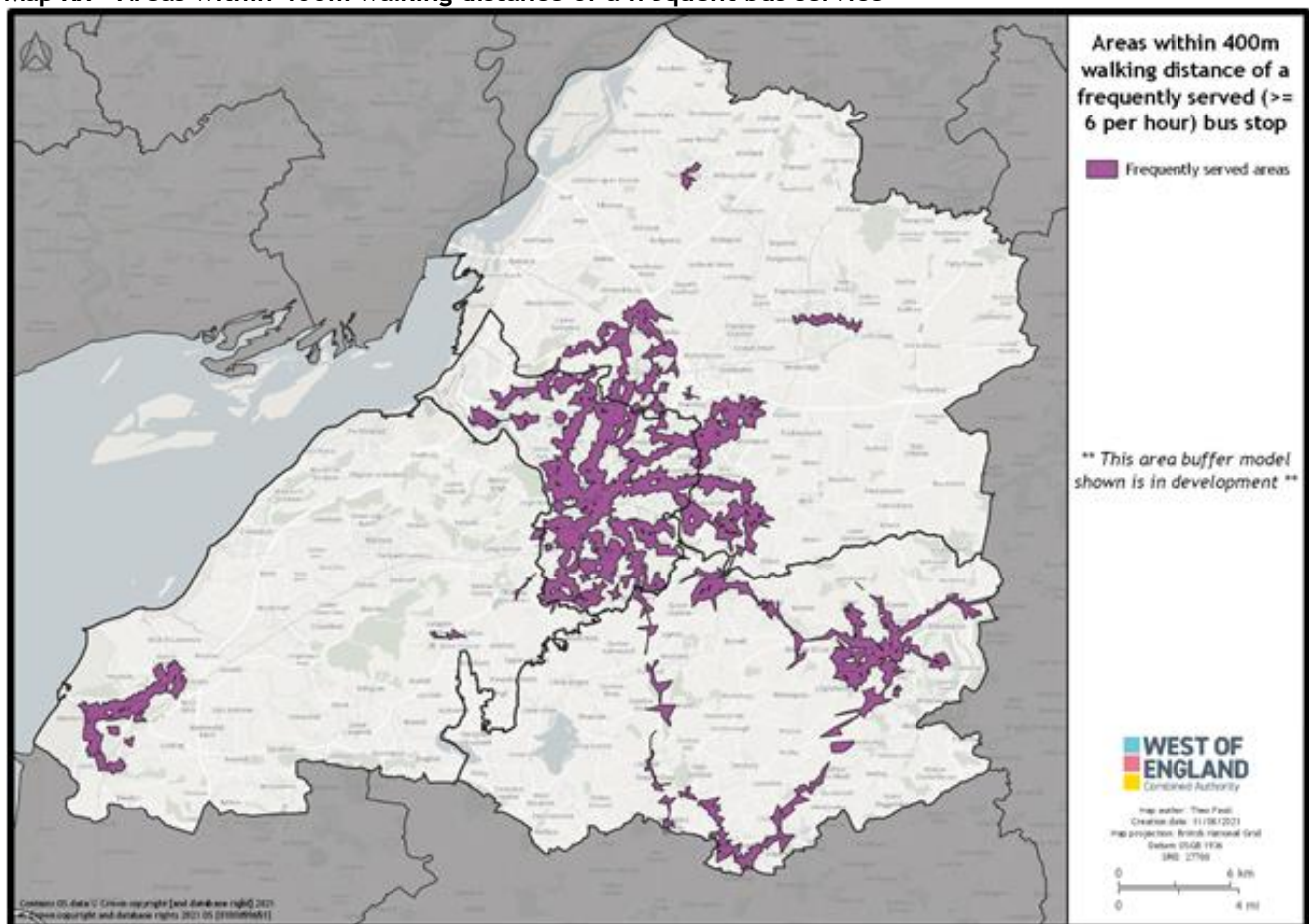
Prior to the onset of coronavirus, xx% of bus journeys were made by holders of concessionary passes for persons who are older or who have a disability.

Bus network coverage

The West of England Bus Strategy includes a detailed analysis of the bus network in 2019, so a summary of the key points is given here.

Roughly half the population of the BSIP area (amounting to 560,000 residents) live within 400m walking distance of a frequent bus service (at least 6 buses per hour)

Map xx - Areas within 400m walking distance of a frequent bus service



Bus service frequencies in the West of England 2019

Although there are no remote areas more than ten miles from a city or town in the BSIP area, rural parts of the region suffer from the problems common to other similar parts of the country - such as limited access to employment opportunities and services, poor public transport and lack of affordable housing.

Bus services are focussed on radial corridors in the urban areas of Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare. 7% of all local bus services run to a high frequency - that is 5 buses per hour or more over most of the working day.

About a quarter of bus services are medium frequency, that is 2-4 buses per hour and service levels of 1 or 2 buses per hour operate on the main inter-urban corridors.

The commercial route networks in the three main urban centres are, with a few exceptions, radial services that terminate in the centres. In Bath and Bristol, there are few cross-centre services - mainly to avoid spreading the impact of unpredictable delays from one side of the city to the other. This reduces connectivity and efficiency of operation.

There are very few orbital services around the cities and those that exist operate to low frequencies. Bus operators do not regard them as viable and are not willing to cross-subsidise them, so they rely on revenue support.

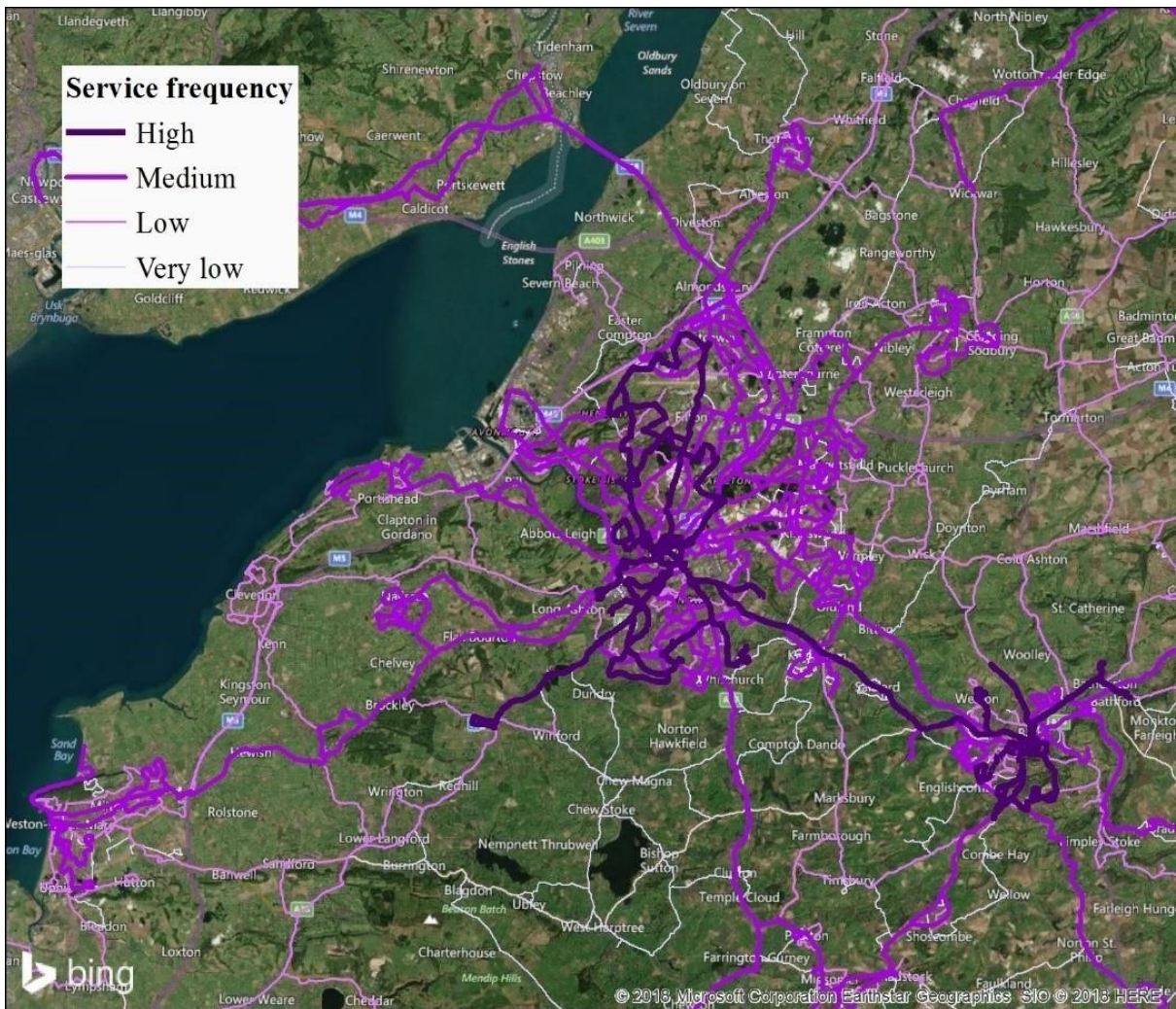
Also, there are few inter-urban limited-stop services to provide fast services giving comparable journey times to cars.

Not all commercial bus services operate all day, seven days a week. Much of the financial support provided by the LTAs is directed at evening and Sunday services.

Rural areas have a comparatively sparse bus network and, generally, it is reliant on revenue support. Many villages have only 1 or 2 buses per week and are used predominately by shoppers. Journey times by bus from outer terminals in rural areas to cities centres are generally much longer than by car because the bus services take circuitous routes in order to serve as many communities as possible on the way. There is very little provision of evening or weekend services to rural areas away from the main inter-urban corridors.

We have engaged with local representatives of the Department for Work & Pensions about the BSIP. A key issue they raised was how the public transport network can support people who have shift work or working patterns beyond the more usual 9-5. This has fed into our proposals for an expansion of early morning, evening and night bus services.

Map xx - Bus service frequency by corridor 2019



Source: Technical Note 1, West of England Bus Strategy

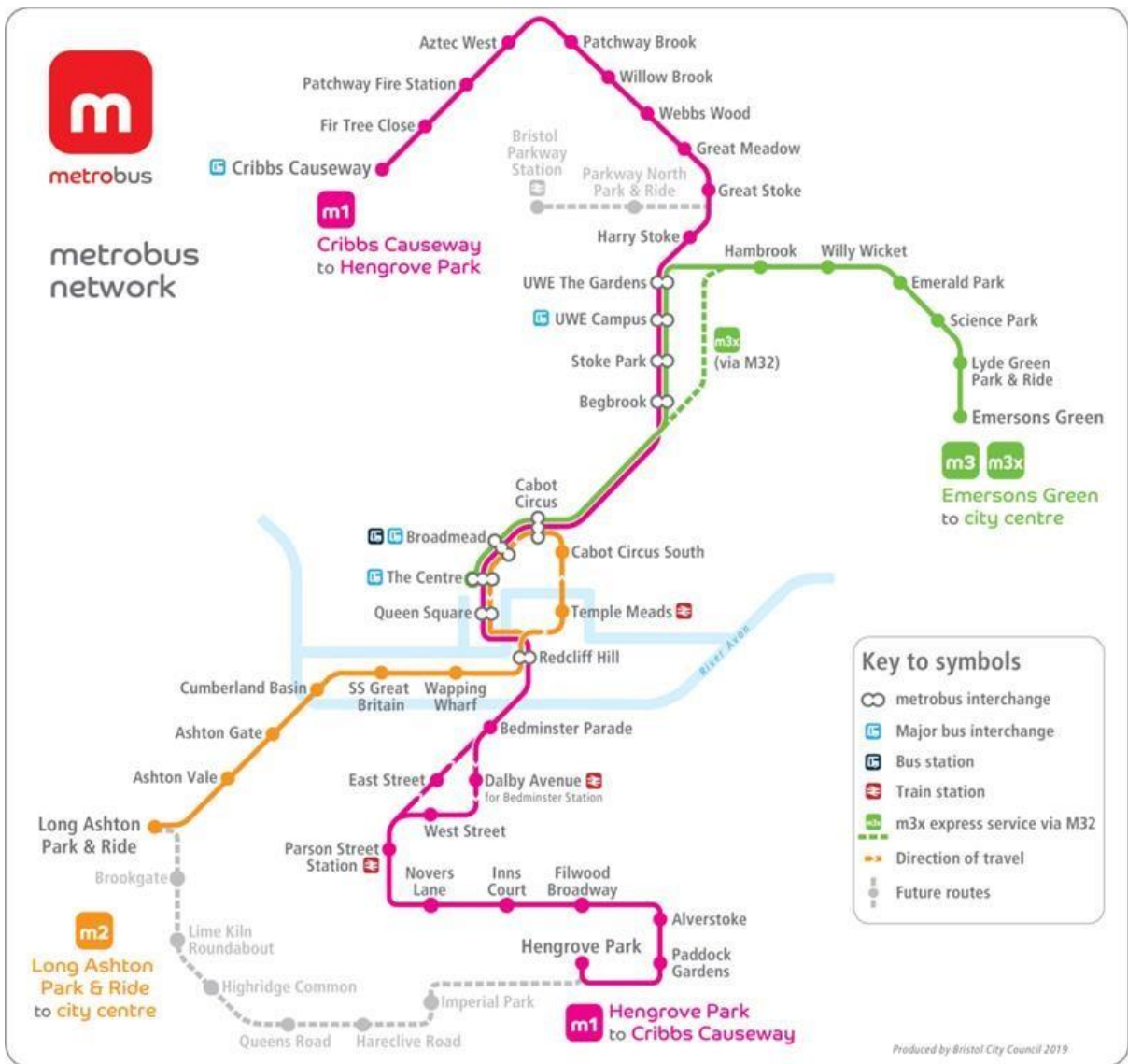
Punctuality

In 2017 less than 80% of bus services ran on time, with delays of up to 15-20 minutes, representing the worst performing Integrated Transport Authority in England, with some authorities having up to 90% of services on time.

metrobus

metrobus is a high-quality Bus Rapid Transit network of four limited-stop routes focused on Bristol city centre, covering over 50 km of route mileage. It features bus lanes and segregated busways, 90 bus stops with high-profile shelters and iPoints (to sell tickets and give real-time information) and low-emission biomethane buses.

metrobus network 2019



Vehicle kilometres on local bus services

Million vehicle kilometres						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Bath & North East Somerset	10.7	11.2	11.4	9.1	8.7	6.9
Bristol	23.7	26.2	25.8	17.7	17.5	20.0
North Somerset	4.8	4.9	5.0	7.2	7.1	6.8
South Gloucestershire	6.3	5.4	5.5	7.7	8.0	8.6
Total	45.5	47.7	47.7	41.8	41.3	42.2

Source: DfT Public Service Vehicle Survey

Passenger journeys on local bus services

Prior to the onset of coronavirus, bus patronage in the West of England had been growing consistently over the past twenty years - in contrast to the trend across most of England. With the imposition of lockdown in March 2020, passenger numbers fell dramatically, rising and falling over the following eighteen months to reflect changes in the rules and the re-opening of the economy.

In September 2021, by which time virtually all sectors of the economy were functioning again, bus patronage had recovered to just 63% of its pre-Covid level.

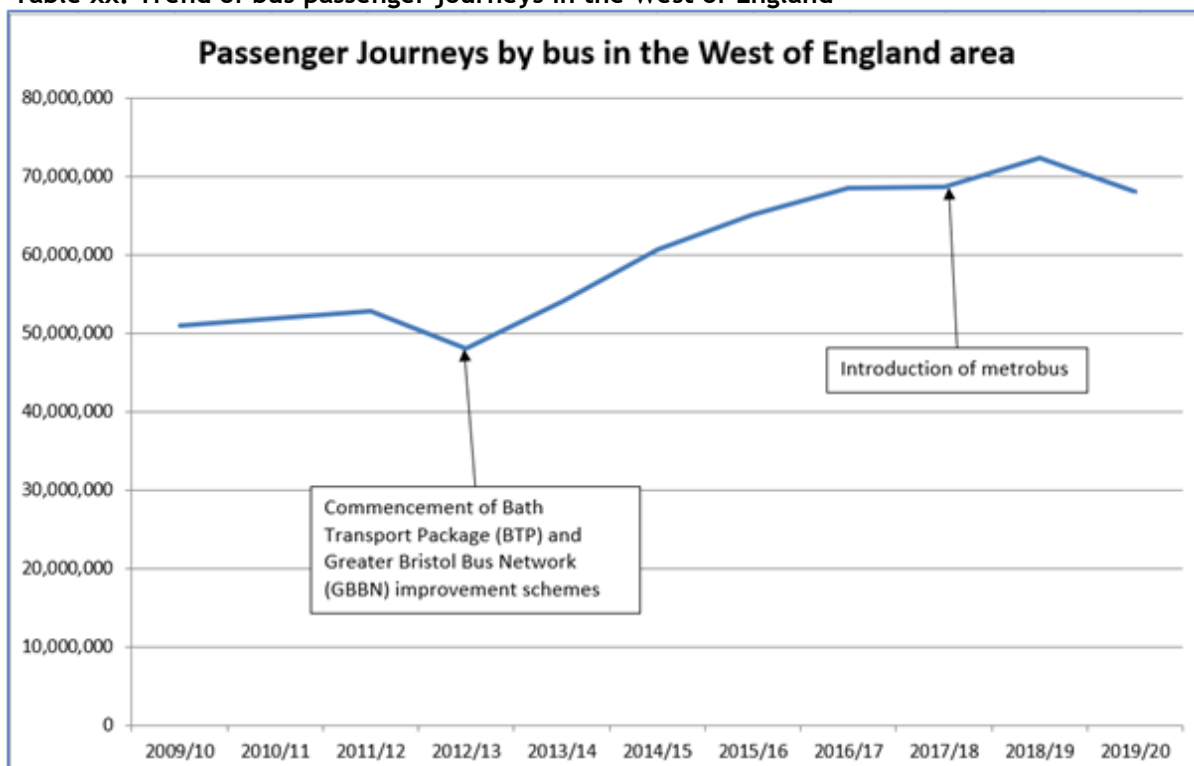
Prior to the onset of coronavirus in March 2020, there had been a consistent trend of growth in bus passenger journeys over the past 20 years, with one blip in 2012-13 which was attributed to a change in the way bus operators reported the figures.

Table xx: Passenger journeys on local bus services by local authority area (million)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Bath & North East Somerset	12.2	12.9	12.4	11.9	14.7	12.0
Bristol	32.7	35.7	39.1	38.4	42.8	40.3
North Somerset	5.7	6.0	7.7	7.6	5.5	5.3
South Gloucestershire	8.0	8.8	10.6	10.4	9.3	8.4
TOTAL	58.6	63.5	69.8	68.3	72.3	66.0

Source: Department for Transport statistics

Table xx: Trend of bus passenger journeys in the West of England



The number of bus journeys per head of population has increased steadily too, with Bristol and Bath & North East Somerset featuring in the Top 10 of places around the country outside London for that statistic in recent years. The region has had relatively high car ownership for many years.

There is still much scope to get more modal shift because our residents make less than 10% of commuter journeys by bus, despite 40% of such journeys being of less than 2 kilometres distance.

The coronavirus pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the local bus network. Demand for bus services had recovered to only 63% of its pre-Covid level by mid-September 2021, whereas bus operating mileage was over 90% of the pre-Covid level. General road traffic levels were back to their former levels.

Fares & ticketing

The average single bus fare in the West of England BSIP area is £1.79 and the average single passenger journey length is 5.76 km.

Table xx - Average bus fare per kilometre in the West of England BSIP area

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Vehicle kilometres	45,500,000	47,700,000	47,700,000	41,800,000	41,300,000	42,200,000
Passenger journeys	58,600,000	63,500,000	69,800,000	68,300,000	72,300,000	66,000,000
Average fare	£1.64	£1.67	£1.69	£1.71	£1.75	£1.79
Fare increase	3.54%	1.47%	1.24%	1.06%	2.23%	2.43%
Average fare per kilometre	28p	29p	29p	30p	30p	31p

Source: DfT Public Service Vehicle Survey

More text to be added here

Information

We currently have over 5,000 local bus stops within the West of England, and we would estimate that around 4,000 of these have some form of information provided. Our BSIP ambitions include the roll out of further displays at local bus stops, including digital and real-time displays.

Across the region, around 55% of local bus stops currently have a printed timetable display provided. Timetable displays are mainly used to give passengers the

RTI

At the beginning of 2021, the West of England region had over a thousand RTI displays at local bus stops and interchanges. Approximately 900 of the RTI displays at bus stops are equipped with an audio messaging function, which is particularly helpful for our visually impaired passengers. The current system uses key fobs to activate the audio announcements and relies on passengers being provided with a key fob in order to use the audio system

Live messaging is used at bus stop RTI displays to inform passengers of disruptions and changes. Depending on the importance of the information, we have the option of using the whole RTI display screen to display messages, or for minor disruptions and general information we can show a scrolling message along the bottom line of the display.

Traveline

Traveline South West is the dedicated bus information site that covers our region. Key components of the Traveline website include:

- Plan your Trip - journey planner for trips across Great Britain as a whole
- Get Departure Times - for next departures from bus stops using real time information

- My Regular Trip - a personal journey plan for regular trips
- Stop Timetables - list of departures from favourite stops
- Route Timetables - for viewing, downloading and printing individual timetables
- Route Maps - for viewing, downloading and printing individual route maps.
- Contact details for operators and authorities

Traveline also provide a SMS text message service to customers and this is promoted on our timetable displays at bus stops. Customers are able to use this service to access upcoming departure information from their bus stop, receiving the information via SMS text message.

The national Traveline service does provide an app, which replicates the services available from the website.

Travelwest

Travelwest was launched in 2012 to create a Travelwest central information resource for multiple travel modes for the West of England region. The website brings together information on all modes, as well as providing an information resource for our wider transport network and the work that we do.

Key components of the Travelwest website include:

- Multi-modal journey planner
- Live arrival times
- Routes and timetables
- Fares and Travelcards
- Travel updates / Disruptions to public transport
- Help centre

Operators' websites

ADD TEXT

Operators' apps

Many local bus operators have developed their own app, in addition to their own online websites and resources. Operator apps are popular amongst passengers where they are used as a platform for ticketing.

iPoints

Large totem displays, or 'iPoints', have been installed at various locations across the region to bring a range of information and services to passengers. iPoints are a key feature of bus stops on the metrobus network and have also been installed at key interchange points in town centres and at Bristol Airport.

On-board Information

Many bus services now have on-board RTI systems in the form of either LED or TFT displays. These displays can be used to provide useful information to passengers on the route, including letting

passengers know where they are on the journey by informing them of up-coming stops. Many buses are also now equipped with audio notifications, providing information to passengers such as next-stop announcements, as well as providing passenger safety information. In addition to digital screens, the vast majority of buses have static poster panels which can be used for information such as maps, service and fares information as well as any other messages for passengers.

Local bus fleet

The total fleet operating registered local services in the West of England comprises 1,159 buses, of which 695 are garaged within the BSIP area. The age profile is as follows:

Year	2021 Age	Totals	
2016-2021	0-5	261	22.50%
2011-2015	5-10	407	35.10%
2006-2010	10-15	313	27%
2001-2005	15-20	146	12.50%
1996-2000	20-25	14	1.20%
1991-1995	25-30	15	1.20%
1986-1990	30-35	1	0.08%
Unknown		2	0.17%
Total no. of buses		1159	

The fleet garaged within the BSIP area meets the following exhaust standards:

	Number of vehicles	%
Euro II	2	0.20
Euro III	39	5
Euro IV	159	22.9
Euro V	160	23.3
Euro VI	324	47
Hybrid	11	1.6
Ultra-low emission bus (ULEB)	0	0
Total	695	

Customer service

As an information provider we have multiple ways for the public to contact us. We have public postal and email addresses, social media accounts and telephone numbers. Ways to contact us are advertised across the bus network and online.

Current customer service channels / recompense

Bus user groups / customer panels / meet the manager sessions

LTA financial support for bus services

More than 90% of the local bus network (in terms of passenger journeys) was operated on a commercial basis prior to the pandemic. The West of England CA and North Somerset Council have 86 contractual arrangements for non-commercial bus services and contribute to the cost of 5 cross-boundary bus services. Together they spend £11.5 million per annum in financial support for local bus services.

Table xx - LTA support for non-commercial bus services in the BSIP area in 2021-22

	Core funding	Devolved BSOG	Developer contributions	Total
West of England CA	£9,979,304	inc	£810,340	£10,789,644
North Somerset Council	£682,000	inc	-	£682,000
TOTAL	£10,661,304	inc	£810,340	£11,471,644

A full list of the routes and route mileage supported is in Appendix 2.

Other factors that affect the use of local bus services

Parking provision

The introduction of Residents' Parking Schemes in Bath and Bristol in previous years has been one of the factors in the growth in bus passenger numbers.

Parking provision is split between public and private ownership, with most large, public car parks being located in Bath and Bristol city centres and Weston-super-Mare town centre. Charges are set to deter long-stay parking whilst still providing short-stay parking for shoppers and visitors.

In Bath city centre, there are 3,200 off-street public parking spaces - of which 2,200 are in local authority control - as well as 8,000 on-street spaces managed as Residents' Parking Zones (RPZs). In Bristol city centre, there are 9,000 off-street public parking spaces - of which 2,100 are in local authority control. In Weston-super-Mare, there are 4,500 off-street public parking spaces - of which around 3,000 are in local authority control.

All day parking in a public car park in Bath city centre is priced from £15, in Bristol city centre from £13.50 and in Weston-super-Mare town centre from £12.00 to deter all day parking by commuters.

Areas away from the major urban centres have greater private parking provision, which is less likely to feature charges to park. In particular, the Bristol North Fringe has 30,000 spaces provided by employers as well as significant retail parking provision including 7,000 spaces at The Mall regional shopping centre at Cribbs Causeway.

In small towns such as Portishead, Nailsea and Yate, free parking is provided for supermarket and other shopping for two or three hours.

The first RPZ in North Somerset is being introduced in Leigh Woods to complement the Clifton RPZ that was introduced in Bristol. Various location across Weston-super-Mare have been explored and the first schemes should be brought forward in the coming years. South Gloucestershire accommodates around 2,000 RPZ spaces.

Table xx: Annual spend on parking enforcement 2019-20

Bath & North East Somerset	??
Bristol	£6.5
North Somerset	£0.6
South Gloucestershire	£1.4
TOTAL	??

Bristol City Council issues between 50,000 and 60,000 PCNs for bus lane infringements per annum. South Gloucestershire issues around 23,000 PCNs for parking infringements per year, both by officer and via CCTV enforcement.

Bus lanes

All recent major public transport schemes in the West of England have included an increase in the number of bus lanes and other bus priority measures.

Table xx - Bus lane mileage in the BSIP area

	Bus Lane Mileage
Bath & North East Somerset	2.36
Bristol	21.19
North Somerset	2.43
South Gloucestershire	8.05
TOTAL	34.03

There is a funded programme in place already to increase the total bus lane mileage substantially and our BSIP includes an ambitious programme to take that further.

Views of passengers and stakeholders

Extensive public consultation was carried out on the West of England Bus Strategy in February/March 2020 and nearly 2,000 responses were received. The full consultation report is published at <https://travelwest.info/app/uploads/2020/02/Bus-Strategy-Consultation-Report.pdf>

Respondents were asked to rank the key themes in the order of priority. The top six were:

1. A well-designed network that is simple, coherent and efficient across the region;
2. Giving passengers more reliable and faster buses through priority infrastructure and wider policy;
3. Modern, clean and accessible buses that contribute to reducing transport's harmful emissions;
4. High quality, consistent and easily-understood information;
5. Simple, smart and convenient ticketing; and
6. Better services for people in rural areas.

More recently, passenger groups, MPs and the business sector were invited to give their views on the merits and demerits of the local bus network as part of the development of the BSIP. This exercise was carried out in July / August 2021 and 55 responses were received. A full summary of the feedback is in Appendix 3 but five priorities for improvement were identified by more than two-thirds of respondents:

- Improved punctuality;
- Cheaper fares;
- Better waiting facilities;
- More frequent services; and
- More public consultation on changes.

Transport Focus published "*Bus passengers' priorities for improvement*" in September 2020. They asked 5,000 bus users and 1,700 non-users across England (outside London) to give their priorities. The full document is available at https://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/09095433/TF-Bus-passenger-priorities-Sept_20-WEB.pdf

The top five priorities for bus users were:

1. Buses running more often than they do now;
2. Buses going to more places you want them to;
3. More buses arriving on time at your bus stop;
4. Better value for money from bus journeys;
5. More journeys on buses running to time.

The top five priorities for non-bus users were:

1. Buses going to more places people want them to;
2. Buses running more often than they do now;
3. Better value for money from bus journeys;
4. Bus stops closer to home/destination
5. More bus services running on time;

The National Highways and Transport annual survey gives the perceptions of residents on a range of issues, including bus punctuality and reliability, the state of bus stops and the frequency of services. The results in 2020 show that many people in our villages and rural areas are disappointed with the frequency of bus service. The minimum service standards we propose in the BSIP will address this issue. The level of dissatisfaction with bus stops is unacceptably high too, so we aim to invest in every bus stop in our area.

Future demand for bus services

In June / July 2021, the West of England CA commissioned independent research on two major sources of travel - to work and to shopping - to gather evidence on what businesses were expecting and planning. A representative range of employers across the region were asked about their intentions in bringing workers back to workplaces. Also, we sought to understand expectations among retail businesses - including the food and drink sector - for recovery in footfall. Responses were given by 129 retailers and 650 other businesses.

Employers reported that levels of attendance at the time of the survey were around 60% of pre-Covid levels. They expected this to rise to 85% within three months, but to remain 10-15% below pre-Covid levels after 12 months.

Many of the reasons cited for lower attendance were inherently temporary, including furlough and reduced capacity due to social distancing, which bolstered their confidence that a relatively swift recovery could be expected.

More home working will be a significant factor affecting long-term commuting levels. 11% of respondent employers were considering permanent, full time home working, and a further 24% were considering partial home working. This seems likely to weigh down on commuting levels over the next year.

Currently, office lettings remain subdued, but vacancies are considerably lower than the last peak in 2012, indicating that confidence remains in the office market.

Evidence from the retail sector also points to a relatively fast recovery. Retail and food and drink respondents were optimistic - 65% expected that footfall would reach pre-Covid levels or higher by January 2022. Furthermore, 78% expected the same or higher footfall by July 2022. Retailers themselves projected a more optimistic view than representatives of shopping centres.

In summary, the research suggested that travel volumes might recover strongly in the autumn, stabilising at roughly 10% lower than before the pandemic, owing to shifts to home working and in retail patterns.

Over the next two or three years, however, the consequences are less clear, because freed-up offices may allow new or expanding businesses to occupy the same space, bringing workers back to city centres. These adjustments will take time to emerge, as businesses form plans and await tenancy breaks.

Caution should be used in interpreting these results, and the greater risk is that demand will be lower than that it is higher. Many factors influence the expectations of businesses. Workers may be reluctant to return to commuting, and may be able to exert influence in a tight labour market. Also, the optimism of retailers may not be reflected in the behaviour of consumers who are now used to shopping online.

Section 3 - Headline targets

General approach

To assess delivery of the BSIP, we are setting targets for four measures:

- (i) Journey time
- (ii) Punctuality
- (iii) Passenger journeys
- (iv) Customer satisfaction

Each target will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART) and set for 2025 and 2030. Progress will be reported every 6 months, starting in April 2022.

Our targets are ambitious and directly linked to our BSIP measures to reduce car dependency and carbon emissions by promoting bus use. They build on our strong track record for successful delivery of major transport schemes.

Wherever possible, targets will be set for four geographical areas:

- (i) the whole BSIP area
- (ii) Bath urban area
- (iii) Bristol urban area
- (iv) Weston-super-Mare

Journey time

Working with bus operators, we will create a representative sample of bus journey times for each area, taken from the registered timetables. The sample will be checked every six months to report on any changes to journey times.

Prior to the pandemic, the average bus speed across the West of England remained around 8 mph during peak periods, despite the delivery of substantial bus priority measures over the previous two decades.

The extension of bus priority measures will ensure that buses have an advantage over private cars where road space is limited, and our initiatives on fares and ticketing will speed up boarding times.

Our headline target is to reduce average bus journey times on designated corridors by 20% by 2030.

The West of England is at a key point in England's Strategic Route Network. Incidents on the M4 and M5 can lead to major disruption in Bristol city centre and on its radial routes, having a disproportionate impact on bus services. We will work with National Highways to improve the monitoring of the motorway network across the area and their diversion arrangements.

Punctuality

Punctuality is defined as percentage of buses running no more than one minute early or six minutes late at the start of their journey and at intermediate points. On frequent services, it is

the excess waiting time. A frequent service is defined as one with at least 6 buses per hour operating at maximum intervals of 15 minutes between any two departures.

As now, punctuality will be measured by schedule adherence reports from our real-time information system, which covers roughly 90% of bus operating mileage in the area and which will be expanded to cover 100% of mileage. The West of England CA and North Somerset Council will continue to report separate figures for their own areas to the Department for Transport, for National Indicator 178.

In 2019, 80% of bus journeys started on time. Our target is to increase this to 95% by 2030, facilitated by bus lane infrastructure and improved enforcement.

We do not measure punctuality at intermediate timing points currently, but we propose to do so to monitor progress of the BSIP. Our target is that 90% of buses will be on time (within the parameters above) at intermediate timing points by 2030.

Our target for excess waiting time will be 5 minutes by 2030.

A higher level of punctuality will reduce the need for recovery time in schedules and thus ease the pressure for space at terminals and city centre bus stops.

Single passenger journeys

As now, data to be supplied by bus operators, counting the number of passenger boardings within the relevant area, as recorded on electronic ticket machines. We will work with operators to create a representative sample for each of the reporting areas.

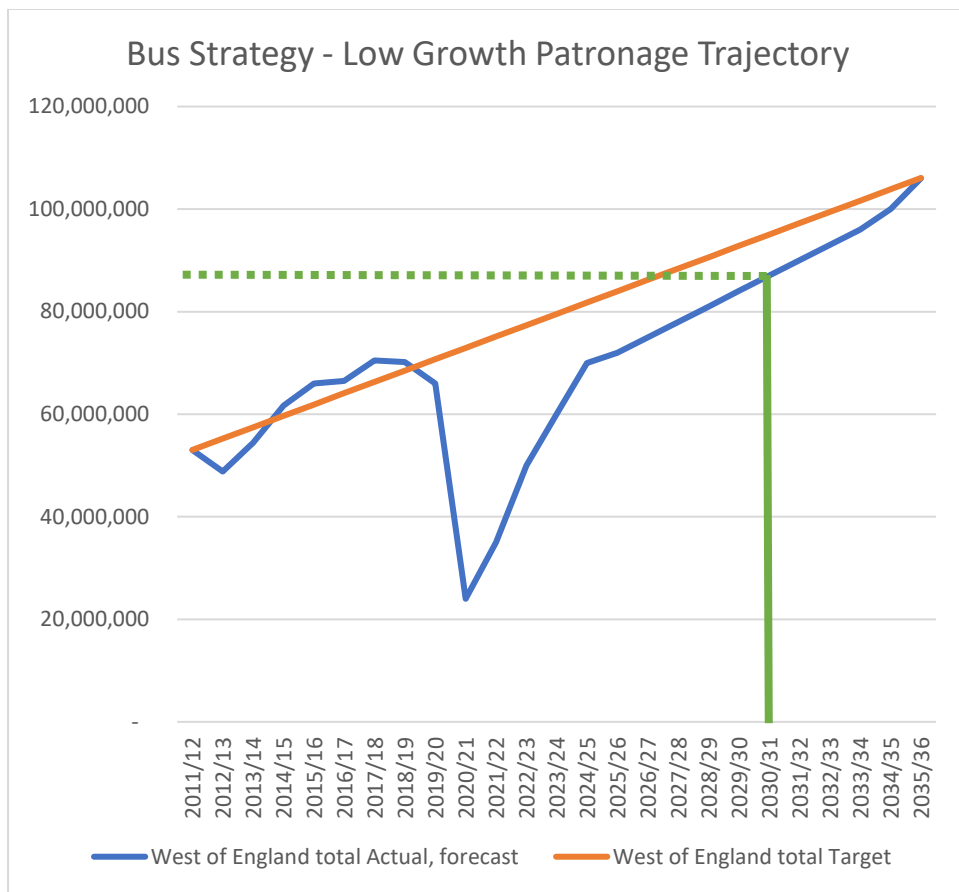
The West of England Bus Strategy includes a target to double bus passenger numbers by 2036 from a 2011 baseline. This target was based on trip forecasts arising from the West of England Joint Transport Study (October 2017), and prior to the onset of coronavirus we were on track to meet that target, amounting to 106 million single bus passenger journeys in 2036-37.

In line with the principles of the National Bus Strategy, our first priority will be to recover passenger numbers to pre-Covid levels. The lockdown is likely to have had a lasting impact on travel behaviour. There is anecdotal evidence of a growth in car dependency during the lockdown period, embedding a homeworking trend and a sustained reluctance on the part of some passengers to return to using the bus use.

We propose to set low and high growth scenarios for our single passenger journeys target, in recognition of the uncertainties faced by the bus market at present and in the absence of a confirmed level of funding from Government to deliver the BSIP. Both scenarios envisage passenger numbers returning to pre-Covid levels (70 million per year) by 2025. Further growth up to 2030 will be achieved by implementation of our BSIP, including an ambitious bus priority programme, enhanced bus service levels on a redesigned interchange-based network, fares reductions and simplified ticketing, more extensive information and complementary policy-based interventions.

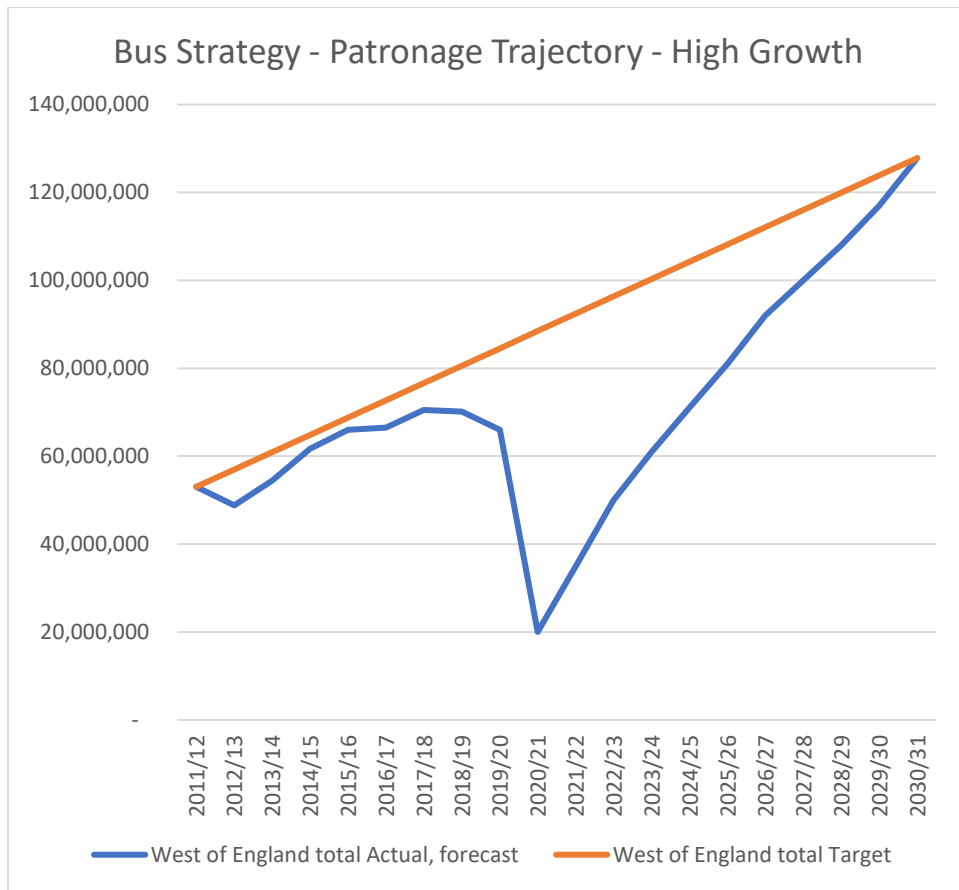
Low Growth Scenario

This envisages meeting the West of England Bus Strategy target by 2036 through accelerated growth in passenger numbers following a return to pre-Covid levels by 2025. To double baseline passenger trips by 2036, the 2030 target will therefore be 84 million passenger trips.



High Growth Scenario

The high growth scenario is linked to our aim for a carbon-neutral transport network by 2030. This envisages a halving in mode share for car-based commuting to around 30% by 2030 compared to 2011. This includes exceeding our pre-lockdown level by 2025-26 (81 million trips) and rapid bus passenger growth to 128 million by 2030-31. Such a level of growth will be dependent on the delivery of further policy interventions to reduce car dependency, which will be set out in our next Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP5). These are likely to include further restraint measures on car use including fiscal restraint, further parking restrictions and prioritisation of core corridors for movement of public transport, walking and cycling. Significant increases in mode share across all sustainable transport choices will be required (particularly for longer trips) and the reshaped bus network will have a key role to play in meeting this ambitious goal.



Passenger satisfaction

Data to be supplied from the annual Bus Passenger Survey (BPS) carried out by Transport Focus. We will seek advice from Transport Focus on the best method of obtaining additional survey data to enable us to report on progress every six months.

The most recent BPS (in 2019) confirmed that 86% of bus passengers in the West of England were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” overall, compared to an average of 89% across England (outside London). Our targets are 89% for 2025 and 95% for 2030 in recognition of the impact of the BSIP measures.

In addition to the BPS, we will monitor other surveys of bus users and non-users, including the NHT survey.

Section 4 - Delivery

Our high-level objectives

The LTAs and local bus operators agreed on seven high-level objectives for our BSIP - based on the aims and vision in the National Bus Strategy, the vision and objectives in the adopted West of England Bus Strategy, research by Transport Focus on passengers' needs and expectations, and the guidance on Bus Service Improvement Plans. Those objectives and their attributes (the features that our ideal network would have) are listed below.

We propose to bid for funding to achieve these high standards - although delivery will be contingent on the amount of funding awarded. Our strong track record of delivery makes us confident that, by working in partnership and with sufficient funding, we can deliver a local bus network by 2030 that has all the attributes listed below, meeting our objectives and fully aligned with the aims and vision in the National Bus Strategy.

Objective 1 - High mode share for buses of overall travel market

- Good access to bus services from all parts of the area
- Good access from bus network to passenger destinations
- Positive contribution to decarbonisation plans and air quality improvements
- Positive contribution to sustainable housing and employment growth
- Declining need for subsidy as market grows organically
- Ambitious targets and trajectory for modal share and bus patronage
- Robust civil enforcement of moving traffic offences, parking and traffic restrictions
- Extensive bus priorities - particularly on main urban routes - as continuous as possible and part of a whole-corridor approach
- Good co-ordination of road works

Objective 2 - High quality bus service

- Cohesive, comprehensive and simple route network including co-ordinated radial and orbital services in the Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare urban areas with easy interchange between them
- Standard all-day routes with evening and weekend services on urban and inter-urban routes
- Turn-up-and-go daytime frequencies and evening frequencies of at least 4 buses per hour on core urban routes (including orbital routes)
- Good frequencies on principal inter-urban corridors and in smaller urban areas
- 24/7 services - where appropriate - on core urban and principal inter-urban corridors
- Feeder services to interchange hubs to boost the frequency of connections from places away from main roads, connecting to the core bus routes with integrated ticketing
- Demand-responsive services to low-density areas where appropriate - possibly operated by community transport providers
- Basic minimum standard of accessibility to network from rural areas
- High standard of punctuality
- As far as possible, journey times comparable to or better than car travel
- Sufficient capacity to meet demand
- Provision of service to new developments at early stage, funded by developer contributions
- Regular service reviews but no more than two major change dates per year
- Good links to rail services, with buses connecting with first and last trains where appropriate
- Consistent, clear and distinctive branding for the whole public transport network, incorporating any strong local or route-specific brands
- Unique service numbers within the network (apart from urban services in Bristol, Bath and Weston-super-Mare) with no suffixes

Objective 3 - High quality waiting environment

- Bus stops, bus stations and interchanges to be accessible, safe and inclusive by design with good facilities
- High quality, branded interchanges at key locations, including rail stations
- Branded, distinctive shelters at all stops wherever practical (except alighting points) with high standard of cleanliness and maintenance
- Defined, paved waiting areas at urban stops and hardstandings at rural stops with cycle parking where possible
- Good pedestrian accessibility to adjacent residential areas and passenger destinations
Bus stations protected from closure and redevelopment

Objective 4 - High vehicle standards

- Progression to zero emissions through bids for Government funding when available, and Euro VI emission standard in the meantime
- High levels of cleanliness, comfort and security for passengers
- Full accessibility with ample areas for pushchairs and luggage in addition to the wheelchair space
- Dual-door vehicles on core urban corridors
- High level of mechanical reliability
- Audible and visible “Next stop” information
- WIFI and charging as standard
- All vehicles equipped with tap on /tap off readers

Objective 5 - High level of passenger satisfaction

- Bus Passenger Charter to set out what standards passengers can expect, including punctuality, vehicle cleanliness, accessibility, proportion of services operated and redress
- Public consultation on route and network changes
- One customer service contact point for whole network
- Measurement of passenger satisfaction to include value for money and provision of information
- Targets for punctuality and journey times

Objective 6 - High quality information

- Bus Information Strategy adopted and implemented
- Consistent, distinctive and readily-identifiable branding for the whole public transport network on all media
- Easy access to information via Travelwest website and app, including times, accessibility information, fares and live running
- Roadside timetable posters at all stops except alighting points
- Roadside displays in rural areas to show return bus times and basic fares information
- Timetable leaflets and comprehensive area booklets for whole network
- Printed and interactive maps for whole network and town/city plans for urban areas
- Maps at interchange stops and local centres, showing pedestrian routes and road crossing points to destinations
- Fares information - including multi-operator tickets - on Traveline
- Real-time information system to cover all operators’ services
- Targeted information on route and network changes
- Consistent naming of bus stops and interchanges
- Bus stops in urban areas to carry route number tiles
- Easy access to comprehensive information via website and app, covering all operators, including times, accessibility information, fares and live running;
- Full information on local bus services in railway stations
- Heavy promotion and marketing, including bus links to rail services and scenic routes
- Introductory offers to promote the network to non-users
- Continuous marketing and promotion of network and multi-operator tickets

Objective 7 - Low fares, simple ticketing and easy means of payment

- Low flat fares in Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare and other urban areas
- Lower point-to-point graduated fares outside urban areas
- Multi-operator ticketing as the norm - branded as part of the network branding
- Daily and weekly capping using tap on /tap off readers
- All operators equipped to take contactless payment, EMV ticketing and m-ticketing
- Contactless payment to be the norm but cash retained for the time being
- Integration of multi-operator bus ticket and multi-modal ticket into one family of tickets
- Simplified range of tickets but more flexible ticketing for part-time commuters
- Harmonisation of ticket zones, ticket types and conditions
- Reduction in fares for young people and standard discounts for children and students

Investment in public transport, cycling and walking will deliver immediate benefits to residents and visitors by making it easier to travel in and around the region:

- Bus services will be quicker, more reliable, and more frequent;
- Bus fares will be cheaper and and ticketing will be simpler;
- Bus operators will no longer have to shoulder the costs of traffic congestion;
- Cycling and walking will be safer, more convenient, and more pleasant.

Our Joint Local Transport Plan 4 set out the wider benefits to the local economy of a good public transport system.

CONSIDER SUMMARY TABLE HERE

To develop our BSIP, we divided the work into seven areas: services, vehicles, infrastructure, information & brand, policy, fares & ticketing, and customer service. Each of those areas is covered in turn below, with detailed policies and proposals. It should be noted that they are complementary and will all work together to enable us to achieve our objectives.

We have identified some “quick wins” which can be delivered by 2025, and these are highlighted.

4A Services

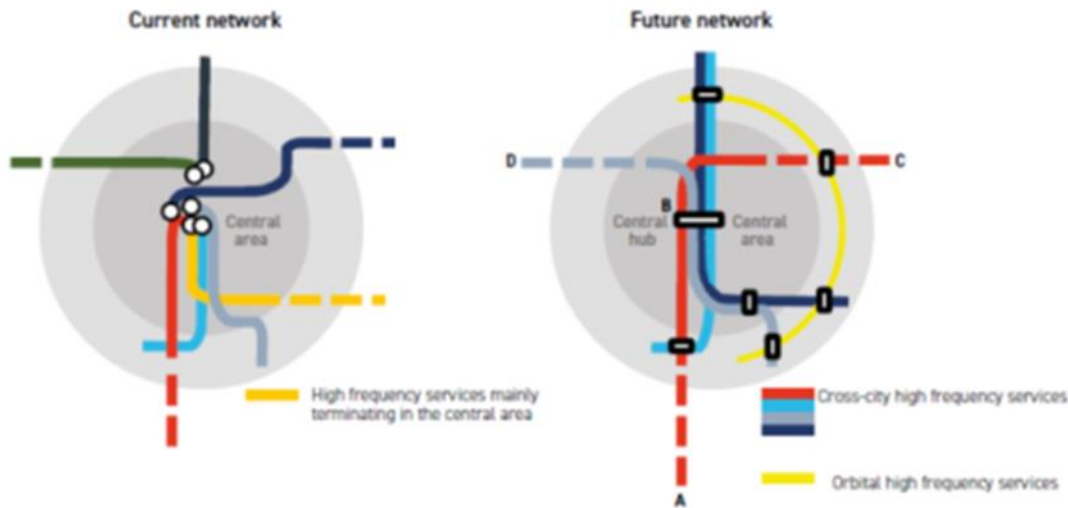
Intensive services and investment on key corridors, with routes that are easier to understand; more demand-responsive services and “socially necessary” transport

Future Bus Route Network

The West of England Bus Strategy looked closely at the effectiveness of the local bus network. It recommended the development of network that featured a fewer number of services overall but at higher frequencies. In the principal urban areas, cross-centre radial services would connect with orbital service at key interchange points and transport hubs.

Outside the principal urban areas, interchange hubs would be located on the inter-urban corridors, and rural bus services or local demand-responsive transport services would feed into those hubs to connect onto the inter-urban routes.

Example of current and future bus route network principles in central areas



Source: West of England Bus Strategy

More recently, the West of England CA and North Somerset Council have worked with local bus operators to review the current network - both commercial and supported - and identify gaps and opportunities.

Network design

Services will fall into one of these categories:

- Radial routes in urban areas and conurbations
- Orbital routes in conurbations
- Inter-conurbation and inter-urban routes
- Community bus routes (operated under Section 22 permits)
- Demand-responsive transport linking to Transport Hubs and other interchanges

We will ensure that all services link to key locations such as:

- Transport Hubs for interchange opportunities
- Rail stations
- Major hospitals
- Other health facilities
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Supermarkets and local shopping areas
- Leisure facilities
- Bristol Airport

Minimum frequencies

We propose a minimum of 12 buses per hour (bph) on principal radial corridors and a minimum of 4 bph on inter-urban routes. This would be achieved by adopting a principle of frequency appropriate to the population of each area (based on most recent published census results or estimates), as follows:

- Conurbations - population over 70,000:

- Radial routes (cross-centre) - minimum provision of 6 bph
- Orbital routes - minimum provision of 4 bph
- Inter-conurbation routes - minimum provision of 4 bph
- Large urban areas - population over 20,000 but under 70,000:
 - Radial routes - minimum provision of 4 bph
 - Inter urban routes: Minimum provision of 4 bph
- Small urban areas - population over 10,000 but under 20,000:

Minimum provision of 3 bph
- Large rural areas - population over 3,000 but under 10,000:

Minimum provision of 2 bph
- Medium rural areas - population over 500 but under 3,000:

Minimum provision of 1 bph
- Small rural areas - population under 500:

Provision of demand-responsive transport to Transport Hubs

Minimum provision will apply from 0700 to 1900 on Mondays to Saturdays. 50% of minimum provision will apply from 0600 to 0700 and from 1900 to 2400 on Mondays to Saturdays, and all day on Sundays and most Public Holidays.

Currently, 18% of bus services in the BSIP area meet the proposed frequencies - predominately in the urban areas. Full implementation of the network design principles will increase the number of residents living within 400 metres walking distance of a bus stop from 560,000 to 721,340 (a 29% increase)

Transport to school

As part of the network review, we want to ensure that we provide bus services which young people can use to get to schools, colleges and universities. This will build confidence in using the bus network to make it more likely that they will use bus services in holidays and at the weekends. The location of some schools - in relation to where their pupils live - can create difficulties in providing buses at affordable fares.

We will carry out a review of transport to school for young people who do not qualify for free home-to-school transport by January 2022 and make recommendations on policy.

Bus Depots

For us to meet the above minimum frequencies we are aware that more vehicle resource will be required. At present depot space is at a premium in the region with limited ability for new operators to come into the area. Due to this we will be carrying out a review of bus depots in the region with local bus operators and looking for ways that we can overcome this.

Opportunities

Development of metrobus rapid transit. We are keen to build on the success of metrobus in the region and recognise the Government's aspiration for increasing bus rapid transit in the National Bus Strategy.

The next phase of metrobus corridors have been selected to enable almost complete segregation from general traffic and ensure that services are quick, frequent and reliable and a step change from existing provision. This also includes enhancements to the existing metrobus routes. These corridors will form the backbone of the overall network and make interchange in the city centre a more realistic option, delivering a key component of the West of England Bus Strategy. In turn this will make more efficient use of available kerb space and reduce delays and journey times, whilst also providing a more integrated solution for onward travel across all bus services in the region.

The approach also enables enhanced interchange opportunities at key multi-modal transport hubs. The key hubs will be centred around existing and proposed P&R sites, although we will also deliver hubs on different scales at key interchange locations. These hubs will provide opportunities for first and last mile transport connections through micro-mobility options as well as other facilities to encourage mode shift away from the private car and ensure that interchange is pleasant and attractive - allowing for cafés, waiting areas etc where space permits. More reliable, frequent services mean that interchanging also becomes a realistic option for rural and feeder services. The additional passenger capacity created by the metrobus standard corridor routes provides the opportunity to secure other benefits through an Enhanced Partnership, in line with the Bus Service Improvement Plan. This should see an improved bus offer, not only on these routes, but also on the wider network of connecting services, including multi-operator, contactless ticketing, more comprehensive bus service information and capped, better-value fares.

As previously highlighted three quarters of the West of England- area are regarded as rural and the high levels of congestion within Bristol provide opportunities to develop alternatives for those residents who are driving into the urban areas of Bath and Bristol for employment, education, health or leisure purposes.

The Chew Valley in the South West of the West of England area is particularly poorly served by public transport. The results of a recent survey by the Chew Valley Area Forum Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group on public transport provision in the Chew Valley concluded that people would be more willing to travel by bus if there was an app based planning booking and tracking service and a cross valley shuttle service connecting the villages with the A37 & A38.

In Filwood Park, Hengrove Way (A41740) there are three large housing developments planned which will supply a mix of council, shared ownership and private accommodation. Currently this route is only served by the Airport Flyer which provides an hourly bus service between Bath and Bristol Airport. There is potential to grow a bus service that links the communities of Bedminster, Knowle West, Filwood, Hengrove and Knowle with employment and retail opportunities.

Charlton Hayes and Patchway New neighbourhood developments are new build homes built by various developers. There's a recent new bypass, Hayes Way, linking the A38 with the Mall at Cribbs Causeway. There are many major local employers in the area, including Rolls Royce, Royal Mail, Airbus, BAE and the MoD at Abbeywood. Aztec West Business Park, home to over 100 companies, is also nearby. A number of services currently serve Charlton Hayes includes metrobus. A new Cribbs Patchway metrobus extension will provide a direct route between Parkway Railway Station and Cribbs Causeway via the Patchway New neighbourhood.

Congestion on main Eastern corridor into the city making progress slow on a bus
Lack of routes from East to South - though without going into city centre, there are geographical constraints (Avon valley etc)

Operator Engagement

We have held several meetings with local bus operators to discuss the above proposals and get feedback from the local operators.

Minimum Frequency

Generally supportive of the minimum frequency approach, discussions around pump priming being needed on services where frequencies will be increased. We need to ensure that there will be enough driver resource to cover the enhanced frequency, at present all operators in the region are experiencing staffing shortages.

Network Design

Generally supportive of our approach of radial services with orbital/demand responsive services linking in. Feedback from operators is that we need to ensure that the interchange between services is seamless and passengers are not disadvantaged by changing buses.

Cost of operating proposed bus network

As part of our review of the bus network we have worked with Arup to help us cost the operation of this network. We have looked at this using the above principles and believe that the network will cost the below figures to operate.

Cost of operating full network across the region: £xm

X number of services to be operated on a commercial basis

X number of services to require funding on a short term basis to make them commercially viable in the long-term: £xm

X number of service to be fully supported by the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council: £xm

Cost of operating 1 bus 7-7 Mon-Sat £150k

Cost of operating 1 bus 7-midnight Mon-Sat £200k

Cost of operating 1 bus Sundays £100k

4B Vehicles

Modern buses and decarbonisation

Quick Wins

- All vehicles to have Audio Visual technology to provide Next Stop information by April 2023 (subject to funding)
- Consultation with bus users and stakeholders on future vehicle design through the EP Advisory Board from April 2022 onwards
- All local buses to meet Euro VI emission standard by April 2023
- Installation of up to 20 ultra-fast EV rapid chargers at key interchanges, Park & Ride sites and layover points during 2023-24
- Collaboration with all local operators to develop a plan to reach our 2030 target for a zero-emission fleet, to be completed by April 2023

Introduction

The West of England welcomes the level of ambition for consistently high standards of passenger friendly Ultra Low emission Buses (ULEB) set out in the National Bus Strategy, and our consultation with users and operators reflects the importance of the bus itself with the environmental impact being the 4th highest priority issue.

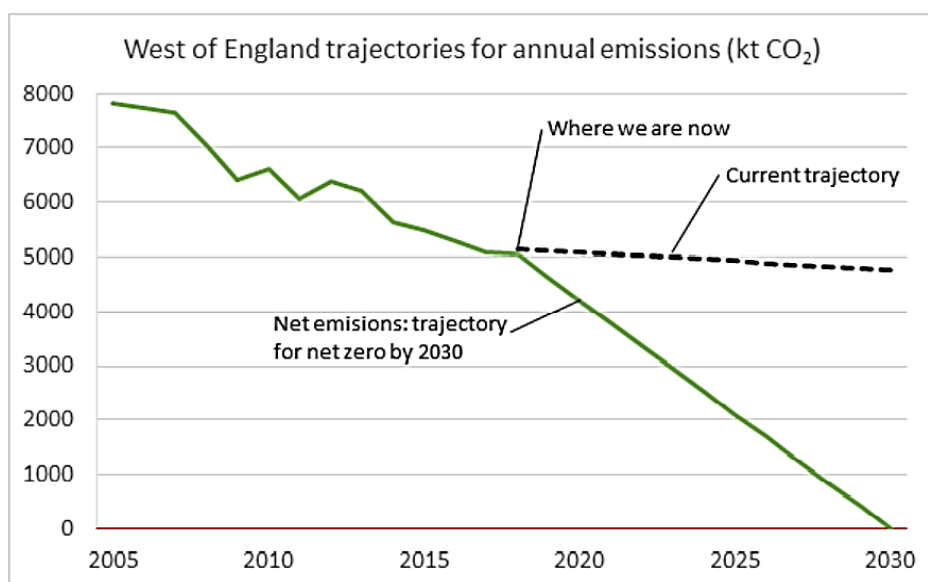
To meet our BSIP objectives, we propose:

- High levels of cleanliness, comfort and security for passengers;
- Full accessibility with ample areas for pushchairs and luggage in addition to wheelchair space;

- More capacity to carry bikes where demand is identified;
- Audible and visible information in addition to mobile charging;
- Consideration to the type of and design of vehicles for each corridor - to ensure efficient and effective boarding and alighting to reduce dwell and overall journey times
- An Ultra-Low or Zero Emission Bus fleet with a 50% reduction in the level of net WtW emissions by 2030.

This will be a considerable challenge that will take significant investment, co-operation and meticulous planning over the next decade to ensure that the buses remain cost effective and efficient, whilst ensuring people keep their faith in low emission technology and its pivotal role in tackling climate change and improving public health.

The West of England Combined Authority, its constituent councils, and North Somerset Council have all declared a climate emergency and pledged to reduce emissions to net zero carbon by 2030. The consequences are illustrated in this table:



To meet our carbon reduction goal by 2030, emissions must fall by 18% every year.

Transition to a zero-emission fleet

One third of the local bus fleet is due for imminent replacement and this offers the opportunity to introduce the first ULEBs in the next five years, complementing the biomethane and hybrid vehicles already operating.

Two of bus rapid transit services (metrobus) have an entirely biomethane fleet significantly reducing the WtW carbon emissions. The fuel is produced locally at a waste anaerobic digestion plant in Avonmouth.

The two largest local operators - First Bus and Stagecoach - have already made commitments to convert their entire fleets (comprising 546 and 63 vehicles respectively) to zero-emission vehicles by 2035. Our target is to bring that date forward to 2030 and to cover all local operators. Two-thirds of local operators agree that progression to a green fleet is a high priority.

Much of the recent investment in the local bus fleet has been driven by the need to make rapid improvements to air quality - most notably the city centres of Bath and Bristol. A Clean Air Zone (CAZ) came into effect in Bath in March 2021 and one is in development for Bristol - with a target

date of Summer 2022. Both CAZs set a minimum requirement of Euro VI emission standard for buses.

We have a good track record of working with bus operators to support trials of emerging technologies (such as hybrids on Bath Park & Ride and geo-fenced EV hybrids in Bristol), but there are no non-hybrid, zero emission at tailpipe vehicles operating in the area at present. The reasons given by operators are:

- (i) the difficult operating terrain
- (ii) the limited range of alternative fuels
- (iii) restrictions on the depot space for the necessary infrastructure.

Recent developments in these areas have opened up the possibility of EV or hydrogen to power the fleet in the future.

By April 2023, we will collaborate with operators to produce a plan that will form part of a future update of the BSIP to set out a road to Ultra Low Emission Buses by 2030. It will set out the WtW carbon impact of the current fleet and project future trends. Targets will be added to our BSIP targets and progress will be reported every 6 months. We will bid for £150k to develop proposals and engage industry expertise as needed.

We will seek commitments from operators in our EP on transition of bus fleets to ULEB to achieve our target of halving WtW carbon emissions by 2030. The estimated cost will be £350 million at current market prices for EV buses and approximate costs for the depot infrastructure. This assumes a full fleet cycle over the next two decades, reflecting a normal bus service life of twenty years.

In collaboration with operators, we propose to pilot EV vehicles on two or more key corridors during 2022-23, using a range of demonstration vehicles.

We propose to establish a local Zebra scheme to offset the cost of buying and deploying up to 100 Ultra Low Emission Buses, compared to the equivalent Euro VI diesel by 2026. This project is scalable and subject to funding. The aim is to deploy 75 double-deck vehicles and 25 single-deck. Both hydrogen and electric would be explored as part of this proposal, and it would form part of the decarbonisation plan we propose to agree with operators. The anticipated costs are up to £160k contribution towards each vehicle and up to £50k towards the infrastructure to support them. The total funding needed is £21 million.

We propose to install up to 20 Ultra-fast 500 amp EV charge points for buses at key interchanges, Park & Ride sites and layover points - subject to site surveys and funding. This will be an ambitious project - but necessary for our area because the local topography will place high demands on full EV buses. The ability to rapid charge during layovers will unlock the potential of the vehicles and reduce the overall fleet size required. The common standard to be installed is a minimum of 150 amp chargers up to dual 500 amp ultra-chargers. These will be targeted to major interchanges and high frequency corridors during 2023-24 to create our first Ultra Low Emission Bus corridors, and the introduction of up to 100 ULEBs by 2026. The funding required to deliver this will be £2 million.

To achieve emissions reductions in the medium term, we want to get all local buses up to Euro VI or equivalent by retrofitting. There may be specific exemptions if appropriate. Our target date is April 2023. The cost of a retrofit is roughly £20,100 per vehicle and some work is in progress already to meet the requirements of the Bristol CAZ. We will carry out a fleet review with all operators to any additional vehicles that require retrofitting.

The total estimated cost is **TBC**

Accessible and high-quality vehicles

Locally, our metrobus network has set a benchmark for vehicle quality that we aim to develop through our BSIP. Currently, metrobus vehicles represent roughly 20% of the local fleet.

The metrobus vehicle specification includes dual doors to improve passenger flow and reduce bus stop dwell times, spacious entrances, low floors, wide corridors, more leg room, audio and visual information and USB charging ports. We recognise that the operation of dual-door vehicles is only suitable for high-intensity urban routes and may require changes to the layout of some bus stops.

We will agree minimum standards for cleaning of vehicles and include commitments by operators to those standards in our EP, to take effect from April 2022.

We will look for opportunities to trial the carriage of bicycles on suitably-equipped buses in rural areas.

metrobus vehicles – interior view (left) and exterior view using a guideway (right)



Audio / Visual information and WiFi

We see this as a potential quick win. Currently, 30% of the local bus fleet is equipped to give audio-visual (AV) information. We want to equip all operator's vehicles to provide audio-visual Next Stop information. Subject to the award of funding, 90% of buses could be fitted by October 2022 and 100% by October 2023 at an estimated cost of £1,786.044 (including installation and initial programming).

All permanent new or replacement vehicles on operating on local bus services will be fitted with AV equipment prior to entering service. We will seek this commitment from operators in the EP from April 2022.

4C Infrastructure

A significant increase in bus priority; interchanges; service patterns integrated with other modes

Corridor Programme

Working with bus operators, we have identified routes and corridors where journey speeds and punctuality are poor. We have developed a programme to address the problems and give priority

to buses and sustainable transport modes in the allocation of road space. The corridors are based on the main bus corridors and Key Route Network. Project delivery has been split into three phases and work has started using local funding for scheme development.

We have categorised corridors into three types:

City Corridors:

- Bristol City Centre - changes to create priority access for the routes set out below
- A4 Portway - expansion of existing Park & Ride site to incorporate links to the new rail station and change to a Transport Hub
- A370 - improved connections to the existing Long Ashton Park & Ride site and along Cumberland Road
- M32 - new Transport Hub and changes to the corridor
- A4 Bristol to Bath - segregated route between our two main cities with a new Transport Hub at Hicks Gate
- Bath City Centre - changes to create better access for all routes, especially the A4.

There are opportunities for quick delivery through large infrastructure changes on key corridors connecting to a ring of Transport Hubs on the urban fringe. This will include changes to central Bath and Bristol and full separation or prioritisation for buses.

Town Corridors:

- A38 - connections from Thornbury to the Bristol North Fringe, Cribbs Causeway and M32
- A432 - connections from Yate to the M32
- A37 / A367 - improving access from the Somer Valley area into Bath and Bristol
- A37 / A4018 ensuring good connections between central Bristol and key residential, employment and retail developments in the south and north of the city
- A370 - direct connections from Weston-super-Mare to Long Ashton P&R site
- A38 - connections from Weston-super-Mare via Bristol Airport to a new Transport Hub in south west Bristol.
- A369 - connecting Portishead into Bristol
- A4174 - building on our metrobus scheme to provide improved orbital connections
- A420 - creating links to the east of Bristol
- A431 - connecting east Bristol to central Bath
- A4 - London Road (Bath) will provide improved connections between east of Bath and Wiltshire
- A36 - improved connections from west of Bath via the city centre into Wiltshire
- A432 to build on the work from Yate to complete the connection from the A4174 into central Bristol
- A38 - completing connections from central Bristol to the south and north
- Clevedon urban area - with a focus on bus stops and the waiting environment
- Nailsea and Backwell urban area - with a focus on connections to and between the two towns to the rail station
- Weston-super-Mare urban area - expansion of the newly completed Town Centre Public Transport Interchange
- Yatton High Street - to provide improved bus time journeys through the centre to provide a better connection between the A370 and Clevedon.

The overall aim is to provide as much full segregation / prioritisation on inter-urban corridors as possible, recognising that this is not always possible or required in smaller towns.

Rural & Suburban Corridors:

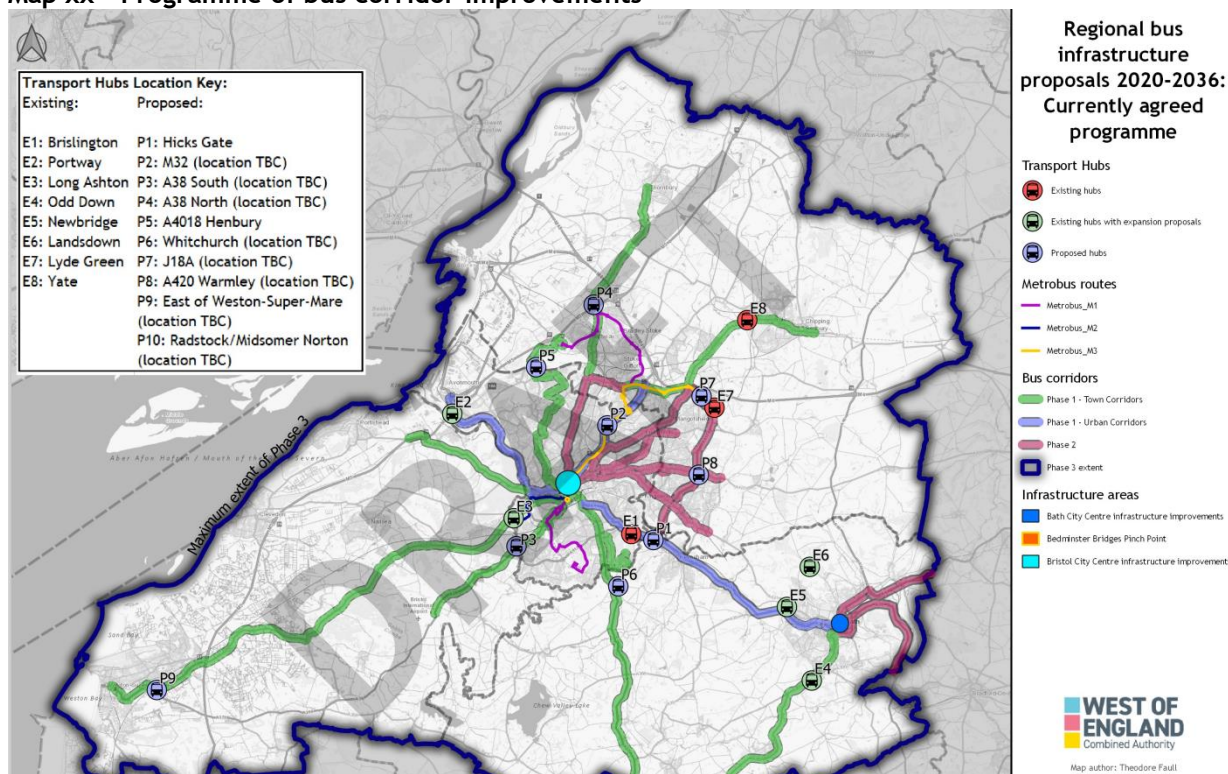
We will focus on connections into the key routes and ensure that all users benefit from access to the same level of service as those on the main corridors.

Across all the corridors, investment will be targeted to improve integration and connectivity between different modes, making interchange between radial and orbital corridors a realistic option. Our metrobus corridors will form the backbone of the overall network.

Measures on each corridor will be tailored to address the specific problems and normal engagement will take place with the community. The specific types of schemes being developed include:

- Delivery of bus infrastructure (including in rural and suburban areas), including bus gates, continuous bus lanes, real time information, improved bus stops, integrated ticketing and prioritised junctions;
- Improved walking and cycling, including segregation and quiet streets with junction changes to provide safer cycling;
- Transport Hubs to provide better interchange between bus services and different modes, including consideration of Park & Ride services;
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (or Liveable Neighbourhoods) to mitigate the impact of changes to the main corridors and provide safer walking and cycling routes to the main corridor.

Map xx - Programme of bus corridor improvements



Bus stop standards and Transport Hubs

We are currently reviewing our bus stop standards to ensure that we deliver standardised infrastructure across the region to improve the customer experience. This will include a standard approach to service information, as well as improving accessibility and comfort when waiting at the stops. These stops will form a core part of the delivery of Transport Hubs. We are working closely with the Future Transport Zones project team to set up a scaleable model of how they can be delivered at key interchange locations and providing the opportunity to, not only interchange better between bus services, but also between different modes. The scale of the hubs will range

from traditional edge of urban area Park & Ride sites to urban areas where onward journey options can be improved.

Bio-diversity will play a key role in all of the infrastructure that we deliver. We will ensure that we mitigate the impacts of any new infrastructure through green infrastructure. There are already good examples around the region where we have delivered these improvements alongside infrastructure changes, including delivering enhanced bio-diversity alongside sustainable urban drainage systems.

Roadworks co-ordination

We are working closely with the Unitary Authorities to provide a better aligned approach to the co-ordination of roadworks. This is required for the following reasons:

- Ensure better up front information to ensure that bus operators can adapt to live roadworks
- Co-ordinate on site works through scheme development to minimise the impact on all road users
- Work with contractors, highway authorities and bus operators to provide priority for bus operators through roadworks as changes to the network occur

Targets

Our SMART objectives prioritise sustainable transport, broad accessibility, and improved air quality. The objectives are a recognition that the region's success depends on ensuring everyone has equal access to safe, zero-carbon, high-quality transport. By 2030 we aim to:

- Deliver 100 additional miles of dedicated bus priority along our transport corridors.
- Provide simple, integrated ticketing and real time travel information, as people move between different forms of transport under a common brand.
- Make walking and cycling more attractive forms of travel, which includes building 100 miles of new segregated infrastructure linking to our priority corridors.
- Open four new Transport Hub sites and upgrade three existing locations to make it easier to interchange between car, public transport, walking and cycling.

These measures will act to:

- Reduce car use by 25% with a 15% net reduction in private car journeys at peak times.
- Secure our region's future with a 30% gross reduction in transport carbon emissions by 2027, measured by the 2021 baseline, leading to a carbon net zero by 2030.
- Clean our air through an effective monitoring regime to measure the impact of existing Clean Air Zones and applying the necessary measures to ensure we make a difference.
- Achieve legal air quality across the region by 2025, measured by the requirements in EU Directive 2008/50/EC.

4D Information & brand

A single system that works together, with clear passenger information

To support our aim of presenting the bus network as one, simple and easy to use system, we will aim to improve the quality, accessibility and availability of information for bus passengers. We will also embark on a new approach to promoting bus travel as a mode of choice through a long-term marketing campaign, alongside the implementation of new measures to engage with passengers and give them a bigger say in how our network operates.

We believe that providing bus passenger information in a way that suits the customer needs will not only help passengers who currently use the bus, but will also help to attract new passengers, which in turn will increase the viability of services and help to grow the network.

Frequent service changes during the pandemic has highlighted the difficulties that an unstable network creates, including an inability to keep information up-to-date, confusion amongst passengers and a lack of confidence in services.

QUICK WINS:

Could be delivered in 2022-23:

- New Bus Information Strategy published
- New digital-connectivity display provided at every bus stop
- New brand identity for the local bus network, with materials pushed out to passengers, on-bus liveries, online and at local bus stops
- Launch of a new marketing campaign to get people back on to the bus
- New Travel Guides for the whole region, including town maps for key areas
- Bus Passenger Charter prepared and published

Bus Information Strategy

Early in 2022, a new Bus Information Strategy for the West of England will be adopted and published. Aligned with our BSIP, this will be a joint strategy between North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority and will set out in detail our approach to delivering bus passenger information.

Change dates

Prior to the pandemic, we had a voluntary agreement with bus operators to limit service changes to fixed dates every year. We propose to enshrine that agreement in our EP and focus on two dates per year - in April and in late August/early September - for major changes. Other changes will be minimal - to align bus services with schools, universities and rail timetable changes, as necessary.

Roadside information

The information we currently provide at local bus stops largely comprises a mix of timetable displays, summary route information, contact details and real-time information through our regional RTI system.

Information is not currently provided at all stops and the feedback from passengers in our recent public consultation is that information is important, particularly real-time information. We will therefore seek to ensure that every single bus stop within the region has an information point so that passengers can access up-to-date information about their services.

We will commit to reviewing all our information provision at local bus stops, providing additional display cases wherever possible. We will introduce a new 'smart' information plate at every one of our local bus stops, providing a standard set of digital information links, using QR codes and website short-links, to timetables and journey planning and other useful information for passengers. This will provide passengers will greater connectivity to digital information. This will

also be particularly useful in rural areas, where we will be able to use the smaller displays to create bespoke information for rural services.

- 500 new display cases at bus stops across the region
- 4,000+ new smart information plates (one for every local bus stop)

As well as additional display cases, for some bus shelters we will introduce new information and branding material through graphics printed onto adhesive vinyl. This can be a low-cost way to achieve high impact for branding and promotion at bus shelters.

Bus stop flags are another area where we will make improvements. We will look to roll out a newly designed bus stop flag at all bus stops to help deliver our new brand for the network. This will be a key tool that we will use to present the bus network as one single system. This process will also allow us to complete a refresh of the flags across the network, updating and then maintaining correct service numbers on all our flags.

Enhanced information on our displays

We have developed a standard layout for our roadside timetable displays to provide a common approach across the region. Our current displays include:

- Stop name, branding and contact information
- Traveline details, including SMS text service for next departures
- Departure times from the stop with route diagrams
- Links to Travelwest online services, including QR codes linking to RTI departures

Many of our stops have more than one display case, which enables us to show more information, such as network maps, interchange information and walking maps. As part of our BSIP ambitions we will expand the number of additional displays and we will develop new enhancements to our displays and offer more information to passengers as standard, including:

- Route maps for the services using the stop
- Network and interchange map displays
- Walking maps to show nearby destinations and attractions
- Ticket and fares information
- Bespoke information to complement the surrounding local transport network
- Marketing material to promote bus travel

Bespoke information would also be provided at key locations, in conjunction with our Future Transport Zone projects, providing information to compliment the local transport network. Information provision will be key at our Mobility Hubs and we will include multi-modal information, connected to our real-time system where possible, and with detailed mapping to show landmarks, tourist destinations and other wayfinding from local bus stops.

Digital timetable displays

We will trial the use of 'e-paper' displays in two of our interchange locations. These digital displays offer the potential to show passengers timetable information, route maps, ticket and fares information as well as a real-time information feed, all on one display panel, and kept up-to-date remotely and in real-time. The trials will test the technology and gain feedback from passengers ahead of potential further roll out.

Upgraded displays for rural areas

Passengers in rural areas have a greater need for information covering their whole journey. This is particularly true for passengers that rely on infrequent services. We will therefore improve the design and layout for roadside timetable displays in rural areas, providing more helpful information for passengers that are using infrequent, rural services. One area of feedback from passengers in this regard is the need for return journey information and we will look to include this within the redesign for rural displays.

Bus stop maintenance

Bus stop infrastructure has to be well-maintained to offer a welcoming environment and to enable us to show high-quality information.

We will review the current arrangements with our highway authorities and consider the creation of a new centralised team, with quicker response times for the maintenance of bus stop infrastructure. This will enable us to create common standard across the West of England.

Real time information (RTI)

Our recent public consultation exercise for the Bus Strategy highlighted that passengers are very keen to see more real-time information at bus stops and across the bus network. RTI is now a common sight within the bus network in the West of England and we have ambitions to do more with our network of RTI displays, providing live predictions for all of our bus services and connecting more with passengers through more live network updates.

We will roll out new full-colour digital displays for all central and interchange locations, cascading our older LED displays to other bus corridors. We will also roll out new digital interchange displays, creating digital ‘information hubs’ at key locations, working in partnership with local areas. These hub displays can also be used for additional local information such as mapping and other local travel information.

- 250 new full-colour in-shelter RTI units
- 30 new full-colour interchange displays, replacing our 12-line LED boards

Solar power connections can be used in certain locations, replacing the need for intrusive or expensive electricity supply connections. By adopting this we can bring RTI to more locations, particularly in rural areas.

- 30 new solar-powered digital displays for key locations in rural areas

We will also develop digital poster displays for both indoor locations such as bus stations and interchanges, and outdoor locations including bus stops. These poster displays can be highly effective, providing a mix of RTI, route maps, live network information and a range of useful content for passengers.

- 50 digital poster displays

We will also look to upgrade our bus stations to enhance the RTI and digital information displays, to create a modern system within our key bus stations. Upgrade packages will be developed for our two key bus stations within the region, with new RTI screens, digital posters and interchange displays, including audio announcement capabilities.

- Digital upgrade package for Bristol Bus Station
- Digital upgrade package for Bath Bus Station

Enhanced RTI functionality

To complement the roll out of new RTI displays and infrastructure across the network, we will develop several areas of our RTI system to improve the system and functionality, enabling us to bring more information to passengers.

Regular meetings will take place between the bus operators and the local authorities to identify areas for improvement. Through the proposed EP Advisory Forum, passengers and other stakeholders will also be able to put forward suggestions for how the system can be developed.

We will support all operators to get on to the system and make it a key requirement of local bus registrations within our area, ensuring that all services are shown on our RTI displays.

Enhancements to our RTI system will include:

- Live departure board URL links, including for cluster stops, for key locations to show RTI and public transport information on screens (delivered through our outreach project)
- Bespoke URL links created for individual passengers to access on mobile phones and in key business locations
- New RTI configurations to show targeted information based on the corridor, for example calibrating the mix of high and low frequency services on displays
- Bus and Rail departure times shown from appropriate stops, with rail departure times appropriately adjusted to allow for the walking distance to the rail station
- Upgrade to our colour display formats to show 'vias' and dynamic destinations
- Bus 'busy' status information added to the displays where available
- Live visual tracking of buses for the Travelwest website using our real time data
- Continued support for BODS delivery
- Electronic Bus Service Registrations rolled out as standard, improving the data processes and paving the way for further enhanced RTI functionality
- Retrofit to the REACT boards with dual REACT/Bluetooth boards, ensuring that people that currently use our visually impaired service can also use Bluetooth connectivity

Overall, our aim is that our network of RTI screens will be used far more as a tool to communicate 'live' with passengers at bus stops, informing them of any issues with local bus services and helping them in real time with their journey. We will review how the messaging function for the RTI screens is managed, to enable a 24/7 approach to be taken for posting messages to the screens.

Marketing and promotion

In addition to promotion and marketing within the traditional realms of the local bus network, we have ambitions to develop a new 'outreach' programme, promoting bus travel as a safe and sustainable mode of choice to key destinations throughout the region.

Our programme would involve direct engagement with local businesses and key attractions to develop bespoke ways of encouraging bus travel. This will encompass new notice boards, the distribution of information and promotions material, as well as discounted ticket offers and a range of marketing activity.

Marketing events, including face to face sessions and meet-the-team style Q&As can be very effective in developing new passengers, providing a better understanding of bus travel and helping both existing and new customers get the best from the network.

Our outreach programme will work across all sectors. In the first two years we would target the development of new links with:

- Supermarkets and shopping centres
- Leisure centres
- Key tourist attractions
- Universities and colleges
- Primary and secondary schools (alongside our current Active Travel work)
- Hospitals, doctor's surgeries and health centres
- Large employers
- New housing developments

A significant part of the early engagement would be with 'destination' organisations. However, we will also focus on developing the 'origin' of journeys and will develop ways of direct marketing for this as part of our new approach to marketing. This will include targeting key demographics where this would have greater impact.

As part of our ambition to grow bus patronage back to pre-pandemic levels and then beyond, we will develop a comprehensive and continuing marketing campaign, reaching out to new passengers as well as those that are yet to return to using the bus.

Our approach to marketing would include:

- A comprehensive and continuing marketing campaign to encourage bus travel
- Delivered in partnership, across all available platforms
- Fare promotions, including free introductory promotions
- Engagement with local businesses to create low cost ticket deals for employees
- Promotional information around the health benefits of 'active travel'
- Information sharing around our covid-safe measures

Comprehensive Travel Guides

Within the West of England area there have been several travel maps and guides produced throughout the years, completed by the respective local authorities. We propose to deliver and maintain a new single, comprehensive Public Transport Guide, covering the whole of the West of England.

The new guide will be available in a series of paper fold-out guides, but it will also form the backbone for a new interactive digital guide online to support journey planning. The interactive guide will allow people to plan their journey in full, with interactive elements including the ability for passengers to interrogate their local bus stop 'virtually' to gather and view live and up-to-date information.

The guide would be continuously updated, with the main updates coinciding with the two major networks changes each year.

The guide would be available online and the printed version would be distributed widely and would form a key part of our outreach and marketing programmes.

Alongside our comprehensive Public Transport Guide, we would also produce local area guides to promote key parts of the network. Recent examples of such guides include the Chew Valley Area Guide, which brought together information for all the rural services within the Chew Valley area into one place.

We will develop a range of local area guides and bespoke leaflets, both paper-based and digital, where this would present additional benefits to encouraging patronage.

Travelwest

Travelwest provides the region with a single source of transport information for a variety of travel modes. A key feature is the multi-modal journey planner, which sits alongside up-to-date information on walking, cycling, bus, ferry, taxis and other city transport services. The website also provides links to our RTI services and has live messaging for the network.

We will look to develop the website further with an enhancement package that will include:

- Fares information for our buses
- Multi-modal cost comparisons
- Direct marketing and information for passengers, including tailored push notifications
- Enhanced service information including statistics on journey times, space availability on the bus, live location data and other real-time information
- Ticket sales with an enhancement package for our Travelwest Travelcard, which carries some multi-operator tickets
- Online chat function as part of enhanced customer service offer

App Development

A high proportion of our bus passengers currently use a mobile phone app to access service information and to buy tickets. Many operators have developed an app, with the highest use in our region being the First Bus App, featuring mTickets.

As a first phase, we will support improvement and development of current apps that serve our passengers, bringing forward technology improvements and functionality that will help to grow our passenger market by making bus travel easier. We will support the enhancement of existing apps, where they have been developed for the whole network, including information for all services, and where they offer a point of sale for our regional multi-operator Rider tickets, the multi-modal Plus Bus and Freedom Travel Pass tickets.

As a second phase, we will support the development of a new Travelwest app, that will bring new functionality for the wider transport network beyond just the bus network. This will be a key tool in bringing our bus network improvements, delivered through our BSIP and Enhanced Partnership aspirations, together with our Future Transport Zone and other regional transport improvements.

Social media and communication activity

Alongside our traditional media and the information services that we will provide online and at local bus stop, we recognise the growing demand for passengers to engage with us through our social media channels.

We will enhance our social media activity, expanding on the activity currently undertaken through our Travelwest brand, and with additional marketing and information content on our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube channels. We will also develop a newsletter style approach to regular communication with passengers, building upon the current newsletter communications that we have established and made available via email subscription.

We have developed the ‘Travelwest Challenge’ and this is one of our key areas of successful engagement with businesses, communities and the public, raising the profile of sustainable travel. We will grow this further and use our combined marketing activity to reach new audiences with the challenge.

YouTube videos will allow us to create some simple “how to” videos. We will create these and develop some content that can be used as part of our marketing campaigns to debunk some of the negative myths around public transport, as well as helping to ease people back onto the bus network.

Brand identity

We have ambitions to develop a new and comprehensive brand for the local bus network in the West of England, a key part of our plans to present our bus network as one single system.

Our new brand will look to build upon and complement our existing successful brands, such as our flagship metrobus livery and our branded Park & Ride services. New designs will be created, with the aim of developing a connection between people and their bus service, giving passengers and local communities a greater sense of ownership.

Our new brand would cover everything, supporting our ambition to present the local network to passengers as one single system. The new brand would therefore extend to:

- Vehicles with a clear identity, and with a common reference to the BSIP enhancements
- Bus passenger information and publicity
- Real-time information and passenger notices
- Infrastructure, including our local bus stops
- Our tickets

Local Bus Service Registrations

We propose, subject to further investigation, to adopt the function for the registration of local bus services, which is currently carried out by the Traffic Commissioner. This proposal would be developed and implemented as part of our EP.

As part of our management of the local bus service registrations, we would look to introduce Electronic Bus Service Registrations (EBSR) as the standard. Bringing forward EBSR for all our local bus services would improve the data handling processes surrounding registrations, speeding up the process but also improving the quality of data within our information services.

BUDGET

Capital:

- New timetable cases and panels - £750,000 (two-year programme)
- New RTI infrastructure - £4,000,000 (six-year programme)
- Travelwest App development - £500,000 (two-year programme)
- **TOTAL - £5,250,000**

Revenue:

- Enhanced bus stop maintenance - £500,000 per annum (four-year programme - £2,000,000 total)
- RTI system upgrades - £200,000 (two-year programme)
- Information and Promotion - £200,000 per annum (four-year programme - £800,000 total) to include 1FTE staff resource.
- Vehicle brand development - £1,000,000 (two-year programme)
- Development of new regional Travel Guides - £100,000
- Development of new Town Maps - £200,000
- Development of a single customer contact point - £150,000 per annum (four-year programme - £600,000)
- Adoption of the Traffic Commissioner function for local bus service registrations - £100,000 per annum (initial four-year programme - £400,000) to include 1FTE and assumptions on fees income
- Preparation and delivery of the Bus Passenger Charter - £25,000 per annum (initial four-year programme - £100,000)

TOTAL - £5,400,000

4E Long-term aspirations and policy

A long-term transformation of networks

The JLTP4 notes that:

“To influence the demand of drivers on the transport network who have alternative ways to travel, there is a need to consider the implementation of demand management measures, which will be determined by the appropriate authority. Measures to influence demand could include:

- *Management of parking provision, such as increasing or introducing charging, and waiting restrictions...*
- *...Workplace Parking Levy with the revenue reinvested in public transport, cycling and walking”*

Parking controls can encourage trips within urban areas to transfer to active modes or public transport. By reducing commuter parking in town and city centres, local economies can be improved by increasing the turnover of the limited number of spaces that are available. The

above parking controls will allow progress towards the West of England becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and also improving air quality. The potential for emerging technology in improving car park and kerb management will be considered through, for example, the reservation of on-street parking spaces (including EV charging points). Parking policies will continue to accommodate those who are unable to use alternative modes of travel to access urban areas.

Through the development of local parking strategies, we will continue to manage parking to control future traffic demand, including policies for on-street parking, off-street parking and residential parking schemes where appropriate. The design and location of new developments and at workplaces, as well as the numbers of spaces, will help to manage demand and reduce the dependency on the private car. All day parking will be controlled in a way to discourage users who could transfer to lower carbon travel choices.”

MORE TEXT TO BE ADDED

4F Fares & ticketing

Lower and simpler fares; seamless, integrated local ticketing between operators and across all types of transport

Overview

To deliver the ticketing aspirations in the National Bus Strategy the West of England has set the objective of achieving lower fares, simple ticketing and easy means of payment. To achieve that objective, we have identified - in partnership with operators - the following fares and ticketing reforms:

- The need for more flexible tickets to reflect changing travel patterns e.g. the introduction of a ticket where customers can travel for any 3 days in a given week, and eventually where customers will have the flexibility to customise their own frequency and duration
- The need to introduction of lower single fares, to attract new users and more occasional bus use, and return fares that will lower daily costs for the majority of daily journeys
- The need for lower local fares in towns to drive modal shift from car to bus for short local journeys;
- Subject to funding, a network-wide rollout of tap-off readers to give customers across the network access to convenient, capped digital tickets
- The need for a reduction in fares for young people - including standard discounts for children and students
- The need to refresh multi-operator ticketing in the area so that it becomes the norm - including introduction of digital multi-operator tickets on smartphones
- The need to move to consumption-based pricing through digital channels, enabling a model where the more you travel, the more you save

The current offer

In the West of England area, the principal bus operator is First Bus with a 90% share of passenger journeys. This position has enabled First Bus to invest in digital (smartphone) ticketing and

contactless payment, with some capping in flat fare zones. Over 50% of ticket sales by First Bus are now through digital smartphone channels.

The remaining 10% of the local bus market in the area comprises several smaller operators with fleet sizes ranging from 2 to 45 vehicles. Due to their size it is often not commercially viable for these operators to invest in the latest ticketing and payment technology, and this has created a barrier to introducing multi-operator tickets on smartphones.

The West of England Bus Strategy (adopted in June 2020) recognised that a key challenge to the attractiveness of bus travel is the current complex ticket offers which cannot be used on all buses. As a result, we have initiated work with bus operators to see how we can make improvements together.

Data on average fares per kilometre travelled could not be provided by operators because the alighting point is not captured by the existing ticketing arrangements. Through the rollout of Tap on Tap off readers in 2022-23, enabling PAYG with capping for adults using contactless bank cards in 2022-23 - as proposed in this BSIP, data for journeys made using PAYG will start to be available in 2023.

The Rider multi operator ticket scheme:

- This scheme is managed by the West of England Bus Operators' Association and offers day and week tickets for adults and children broadly matching individual operator zones.
- The rider tickets are less than 1% of total ticket sales in the area - this is as a result of ticket price premiums, a lack of promotion, the limited ticket range, and the network coverage of the principal operator.
- Adult tickets are available as paper tickets and on smartcards Child tickets are on paper only. None of the tickets are currently available as a Pay-As-You-Go offer or on mobile/ smartphone

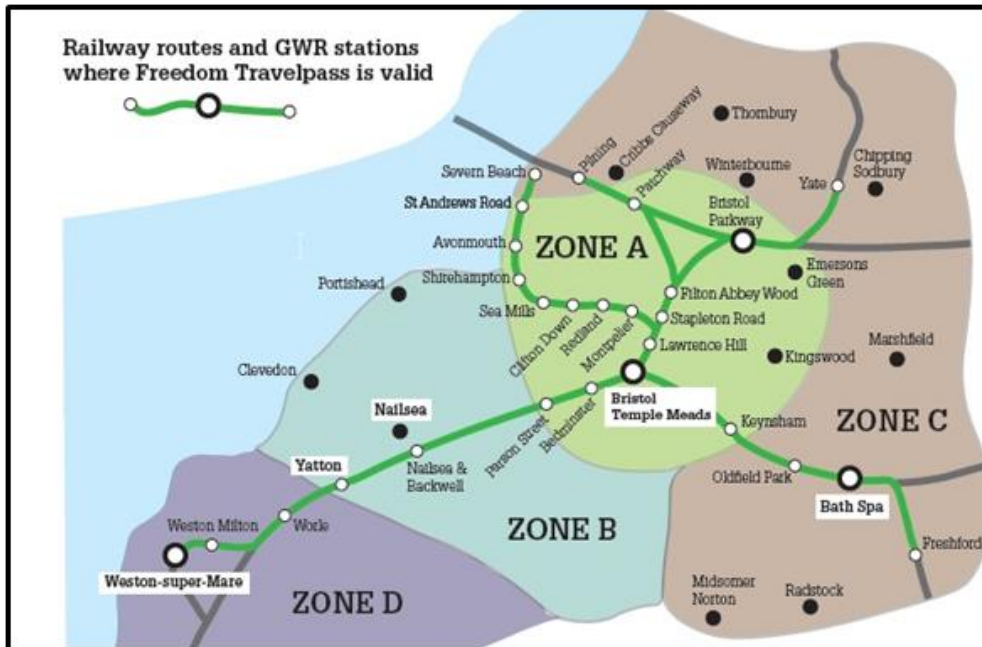
metrobus

- metrobus is a commercially operated bus rapid transit system made up of 3 routes with a further route to be launched in 2023. Partnership arrangements are through a quality partnership scheme (to be superseded by our EP) which sets standards for ticketing and maximum fares.
- No driver interaction with off bus ticketing through at stop vending machines (iPoints) with all tickets (multi operator and individual operator) on smartcard and paper with operators own tickets on mobile/ smartphone
- Inter-availability of single operator period passes is required where there is more than one operator running on a route
- PlusBus is an add-on to single and return train tickets as well as season tickets, which offer unlimited bus and tram travel around the regions. There are Bristol, Bath and Weston-Super-Mare tickets.



Bristol map from PlusBus website

- The Freedom Travelpass provides unlimited travel on all train and most bus services in four zones covering the BSIP area, but is not well-publicised.



Freedom Travelpass zones from Travelwest website

Recent initiatives

Over recent years, we have worked with operators on various ticketing initiatives:

- Support for promoting the Rider scheme
- Support to put adult Rider tickets on Smart card

- Installation of 89 on street ticket vending machines (iPoints), to enable 100% no driver interaction on the metrobus BRT network, including contactless payment, barcode tickets, and multi day/journey tickets sold on smartcard
- Support for smaller bus operators to upgrade to contactless payment and barcode reading through a ticket machine rental scheme

Current projects to develop ticketing and payment in the area are:

- Early business case development on a project to support to all bus operators to deliver Tap on / Tap off (TO/TO) and capping with a bank card. This early stage work will enable installation of TO/TO readers to start immediately after confirmation of funding - with rollout across the whole BSIP area to be completed in 2022-23.
- Ongoing development of a trial Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) platform and app, funded through our Future Mobility Zone project. New and enhanced multi-operator and multi-modal ticketing solutions delivered through the BSIP will be made available on the MaaS platform and app
- Working with rail operators through the Western Gateway STB and with Great Western Railway (GWR) to develop ticketing and payments initiatives including contactless payment, mobile ticketing, & PAYG capping with smart card - aligning with the current GWR PAYG initiative

Barriers and Opportunities:

The main ticketing and payment barriers in the area are:

- Lack of common technology/ payment and ticketing offer on all buses
- A limited multi operator ticket scheme - with an incomplete range; priced at a premium; not available in the best value formats (such as digital tickets on smartphone)
- Lack of integration with other modes in the area
- No perceived price advantage/ clear benefits compared to other modes such as use of a car
- High ticket prices for some journeys (such as local short trips on some services)

The large growth in the availability of smart phones and development of contactless payments has transformed the wider retail sector and are driving changes in fare payments. Whilst this has already begun to move the sector away from on-bus cash payments there is no consistent cashless payment or mobile ticket offer across bus operators resulting in the continued need for cash and different apps for different bus operators. The increased usage of tickets on smartphone and contactless pay-as-you-go is a core element in removing barriers, enabling more flexible better value tickets, and creating a simple traveling experience which is value for money. Ticket purchase on bus will remain an important option, enabling access to travel for all customers.

The main areas of opportunity in the BSIP area are in being able to create a single offer to customers across the area with contactless Pay as you go and digital (smartphone) ticketing. Through this there is greater flexibility for operators to create flexible ticketing and pricing that meets the needs of local people - this is particularly the case in areas where shorter bus journeys are made. In addition, there are opportunities to create a more comprehensive and attractive offer for young travellers in the area.

Areas of opportunity in both multi operator ticketing and youth fares can be seen when looking at the current offer in WECA/ North Somerset and other areas:

- Multi operator ticketing: less than 1% of journeys made using multi operator tickets compared to over 10% in other areas and premiums of up to 20% for day tickets compared to 5 to 6% in the West Midlands
- Low fares/youth: an inconsistent offer with the main operator offering 50% discount for children (under 16) and 30% for students and under 21s - however the local multi operator scheme only offers a 30% discount for students and under 21s. This compares to youth fares in Merseyside of 50% off for under 19s - which has driven significant patronage growth

Opportunities:

The main areas of opportunity in the area are:

- Standardise on bus technology to cover contactless Pay-As-You-Go and digital (smartphone) ticketing across the whole network
- Simplification of zones and ticket ranges
- Cheaper fares - through a fare reduction package including more flat fares; low fare zones, and extension of youth discounts; standardisation of discounts across operators and multi operator scheme
- Bus operators in the West of England offer up to 50% discount on fares for young people and some offer group tickets to encourage family travel. We recognise that, to attract car users, family travel by bus needs to be affordable, so we will work with bus operators to explore ways of achieving that.
- To build on existing Future Transport Zones Mobility as-A-Service trials to deliver an ongoing platform for ticketing across all modes
- Improved multi operator ticket range - wider range of tickets with better pricing (in line with National Bus Strategy aspiration for little or no premium).
- Standardisation of on bus technology enabling the same customer offer - which would include individual operator contactless PAYG (followed my multi operator through the DfTs national approach referenced in the NBS) and multi operator/multi modal tickets on mobile phones
- Creation of a single point of access/account through building on the WECA Future Transport Zones Mobility as a Service trial

Section 2 - Local Operators

In the development of this chapter local bus operators were consulted on the approach to delivering on the WECA/North Somerset ticketing objectives. Specifically, they were asked about the requirements of the National Bus Strategy and BSIP guidance; and how best to deliver this as well as achieving the attributes set out by WECA/North Somerset. There were large variations in responses received - with some more detailed responses and those that were more general and broader.

Operator fare reduction & ticket simplification package:

Operators did not object to a fare reduction/standardisation package, based on the BSIP requirements, with smaller operators supportive of a simplified ticketing system and pricing structure delivered though a move to multi-operator as the norm. Operators with the largest fleet in the area have already stated an intention to introduce lower fares and local low fares - using both digital ticketing and proposed 'Tap on Tap off' systems with capping to simplify the customer offer and ensure value for money. In general operators were concerned that the

network should continue to deliver sustainable returns - and that any low fares or youth discount proposals would need to be viable with financial support provided if necessary.

Pay as you go (PAYG) with contactless bank card:

The largest operator in the area was supportive of delivering this functionality and identified significant benefits in terms of achieving flexible and cheaper tickets - smaller operators were also supportive of delivering a more standardised and universal offer to customers. The largest operator also identified the technical challenges in delivering PAYG discount/youth travellers. All operators were concerned with technological and financial barriers to delivering this - with the greatest benefit coming from the functionality being across all operators and a standard offer to support both single operator and multi operator capping.

Multi operator as the norm & multi modal integration:

Operators were generally supportive of developing the multi operator offer - with support from some larger operators to explore the potential to develop the existing scheme to a state where agreed tickets are only purchased in multi operator form with single operator tickets removed.

Operators from the local 'Rider' multi operator scheme identified the need for all operators to have the same on bus technology functionality, including contactless bank and barcode readers, and the introduction of an updated reimbursement process. In order to deliver 'multi operator as the norm' operators have given their support to following timeline for refreshing the existing scheme:

- 16/10/2021 = Formation of a working group (with operators and authority reps) and agreement on scope of activities and person to lead each item
- 17/01/2022 = Draft proposals produced and circulated
- 28/02/2022 = Proposals agreed/signed off
- 29/04/2022 = Refreshed scheme agreement signed off and rollout plan agreed
- End of 2022 = Actions to implement changes and go live/launch refreshed scheme

Work has already progressed with on multi modal integration with trials of GWR digital plus bus acceptance on Firstbus vehicles currently underway. Following the completion of the trial we will work with GWR and other operators to extend this trial to all participating bus operators.

Section 3 - Headline targets

Quick Wins:

- Operator led fare reforms including - flexible tickets to reflect changing travel patterns; lower single fares; introduction of return fares to lower daily costs; and introduction of lower local fares (Portishead identified as likely initial focus) - throughout 2022
- Network wide rollout of tap on tap off readers delivering Individual operator contactless bank PAYG with capping - by March 2023 (subject to funding)
- Review and refresh of existing scheme and new/expanded range of multi-operator tickets & Tickets on smartphone and smartcard by March 2023 (subject to funding)

- Reduction in fares for young people - including standard discounts for children, young people and students - by March 2023 (subject to funding)

High level targets:

2022 - 2025:

- Adult Pay As You Go Contactless Bank fair price capping on all buses
- New/expanded range of multi operator tickets
- Multi operator tickets on mobile/smartphone
- Single ticketing mobile platform for tickets
- Operator fare reduction package (flat fares; low fare zones; youth discounts)
- Multi-modal/ through ticket Pay As You Go on mobile/smartphone
- Multi Operator Pay As You Go Contactless Bank capping (target dependant system being available)

2025- 2030:

- Discount fares Pay As You Go Contactless Bank capping
- Multi-modal contactless Pay As You Go

Section 4 - Delivery

Proposals for Improvement:

The proposals for improvement have been developed with the core aim of working with operators to make services cheaper; easier to use; and better integrated with other modes and each other.

Below are our key proposals to deliver against the identified attributes and opportunities; meet our core aims; deliver on the reforms/changes identified and achieve the targets outlined above

Operator fare reduction & ticket simplification package:

- More flat fares/ lowers point to point fares and standardise ticket ranges/zones
Work with operators to reform existing fares - this will include a range of approaches including introduction of standardisation or ticket ranges and zones; new flat fares where appropriate; local low fare zones; and lower point to point fares (looking to use contactless tap on tap off technology, similar to that seen in London, to enable flexible ticket pricing that matches customer journeys and value for money fares) in 2022/23
Expected costs - Operator funded
- Youth fare discounts/ reductions
Work with operators to extend and standardise discounts for children and students across all operators, similar to the youth fares offer in Merseyside, and to explore reductions in fares to encourage travel by families and young people - 2022/23
Expected costs - Joint operator and West of England initiative. WECA/North Somerset support/contribution = £Up to 10m revenue (2022 - 2025)

Pay as you go (PAYG) with contactless bank card:

- PAYG - individual operator adult tickets

Support to all operators to upgrade existing equipment (to include new tap out readers and full ticket machine replacement where required to support both single operator

capping and future multi operator delivery) to accept 'Tap on Tap Off' with a bank card and introduce capping for adult tickets in 2022/23

Expected costs - £1.3m capital

- PAYG - multi operator and youth/discounted
- Implement multi operator contactless bank PAYG using the DfTs preferred option as per NBS and BSIP guidance - timescales dependent on confirmation of approach. Put in place systems to enable PAYG discounted fares including children; young people; and students - between 2023 and 2027

Expected costs - costs £1.7m capital

Multi operator as the norm & multi modal integration:

- New/Expanded range of multi-operator tickets & Tickets on smartphone and smartcard
Work with operators through the existing 'Rider' ticket scheme to refresh the ticket range to cover all ticket types and discounts and to deliver multi-operator tickets on smartphone and smartcard , and ensure all operators have the ability to fulfil tickets on smartphone and scan tickets on bus - 2022/23

Expected costs - £200k Capital

- Multi-modal Pay As You Go and mobile/smartphone
Work with rail and bus operators to deliver multi-modal tickets (currently Plusbus & Freedom Travelpass) on rail and bus smartphone enabling better integration with rail and access to through journey ticketing. - 2024

Expected costs - £300k Capital

Support to integrate bus and rail platforms to deliver multi-modal contactless capping - by 2030

Expected costs - 300k Capital

Single mobile platform

- A single app and platform for mobile/smartphone tickets in the area.
Collaborate with operators to deliver a single contactless smartphone/ mobile ticketing app for the area. With agreement and participation of operators - build on the systems delivered through the West of England Future Transport Zones Programme Mobility As A Service project - 2023/24

4G Customer service

Giving bus passengers more of a voice and a say

Bus Passenger Charter

A new Bus Passenger Charter will set out commitments by the local authorities and local bus operators, and the obligations of bus users. We plan to launch this by October 2022.

The Charter will make it clear to bus passengers what they can expect, how they can get in touch with us and how they can play a more active role in the development of bus services - through our new approach to regular public consultation.

The Charter will include the following commitments:

by the transport and highway authorities:

- A welcoming bus stop environment, clean, tidy and well-maintained
- Infrastructure accessible for all, including step-free access onto the bus

- High quality, accessible information at all bus stops, online and on-bus
- Advance notice to passengers of our Diamond Travelcard service for elderly and disabled passengers
- Keeping our buses moving through continued bus-lane and parking offence enforcement
- Regular consultation with passengers
- A new approach to customer service, with one single point of contact
- A prompt response to passenger contact, including complaints

by the bus operators:

- Reliable, clean, accessible, and well-maintained vehicles on all routes
- Courteous, well-trained and helpful drivers
- A safe environment, with CCTV on all buses
- Care for customers with special needs
- Clear fares information on-board, with the best fare offered to passengers
- 95% of journeys operated and on time
- Easy payment options including cash, contactless card payment (with tap-on / tap-off capping), **Travelwest smart card**, mobile ticketing
- One simple range of fares and tickets for the network
- Visual and audio announcements on all services

The Charter will set out the mechanism for redress on those occasions when these commitments are not met. It will be published on our Travelwest website and, where possible, on bus operators' websites too. It will also be available in leaflet format, and we will publicise it at key points on our transport network.

Customer service

We will develop a new single customer contact point, providing passengers with one telephone number and online enquiry contact form for anything associated with their bus journey. This will make it easier for customers to get information or assistance. We plan to launch this by April 2023.

Bus Advisory Forum

Our enhanced partnership with bus operators will include a new Bus Advisory Forum through which bus user groups and other stakeholders can contribute to the development of the bus network. As part of our engagement with stakeholders on the Bus Service Improvement Plan, we invited expressions of interest for membership of the Bus Advisory Forum. We plan to establish it as part of the process of developing the enhanced partnership and launch it with the enhanced partnership in April 2022.

Consultation

We will ensure that bus users and local councillors are consulted at an early stage in the process of planning changes to the bus network and that they have an opportunity to provide feedback to proposals. We plan to establish a process to do this by February 2022.

Section 5 - Reporting

This joint Bus Service Improvement Plan will be published on the websites of the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council through the following links:

[LINK TO WEST OF ENGLAND CA WEBSITE](#)

[LINK TO NSC WEBSITE](#)

The document will be updated in October 2022 and annually thereafter. Progress towards targets will be reported every six months, starting in April 2022.

Section 6 - Overview table

Name of authority or authorities:	West of England Combined Authority & North Somerset Council
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both):	Enhanced Partnership
Date of publication:	29 October 2021
Date of next annual update:	28 October 2022
URL of published report:	TBC

	Actual 2018-19	Actual 2019-20	Target for 2024-25	Description of how each will be measured <i>(max 50 words)</i>
Journey time				
Reliability				
Passenger numbers				
Average passenger satisfaction				

Delivery - Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes / No	Explanation <i>(max 50 words)</i>
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
<i>More frequent and reliable services</i>		

Review service frequency		
Increase bus priority measures		
Increase demand responsive services		
Consideration of bus rapid transit networks		
<i>Improvements to planning / integration with other modes</i>		
Integrate services with other transport modes		
Simplify services		
Review socially necessary services		
Invest in Superbus networks		
<i>Improvements to fares and ticketing</i>		
Lower fares		
Simplify fares		
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport		
Make improvements to bus passenger experience		
<i>Higher spec buses</i>		
Invest in improved bus specifications		
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services		
Protect personal safety of bus passengers		
Improve buses for tourists		
Invest in decarbonisation		
<i>Improvements to passenger engagement</i>		
Passenger charter		
Strengthen network identity		
Improve bus information		
Other		
Other		

Appendices

- 1 - Map of geographical area covered by BSIP
- 2 - Table of supported routes and mileage (as at 29 August 2021)
- 3 - Summary of responses to stakeholder engagement (July/August 2021)

Appendix 2

List of supported services

Service	Route	Operating Days/Times	Operator
2	Bath City Centre -Mulberry Park	Mon-Sat Evening	First
6A	Bath City Centre - Larkhall - Bath City Centre	Mon-Sat Evening	First
8	Bath City Centre - Kingsway	Mon-Sat Evening	First
10	Rock Street North and Hortham Village to Southmead Hospital	All Journeys	Stagecoach
10/11	Southmead Hospital - Avonmouth	All Journeys	Stagecoach
11	Bath City Centre - Bathampton	All Journeys	First
12	Severn Beach - Bristol Parkway	Monday - Saturday	Stagecoach
12	Severn Beach - Cribbs Causeway	Sundays / Public Holidays	First
12	Bath City Centre - Haycombe Cemetery	All Journeys	First
13	Bristol City Centre - Southmead Hospital	All Journeys	Stagecoach
13	Southmead Hospital - Shirehampton	All Journeys	Stagecoach
17	Southmead Hospital - Kingswood - Keynsham	All Journeys	First
19	Bath - Cribbs Causeway via Bitton	Sun Daytime	First
20	Bath - Twerton	Mon-Sat Daytime	First
22	Twerton - Bath Uni	Monday to Friday University Holidays Only	First
35	Marshfield - Bristol	All Journeys	First
41	Malmesbury - Yate	Mon-Sat Off Peak	Coachstyle
42	Odd Down Park & Ride - Royal United Hospital	Mon-Fri evenings	First
52	Bristol City Centre - Hengrove	Mon -Fri	HCT Group
79	Marshfield - Bath Centre	Mon-Fri Peak	Faresaver
82	Paulton - Radstock	All Journeys	First
84	Yate - Wotton-under-Edge - Yate	All Journeys	Stagecoach
85	Yate - Wotton-under-Edge - Yate	All Journeys	Stagecoach
86	Yate - Kingswood	All Journeys	Stagecoach
94	Trowbridge - Bath	Mon-Sat	Libra Travel
172	Bath - Paulton	Mon-Sun Evening	First

179	Midsomer Norton - Bath	All Journeys	CT Coaches
185	Hallatrow - Trowbridge	All Journeys	CT Coaches
202	Chipping Sodbury - Winterbourne	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
228	Colerne - Ralph Allen School	School Days	Faresaver
505	Long Ashton Park & Ride Site - Southmead Hospital	All Journeys	HCT Group
506	Bristol City Centre - Southmead Hospital	All Journeys	HCT Group
511	Bedminster - Hengrove	All Journeys	HCT Group
512	Totterdown - Bristol City Centre	All Journeys	HCT Group
513	Knowle - Brislington	All Journeys	Stagecoach
514	Knowle - Brislington	All Journeys	Stagecoach
515	Stockwood - Hartcliffe	All Journeys	HCT Group
620	Old Sodbury - Bath	All Journeys	Stagecoach
622	Chipping Sodbury - Cribbs Causeway	Monday - Saturday	Stagecoach
622	Thornbury - Cribbs Causeway	Sundays / Public Holidays	First
623	Severn Beach - Bristol Centre	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
626	Wotton-under-Edge - Bristol Centre	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
634	Tormarton - Kingswood	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
636	Hengrove - Keynsham	All Journeys	CT Coaches
640	Bishop Sutton - Keynsham	All Journeys	CT Coaches
663	Somerdale - Chandag Road	All Journeys	Stagecoach
664	Keynsham (Somerdale) - Saltford	All Journeys	Stagecoach
665	Somerdale - Longmeadow Road	All Journeys	Stagecoach
668	Peasedown St John - Bristol	All Journeys	CT Coaches
672	Bristol - Blagdon	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
680	North Yate - Filton College	All Journeys	Stagecoach
683	Keynsham - Wells	All Journeys	CT Coaches
684	Wick-Keynsham	All Journeys	Eurotaxi
700	Bath City Centre - Sion Hill	All Journeys	CT Coaches
716	Bath City Centre - Newbridge	All Journeys	CT Coaches
734	Bath City Centre - Bathwick	All Journeys	CT Coaches
752	Hinton Blewett - Bath	All Journeys	BANES
754	Hinton Blewett - Radstock	All Journeys	BANES
757	Combe Hay - Midsomer Norton	All Journeys	CT Coaches
768	Midsomer Norton - Bath	All Journeys	CT Coaches
779	Bath City Centre - Gloucester Road	All Journeys	CT Coaches
948	Pucklechurch - Sir Bernard Lovell Academy	All Journeys	Stagecoach
963	Patchway - Winterbourne Academy	All Journeys	Stagecoach
967	South Yate - Chipping Sodbury School	All Journeys	Stagecoach
Bris	Brislington P&R	All Journeys	First
Port	Portway P&R	All Journeys	First

D1	Trowbridge - Bath	Mon-Sat Evening	First
T2	Thornbury - Bristol Centre	Mon-Sat Daytime	First
T2	Thornbury - Bristol Centre	Mon -Sat Late Eve	First
Y4	Yate - Bristol Centre	Mon-Sat Evenings	First
Y5	Yate - Bristol Centre	Mon-Sat Eves and Sun	First
Y6	Yate - Southmead Hospital	Mon-Sun Daytime every other journey and evenings	First

List of supported services in North Somerset

51	Weston Super Mare - Wrington	Mon - Fri daytime	Stagecoach West
53	Clevedon Circular	Mon - Sat daytime	HTC Group
54	Clevedon - Bristol Airport	Mon - Sat daytime	HTC Group
55	Bristol Airport - South Bristol	Mon - Sat daytime	HTC Group
57	Portishead - Westlands Lane	Mon - Sat daytime	Stagecoach West
58	Portishead - Redcliffe Bay	Mon - Sat daytime	Stagecoach West
59	Portishead - Nailsea	Mon - Sat daytime	Stagecoach West

Appendix 4 - Features of Enhanced Partnerships

- 1 The Bus Services Act 2017 updated previous legislation on partnerships between local transport authorities (LTAs) and bus operators, and it created a new model called an Enhanced Partnership (EP).
- 2 An EP is an agreement between the LTA and local bus operators to work together to improve local bus services. It includes a clear vision of the improvements that the EP is aiming for (an EP Plan) and accompanying actions to achieve them (set out in one or more EP Schemes). It must have the support of a majority market share of local bus operators - and any relevant highway authorities if it includes measures related to traffic regulation orders, parking enforcement etc.
- 3 An EP Plan must include an analysis of the current market, the impact of congestion and local passengers' experiences. It must set out what interventions are needed to improve local bus services, but it is basically a framework within which EP Schemes can be delivered as and when funding becomes available. Much of this content is also required for the Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 4 An individual EP Scheme can set requirements that all bus services operating in the area, whether new or existing, must meet. Those requirements may include vehicle age and standards, livery and local branding, common ticketing zones and fares conditions, standard discounts for groups such as children, students, jobseekers etc, prices of multi-operator tickets and co-ordination of timetables.
- 5 An EP Scheme cannot regulate fares set by individual operators nor can it require an operator to operate loss-making services.
- 6 An individual EP Scheme does not have to contain commitments by the LTA, but it is highly unlikely that it would receive support from bus operators if it did not. The requirements on an LTA may include provision of new bus stop infrastructure, new bus priority measures, marketing campaigns to promote bus services, changes to parking provision and enhanced enforcement, commitments to restrict roadworks on key bus corridors and application to Government for powers to enforce moving traffic offences. Many of these features are within the gift of the highway authorities so their involvement in an EP is essential.
- 7 There is no prescribed model for governance of an EP but there is a statutory process to follow for amendments and additional EP Schemes. Government recommends that an advisory stakeholder forum be set up – possibly with an independent chair – to facilitate open discussion about current deficiencies in the market.
- 8 The only active EPs have been made by Hertfordshire County Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority. They both took two years to bring to fruition but Government has challenged other LTAs to develop theirs in nine months, to be completed by April 2022.
- 9 Government published updated guidance on EPs in July 2021. It strongly recommends that the initial EP should “memorialise” all existing agreements such as quality partnership schemes, voluntary partnership agreements, traffic regulation conditions, current expenditure on bus service support, traffic regulation orders for bus priorities, bus shelter maintenance expenditure etc.

Appendix 5: West of England Bus Strategy and JLTP4 consultation summary

Further to the above, in the last three years we have undertaken a good level of consultation on public transport in the West of England. The [West of England Bus Strategy](#) was consulted upon extensively in January 2020 (with nearly 2,000 responses) and adopted in June 2020. It considers options to improve the bus network and set out how further growth in bus usage can be encouraged. Summarised in the [Bus Strategy Consultation Report](#), the consultation was seen as a success with support for the strategy. Responses showed that:

- 85% of people either strongly agreed, agreed or somewhat agreed with the objectives:
 - developing a comprehensive and joined-up bus network;
 - maximising bus service reliability and reducing journey times;
 - providing simplified ticketing;
 - addressing congestion;
 - developing accessible passenger waiting facilities, and;
 - continuing to improve passenger satisfaction.
- A significant majority (84.3%) agreed to the reallocation of road space to prioritise buses, with over half of all people “strongly agreeing”;
- Over two-thirds of responses agreed with the proposed target: doubling passenger numbers by 2036;
- Nearly four out of five (79.8%) people either strongly agreed or agreed that rural communities would be better served by connections to transfer hubs with over four out of five (82%) people agreeing that other transport solutions should be explored to serve rural areas instead of conventional buses;
- The highest ranked priorities for supported bus services were access to employment, hospitals and education facilities;
- The highest ranked bus strategy themes were a well-designed bus network, reliable and faster bus services and modern, clean accessible buses.

The West of England JLTP4 (Joint Local Transport Plan 4) also undertook a full public consultation in February and March 2019 for six weeks and generated over 4,000 responses. The responses resulted in making over 3,500 edits and improvements to JLTP4 as a result of the consultation, which overall showed (as seen in the [Consultation Report](#)):

- a strong enthusiasm for the aims & objectives of the plan (65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed);
- support for rail, bus improvements (58 responses) and active travel (39 responses);

As a result of the consultation, key changes to the plan from the 3,500+ edits included strengthening the West of England authorities’ [Climate Emergency declarations](#), stronger text on demand management and the reallocation of street space, the removal of references to the withdrawn Joint Spatial Plan and adding the Environmental, Equalities & Health impacts of JLTP4.

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2021

Subject of Report: Contract Award for the Design & Build (Stage 2) of the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion (WHAE)

Town or Parish: Locking

Officer/Member Presenting: Councillor Gibbons, Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

Key Decision: YES

Reason:

Decision value is greater than £500,000.

Recommendations:

That the Executive approves:

- 1) The award of the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion (WHAE) Design and Build (Stage 2) contract to Kier Construction Ltd, Tempsford Hall, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2BD (company registration number 2099533) for a value of no more than £27.7m
- 2) The increase of capital budget by £ 2.1m funded by Section 106 contributions, to align the project to the values included within the original business case submissions.
- 3) Delegation to Director of Children's Services to enter into final contract within the capped value, subject to acceptance of final due diligence detailed within this report.

1. Summary of Report

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed approval of North Somerset Council's (NSC) Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) (Forward Fund) bid on the 26 November 2019, and allocated a grant sum of £97,067,550 which will deliver the infrastructure to facilitate the delivery of 7,557 new dwellings, specifically:

- Additional secondary school places, and
- A bypass around the village of Banwell

The original business case submission to Homes England advised that £2,100,000 of Section 106 funding would be available to support build costs associated with the school element of the bid, meaning that the total cost of the overall project would ultimately be £99,167,550; £32,447,175 for the school and £66,720,375 for the bypass around Banwell.

The secondary school places are to be delivered through the expansion of the existing Winterstoke Hundred Academy on to a second site at Locking Parklands. Cabot Learning Federation (CLF) are currently operating Winterstoke Hundred Academy on Beaufigther Road. Once the new site on Locking Parklands is available this will become their main site.

The procurement of the Design and Build contract for WHAE is structured in two stages and comprises of two contracts – the Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) (Stage 1) and the Design and Build (D&B) contract (Stage 2). The Design of WHAE and the decision to enter into the PCSA (Stage 1) contract was approved by the Director of Children’s Services in December 2020 (reference: CY11 2020/21 Scheme in Background Papers).

The Project Team committed to return to the Executive for approval of the Stage 2 contract for design and build of the school once the details of cost, timescales and scope were clarified as part of delivery of the Stage 1 PCSA contract. This was in recognition that the budgets for the project would also need to be aligned with those submitted at the original business case submission.

The Stage 2 contract is forecast to run from November 2021 to August 2023, with a further 12-month defects liability period to August 2024. The contract value is currently forecast to be £27,691,694, including cost risk contingency to mitigate increase above this value. By requesting that this decision be made whilst awaiting quotes from suppliers, the Project Team aim to de-risk delivery of the programme and increase the likelihood of achieving the critical milestone of practical completion by 07 August 2023 to allow pupils to attend the school from September 2023.

The current total forecast budget for this scheme is £33,857,901, which is £1,410,726 more than the revised budget; see Table 1 below. This increase is largely a consequence of market influences as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit, but also scope changes to fulfil council climate change ambitions and future proof the school and site conditions.

Original Budget	£30,347,175
Section 106 funds in original Business Case budget	£2,100,000
Revised Budget	£32,447,175
Current Forecast	£33,857,901
Projected variance	£1,410,726
Funding Strategy: HIF contribution	£1,410,726
TOTAL	£1,410,726

Table 1: Project forecast and funding strategy.

The projected variance of £1,410,726 will be initially funded by underspend in preliminary phases across the HIF scheme with a view to increasing the total HIF contribution following ongoing discussions with Homes England.

Recommendation 3 seeks approval for delegated authority to the Director of Children’s Services for award of contract once the final submission is received from Kier and the due diligence report from the Employers Agent.

2. Policy

The corporate plan sets out a number of council priorities. By providing brand new, carbon neutral school buildings, this project is supporting the council to meet these priorities by investing in the local area and making it a thriving and sustainable place to live, which empowers and cares about people by enabling young people to lead independent and fulfilling lives and supporting children to achieve their full potential.

3. Background Details

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed approval of North Somerset Council's (NSC) Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) (Forward Fund) bid on the 26 November 2019, which totalled £99,167,550.

The grant to NSC totals £97,067,550, with the remaining £2,100,000 defined in the Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England as Section 106 contributions. The £97,067,550 HIF was agreed at the Full Council meeting on 16 June 2020; see Background Papers. This grant is to deliver the infrastructure to facilitate the delivery of 7,557 new dwellings, specifically:

- A bypass around the village of Banwell and
- Additional secondary school places.

The objectives of the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion (WHAE) project are to:

- Deliver the capacity for at least 900 school places on the WHAE site by the 2023/24 school year
- Provide infrastructure that enables housing development across Weston super Mare (subject to Local Plan)
- Be innovative and efficient in reducing and offsetting carbon from the design and construction of the infrastructure
- Ensure the development provides the opportunity to increase Bio-Diversity Net Gain by at least 10%
- Proactively engage with all stakeholders respectfully, openly and honestly and have more positive than negative responses to consultations
- Construct school buildings that students, parents and teachers all feel proud to attend and be a part of, evidenced by a satisfaction survey 1 year after WHAE has opened that will include a review of the Equalities Impact Assessment actions/outcomes
- Deliver value for money for the local community and North Somerset residents by ensuring the build costs per square metre are within national benchmarking parameters
- Design a school that meets Department for Education, NSC, Local Planning Authority (LPA) and CLF requirements, evidenced by receiving planning approval and completing the school's construction with each Stakeholder's support
- Ensure the school design is flexible enough to enable it to be easily and economically adapted to meet future challenges and changes to educational delivery needs plus allow its design to incorporate future-proofed options to enable easy and affordable expansion in the future as and when necessary, evidenced by the provision for expansion of the school building in the design along with adequate landscaped outdoor areas for 1200 pupils
- Build a school that is easily capable of being used by the local community outside of school hours so that it becomes, shown by the positive demand for its use, a central asset to the community is serves

These objectives have informed the preliminary design of the school and will continue to be a key focus of subsequent design development as the project progresses.

Kier Construction Ltd were appointed in January 2021 to design the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion (WHAE) (CY11 20/21) via the SCF with the intention to appoint them to also construct the school, subject to agreeing a contract value, achievement of SCF Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Executive approval. As an existing framework, the SCF was chosen as the preferred procurement route as it offered a competitive process through two stages of mini competition whilst also ensuring that contractor appointment aligns with the required project timescales, as all bidders are pre-qualified. Further details of the SCF framework and procurement process are available in the Procurement Plan; see Background Papers.

Governance

The details of governance of previous project decisions are provide in the Background Papers section at the end of this report, and include:

- The Commissioning Plan approved at Full Council on 25 June 2019;
- The Procurement Plan approved by the Executive Member on 24 September 2020;
- The Design of WHAE and the decision to enter into the PCSA (Stage 1) approved by the Director of Children's Services in December 2020.

The governance of project decisions is provided by the HIF Steering Board, which includes Director of Place, representatives from Children's Services, legal and finance and Head of Major Infrastructure Projects to provide direction and oversight to the project. Provided the decision to award the Stage 2 contract is approved by the Executive, the contract will be managed, administered and governed by the steering board and Employers Agent to ensure council interests are protected and appropriate due diligence has been completed.

Market Engagement

Ahead of Stage 1 of the procurement, the Project Team engaged with SCF framework providers prior to the publication of the mini competitions, visiting school sites with prospective contractors and consultants. A briefing session was held in September 2020 with all 10 of the SCF suppliers. The suppliers were advised of the site, scope, value and duration of the contract. The SCF Manager then ran mini competition 1 where suppliers answered various questions and 3 bidders (out of the 7 who bid) were shortlisted and invited to bid in mini competition 2. Of these 3 Kier was assessed as the most competitive and were appointed to carry out Stage 1.

At the completion of Stage 1 in November 2021, NSC have the option to appoint an alternative contractor through the SCF to carry out the Stage 2 detailed design and build. The Project Team have investigated this as an option to establish whether an alternative contractor would provide better value for money to the Council. The Employers Agent for the scheme has advised that the current cost estimate from Kier is robust and that there would be no benefit in changing contractors at this stage in the project. Also, anecdotal evidence from other education schemes in the south west of England indicate that there is a risk that costs could increase if a new contract was appointed to deliver Stage 2. Whilst all work produced in Stage 1, including the preliminary design, would be the property of NSC, the positive working relationships and knowledge of the scheme gained by Kier through delivery of Stage 1 would be lost.

Evaluation

Throughout Stage 1 the NSC Project Team and their Employers Agent have been providing appropriate challenge, interrogation and assurance of the cost estimates and early design

provided by the contractor, Kier. This has included benchmarking against industry metrics and other similar education schemes in the south west of England.

In addition to technical assurance by the Employers Agent, to allow evaluation of the quality aspects of the Stage 2 contract CLF have been engaged at an early stage to ensure that as end-user they are satisfied with the proposed scope and contract requirements. This has allowed proposals to be constantly evaluated throughout Stage 1 and adjusted to ensure end-user criteria are met whilst also ensuring the scope aligns with the project objectives.

Once all subcontractor work package returns are received, which is scheduled for 01 November 2021, Kier will submit their full offer to allow NSC Employers Agent, Atkins, to carry out a due diligence exercise to ensure no errors, duplications or erroneous costs are included. A minimum of 3 quotations is required for each works package under the SCF and Kier must provide all details in a full open book process to allow interrogation and due diligence of the submissions. The results of this process will be presented in a report produced by the Employers Agent.

Contracts awarded under the SCF have a 'gateway' at the end of design stage, allowing the contracting authority to decide whether to proceed with the award of the construction contract or seek an alternative contractor. The contractor performance is measured against SCF defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which will be used as part of the final due diligence review carried out by the Employers Agent, Atkins. Kier have worked efficiently and professionally during the pre-construction phase of this project and created strong and productive relationships with key stakeholders; principally NSC, Cabot Learning Federation (CLF) and Atkins. This has delivered a design for the school which meets the needs of NSC, the expectations of CLF and the requirements of Homes England.

It is therefore recommended that the Design & Build contract (Stage 2) is awarded to Kier Construction Ltd, providing that the Final Submission from Kier and the due diligence report produced by the Employers Agent is accepted by the Director of Children's Services and the HIF Programme Steering Board through the project governance process.

Social Value

Kier have committed to an extensive social value programme as part of the contract to design and build WHAE. This covers a variety of environmental, economic and community initiatives. Social value delivered by Kier during the design stage (Stage 1) includes the following:

- The recruitment, via the 'Kickstarter' initiative, of a care-leaver.
- Working with two local secondary schools on the design of hoarding for the construction site
- Working with two local secondary schools on the design of the 'Sustainability Hub' (see below)
- The provision of support to a local Scout group on the maintenance of their hall
- Providing lessons and activities to local schools around science and engineering
- Support for the CLF school summer holiday club

The social value commitments to be delivered by Kier during the construction phase (Stage 2) of the project include:

- The construction of a 'Sustainability Hub' at the WHAE site – a stand-alone building in the school grounds to act as an exemplar of energy efficiency and low carbon design and provide a space for education on these issues for the school and wider community

- 50 work placements
- 14 apprentice places
- 10 new jobs
- 1 graduate position
- 44 construction qualifications gained
- A commitment to support the local economy for labour and supplies wherever practical

Implementation of Contract

The Southern Construction Framework (SCF) follows the following two stage tender process:

- Mini-Competition 1 – Framework expression of interest to pre-qualified suppliers
- Mini-Competition 2 – Stage 1 - Appointment of main contractor
- Mini-Competition 2 – Stage 2 - Procurement of sub-contractor work packages

The Design & Build contract (Stage 2) will be a progression from the PCSA contract (Stage 1).

Kier have also been commissioned to carry out the Ground Enabling Works (via the SCAPE framework) to ensure continuity and no loss of time to the programme. Whilst these works should have been carried out by the current land-owners, St Modwen Developers, appointing Kier to carry out these works provides NSC with greater control of the works, de-risking the programme and providing greater assurance over the quality of the works. The NSC Project Team have also successfully negotiated contribution from St Modwen to cover a share of the cost of these works.

The dates in Table 2 are currently planned for implementation of the Stage 2 contract.

Design & Build contract award decision presented to Executive Committee	20 October 2021
Final submission of Stage 2 subcontractor costs by Kier and due diligence by Atkins	01 November 2021
Steering Board final review and approval for Stage 2 contract award	08 November 2021
Construction commences	22 November 2021
Practical completion	07 August 2023
School opens	04 September 2023

Table 2: Contract key milestone dates.

Contract Management:

Named entities under the JCT contract for Stage 2 will be as follows:

Client: North Somerset Council

Employers Agent: Atkins Limited

Principal Contractor: Kier Construction Limited

As Employer's Agent and Technical Advisors under the JCT contract, Atkins will ensure that quality and budget is achieved through protecting the design principles, brief and strategy from design through to construction and completion. The Employer's Agent and Technical Advisors duties through the pre and post contract phases include:

- Programme management through the design and construction
- Safety management through the design and construction
- Risk management through the design and construction

- Quality assurance and management through the design and construction
- Budget management and cost forecasting through the design and construction
- Acting as a Technical Advisor through the design and construction
- Acting as the Cost Consultant / Quantity Surveyor through the design and construction
- Managing and administering the JCT Design and Build 2016 contract
- Leading the technical review stage and ensuring necessary approvals

In addition the NSC team will continue to ensure that governance is followed and that contract decisions are made in accordance with agreed delegated levels of authority.

Consultation

Extensive consultation has been undertaken with a variety of stakeholders in advance of the project being undertaken and the construction of the school commencing. This has included:

- Quarterly updates to the Locking Parklands Stakeholder Group – a forum of local residents, churches, community groups, schools and businesses with an interest in the developing Locking Parklands community
- Parish Council presentations to Banwell, Locking and Churchill parish councils
- Open consultation on the council's e-consult website between 31 March and 5 May 2021.
- On 21 April 2021 the Project Team held an online presentation on the development of the school, which was open to anyone to watch and ask questions afterwards. The presentation is available to watch on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQWQhCAar5E>

In addition to the above, consultation with internal NSC stakeholders has included:

- Briefings of Exec Members
- Council Scrutiny Panel
- Planning
- HIF Project board
- Transportation

4. Financial Implications

Cost

To date the school has incurred total costs of £1,722,623 (as at August 2021), of which £1,022,837 are the costs to date for the PCSA with Kier.

Stage 1- forecast cost of £3,084,458

Stage 2 – forecast cost of £30,773,443 of which £27,691,694 is the detailed design and build contract with Kier.

The Stage 2 contract value is currently estimated with 90% certainty; once all supplier prices are returned Kier will provide the fixed price contract value, which is forecast for 01 November 2021. As detailed in the risk management section of this report, the 90% certainty value includes cost contingency to mitigate the risk of the final fixed contract submission exceeding this estimate.

This brings the current total forecast cost to completion of the project to £33,857,901.

The total forecast project cost is £1,410,726 greater than the revised budget and the estimate submitted in the business case to Homes England.

When NSC submitted their business case it was based on the information that was available at the time regarding the site and the school requirements, including benchmarking against another school with similar requirements. The increase is due to market increases, largely driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and global supply chain disruption, and also changes to project scope driven by NSC climate emergency challenges and site constraints identified during Stage 1 such as shallow bedrock. None of these risks could reasonably have been included as contingency to the extent that they have impacted the project when the original budget was estimated in 2018. In addition, the Employers Agent has interrogated and benchmarked the current cost estimate to provide assurance that it is robust; this provides confidence that the estimate will not increase beyond that currently estimated.

Funding

The proportion of the HIF grant currently allocated for the school is £30,347,175; the value of S106 contributions identified and allocated as funding to this project totals £2,100,000 which means that the project currently has a total revised budget and project resources of £32,447,175.

The overall cost of the project is forecasted to be £33,857,901, which gives a variance of £1,410,726.

In order to cover the additional £1,410,726 required to fund the project, the Project Team have identified and agreed sources of funding Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), as summarised in Table 1. The additional HIF funding will be notionally transferred from the currently forecast underspend in the current Stage, through a temporary virement from the Bypass Stage 1 budget. The Project Team are in discussions with Homes England regarding increasing the HIF contribution to ensure that the virement from the Bypass is permanently covered by additional HIF funding, and these discussions will be carried out in parallel with current cashflow forecast revisions that will be concluded in October 2021.

Funding Position	
Current HIF allocation & S106 Contributions	£32,447,175
Current forecast cost to completion	£33,857,901
Total increase required through HIF Grant	£1,410,726
Section 106 funds:	
<i>Weston Villages Education Contribution (XCE249)</i>	<i>£1,000,000</i>
<i>Mead Realisation Secondary Contribution (XCE323)</i>	<i>£690,000</i>
<i>St Modwen Site Preparation Contribution</i>	<i>£410,000</i>
TOTAL	£2,100,000

Table 3: Financial Summary

It is important to note that should discussions with Homes England not be successful then the Council would seek alternative funding solutions, initial options would include identifying further Section 106 contributions or cost mitigations although there may be other areas to explore. Given the timescales described in Table 2 above, it is necessary to approve the contract award at this time and further updates on this position will be shared through future monitoring reports.

5. Legal Powers and Implications

The council is using the JCT Design & Build contract. The council's best interests are represented by using JCT contract amendments, which has been confirmed through independent review of the amendments by private law firm Keystone Law. The acceptance of the council's terms and conditions was made a pass/fail criterion during procurement of Kier for Stage 1, and the same approach will be taken should Kier propose any further amendments for Stage 2. The project team are mitigating the risk of lack of agreement on terms and conditions by carrying out contract discussions with Kier in parallel with development of the Fixed Price, with the intention of agreeing ahead of the contract award milestone.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

We are aiming to achieve BREEAM Excellent, as it is a planning requirement for a project of this size to be constructed to a standard at least comparable with this. BREEAM Excellent is achieved through a score of 70% and the current project design BREEAM score tracker is projecting a score of 72.6%. It is our intention to have this achievement independently certified at the end of construction.

In line with North Somerset Council's Carbon Emergency Policy WHAE is being designed to be net-zero carbon in operation. This is being achieved through:

- excellence in design;
- the use of highly energy efficient materials;
- the installation of low energy technologies and
- the onsite generation of renewable energy.

Examples of how these things will help deliver a net-zero carbon school are:

- the school will be orientated on the site so as to minimise the potential for over-heating and the need for cooling in the summer
- the glazing and wall materials will deliver U-values significantly above that required by building regulations minimising heat loss and the need for space heating
Heat recovery units will recycle the air and heat fresh air coming into the building using heat already within the building
- Heat pumps will provide the minimal amount of space heating required and solar panels on the roof of the school and sports hall will provide sufficient electricity to meet the school demands

In addition to consideration of carbon in operation, the embodied carbon of the materials being used in the build will be reduced through the consideration of their life-cycle impact and the maximisation of local suppliers and manufacturers.

The result of this design and specification is the following improvements on building fabric and glazing specification against the legal minimum (Part L2A 2013):

Element		Part L2A 2013 limiting fabric efficiency		Proposed Building fabric efficiency targets	
External Wall	u-value	0.35	W/m ² .K	0.15	W/m ² .K
Ground Floor	u-value	0.25	W/m ² .K	0.15	W/m ² .K
Roof	u-value	0.25	W/m ² .K	0.15	W/m ² .K
Glazing	u-value	2.2	W/m ² .K	1.5	W/m ² .K
	g-value			0.4	
Air Permeability		10 m ³ /m ² /hr 50Pa		3 m ³ /m ² /hr @50Pa	

Table 4: Carbon improvements in building specification.

7. Risk Management

The key risks associated with this decision are:

Risk	Type	Mitigation
If the returns from subcontractors are greater than forecast there is a risk that the total fixed price cost is greater than the approved value, resulting in requirement for additional Executive approval and delay to contract award.	Threat	Review of current costs and contingency in forecast fixed price by Employers Agent to provide assurance that forecast is robust and unlikely to increase.
If Stage 2 contract award is delayed there is a risk that practical completion will not be achieved in August 2023, resulting in delay to the school opening and costs to the council in finding alternative school places for pupils.	Threat	Obtaining approval to award the contract to Kier ahead of final submission will reduce the likelihood of delay to contract award.

Table 5: Key decision risks.

As summarised in the mitigation for the top risk above, the current construction estimate from Kier includes risk contingency costs, which includes values for inflation, design development and supplier increases. This contingency mitigates the risk of the final fixed price contract value for construction exceeding the current forecast.

The project has a robust risk management process in place, with a framework that encourages collaborative risk identification and treatment by the entire project team, including NSC, Kier and Atkins and a shared risk register used as a key tool for risk management. This process will continue from Stage 1 into Stage 2 of the project to ensure that risk is proactively managed in Stage 2 to protect NSC interests and consideration of risk underpins project decisions.

8. Equality Implications

A thorough and comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken by the project team. The process that was undertaken to involve and capture the views of those affected included three EIA focused workshops, public consultation events and a question with the online questionnaire.

The first workshop took place on 10th February, with members of CLF's staff, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together and the WHAE design team (Kier). Attendance from NSC included the SEND Operational Lead, the Access Officer for Disabled People, the Head of Strategic Planning and Governance and the WHAE project management team. During the workshop, we listened to everyone's views on how each equalities group may be impacted and examined the various areas of the school and how the design could accommodate the needs of these different groups.

The second workshop took place on 12th March, and attendance included the Head of WHA - BR, CLF's Head of Projects and Estates, the design team, NSC's Head of Strategic Planning and Governance and the WHAE project team. The purpose of this workshop was to get the wider CLF team's input into how they would implement some of the suggestions from the initial EIA workshop.

The third and final workshop involved the design team, the project team and NSC's Head of Strategic Planning and Governance and focused on how each of the points raised at the initial workshop, along with CLF's input at the second workshop, could be incorporated in the design. Each point raised for each equality group/area of the school has been carefully considered, with actions and amendments to the design taken where appropriate. Attendees of the two Public Consultation sessions on April 21st 2021 were made aware of the EIA that was being undertaken. No issues were raised in relation to the impact of the development on Equalities Groups. The e-consult questionnaire that formed part of the consultation included a question that asked people whether they have any concerns about potential equality impacts. Of the 95 responses, 11 highlighted concerns they had about the impact of the school development on different Equalities groups. These have been considered by the project team and integrated into the final design.

9. Corporate Implications

The provision of key enabling infrastructure and educational facilities widely supports the Corporate Plan Vision of an open, fairer, greener North Somerset, through prioritising a thriving and sustainable place, a council which empowers and cares about people and being an open and enabling organisation.

10. Options Considered

The procedure for Design and Build contracts awarded through the Southern Construction Framework (SCF) is that the appointed contractor undertake the preliminary design of the school (Stage 1) and then proceed into the detailed design and construction of the school (Stage 2). It was with this intention that the Project Team procured the services of Kier in January 2021.

As outlined in the evaluation section of this report, contracts awarded under the SCF have a 'gateway' at the end of design stage, allowing the contracting authority to decide whether to proceed with the award of the construction contract or seek an alternative contractor. In this scenario the council would retain the ownership of the school design and enter into negotiations with the contractor who had the second highest-scoring submission in the original SCF procurement process.

Kier have achieved the outcomes of a satisfactory school design, aligned with project objectives and CLF requirements, and are delivering to the agreed programme. Therefore, the Project Team requests recommends that the Design and Build contract (Stage 2) be awarded to Kier to enable the construction element to commence, providing that the final submitted fixed price is £ 27,691,694 or less and approval is granted by the Director for

Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning.

Author:

Tom Foster, HIF Senior Project Manager

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Corporate Plan 2020-2024

https://nsomerset.sharepoint.com/sites/the-source.authoring/Documents/Corporate%20Plan%202020_24.pdf#search=corporate%20plan

Procurement plan Winterstoke Hundred Academy Design & Build Contract

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/20-21%20DE123%20signed.pdf>

Contract award report for the Design of the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Extension [CY11 (2020/21 Scheme)]

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/CY11%20signed.pdf>

Housing Infrastructure Fund (Forward Fund) Commissioning Plan Approval:

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Council/201906251800/Agenda/19%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund%20Commissioning%20Plan%20Approval.pdf>

COU 8 Acceptance of Housing Infrastructure Fund (Forward Fund) Grant Heads of Terms with Conditions (Agenda Item 9):

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Council/202006161430/Agenda/09%20HIF%20Forward%20Fund%20Acceptance%20of%20Grant.pdf>

Housing Infrastructure Fund (Forward Fund) Business Case Bid Submission Approval:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/18-19%20DE%20341%20signed.pdf>

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE

DATE OF MEETING: 20/10/2021

SUBJECT OF REPORT: COMMISSIONING PLAN FOR THE PROVISION OF IN-HOME LIFTS

TOWN OR PARISH: N/A

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ADULT SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING / DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND REGULATORY SERVICES

KEY DECISION: YES

REASON: THE TOTAL VALUE OF THIS CONTRACT AWARD IS OVER £500,000

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the commissioning plan is approved

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The proposal is to procure a contract to deliver in house lifts (stair lifts, through floor lifts, platform lifts and step lifts) in North Somerset, in support of the Disabled Facilities Grant programme.

The Disabled Facilities Grant delivers housing adaptations, enabling elderly and disabled residents remain living safely and independent in their own homes. These adaptations in the main provide access both to the property and to essential facilities within the property. The provision of access is often provided through installation of a stair lift, through floor lift or similar.

The grant process is prescribed in law which usually requires two estimates to accompany each application unless the local authority otherwise direct. Good practice guidance encourages councils to use tendered contracts to improve the customer journey for applicants.

There is considerable operational advantage to the council and applicants when using a contract approach. It simplifies the process by enabling streamlined delivery and a competitive price through formal procurement, delivering value for money.

The current contract, which has run successfully in North Somerset since 2012 terminates in February 2022.

The proposal is to continue operating the contract through the established in-house agency for delivering adaptations.

The estimated value over the lifetime of the contract would be around £1,750,000; based on a contract length in the region of 5 years, with an optional 2-year extension.

2. POLICY

The Corporate Plan sets out the council's vision and overall priorities; this commissioning plan will support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing, and Quality Places objectives. A contract to deliver bathing adaptations helps disabled residents with essential adaptations to remain independent at home.

In the draft Housing Strategy 2022 -2027 (currently out to consultation) a key challenge is making the best use of current housing and help older and disabled residents stay independent in their own homes, through adaptations.

3. DETAILS

The Council assists elderly and disabled people to remain living safely and independently in their own homes through the provision of a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs). This is a mandatory, means tested, grant which can fund a range of adaptations in people's homes, including the installation of stairlifts, through floor lifts, step lifts and other similar lifting devices.

Since February 2012 the council, through a contract with Handicare have provided these lifts as part of their Disabled Facilities Grant programme. This contract has operated successfully since commencement but expires in February 2022.

The use of a procured contract provides advantages to the customer and the council. A single contractor visit is required to carry out the technical survey and provide one quote, in accordance with a tendered price. This reduces disruption to the customer, allows a fast, efficient streamlined service, and secures value for money.

Other advantages include:

- Solely North Somerset tender
- Contract performance indicators can be structured to improve delivery
- Social Value opportunities can be locally focused
- Supported through in-house agency arrangement
- Benefits of technical innovation in the sector can be realised and any savings captured.
- Strong emphasis on quality particularly customer journey and satisfaction
- The benefits from the Equipment & Demonstration Centre can be incorporated into the process to fast-track works.

A report commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care recently published strongly recommends Councils adopt this approach and encourages the use of framework

agreements and schedules of rates to streamline and speed up the DFG process. The report highlights the importance of timely solutions to support more people to stay independent at home for longer

The proposal is to tender for a new contract to maximise opportunities to further streamline the process, achieve efficiencies and provide value for money.

A Procurement Plan will be produced to include the technical details, contract type selection and compliance, price/quality weighting, market testing analysis, environmental and social value requirements. The final plan will be agreed with the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.

The length of contract will be for a period of 5 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

Timeline for procurement

August 2021 - Market Engagement (completed under evaluation)
20th October 2021 – Executive Report - Commissioning Plan approval
End October 2021 - Procurement Plan
November 2021 - Advert/Tender released
Mid Dec - Tenders returned
Jan-2022 - Tender Evaluation
Jan -2022 - Contract Award Report
Feb 2022 - Contract Start

4. CONSULTATION

Market engagement was conducted through a Prior Information Notice Questionnaire, which received 12 responses and enabled us to gauge the level of interest in this opportunity. It also helped inform the Council's commissioning intentions and inform service specification development.

Consultation is proceeding with:

- Disabled / Older person representative groups
- Occupational Therapists (Internal - Adult Social Services and Disabled Children's Team)
- External stakeholders e.g. Alliance Homes

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs and funding

The value of this contract is in the region of £250,000 per annum which will be met from the Better Care Fund (DFG) annual allocation.

The value over the lifetime of the contract would be in the region of £1,750,000.

The procurement plan will be designed to produce a fixed price quotation for each installation through a contract. The price will be fixed for at least the first year of the contract and subject to inflationary price increases thereafter. The proposal will support in-house agency service and contribute to income generation through this service.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Disabled Facilities Grants is a mandatory grant, introduced by the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Good practice guidance encourages Local Authorities to use procured contracts to help streamline and speed up service delivery. The procurement plan and draft contract will be prepared in conjunction with the Councils Legal Service.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Consideration of the climate impact and the potential to reduce carbon emissions, will be considered as part of the development of the Service Specification and detailed in the Procurement Plan.

Preference will be given to tenders where a clear process for reuse and/or recycling of lifts is detailed. A benefit of one provider reduces the travel costs associated with multiple providers making home visits to provide an estimate.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

The key risks to fulfilling the proposed commissioning plan include:

1. **The ongoing impact of the COVID19 pandemic** – The uncertainty of pandemic may have an impact on being able to deliver installations in peoples homes. The impact can be minimised by developing robust risk assessments and through good communication between the contractor and client.
2. **Brexit** – Brexit is currently having a negative impact on both supply and delivery within the sector, this impact will need to be managed and minimised by the contractor.
3. Any residual risks will be addressed through the procurement plan.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

An impact assessment will be completed as part of the Procurement Plan but the approach proposed should only result in positive outcomes for disabled people.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The provision of disabled adaptations supports a number of corporate strategies and maintaining independence is a key part of the draft Housing Strategy for 2022 – 2027 (currently out to consultation)

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The current contract expires in February 2022; and cannot be extended further.

If the contract expires and we do nothing - applicants (elderly & disabled) would be required to submit two estimates for the necessary work which would increase the time and disruption to the household. Such an approach would conflict with good practice and any advantage to streamline the process would be lost, impacting on the customer journey.

AUTHOR

Claire Baxter, Housing Adaptations and Improvements Team Manager

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Independent Review of the Disabled Facilities Grant – Commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/762920/Independent_Review_of_the_Disabled_Facilities_Grant.pdf

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, Sections 19 – 24.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53/part/I/chapter/I/crossheading/disabled-facilities-grants>

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2021

Subject of Report: 2021/22 Budget Monitoring - Month 5

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Ashley Cartman, Executive Member for Corporate Services

Key Decision: Yes

Reason:

Financial values contained throughout the report are in excess of £500,000

Recommendations

The Executive are asked to;

- i. Note the projected revenue and capital budget forecasts as detailed within the report,
- ii. Approve the amendments to the capital budgets as detailed within Appendix 7.

1. Summary of Report

This report provides a summary of the council's financial position after the first five months of the 2021/22 financial year and includes details relating to key issues, known pressures as well as the potential risks that have been identified at this point in time. This is the second report of the financial year and so efforts have focused upon updating material areas of change within the council's budget or those which continue to be impacted by Covid-19 or may be subject to operational challenges.

2. Policy

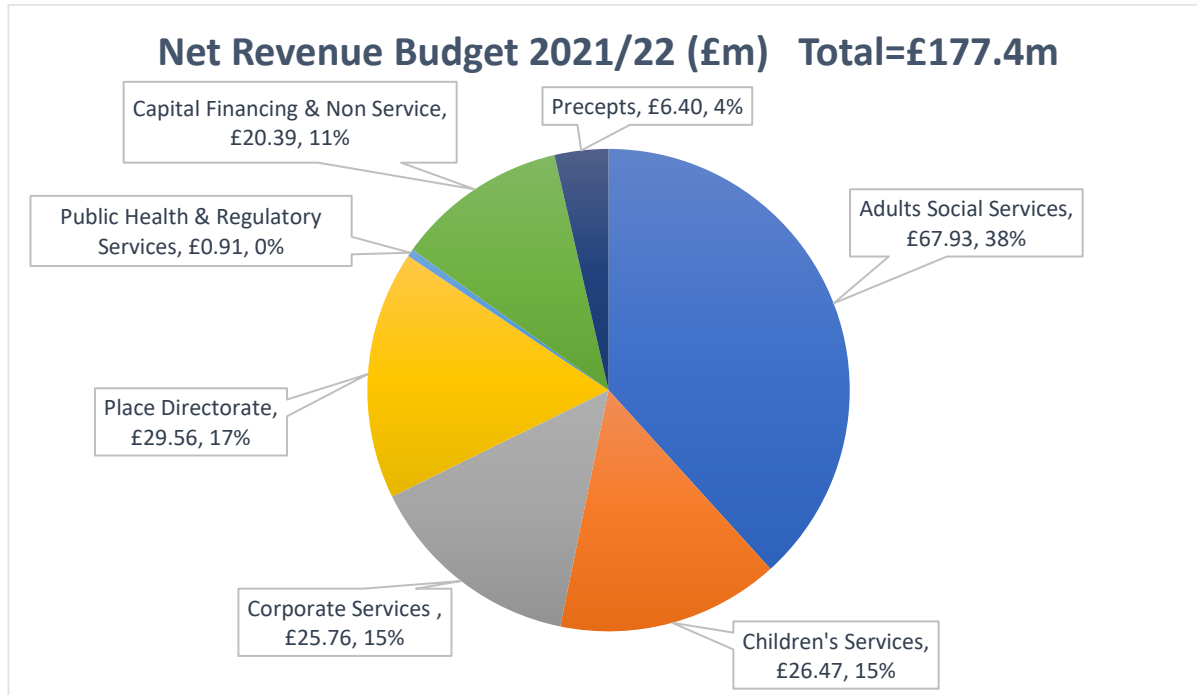
The council's budget monitoring is an integral feature of its overall financial framework, ensuring that resources are planned, aligned and managed effectively to achieve successful delivery of its aims and objectives.

The significant financial risks and impacts associated with Covid-19 on the council since March 2020 have meant that the financial consequences and reporting process have become more important, albeit more complex than before, particularly when understanding the wide range of obligations and requirements on services, as well as the associated funding sources in some areas.

3. Details

3.1. Introduction and context

The council's revenue budget for 2021/22 was approved in February 2021 and the graphic below depicts the size and shape of how this budget is shared across each of the directorates and spending areas.



A significant proportion of the council's budget is allocated to services who provide much valued social care and support to those adults and children who are most in need within our communities, some of whom are vulnerable and really need the help and assistance the council can offer. A vast range of services are provided from assessments and the provision of both short and longer-term care, to those services which are more supportive and preventative, and which enable residents to maintain and maximise their independence in their home where appropriate. Care related services have been under pressure for some time as demand levels continue to grow, often at a pace which is faster than the resources allocated to fund them. As a lot of this funding is either given or controlled by central government, the financial challenges of increasing demand remains an important priority for the council to resolve.

The Place directorate holds budgets for many of the public facing services which are recognisable by residents and businesses within their daily lives such as leisure, libraries, waste collection and disposal, highways and sustainable transport and also areas such as planning, place-making and climate change, whereas the corporate services directorate delivers a combination of revenues and benefits and customer services to the public as well as back-office support services to internal customers.

The budget was prepared at a time when the third wave of the Coronavirus pandemic was at its height and many aspects of the future remain uncertain. As part of its funding package for the year ahead the government provided councils with additional one-off support designed to cover unplanned spending pressures or unmitigated reductions in income levels. The council's share of **general Covid support was £4.975m** and a decision was taken to hold these resources centrally within the 'Non-Service' area of the budget, until the needs and impacts across the entire organisation were assessed and fully understood.

This area of the budget also contains the council's corporate contingency budget of £1.3m, which is the only area of the budget without spending plans or calls against it at the start of the year. Both of these sums will be held as part of the council's financial risk management mitigation plans which will evolve over the course of the year.

Some areas of ring-fenced financial support from the government in respect of Covid-19 have continued into the current financial year although these have been targeted and focused on responding to specific risks and issues. Examples of additional funding received by the council include the extension of the Sales, Fees and Charges grant claiming process, which has been extended until June 2021, and also the continuation of specific grants such as the infection control and testing fund for care providers, support to leisure providers and funding to cover the increased costs of providing home to school transport services. A list of Covid grant funding is provided at Appendix 5.

The council has reflected all additional ring-fenced funding and spending within each of the individual service areas that it relates to and has taken care to increase both the income and associated expenditure budgets for these sums by way of budget virements so that it can be as transparent as possible.

Despite the risks, uncertainties and complexities brought about by both Covid as well as ongoing pressure within core services, the council's budget also includes provision for additional investment within communities, which is targeted at delivering against specific corporate plan aims. The spending associated with each of these items has been included within the relevant directorate budget although a summary showing the main components has been extracted and included at Appendix 4.

3.2. Revenue budget summary

Shown below is a summary of the council's financial forecast year end position after the **first five months** of the year, using the information provided by budget managers from across the council. The projected forecasts do contain both Covid and non-Covid impacts, and further information on these areas has been included throughout the body of the report as well as within the statements from each director attached at Appendix 2.

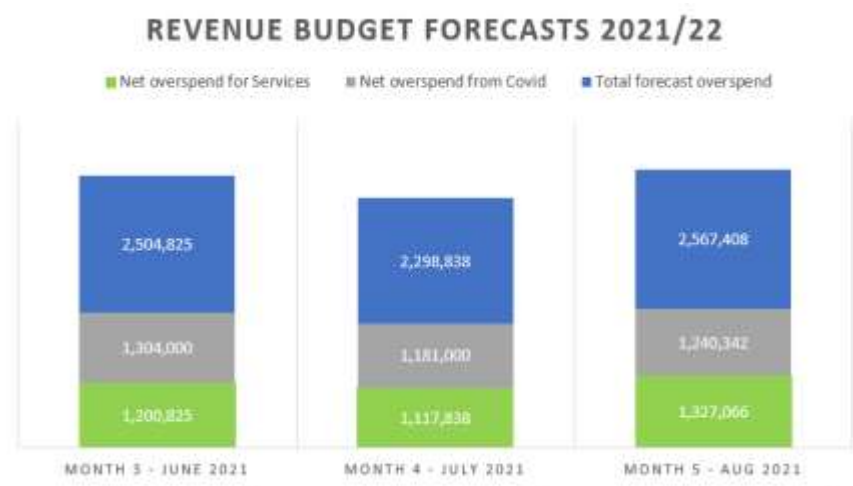
Revenue Budget Monitoring Summary 2021/22						
	Original Net Revenue Budget £000	Month 5 Forecast			Month 5 Analysis	
		Revised Revenue Budget £000	Projected Out-turn £000	Projected Variance £000	Material Covid Impact £000	Non-Covid £000
Service Expenditure Budgets						
Adult Social Services	67,905	67,933	69,041	1,108	165	943
Children's Services	26,512	26,474	26,112	(362)	0	(362)
Corporate Services	25,739	25,756	25,717	(40)	0	(40)
Place	29,565	29,558	31,415	1,856	1,075	781
Public Health & Reg Services	911	911	913	2	0	2
Capital Financing	10,674	10,674	10,673	(1)	0	(1)
Other Non Service Budgets	16,118	16,118	16,120	3	0	3
Total Net Revenue Budget	177,423	177,423	179,991	2,567	1,240	1,327
General Fund Financing Budgets	(177,423)	(177,423)	(177,423)	0	0	0
NET REVENUE BUDGET TOTALS	0	0	2,567	2,567	1,240	1,327
Use of Covid Funding			(1,240)	(1,240)	(1,240)	0
REVISED REVENUE BUDGET TOTALS			1,327	1,327	(0)	1,327
Dedicated Schools Deficit	7,150		11,861	4,711		

The table is displayed in the council's standard financial monitoring template and depicts the reported position for each of the 'directorates' in turn, as well as portraying an aggregated picture of all council services, along with the resources used to fund the services.

Key messages and headlines which can be taken from the table above are;

- The council's revised net revenue budget for the year totals £177.423m (blue shaded column)
- An initial assessment indicates that the council will spend £179.991m on delivering its services, which is £2.567m more than the resources it has available (yellow shaded column)
- Of the total overspend of £2.567m, an assessment has been made which shows that £1.240m relates to unplanned covid spending or short-falls in income budgets; and £1.327m relates to non-Covid or business-as-usual operational impacts elsewhere within the council's budget (green shaded columns)

As noted above, the council has been allocated a one-off grant by the government which it can use to fund Covid related impacts which may arise during the year. The summary table above shows that the council will allocate £1.240m of the Covid grant and will release this as funding to offset the reported pressures, meaning that the revised financial projection in respect of the council's ongoing revenue budget at this time, is a **short-fall in funding**, or an **over spend of £1.327m**.



It is important to recognise that all the council's budget monitoring forecasts are likely to change at some point over the coming months as more information is gathered, reviewed and assessed and so the financial reports will continue to be updated and refreshed and shared throughout the year. The chart shows the movements in projections made over recent months.

In the event that the projected over spend of £1.327m remains at the end of the financial year, then the council would be required to consider how this would be funded. Although no recommendations are being made at this stage, options would include use of the council's contingency budget, a transfer from the general fund working balance, or from other earmarked reserves although each of these options will have implications and so the corporate leadership team will continue their efforts to ensure that mitigations are identified by directors to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved at the end of the year.

3.3. Revenue budget - directorate summaries

The council's financial monitoring processes are consistently applied and embedded across all of the directorates and service areas. Each month the finance service collaborates with senior managers who have been given specific financial responsibilities, to review and assess the key

risks and issues being faced by services so that they can prepare a forecast which accurately portrays the financial performance likely to be achieved at the end of the financial year.

Reports are presented to each Director and their leadership teams so that they can review and assess the latest projections by their budget managers and identify and approve any actions arising or mitigations which may need to be implemented in the future.

An extract of the monthly reporting information from each Director is included within this report and can be found in Appendix 2. These summaries provide a detailed breakdown of significant financial variances and cover both Covid and Non-Covid impacts however, key extracts or notable issues arising within each of the directorates have been summarised and incorporated in the narrative below.

It should be noted that a consolidated report is also reviewed by the corporate leadership team so that they are aware of the council's overall financial position enabling them to understand, influence and support any strategic decision-making which may be required.

3.3.1. **Director of Adult Social Services** – Projected expenditure in excess of the approved budget provision of £1.108m (1.6% and £165k of which directly relates to Covid pressures)

The predominant area of over spend relates to individual care packages and whilst none of this is badged directly as Covid related, the shift in the pattern of demand, described below, will inevitably be, at least in part, related to Covid.

The key trend of seeing fewer basic long-term placements in care homes since impact of Covid-19 appears to continue, although this is partly offset by an increase in “Exceptional Special Needs” (ESN) placements. As a result, whilst expenditure is broadly consistent with the budget, there are lower client contributions, partly as a result of reduced basic packages, but also because of client contributions being significantly lower in relation to higher cost ESN packages. The increasing number of ESN packages may suggest higher commissioning costs, a difficulty in moving clients from CCG commissioned hospital discharge beds and / or increasing complexity of people's care needs.

Expenditure in wider social care support in the people's homes and their community, which covers home care and supported living for example also appears to be increasing. The overall rise is partly offset by an increase in client contributions following a programme of reviewing financial assessments for care contributions.

The first part of the year has also shown an increase in short term care, so while there appears to be an underlying trend in fewer long-term permanent placements in care homes, there also it seems to be higher occupancy levels on short term basis, which indicates increased respite or rehabilitation use.

In addition, it is worth noting that there are a number of factors which are likely to result in a continuing increase in demand for services and support, including delays to elective surgery, earlier hospital discharge, Long Covid, pressures on mental health and carers and rising Care and Occupational Therapy assessment waiting lists.

The key metrics that support the narrative are shown in the table below:

1. A reduction in demand for basic residential / nursing placements, which has been more than offset by an increase in demand for ESN placements, which are a) more expensive and b) do not attract any client contributions

	Aug-2019	Aug-2020	Aug-2021	Change 2019 to 2020	Change 2020 to 2021	Change 2019 to 2021
Activity Data						
Residential Basic	503	433	415	-13.9%	-4.2%	-17.5%
Nursing Basic	287	238	238	-17.1%	0.0%	-17.1%
Residential Basic + ESN	234	267	264	14.1%	-1.1%	12.8%
Nursing Basic + ESN	48	55	58	14.6%	5.5%	20.8%
Unit Cost Data						
Residential Basic	£531	£560	£577	5.4%	3.2%	8.7%
Nursing Basic	£613	£637	£665	3.9%	4.2%	8.3%
Residential Basic + ESN	£1,344	£1,417	£1,434	5.5%	1.2%	6.7%
Nursing Basic + ESN	£1,076	£1,225	£1,191	13.8%	-2.7%	10.7%

2. An increase in demand for supported living for (largely adults with LD) and (provisionally for this year) and increase in unit costs beyond inflation

	Aug-2019	Aug-2020	Aug-2021	Change 2019 to 2020	Change 2020 to 2021	Change 2019 to 2021
Supported Living Activity Data	234	268	284	14.5%	6.0%	21.4%
Supported Living Unit Cost Data	£685.45	£689.93	£756.95	0.7%	9.7%	10.4%

3. An increase (beyond simply cost inflation) of the average unit costs of domiciliary care, indicating an increase in complexity / acuity / average number of hours per week

	Aug-2019	Aug-2020	Aug-2021	Change 2019 to 2020	Change 2020 to 2021	Change 2019 to 2021
Average weekly unit cost	£178.29	£195.81	£221.53	9.8%	13.1%	24.3%

Specific Covid-related impacts

It is important to mention that the revised budget for the directorate includes increased expenditure of £3.4m in relation to further rounds of the Infection Control and Testing Grant, funded by the government (to the end of September), which have been distributed to care providers across North Somerset. At this time we are awaiting news from central government as to whether the Infection Control and Testing Grant will be payable after the end of September.

Covid support also continues as part of the agreed recovery plan for care providers with £1.53m of funding available. To date, we have paid £200k for nursing care home premiums, with other assistance due imminently.

3.3.2. Director of Children's Services – Projected under spend of £0.362m (1.4%)

The forecast under spend in Children's Services is mainly due to the spend on placements for looked after children being significantly less than the budget. This is predominantly representative of the fact that the budget was set when looked after children numbers were significantly higher than they are now and, in addition, an allowance was made in the expectation that numbers would begin to rise once lockdown measures were eased; although this has not yet materialised. The positive budget variance has also been helped by the work being carried out by the service on reducing placement costs by "stepping down" young people to more appropriate and cost-effective placements, which also supports their long-term outcomes. As a result of all these factors, the forecast spend is c. £1.1m less than the budget. The number of children looked after in recent years is shown in the graph overleaf.

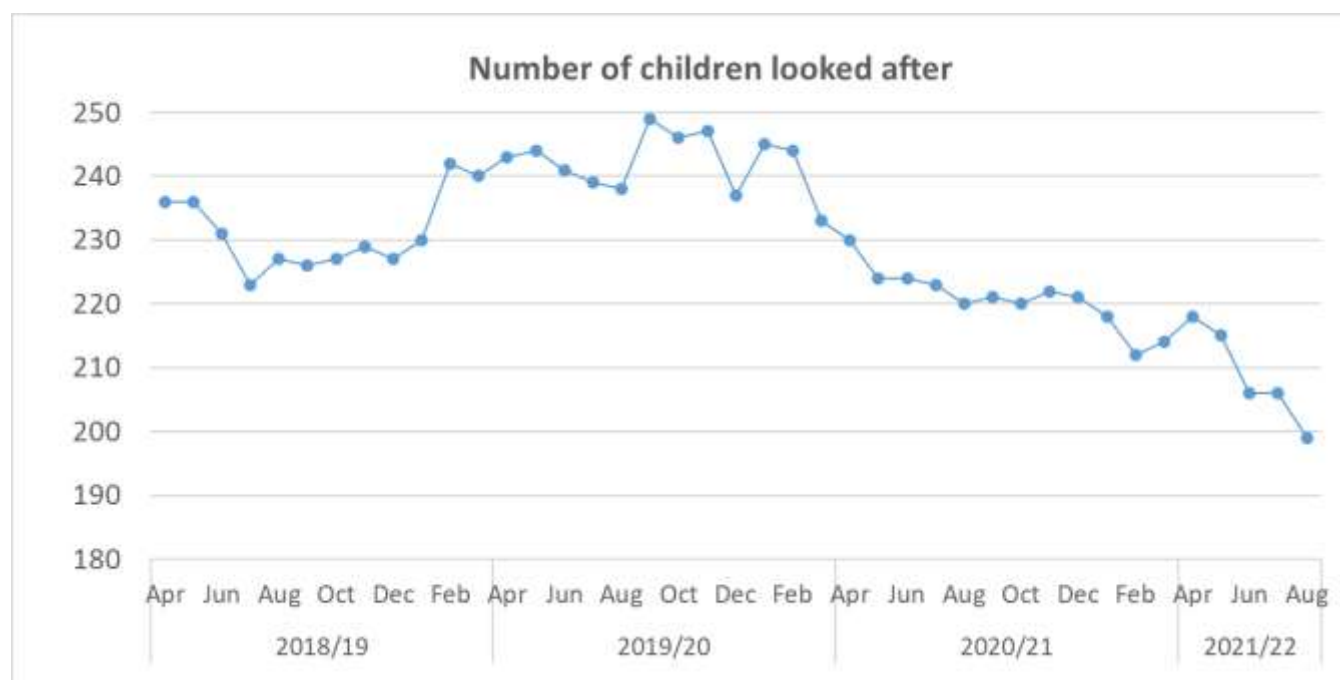
Other areas within the Children's Services budgets are also showing positive positions, for example there are savings in staffing costs as a result of vacancy management, totalling £387k and contributions totalling £285k towards staffing and overhead costs from a number of grants from central government.

The directorate is however facing a range of cost pressures, with the main one relating to supporting families with disabled children (of c. £830k). Growth of £475k was applied to this

area of the budget through the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), although this has not been sufficient to close the gap between the budget and the in-year demand during the current financial year due to a range of individual circumstances. Options are being explored to reduce the forecast from its current level, one of which includes reflecting the financial contributions due from the Clinical Commissioning Group towards the cost of packages, when such discussions have been completed. It should be noted that the forecast expenditure and associated pressures will not all continue into future years as the budget supports a range of children, who's need and ages change over time.

Other cost pressures include systems improvement, nursery income and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) element of our Education Support Services Contract.

The financial impacts which have materialised in the current financial year will continue to be monitored and reported through this framework although impacts and estimates for future years' expenditure in relation to both placements for children looked after and also families with disabled children, will be a key focus of the 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process to ensure that they are aligned to forecast levels of activity.



In addition to the position in Children's Services that relates to the General Fund, there is also a forecast in-year and cumulative deficit with regard to the **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**. The forecast deficit of £11.8m (rising from £7.2m at the end of the last financial year) relates to the significant and sustained pressure in the High Needs Block that provides funding for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

As in previous years, the forecast in-year deficit relates to the costs of independent non-maintained special schools, bespoke packages for young people not in school and Top-Up Funding to both mainstream and special schools.

These rising costs relate directly to the increasing number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The numbers have risen by 108% since 2016 and 23% in the last year, with numbers expected to continue to rise.

Projects are in place to provide more local specialist provision to mitigate cost increases, however, recent modelling, which takes into account forecasts for the increasing number of young people requiring specialist provision, indicates that, in the absence of a further exceptional funding injection from the government, there is little prospect of reducing the overall deficit, although it is possible that the in-year deficit could reduce by 2024/25.

Officers discussed the council's deficit management plan with officials from the Department for Education at the end of July 2020. They raised no concerns about our approach and, in particular, were supportive of our intention to lead and organise an Inclusion Summit. This would include various partners who together would develop a strategy and a range of plans to ensure that more children and young people with SEND can remain in mainstream schools with appropriate levels of support.

The Summit took place earlier this year and there was significant commitment from all parties. We are continuing to develop plans to ensure that more children and young people with SEND can remain in mainstream schools with appropriate levels of support and to ensure that any out of area placements represent value for money. The plans align with our SEND Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) and will be discussed with the DfE during their visit on 23 September 2021.

3.3.3. Director of Place – Projected over spend of £1.856m (£1.075m of which relates to Covid impacts)

The overall forecast for the Place directorate is a net over spend of **£1.856m**. Early reviews indicate that the directorate is still being significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic which currently represents £1.075m of the latest variance, with forecasts showing that £0.780m relates to non-Covid operational impacts.

Given the timescales and reduced funding allocated to the council for Covid impacts it is important to understand the details behind each of the projections to assess the underlying impact in terms of service delivery in the current year, as well as the sustained impacts which may continue into future years which would be a great cause for concern as this may be a time when no additional funding is received. A detailed will be carried out on each of the current covid issues over the next few weeks to determine a baseline position and projection across future years with further information being included within the following report.

Covid-related pressure

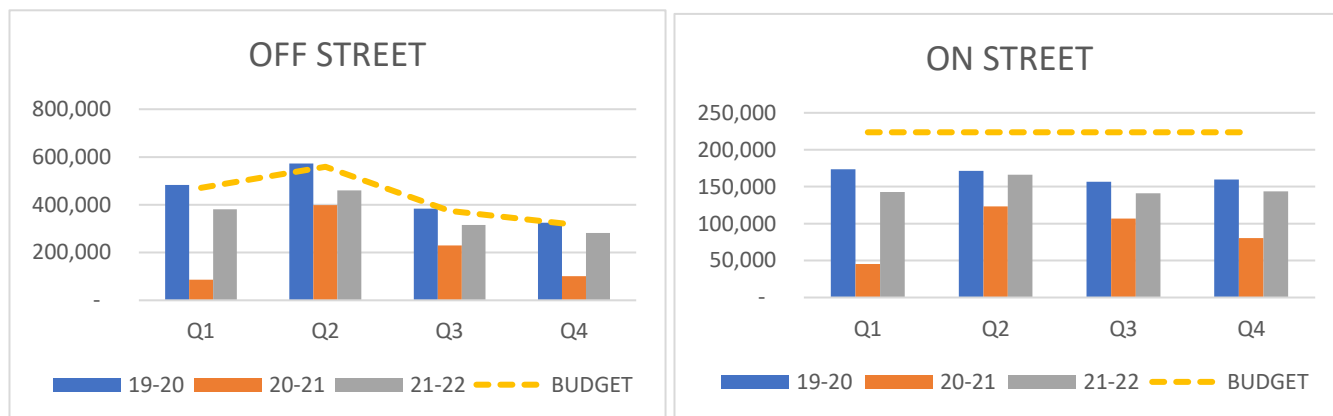
Although the directorate recognises that Covid-related pressures are forecast to be £1.075m of the total projected over spend, it should be noted that this position is a **net** position and includes significant mitigations by way of grant funding allocations from the government.

Some of the Covid impacts reported within the Place directorate have arisen as a result of incurring **additional spending** in areas such as; continuing to pay financial assistance to businesses and support to our leisure providers, incurring additional costs in relation to home to schools transport as well as supporting bus and active and sustainable travel initiatives. A significant proportion of these additional costs are funded through specific government funding packages and so do not impact on the council's own resources.

However, the majority of the financial impact reported within the directorate relates to the losses in budgeted income levels, usually received through sales, fees and charges income streams. In 2020/21 these income losses were mitigated throughout the year by the governments' compensation scheme which provided reimbursement for 75% of losses, which were over a 5% threshold. This significantly reduced the impact of income losses in 2020/21.

Whilst the compensation scheme has continued in 2021/22, it was only for a short period and ended on the 30 June 2021. The anticipated claim for quarter one has been included as a mitigation however the income losses are expected to continue past this date and without the compensation scheme is likely to continue to be a budget pressure which may need to be addressed going forwards.

The main services affected by income losses at this time are highways and parking, leisure contract income, community halls, events and seafront activities. The charts below show an extract of income forecasts for the parking service, and clearly significant parts of these losses would be deemed irrecoverable and cannot be caught up at a later point in the financial year. However, the extent to which these income losses are impacted as a result to covid and the extent to which these losses may continue, will depend on a number of complex factors, including government guidance and legislation, the weather, customer behaviour and economic and market conditions in the weeks and months ahead.



Forecasts will be updated throughout the financial year to see how much of the variances specifically relate to Covid or other factors as well as how much of the income is recovering and whether any of these impacts will be sustained into future financial years.

Other directorate pressures

In addition to the issues noted above there are a number of other risks and issues that have been identified early in the financial year monitoring process with a view to trying to explore ways to mitigate these pressures where possible. The main areas are as followings:

Home to School Transport

Despite c£500k of growth allocated to the service in 2021/22, there remains significant pressures within the Home to School Transport service as a result of a growth in demand specifically for SEND transport.

The forecast variance for the service is a £0.192m over spend although it should be noted however that the true financial position of the service will be unknown until the end of October once the new school year starts and the transport arrangements are in place. In addition to rising demand levels, at the time of writing this report the service is also experiencing operational and delivery issues brought about by the reducing number of appropriately skilled drivers within the market who are available to drive children to school each day. Clearly this is a national issue which is affecting many organisations, industries and services, and one which may ultimately result in additional cost pressures for the council.

The cost of delivering the service will therefore be determined by a number of factors which are currently unknown and could result in the forecast changing throughout the year. A further update will be provided in subsequent reports.

Programme Savings in relation to staffing

Programmed savings in relation to staffing from previous financial years are at risk in 2021/22. In previous financial years these have been offset by vacancies and delays in recruitment but due to the significant pressures on the services and increased workloads it is more challenging to hold vacancies for a significant period of time. The total budgeted saving is £170k. The directorate management team will continue to review to attempt to mitigate this variance throughout the year although this does remain a significant challenge.

3.3.4. Director of Corporate Services – Projected under spend of £0.040m

The overall forecast for Corporate Services is a small net under spend of £0.040m, which is a relatively healthy position however, it can be seen from the summary within Appendix 2 that the directorate is facing pressures in some areas of its budget. The following are worthy of particular note;

- Delays in the delivery of some MTFP savings, e.g. Support Services Contract
- Anticipated reductions in income budgets, e.g. summons costs, car parking and commercial properties
- Increased cost pressures, e.g. Members Allowances, External Audit Fees and insurance premiums

The directorate is managing to balance its overall financial position by offsetting these pressures against areas where there is forecast to be additional income or by spending less in other areas although, it should be noted that this is not a sustainable position as some mitigations are one-off or shorter-term in nature and cannot be continued into future years, for example;

- Increase in income from land charges, rental of office accommodation buildings, new burdens grant towards audit fees, additional Covid grant for sales, fees and charges
- Reductions in running costs of office accommodation properties, former employees' pension charges

3.4. Revenue budget – resources, including the Collection Fund

The council funds its net revenue budget and spending plans each year from 'resources' which are a combination of grants from central government and locally generated resources, levied on both residents and businesses through council tax and business rate demands.

The budget for the 2021/22 financial year shows that the council expects to receive approximately £24m in government grants and £153m from local sources.

Appendix 2 contains a summary detailing each of the council's resource forecasts for the year along with supporting information and explanation to provide context; whilst this can be a complex area headlines to note are;

- Council tax in-year – the forecast shows that there will be a small **surplus of £155k** on the collection fund in respect of council tax activity;
- Business rates in-year – the forecast shows that there will be a **deficit of £4.505m** on the collection fund in respect of business rate activity. However, it should be noted that there has been a significant change made by the government since the time that the council's

budget was set in February 2021 in respect of the continuation of Covid support for businesses in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors by way of awarding tapered relief against their 2021/22 liability; although, as in previous years, this decision will be fully funded by the government by way of a Section 31 grant (see below).

- Section 31 grants – as noted above, the council will be fully compensated by the government for the national policy decisions taken in respect of business rate relief and so it is forecast that a **new grant of £6.173m** will be received. As in previous years the timing of this grant will not align to deficit on the collection fund, and so a smoothing reserve will be used across the year-end.

The majority of other movements and variances within resources relate to prior financial years and will not be reflected within the revenue budget but will instead be seen within the council's medium-term financial plan budget process, although it will be important to distinguish which of these movements are one-off in nature, and which will be ongoing into future years.

3.5. MTFP savings plans

Included at Appendix 3 is a schedule of the budget reductions totalling £7.4m, which were incorporated into the 2021/22 revenue budget, together with an assessment should the status and progress for each of the savings plans.

Despite the ongoing challenges faced over recent months, these items remain a feature within the monthly budget monitoring processes and are regularly reviewed by directorate leadership teams. The assessment at this point in the year indicates that approximately 75% of the planned savings are already on track to be fully achieved in year. Assessments have been made with regards to other proposals and a risk factor has been applied, although it is expected that further progress will be made over the next few months.

3.6. Investment in corporate priorities

The financial summary provided at Appendix 4 gives an overview of the corporate investment priorities included within the revenue budget for the year. These proposals were considered as they clearly aligned with the vision, aims and objectives described within the Corporate Plan and can be seen as having a visible impact on residents and communities. The majority of funding has been fully allocated to specific projects and service leads are currently delivering these impacts on the ground so that the benefits can be seen and accessed. Other investment proposals, such as improving the lakes in Clevedon, Portishead and Weston are classified as capital infrastructure projects and so will be included within the capital programme as detailed in Appendix 6.

3.7. Revenue reserves – general / unallocated reserves

The council's general reserve balance at the start of the year, often referred to as the Working Balance, remains unchanged from previous years and **was £9.053m** which equates to approximately 5.1% of the net revenue budget.

The summary table presented in section 3.2 reflects a forecast over spend of £1.327m and should this need to be taken into account and funded at the year-end then the balance in the general reserve could potentially fall to 4.35%, which would not be a desirable position.

The council does have access to other resources should it be needed, for example the contingency budget, the balance of the unallocated covid grant, as well as a series of earmarked reserves although as in previous years, every effort will be made to deliver a balanced budget by the end of the financial year.

3.8. Summary

The council recognises that there remains a series of uncertainties, risks and potential commitments emerging across many of its budgets in both the current financial year, and also into future years. Some of these issues have been highlighted throughout this report although at this point it is not fully clear what obligations or impacts the council will continue to face or be required to fund in the future. The council does maintain a financial risk register to document all such risks, which includes an assessment as to the scale of the potential impact and also the probability of such a risk materialising. Some risks do present with external funding and so all relevant information is captured. The register is continually reviewed and updated as part of the council's monthly financial monitoring processes.

Whilst additional resources have been allocated to the council in 2021/22 to fund continued impacts of Covid, and there have also been announcements that some of the support mechanisms has been extended until June and even September, the council recognises that this funding is unlikely to be sufficient to cover all known areas of demand or income loss and so information continues to be gathered to enable the council to be as prepared as it can be.

The council recognises that it must operate a range of financial strategies which aim to maximise financial opportunities and funding from external sources, be prudent in spending plans and commitments and also utilise reserves and balances to smooth financial impacts across years where appropriate. The council's revenue budgets will continue to be closely monitored, although it may be that some of the longer-term issues may potentially need to be addressed through the medium term financial planning considerations.

3.9. Capital budgets – current financial performance

The capital programme covers the period up to 2024/25, although does give particular focus and attention for the 2-year period 2021-2023. The programme covers all aspects of the councils' services and has been built up in several phases following different stages of approval.

Appendix 6 provides details of all schemes currently included within the latest programme, although attention has been focused on the significant schemes which are closely monitored by the Capital Strategic Delivery Group, which are deemed to be material in nature or impact.

As referenced in the previous monitoring report, efforts have been made to update and improve the financial information shared in respect of capital projects. Changes introduced within the revised summary include;

- Total capital investment costs – this means that all capital expenditure is now included within the monitor for each project, including spend which has been incurred in an earlier financial year. The previous capital monitor only included expenditure for the current and future years, which did not allow the total costs of a project to be seen in a single report.
- Forecasting – the revised monitor has been updated to included a forecast of potential future costs, even though they have not yet been approved or incurred. This enables the council to assess potential financial risk and implement strategies which could mitigate or fund such risks.

At this time the report indicates that two of the council's capital schemes are forecast to spend more than that approved budgets;

- Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion – currently forecast to spend £3.5m more than the initial resources. This project is subject to a more detailed report considered elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting and so full details have been included there, including the proposed funding solution.
- Weston Town Centre Enhancement Scheme – a range of risks and issues have been documented within the detailed plans for this project including items such as unexpected ground conditions including high water tables and unmapped utilities, both of which have required alternative solutions to be identified, including consultation, co-ordination and gaining approval from utility companies for design changes. Some of these risks and the associated design modifications have resulted in changes to timescales as well as cost forecasts. Work is currently ongoing with specialist project managers and quantity surveyors to assess cost pressures with a view to mitigating these where possible. Alternative sources of funding are also being investigated.

Appendix 7 summarises the changes which have been reflected within the programme during the current financial year, which require approval from the Executive.

4. Consultation

The report has been developed through consultation with the council's corporate leadership team, and also with each of the departmental management teams.

5. Financial Implications

Financial implications are contained throughout the report.

The detailed values included throughout the report include all of the council's expenditure, income receipts as well and any proposed transfers to or from reserves; the values exclude any technical accounting adjustments such as impairment or depreciation which enables a more transparent representation of the council's finances to be shared.

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

The council's Strategic Risk Register currently includes two risks associated with the financial planning:

- Risk that we are unable to deliver the priorities of the council by not planning to meet the Medium-Term financial challenge.
- Risk that we do not manage budgets effectively in-year by not implementing and delivering the transformational projects required to meet the financial challenge.

The council's Corporate Leadership Team regularly review the budget monitoring forecasts as well as significant risks which may emerge from within directorate risk registers or operational activities. A further risk of particular interest when considering the ongoing impacts of Covid-19 pandemic is shown below:

- Viability of our providers, contractors, suppliers including concerns around sustainability of key markets and failure to provide essential services.

The application of additional funding, provider support, service mitigations and savings referenced within the directorate summaries show that the council has sought to manage these risks identified above, although clearly any further changes or measures would require review and reassessment.

9. Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications with regard to the recommendations contained within this report although it should be noted that the council has utilised additional Government funding to support vulnerable residents whether appropriate, financial support to those providing essential services, and working in partnership with community groups.

Individual savings proposals incorporated into the revenue budget for the current financial year are supported by an Equality Impact Assessment.

10. Corporate Implications

The Corporate Plan and MTFP, along with the supporting financial monitoring processes and performance management framework are vital tools to help align effort across the organisation and ensure that services are all are focused on delivery to agreed community and organisational priorities.

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. The Corporate Plan continues to be reviewed in the light of emerging risks and pressures and steps are being taken to assess timeframes and monitor key outcomes.

11. Options Considered

None – the council is legally required to set a balanced budget and to implement a robust financial framework to ensure that spending is aligned to available resources.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1	Revenue budget summary for 2021/22
Appendix 2	Financial commentaries from each director
Appendix 3	Monitoring of MTFP savings plans for 2021/22
Appendix 4	Monitoring of corporate investment plans for 2021/22
Appendix 5	Extract of Covid grant income for 2021/22
Appendix 6	Capital budget monitoring for 2021/22
Appendix 7	Schedule of capital budget virements – to be approved

Background Papers:

Exec Report- February 2021, Medium Term Financial Plan and Revenue budget update

Council Report- February 2021, Council Tax Setting

Exec Report- September 2021, Budget Monitor Month 4

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**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL - 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING
FINANCIAL SUMMARY - AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

	REVISED BUDGET				PROJECTED OUT-TURN				PROJECTED OUT-TURN VARIANCE			
	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £
Service Expenditure Budgets;												
Adult Social Services	109,127,010	(41,049,774)	(144,673)	67,932,563	108,166,317	(39,009,228)	(116,193)	69,040,896	(960,693)	2,040,546	28,480	1,108,333
Children & Young People	36,904,295	(9,813,641)	(616,945)	26,473,709	37,024,045	(10,413,827)	(498,550)	26,111,667	119,750	(600,186)	118,395	(362,041)
Schools & DSG	52,919,642	(52,919,642)	0	0	57,631,010	(52,919,642)	(4,711,368)	0	4,711,368	0	(4,711,368)	0
Children's Services	89,823,937	(62,733,283)	(616,945)	26,473,709	94,655,054	(63,333,469)	(5,209,918)	26,111,667	4,831,118	(600,186)	(4,592,973)	(362,041)
Corporate Services	82,241,246	(56,599,056)	113,992	25,756,182	79,239,124	(53,919,305)	396,823	25,716,642	(3,002,122)	2,679,751	282,831	(39,540)
Place Directorate	59,758,089	(25,087,762)	(5,111,857)	29,558,470	62,493,044	(24,638,462)	(6,439,958)	31,414,625	2,734,955	449,300	(1,328,101)	1,856,155
Public Health & Regulatory Services	18,901,294	(17,749,196)	(241,372)	910,726	17,013,514	(17,789,087)	1,688,752	913,179	(1,887,780)	(39,891)	1,930,124	2,454
Capital Financing	14,761,840	(4,087,840)	0	10,674,000	14,542,851	(3,869,490)	0	10,673,361	(218,989)	218,350	0	(639)
Precepts	6,399,315	0	0	6,399,315	6,399,315	0	0	6,399,315	0	0	0	0
Non Service Budgets	11,191,551	(1,261,080)	(212,000)	9,718,471	14,444,465	(424,600)	(5,539,050)	8,480,815	3,252,915	836,480	(5,327,050)	(1,237,656)
Total Net Revenue Budget	392,204,281	(208,567,991)	(6,212,855)	177,423,435	396,953,684	(202,983,640)	(15,219,544)	178,750,501	4,749,403	5,584,351	(9,006,689)	1,327,066
General Fund Financing Budgets	0	(163,247,193)	(14,176,242)	(177,423,435)	0	(166,689,232)	(10,734,203)	(177,423,435)	0	(3,442,039)	3,442,039	0
Total Revenue Budget Resources	0	(163,247,193)	(14,176,242)	(177,423,435)	0	(166,689,232)	(10,734,203)	(177,423,435)	0	(3,442,039)	3,442,039	0
NET REVENUE BUDGET TOTALS	392,204,281	(371,815,184)	(20,389,097)	0	396,953,684	(369,672,872)	(25,953,747)	1,327,066	4,749,403	2,142,312	(5,564,650)	1,327,066

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE ADULTS SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	105,411	3,716	109,127	108,166	(961)
- Income	(37,544)	(3,505)	(41,050)	(39,009)	2,041
- Transfers to / from Reserves	38	(183)	(145)	(116)	28
= Directorate Totals	67,905	28	67,933	69,041	1,108
Projected Out-turn Variance					1.63%
- Individual Care and Support Packages	63,327	0	63,327	64,421	1,094
- Assistive Equipment & Technology	420	0	420	453	33
- Information & Early Intervention	703	0	703	681	(22)
- Social Care Activities	8,122	210	8,332	8,800	467
- Covid Related Support	0	0	0	0	0
- Commissioning & Service Delivery Strategy	(5,670)	(177)	(5,846)	(6,308)	(462)
- Housing Services	1,004	(6)	997	995	(3)
= Directorate Totals	67,905	28	67,933	69,041	1,108
Projected Out-turn Variance					1.63%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget					
Service area and projected budget variance	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Individual Care and Support Packages					
Expenditure - Long Term Care Packages (residential)			48,622	45,607	(3,015)
Client Income - Long Term Care Packages (residential)			(14,492)	(10,795)	3,697
Expenditure - Long Term Care Packages (non-residential)			32,913	33,640	727
Client Income - Long Term Care Packages (non-residential)			(4,379)	(4,751)	(372)
Expenditure - Short Term Care Packages			4,079	4,493	414
Client Income - Short Term Care Packages			(295)	(357)	(63)
Other income (including CCG contributions)			(2,983)	(3,377)	(394)
Other			(139)	(39)	100
Social Care Activities					
DOLS, IMHA & Safeguarding			484	679	195
Social Care Locality Teams			3,116	3,185	69
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health Teams			2,867	2,952	85
Community Meals			(21)	15	36
Single Point of Access pressures			1,080	1,269	189
Commissioning & Service Delivery Strategy					
Supporting People Commissioning			1,615	1,436	(179)
Court of Protection - additional income			94	24	(70)
Personalisation Team - vacancies			176	114	(62)
Covid Support					
Infection Control and Testing - Payment to Providers	0	3,423	1,932	1,932	0
Infection Control and Testing - Govt Grant Income	0	(3,423)	(1,932)	(1,932)	0
Covid Recovery Fund - Payments to Providers	0	200	200	200	0
Covid Recovery Fund - Reserves Funding	0	(200)	(200)	(200)	0
Housing Services					
Housing Solutions			674	648	(26)
Housing Regulatory Services & Other			330	353	23
Sub total - material budget variances					1,354
Other minor variations to the budget					(246)
= Directorate Total					1,108

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE ADULTS SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£500k	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Care Providers may need additional support beyond Government Grants and Covid Recovery Fund	High	Low
Increases in referrals and waiting lists, likely to lead to more staffing requirements and to an increase in care packages	Medium	High
Discharge to Assess - Some changes to reablement services are required now, possibly in advance of funding being available (although s256 could be the ultimate contingency)	High	Low
Increase in pay award above 2% reflected within the budget	Low	Low
Non delivery of planned MTFP savings	Medium	Medium
Non collection of debt / rising debt balances / increase in write-offs	Low	Medium

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	34,813	2,091	36,904	37,024	120
- Income	(7,745)	(2,069)	(9,814)	(10,414)	(600)
- Central Recharge Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
- Transfers to / from Reserves	(557)	(60)	(617)	(499)	118
= Directorate Totals	26,512	(38)	26,474	26,112	(362)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-1.37%
Support and Safeguarding	21,974	174	22,148	21,549	(599)
Education Partnerships	3,612	(78)	3,534	3,613	79
Strategy and Directorate	925	(133)	792	950	158
= Directorate Totals	26,512	(38)	26,474	26,112	(362)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-1.37%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget					
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2020/21 £000	Out-turn Variance 2020/21 £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Corporate Parenting					
Placement costs for children looked after	9,788	(433)	9,366	8,329	(1,037)
Family Support and Safeguarding					
Children with Disabilities Support	1,170	1,568	1,202	2,086	884
Section 17 Support (community support)	36	43	48	143	95
Family Wellbeing					
Maintained nurseries overspend, mainly income shortfall from private fees	149	(32)	168	233	65
Education Services					
Support Services for Education Contract overspend	402	18	402	483	81
Directorate Wide					
Under spends on employee budgets	13,388	(702)	14,395	14,008	(387)
Grants contribution to overheads	0	(213)	0	(285)	(285)
Systems Development	0	0	16	150	134
Sub total - material budget variances					(450)
Other minor variations to the budget					88
= Directorate Total					(362)

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Number of children looked after increases following the easing of lockdown measures.	High	Medium
Non delivery of planned MTFP savings	Medium	Low

Additional information integrating volumes / demand for services			
Service area	Projected Costs 2021/22 £000	Volume 2021/22 FTE	Projected Unit Cost 2021/22 £000
Placements for children looked after	8,329	279	30

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE - SCHOOLS & DSG BUDGETS
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	52,817	102	52,920	57,631	4,711
- Income	(52,817)	(102)	(52,920)	(52,920)	0
- Central Recharge Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
- Transfers to / from Reserves	0	0	0	(4,711)	(4,711)
= Directorate Totals	0	0	0	0	0
Projected Out-turn Variance					9.22%
Schools Block	11,571	0	11,571	11,849	278
High Needs Block	25,923	(132)	25,791	30,211	4,420
Early Years Block	11,813	0	11,813	11,813	0
Central Schools Services Block	1,793	0	1,793	1,807	14
DSG Funding	(51,101)	132	(50,969)	(55,680)	(4,711)
Schools - Non DSG	0	0	0	0	0
= Directorate Totals	0	0	0	0	0
Projected Out-turn Variance					9.22%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget					
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2020/21 £000	Out-turn Variance 2020/21 £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Schools Block					
- Contingencies and Growth Funding	1,038	(278)	783	1,060	278
- Transfer to/from Dedicated Schools Grant reserve	0	278	0	(278)	(278)
High Needs Block					
- Out of Authority Placements	4,625	1,508	5,062	7,780	2,718
- Top-up Funding	12,172	1,189	13,418	14,270	852
- Children Missing Education (Bespoke Packages)	100	609	159	885	726
- SEND Inclusion Project			0	73	73
- Transfer to/from Dedicated Schools Grant reserve			0	(4,369)	(4,369)
Sub total - material budget variances					0
Other minor variations to the budget					0
= Directorate Total					0

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Increase in the number of non-maintained independent out of area placements	Medium	Medium
Increase in spend on bespoke education packages for Children Missing Education	Low	Medium

Additional information integrating volumes / demand for services			
Service area	Projected Costs £000	Demand / Volume FTE	Projected Unit Cost £000
Independent Special Schools Out of Area Placements	7,780	142	55

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	82,010	232	82,241	79,239	(3,002)
- Income	(56,611)	12	(56,599)	(53,919)	2,680
- Transfers to / from Reserves	341	(227)	114	397	283
= Directorate Totals	25,739	17	25,756	25,717	(40)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-0.15%
- Director of Corporate Services	759	0	759	761	2
- Head of Marketing & Communications	210	0	210	200	(10)
- Head of Business Insight & Policy	932	0	932	895	(37)
- Head of Peoples Services	737	23	760	774	14
- Assistant Director (Governance)	2,669	(43)	2,626	2,656	30
- Head of Support Services	13,279	44	13,323	13,414	91
- Assistant Director	248	(29)	219	208	(11)
- Head of Procurement	309	0	309	395	85
- Head of Finance	6,597	21	6,618	6,414	(204)
= Directorate Totals	25,739	17	25,756	25,717	(40)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-0.15%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget			
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Head of Support Services			
Support Services Contract - Delays in delivery of MTFP savings	(70)	47	117
Support Services Contract - Inflation allocation, currently lower than budgeted	400	325	(75)
Support Services Contract - Other minor variances	14,613	14,648	35
Support Services Contract - Contract change notice re Pension Charges	207	0	(207)
Support Services Contract - Release of Pension Windfall to Transformation Reserve	0	180	180
Short-fall in Summons cost income	(550)	(375)	175
Revenues and Benefits - Increase in Rent Allowances bad debt provision	24	131	107
Recovery of Covid Sales, Fees and Charges Grant income (Revenues)	0	(145)	(145)
Revenues and Benefits - Housing Benefit payments	42,816	42,695	(121)
Assistant Director (Governance)			
Increase in Members Allowances	702	746	44
Head of Business Insight, Policy & Partnerships			
Increase in Land Charges property search income	(297)	(327)	(30)
Head of Finance			
Short-fall in Commercial Rental & Service Charge income	(4,567)	(4,499)	68
Reduction in Commercial Investment costs (Sovereign Centre)	1,654	1,498	(156)
Short-fall in Car Parking income	(900)	(779)	121
Recovery of Covid Sales, Fees and Charges Grant income (car parking)	0	(34)	(34)
Office Accommodation rental income	(551)	(795)	(244)
Office Accommodation running costs	1,918	1,806	(112)
Central Expenses - increase in insurance premium costs	843	910	67
Central Expenses - increase in Telephone costs	321	369	48
Former Employee Costs	1,110	1,046	(64)
Corporate & Democratic Core - Increase in External Audit Fees	384	493	109
Corporate & Democratic Core - One-off New Burdens Grant re External Audit Fees	0	(45)	(45)
Head of Procurement			
Delays in delivery of MTFP savings re Contract Costs	(70)	(6)	64
Sub total - material budget variances			(108)
Other minor variations to the budget			68
= Directorate Total			(40)

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget

Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Increase in pay award above 2% reflected within the budget	Low	Low
Further delays to delivery of planned MTFP savings	Medium	Medium
Further reductions in rental and car parking income from Commercial Investments	Medium	Medium
Further reductions in recovery of Summons Income	Low	Medium
Further reductions in recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments	Low	Medium
Non collection of debt / rising debt balances / increase in write-offs	Low	Medium
Increase in Telephone costs following implementation of 8*8 system	Low	Medium

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	53,987	5,771	59,758	62,493	2,735
- Income	(21,014)	(4,073)	(25,088)	(24,638)	449
- Central Recharge Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
- Transfers to / from Reserves	(3,408)	(1,704)	(5,112)	(6,440)	(1,328)
= Directorate Totals	29,565	(7)	29,558	31,415	1,856
Projected Out-turn Variance					6.28%
- Neighbourhoods & Transport	27,790	138	27,928	29,276	1,348
- Placemaking & Growth	1,463	56	1,519	1,562	43
- Directorate Overheads	242	(200)	42	507	465
- Special Expenses	69	0	69	69	0
= Directorate Totals	29,565	(7)	29,558	31,415	1,856
Projected Out-turn Variance					6.28%

Covid related impacts - additional expenditure	3,721
Covid related impacts - income losses and short-falls	1,815
	5,536
Covid mitigations - reductions in expenditure	(81)
Covid mitigations - grant funding allocations and claims made	(3,560)
Covid mitigations - reserves and balances (incl b/fwd funding)	(820)
	(4,460)
Net Covid impact within Place Directorate	1,075
Non-Covid impact within Place Directorate	781
= Directorate Totals	1,856

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget			
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Environmental Services & Enforcement			
MTFP DE16 Litter enforcement - contract income not expected in 2021/22	(30)	0	30
Safer Community Services - CCTV (includes historical £95k budget saving)	243	310	67
Mitigated by one-off use of earmarked reserves	0	(50)	(50)
Highway & Parking Operations			
<i>Parking Income - Covid Related</i>			
Short-fall in On-street parking income (WSM)	(895)	(479)	416
Short-fall in On-street parking income (Leigh Woods)	(198)	(50)	148
Short-fall in Off-street parking income	(1,722)	(1,403)	319
Short-fall in Civil Parking Enforcement income	(657)	(545)	112
Increase in Seafront parking income	(669)	(843)	(174)
Mitigated by Q1 Sales, Fees & Charges claim	0	(140)	(140)
Open Space, Natural Environment & Leisure			
<u>Leisure:</u>			
Loss of income from Leisure Contracts	(417)	0	417
Agreed mitigation: planned use of reserves	0	(343)	(343)
Mitigated by Q1 Sales, Fees & Charges claim	0	(74)	(74)
Covid Leisure Grant - Receipt of income	(316)	(316)	0
Covid Leisure Grant - Payments to Providers	316	316	0
Churchill Sports Centre - additional costs associated with the closure	0	65	65

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget (contd)			
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Parks & Seafront:			
Shortfall in Concessions income - new concessions and closure of existing concessions	(408)	(337)	71
Bay Cafe - net reduction in income (partially covid related)	(276)	(106)	170
Bay Cafe - Q1 Sales, fees and charges claim due	0	(28)	(28)
Transport Planning			
Home to Schools Transport (HTST):			
Home to School Transport Demand - 50 new SEND applications to be processed	4,289	4,481	192
Covid HTST Grant - Receipt of income	(414)	(414)	0
Covid HTST Grant - Payments to Providers	414	414	0
Public Transport & Sustainable Travel:			
Increased cost of Public Transport, Bus Services & Concessionary Fares	2,329	2,342	13
Bus Lane Enforcement (Scheme Delayed until Jan 2022)	(20)	(5)	15
Bus Services Improvement Plan Expenditure	163	163	0
Bus Services Improvement Plan - grant received	(163)	(163)	0
Covid Bus Services Grant - Receipt of income	(108)	(108)	0
Covid Better Deal for Users Grant - Receipt of income	(134)	(134)	0
Covid Active Travel Grant - Receipt of income	(95)	(95)	0
Covid Active Travel Grant - Initiatives and costs	95	95	0
Libraries & Community			
Shortfall in Libraries income (could be COVID related)	(158)	(91)	67
Shortfall in Campus income - reduced internal meetings / more virtual	(179)	(112)	67
Shortfall in Campus income - external income, after cost reductions and Covid S,F&C	(153)	(101)	53
Shortfall in Somerset Hall income - used as a testing site, net of S,F&C	(97)	(34)	63
Placemaking & Development			
Events:			
Shortfall in Events income (incl Tropicana) - Covid related, net of S,F&C	(268)	(231)	37
Economy:			
Economic Recovery and Renewal, 2020/21 plans, includes £65k Air festival funding	245	245	0
Funded by balance held in Place Reserves (Remaining allocation from 2020/21)	(180)	(180)	0
Economic Recovery and Renewal, 2021/22 allocation	0	295	295
Funded by balance held in Place reserves	0	(295)	(295)
Covid Welcome Back Grant - Receipt of income	(256)	(256)	0
Covid Welcome Back Grant - Initiatives and costs	256	256	0
Covid Self-Isolation Grant - Receipt of income	(254)	(254)	0
Covid Self-Isolation Grant - Payments to individuals	254	254	0
Covid Additional Restrictions Grant - Receipt of income	(1,568)	(1,568)	0
Covid Additional Restrictions Grant - Payments to businesses	1,568	1,568	0
Covid Practical Support for those Self-Isolating Grant - Receipt of income	(216)	(216)	0
Covid Practical Support for those Self-Isolating Grant - Payments to individuals	216	216	0
Directorate Salary Position			
Balance on historical £200k MTFP saving target	(170)	0	170
Shortfall on salary recharges to the capital programme	(3,738)	(3,137)	601
Mitigated by salary underspends (£558k relates to the capital projects delivery teams)	16,720	16,131	(589)
Sub total - material budget variances			1,694
Other minor variations to the budget			163
= Directorate Total			1,856

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Home to School Transport Demand - Estimate included although true position will not be known until Sept / Oct 2021	Medium	Medium
Waste Disposal costs - Estimate included although could increase if current volumes continue	Low	High
Waste related service delivery risks arising from reductions in HGV drivers and impact on service delivery, which could result in higher costs or income reductions	Medium	Medium
MTFP DE11 Staffing Budget - Fund existing staff through capital / other funding opportunities (£200k) - need to investigate options further	Low	Medium
Income losses across the directorate could be sustained and not recover post pandemic	Medium	Medium

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	11,678	7,223	11,678	17,014	5,335
- Income	(10,526)	(7,223)	(10,526)	(17,789)	(7,263)
- Transfers to / from Reserves	(241)	0	(241)	1,689	1,930
= Directorate Totals	911	0	911	913	2
Projected Out-turn Variance					0.27%
PHS Childrens Health	3,897	0	3,897	3,901	4
PHS Management & Overheads	(8,401)	0	(8,401)	(8,309)	92
PHS Obesity & Activity	140	0	140	115	(25)
PHS Other Public Health Services	345	0	345	385	41
PHS Public Health	424	0	424	385	(38)
PHS Sexual Health	1,404	0	1,404	1,426	22
PHS Substance Abuse & Smoking	2,192	0	2,192	2,097	(95)
Public Health Ring-Fenced Services	(0)	0	(0)	(0)	(0)
Regulatory Services	911	0	911	913	2
Covid Related Grants & Services	0	0	0	0	0
= Directorate Totals	911	0	911	913	2
Projected Out-turn Variance					0.27%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget			
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Sexual Health			
Delayed spend due to Pandemic	1,404	1,365	(39)
Public Health services			
Delayed spend due to Pandemic	1,404	1,365	(39)
Stop Smoking Services			
Delayed spend due to Pandemic	373	347	(26)
Health Protection			
Delayed spend due to Pandemic	424	388	(36)
Regulatory Services			
Reductions in income levels, offset by underspends in salaries	912	913	1
Management & Overheads			
Under spends on employee budgets	3,156	3,049	(107)
PH Reserves - reduced requirement to balance budget	(241)	(15)	226
Covid grants			
Contain Outbreak Management Funds - balance from 20/21 + 21/22 allocation	6,007	6,007	0
Local Outbreak Management Plan - balance from 20/21	724	724	0
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Individuals - balance from 20/21 + 21/22 allocation	492	492	0
Government grant funding	(7,223)	(7,223)	0
** The spending forecasts for these grants are currently being reviewed as the sums are not all committed at present. Timeframes are 31 March 2022.			
Sub total - material budget variances			(20)
Other minor variations to the budget			22
= Directorate Total			2

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE CAPITAL FINANCING & NON SERVICE BUDGETS
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

Financial Overview

As can be seen from the table below, the revised budgets for the Capital Financing & Non Service areas total £26.792m, and the projected out-turn position at the end of the year reflects net spend of £25.553m. Should this position remain unchanged then an **under spend of £1.238m**, or 4.62% of the budget, will occur.

A further analysis of the budgets in this area has been provided to give greater clarity on the key elements.

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2021/22 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	32,141	212	32,353	35,387	3,034
- Income	(5,349)	0	(5,349)	(4,294)	1,055
- Central Recharge Recoveries	0	0	0	0	0
- Reserves	0	(212)	(212)	(5,539)	(5,327)
= Directorate Totals	26,792	0	26,792	25,553	(1,238)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-4.62%
- Capital Financing & Interest	10,674	0	10,674	10,673	(1)
- Non Service - Precepts & Levies	6,399	0	6,399	6,399	0
- Non Service - Contingency & Other	9,718	0	9,718	8,481	(1,238)
= Directorate Totals	26,792	0	26,792	25,553	(1,238)
Projected Out-turn Variance					-4.62%

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget			
	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Capital Financing & Interest Budgets			
Net reduction in capital financing costs (mrp, interest and rcco's)	12,493	12,395	(98)
Reduction in investment interest generated on cash balances	(1,869)	(1,853)	16
Contingency & Covid Budgets			
Contingency budget	1,300	1,267	(33)
Corporate Covid budget	4,975	3,735	(1,240)
£1.075m provisionally held to fund forecast reported in Place			0
£0.165m provisionally held to fund forecast reported in Adult Social Care			0
Other Non Service Areas			
Continuation of Unplanned Covid-19 Costs from prior years	212	212	0
Earmarked funding for Covid c/fwd from prior years (New Burdens)	(212)	(212)	0
Increase in Coroners Service costs - due to Covid impacts	427	467	40
Reduction in net costs of City-Deal Pooling following reduction in business rates - linked to variance in Resources - Central Share of current year Port Cumulo business rates	942	942	0
Sub total - material budget variances			(1,316)
Other Minor Variances <£50k			77
= Directorate Total			(1,238)

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Change in assumptions re Contingency & Covid budgets	High	Medium
Further reductions in interest generated on cash balances	Low	Medium
Change in requirement for RCCO's	Medium	Medium
Change in internal capital financing costs	Medium	Low
Further increase in Coroners Service cost from Bristol City Council	Low	Medium

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESOURCES
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021

Financial Overview

As can be seen from the summary tables below, the budgets for the council's Financing Resources equal the Net Revenue Budget total of **£177.423m**. The projected out-turn position for the end of the year is £177.423m.

A further analysis of the budgets in this area has been provided to give greater clarity on the key elements.

Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget £000	Projected Out-turn £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
- Income	(163,247)	0	(163,247)	(166,689)	(3,442)
- Reserves	(14,176)	0	(14,176)	(10,734)	3,442
= Totals	(177,423)	0	(177,423)	(177,423)	0
Projected Out-turn Variance					0.00%
- Precept on the Collection Fund - Council Tax			(116,583)	(116,582)	1
- Precept on the Collection Fund - Parish Precepts			(6,106)	(6,106)	0
- Precept on the Collection Fund - Business Rates			(29,716)	(29,716)	0
- Other Business Rate Income, Disregarded - Renewables & EA			(888)	(888)	0
- Other Business Rate Income, Central Govt share retained - Port Cumulo			(658)	(658)	0
- (Surplus) / Deficit on the Collection Fund - Council Tax re Prior Yr			1,045	1,045	0
- Council Tax Year-End Movement re Prior Yr			0	(556)	(556)
- Council Tax (Surplus) / Deficit re Current Yr			0	(155)	(155)
- Business Rates (Surplus) / Deficit Own Share re Prior Years			13,689	13,689	0
- Business Rates Year-End Movement re Prior Yr Own Share			0	(1,521)	(1,521)
- Business Rates (Surplus) / Deficit Own Share re Current Yr			0	4,505	4,505
- Other BR Income, Disregarded - Renewables & EA Year-End Movement re Prior Yr			0	379	379
- Other BR Income, Disregarded - Renewables & EA (Surplus)/Deficit re Current Yr			0	198	198
- Other BR Income, Central Govt share retained - Port Cumulo - Year-End Movement re			0	26	26
- Other BR Income, Central Govt share retained - Port Cumulo - (Surplus)/Deficit re Curr			0	134	134
- Revenue Support Grant			(2,179)	(2,179)	0
- New Homes Bonus Grant			(1,382)	(1,382)	0
- Lower Tier Services Grant			(213)	(213)	0
- Adult Social Care & Winter Pressures Grants			(5,807)	(5,807)	0
- Business Rate Top-Up Grant			(2,652)	(2,652)	0
- Small Business Rate Relief Grant			(2,881)	(2,980)	(99)
- Business Rate Adjustment Grant (2% cap)			(1,767)	(1,515)	252
- Council Tax Family Annexe Discount Grant			0	(16)	(16)
- Other S31 Grant			(6)	(18)	(12)
- S31 Grant - Additional Retail and Nursery Discounts			0	(6,173)	(6,173)
- Covid-19 grant - Council Tax Support Grant			(1,922)	(1,923)	(1)
- Covid-19 grant - Covid-19 Response Grant			(4,975)	(4,975)	0
- Covid-19 grant - Collection Fund Losses			(246)	(246)	0
- Use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re Grant			(14,176)	(14,176)	0
- Contbn into the Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve			0	0	0
- Use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re PY Disregarded Surp/Def			0	(405)	(405)
- Contbn into the Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re BR Reliefs			0	6,174	6,174
- Use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve			0	(126)	(126)
- Tech Adj through the Movement in Reserves Statement			0	(2,605)	(2,605)
= Totals			(177,423)	(177,423)	0
Projected Out-turn Variance					0.00%

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESOURCES
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021

Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget			
Service area and projected budget variance	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn Variance £000
Council Tax Income			
Precepts and known prior year deficit	(121,644)	(121,643)	1
Current year forecast deficit	0	(155)	(155)
Made up of:			
37 Lower levels of new Band D equivalent dwellings than anticipated			
326 Shortfalls arising from Collection Rate and Bad Debt Provision			
-311 Lower levels of Discounts, Exemptions and Council Tax Support than budgeted			
Business Rates Income			
Precepts, Top-Up grant and known prior year deficit	(20,225)	(20,225)	0
Current year forecast deficit	0	4,505	4,505
Current year disregarded deficit	0	332	332
(A statutory technical adjustment means these deficits have no effect in 2021/22, but the impact will need to be budgeted for in 2022/23)			
S31 grant funding for BR reliefs	(4,654)	(4,529)	125
S31 grant funding for additional Retail and Nursery reliefs	0	(6,173)	(6,173)
(To be transferred to the Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve to address the 2021/22 deficit noted above, which is largely due to the award of retail relief in the current year.			
Government Grants (Non-Covid)			
No material variance	(9,581)	(9,581)	0
Government Grants (Covid)			
No material variance	(7,143)	(7,144)	(1)
Reserves			
Budgeted use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re prior year Bus Rates deficit	(14,176)	(14,176)	0
Anticipated use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re prior year disregarded deficit	0	(405)	(405)
Anticipated use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re S31 grant reductions	0	(126)	(126)
Anticipated contribution into Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re additional S31 grant	0	6,174	6,174
Statutory Collection Fund technical adjustments (through the CFAA / MIRS)	0	(2,605)	(2,605)
Technical Adjustments re Prior Years			
Prior year estimated to actual out-turn movement (surplus for council tax)	0	(556)	(556)
Prior year estimated to actual out-turn movement (surplus for business rates)	0	(1,521)	(1,521)
Anticipated use of Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve re prior year disregarded deficit	0	405	405
Sub total - material budget variances			0
Other minor variations to the budget			0
= Directorate Total			0

Areas of financial risk within the directorate budget		
Service area and potential financial risk	Range / Scale of Risk Low - £0-£250k Medium - £250k-£500k High >£1m	Likelihood of Risk Occurring
Continued delays in completion of new dwellings	Low	Low
Increase in the Exemptions, Discounts and Council Tax Support awarded	Medium	Low
Reductions in Collection Rate and associated impact on Bad Debt Provision	Medium	Medium
Increase in Appeals in respect of business rate liability	Medium	Low
Increase in Discretionary Reliefs awarded	Low	Low

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESOURCES
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

MTFP Impact of Collection Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	Year of MTFP Impact		
	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Council Tax			
2019/20 Residual (Estimated to Actual) deficit	38	0	0
2020/21 Estimated deficit (spread over three years)	1,006	1,006	1,006
2020/21 Residual (Estimated to Actual) surplus	0	(556)	0
2021/22 Estimated deficit at 30 June	0	(155)	0
	1,044	295	1,006
Business Rates			
2019/20 Residual (Estimated to Actual) surplus	(207)	0	0
2020/21 Estimated deficit from Retail, Hospitality, Leisure and Nursery relief (S31 funded)	13,754	0	0
2020/21 Estimated deficit (spread over three years)	142	142	142
2020/21 Residual (Estimated to Actual) surplus	0	(1,521)	0
2021/22 Estimated deficit at 31 July from Retail and Nursery relief (S31 grant funded)	0	5,936	0
2021/22 Estimated surplus at 31 July (other elements)	0	(1,431)	0
	13,689	3,126	142

Collection Fund Narrative

Council Tax

In January 2021, the council tax deficit for 2020/21 was estimated at £3.057m. This was primarily due to the impact of Covid-19 on elements such as discounts & exemptions, and particularly on the assumptions made about collection rates and the provision for non-payment. To mitigate the budgetary impact of this, the council was mandated to spread the majority of the deficit across the following three financial years. This was therefore incorporated into the council's MTFP, approved in February 2021. By the end of the financial year, collection rates had improved and the overall out-turn deficit was lower than anticipated. The estimated to actual surplus movement was £0.556m and the council will feel the benefit of this in 2022/23.

The current year forecast is now a small **surplus of £0.155m**, the impact of which would be felt in 2022/23. However, it should be noted that this forecast is underpinned by a number of significant assumptions and judgements, each of which will be closely monitored and adjusted over the year. The more material assumptions are listed below.

1. Tax base / housing growth. The 2021/22 council tax base was estimated and approved in December 2020 and formed part of the council's budget calculations in February 2021. This included an assumption about housing growth, based on information from specialist colleagues. Growth from April to July was slightly lower than expected and a prudent forecast for the remainder of the year has been made, which indicates overall that new dwellings could be 3% lower than planned, translating to a variance of -£0.096m, which is a small improvement on the previous month.

2. Collection and Bad Debt Provision. To reflect the economic uncertainty caused by Covid-19, the 2021/22 tax base calculation assumed a slightly lower collection rate (98.5%) than in previous years. The out-turn impact in this area is a combination of collection rates for in-year liabilities and historic arrears, the write-off of any arrears deemed uncollectible and the judgements made about the amount of outstanding debt that will not be collected (i.e. the provision). Collection rates in all areas have improved compared to same point last year, but are still not forecast to be at 2019/20 levels by the end of the year. In addition, the increased bad debt assumptions used at the 2020/21 out-turn have currently been retained and a write-off of £1.6m of historic arrears is assumed. These factors have combined to produce an adverse variance of -£0.240m. That being said, the Council is currently holding significant levels of bad debt on its balance sheet and so a project to review these, along with planned actions, may change current assumptions and forecasts during the remainder of the year.

3. Discounts, Exemptions and Council Tax Support. Additional provision was made for council tax reductions when the tax base was set in December 2020, based on trends seen during 2020/21. Currently however, a 1% positive variance (£0.266m) is forecast in this area.

Business Rates

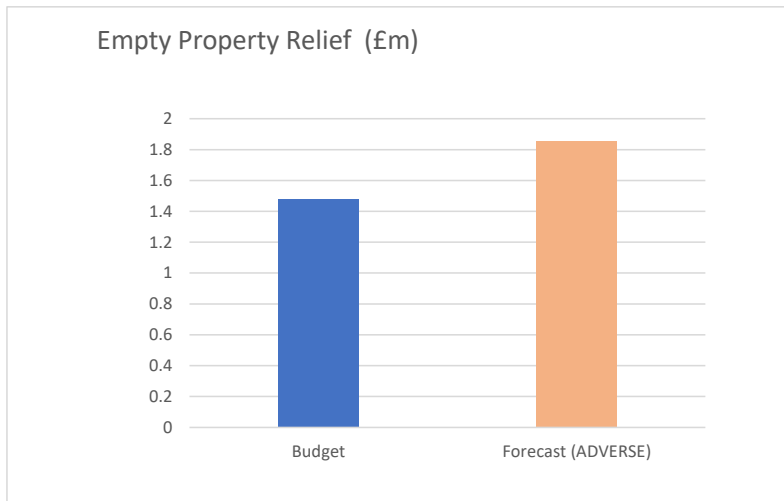
In January 2021, the business rates deficit for 2020/21 was estimated at £13.973m. This was primarily due to the 100% relief granted to all Retail, Hospitality, Leisure and Nursery ratepayers to mitigate the economic impact of Covid-19. The council was fully compensated for granting these reliefs through receipts of Section 31 grant funding. This funding was held in the Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve at year end and both the deficit and the release of the corresponding reserve was incorporated into the 2021/22 budget in February 2021. At the end of March, Central Government announced that Rateable Value (RV) "Checks and Challenges" lodged by ratepayers in response to measures enforced by Covid-19 would not be addressed by granting an RV reduction. This removed significant uncertainty for the council and a significant increase in the provision for appeals was no longer deemed necessary. As a result, the estimated to actual surplus movement was £1.521m and the council will feel the benefit of this in its 2022/23 budget.

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESOURCES
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021**

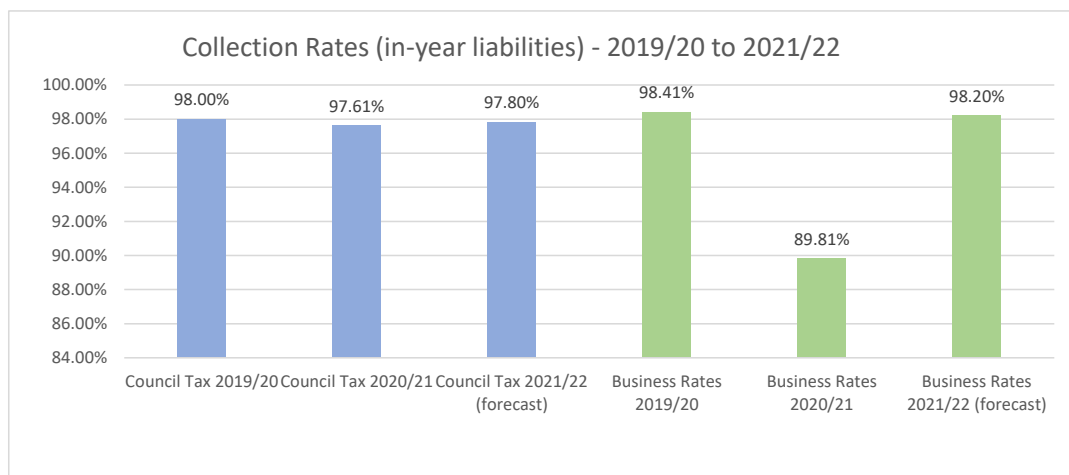
The current year forecast is a deficit of £4.835m, the impact of which would be felt in 2022/23. However, £5.895m of this deficit relates to the granting of relief to Retail, Hospitality, Leisure and Nursery ratepayers (the scheme has been continued, but in an amended form for 2021/22). As with council tax, the business rates outturn forecast is based on a number of significant assumptions and judgements, each of which will be closely monitored and adjusted over the year.

1. A realistic collection rate of 98.2% and a write-off of £0.500m of historic debt are currently assumed. These combine to produce a favourable variance of £0.188m compared to budget (£0.092m is NSC share).

2. An assumed reduction in business rates receivable of £1.695m has been retained in the forecast at the end of July. This was budgeted in January 2021 to reflect several economic uncertainties, including the medium term impact of Covid-19 on businesses and the potential impact on businesses of the UK leaving the EU. Although the total RV of the council's Rating List has remained broadly level from April to July, the amount of Empty Property Relief being claimed by ratepayers has already exceeded budget by £0.377m (£1.858m compared to £1.481m). This is believed to be an impact of Covid-19 and may reflect an increase in businesses that are no longer operational as a result of the pandemic. Further analysis and monitoring of this area will be undertaken ahead of future reports.



3. Whilst an increase (£2.141m) in the provision for successful appeals has been incorporated into the forecast, this has been more than offset by an assumption that £2.841m of outstanding cases will be settled and charged to the provision. This reduces the overall provision balance from £10.5m to £9.8m and the approach is supported by the level of business rates refunds seen to date in 2021/22 and during 2020/21. This forms the main component of the **£1.431m forecast out-turn surplus** (when removing the funded impact of additional Covid-19 reliefs).



Note:

2020/21 business rates collection was suppressed, as a one-off liability of £3.2m was received in early 2021/22

MTFP SAVINGS PROPOSALS REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET

Dir Ref	Dir	Theme	MTFP Savings Proposals	2021/22 £000	RAG Rating	Notes / Comments
PCA1	Adults	Income Generation	Full year impact of review of non-residential financial assessments	-500	G	Financial assessments completed and income from increased client contributions on track. Like for like monthly totals have increased.
PCA2	Adults	Income Generation	Additional income from Continuing Health Care (CHC) and other jointly funded packages	-250	G	On track to make savings with CHC referrals/ NHS contributions to joint packages of care.
PCA4	Adults	Accommodation Shift	Supported Living schemes as more independence-promoting alternatives to residential placements	-150	A	Work ongoing to achieve this saving through accommodation shift
PCA5	Adults	Accommodation Shift	More Shared Lives placements as more independence-promoting alternatives to residential placements	-180	R	Delays in getting the long term referrals and capacity in care market has delayed the deliverability of this saving for 21/22.
PCA6	Adults	Care Package Reviews	Routine reviews of adult social care packages	-250	A	Routine reviews are made with data available to now assess impact, will be updated in P6
PCA7	Adults	Income Generation	Inflation in relation to the Better Care Fund	-160	G	Income and budget reflects additional resources
PCA8	Adults	Care Package Reviews	Review of high cost Direct Payment packages	-75	R	Policy framework required before review of high cost Direct Payments packages, as likely to be resistance from recipients
PCA9	Adults	Care Package Reviews / Early Intervention	Improved outcomes from provider reviews of reablement / digital reablement pathways	-125	A	Ongoing work to deliver this saving through provider discussions.
PCA10	Adults	Care Package Reviews	Dom Care packages reviewed and changed as a result of Covid	-50	G	Income and budget reflects additional saving through post discharge care reductions
PCA11	Adults	Commissioning	Full year impact of redesign of housing with support commissioning arrangements	-600	G	Income and budget reflects additional saving
PCA12	Adults	Early Intervention	Redesign of Day Care Services to focus on a "without walls" respite and early intervention service	-125	G	Savings made to date so far and re-design work ongoing
PCA14	Adults	Early Intervention	Maximise the Wellness Service and redesign the pathway to prevent / delay the need for formal care packages	-75	A	Activity referrals steady and cost & volume numbers steady. It is likely to be cost avoidance savings.
PCA15	Adults	Digital / Remote Working	Reduction in staff travel costs as a result of fewer visits	-50	G	Income and budget reflects additional saving through less travel
DIRECTORATE TOTAL				-2,590		

MTFP SAVINGS PROPOSALS REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET						
Dir Ref	Dir	Theme	MTFP Savings Proposals	2021/22 £000	RAG Rating	Notes / Comments
PCC4	Childrens	Income Generation	Increase contributions from CCG for children with complex needs / children's continuing care	-150	A	Scoping work has started to identify potential eligible young people
PCC5	Childrens	New Ways of Working	Reduction in staff travel costs as a result of fewer visits	-50	G	Staff travel costs remain low due to continued home working for majority of staff
PCC1	Childrens	Sufficiency Strategy	Increase in in-house foster carers to enable less use of Independent Foster Agencies	-100	G	PCC1-3 actively monitored through Placements cost and volume analysis as the proposals are inter-dependent
PCC2	Childrens	Sufficiency Strategy	Commissioning of alternative placements for 16 and 17 year old children looked after	-890	G	
PCC3	Childrens	Sufficiency Strategy	Residential Step Down to In-house Professional Foster Scheme	-275	G	
DIRECTORATE TOTAL				-1,465		

MTFP SAVINGS PROPOSALS REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET

Dir Ref	Dir	Theme	MTFP Savings Proposals	2021/22 £000	RAG Rating	Notes / Comments
CORP S1	CORP	Income	Annual uplift to fees and charges to cover inflationary costs	-380	G	
CSD S1	CSD	Income Generation	Increase in trading income - Inspire, FOI, Risk, Audit, RIPA, FOI etc	-20	A/G	Likely to achieve c75% of savings in-year; although not all proposals long-term so need to review for 2022/23
CSD S2	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - ICT asset analysis	-10	G	CCN Agreed
CSD S2	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Replacement Telephone system	-80	G	
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Introduce a new Target Operating Model for Customer Services: - Close Gateway / reduce hours and / or - Introduce a 'one-call' contact centre for all services	-75	A/G	Expecting £68k saving to be achieved following introduction of changes, CCN still awaited to confirm details
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Review of contracted Business Support - scope / spec / outcomes etc	-50	A/R	Unlikely to be achieved, currently being discussed with Assistant Directors to review / revise proposals
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Review physical storage held with Dataspace	-20	R	Difficult to deliver, unlikely to achieve
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Review storage / azure platform / laas (movement of electronic storage)	-50	A/R	Initial CCN included within Contract but paid on an actual basis, therefore true-up reflected through the year - currently £73k risk and pressures re ICT storage
CSD S2	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Paperless journey - reduce postage costs	-20	A/R	Pilot in progress to test digital solution of combined postage and printing, although unlikely to deliver full savings value
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Reduce printing facilities and costs	-50	A/R	
CSD S3	CSD	Transformation	Transformation - Review retained Business Support - potential reduction from new ways of working	-20	G	Scope and establishment of team reviewed and revised arrangements in place for Directors and AD's - vacant post removed from within structure
CSD S4	CSD	Transformation	Staffing savings arising from a restructure within Corporate Services and a review of vacant posts	-255	G	Senior management structure complete
CSD S5	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Support Services contract - agreed contract changes - Liberata 2015 reduction	-70	G	Contractual saving delivered - lower charge from April 2021
CSD S5	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Support Services contract - VFM service review - Phase 1 - Customer Services Revenues & Benefits	-10	G	CCN Agreed
CSD S5	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Support Services contract - VFM service review - Phase 1 - Debtors	-10	R	Unlikely to be achieved, debt project in place to address rising debt levels
CSD S5	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Reductions in Support Services contract costs - release underspend from contract inflation allocation in 2020/21	-100	G	Budget reduced to reflect actual level of charge
CSD S7	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Review commissioning and contract opportunities following an assessment of the Contracts Register	-70	A/R	Low chance of cashable revenue budget savings although other benefits identified and recorded within contracts register
CSD S8	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Reflect ongoing reductions within expenditure budgets; reduction in the number of former employees and sustained reductions in travel / mileage activity	-50	G	Budget reduced to reflect lower levels of activity
CSD S9	CSD	Efficiency / Change	Review funding options for severance and insurance costs - smoothing resources between ongoing base budget provision and sums held in reserves, as well as internal / external premiums	-250	G	Budget realigned to reflect new funding arrangements, although insurance premium costs arising following changes within the market
DIRECTORATE TOTAL				-1,590		

MTFP SAVINGS PROPOSALS REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET

Dir Ref	Dir	Theme	MTFP Savings Proposals	2021/22 £000	RAG Rating	Notes / Comments
DE4	Place	Review provision	Review Community Transport Services	-15	G	Already reflected in contract price
DE5	Place	Review provision	Review of Churchill Sports Centre	-90	A	Saving has been achieved since the contract ended in 2020 however unforeseen costs associated with the closure of the building are causing revenue budget pressures.
DE6	Place	Income Generation	Libraries Income	-50	A	Unlikely to achieve as income levels down as a result of COVID changed behaviour
DE7	Place	Efficiency / Change	Revisit safe Home to School Transport Routes	-50	A	May not be achieved due to workstream priorities
DE10	Place	Income Generation	Introduce Garden Waste Charging	-1,050	G	Income levels have exceeded target
DE11	Place	Efficiency / Change	Staffing Budget - Fund existing staff through capital / other funding opportunities	-200	A	Opportunities to be explored
DE12	Place	Efficiency / Change	Concessionary Fares Budget - Reduced Patronage	-130	G	Saving will be achieved if government advice does not change regarding concessionary fares payments
DE14	Place	Efficiency / Change	Introduction of the Permit Scheme	-50	G	
DE15	Place	Efficiency / Change	Reduction / Review of Fleet	-40	A	Further work required to achieve full saving
DE16	Place	Review provision	Review of current leisure discount schemes	-21	G	Usage of the scheme has reduced due to COVID.
DE18	Place	Income Generation	Litter Enforcement	-30	R	Not expected to receive a surplus income in 2021-22.
DE17	Place	Efficiency / Change	Supported Bus Review	-30	A	The funding of the service includes COVID BSSG, 2021-22 should be funded, however concerns over future years
DE19	Place	Efficiency / Change	Reduction in staff travel budgets	-20	G	Staff travel reduced due to pandemic
DE21	Place	Efficiency / Change	Partnership working with Town & Parish Council	-30	A	Options to be explored
DIRECTORATE TOTAL				-1,806		

SUMMARY	
-315	R
-240	A/R
-1,240	A
-95	A/G
-5,561	G
-7,451	

INVESTMENT IN PRIORITIES REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET					
Priority Area	Allocation (£000)	Planned Spending (£000)	Unapproved (£000)	Theme / project	Exec Member
Children's Services	150	150	0		
	80	80	0	Funding for extension of the Mockingbird Project to support Foster Carers	Catherine Gibbons
	35	35	0	Improvements at Family Hubs - Provision of advice and support	Catherine Gibbons
	15	15	0	Improvements at Family Hubs - Making equipment and environment more suitable for all age groups	Catherine Gibbons
	20	20	0	Support to Care Leavers to achieve Education, Employment or Training	Catherine Gibbons
Recovery Support for Vulnerable Adults	200	147	54		
	120	111	10	Mental Health Support Workers to support adults recover from mental health episodes and maintain independence	Mike Bell
	80	36	44	Additional respite support for carers	Mike Bell
Climate Emergency & Green Recovery	150	148	2		
	31	31	0	Delivery costs associated with Climate Change initiatives	Bridget Petty
	44	44	0	One-off funding for Climate Change Sustainable Investment Officer post	Bridget Petty
	50	55	-5	One-off funding for Climate Change Communication and Engagement	Bridget Petty
	25	18	7	Other unidentified projects / improvements	Bridget Petty
Covid Recovery, Business, Tourism and Culture Support	100	27	73		
	22	22	0	One-off Higher Level Apprentice post - in Economy team	Mark Canniford
	5	5	0	One-off funding for business breakfast meetings	Mark Canniford
	45	0	45	Growth to fund Culture post in the short-term in advance of longer-term strategy	Mark Canniford
	28	0	28	Other unidentified projects / improvements	Mark Canniford
Active Travel, Parking and Highways	200	200	0		
	55	55	0	One-off funding for Parking service - capacity to deliver outcomes	Robert Payne
	90	88	2	One-off funding for Active Travel initiatives, e.g. 20mph limits, education, promotion, develop EV strategy	Mike Soloman
	55	57	-2	Other unidentified projects / improvements	Mike Soloman
One-off Covid Recovery related Investments	150	150	0		
	150	150	0	Public Rights of Way improvements. An additional £150k S106 will be used to make total project £300k.	Ash Cartman
	60	0	60	Potential proposal - provision of Christmas Lights in Clevedon	Ash Cartman
	90	0	90	Other unidentified projects / improvements	Ash Cartman
Total Investment	1,100	822	278		

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COVID-19

APPENDIX 5

	Legacy Grant Income Allocations 2020/21 £000	Grant Income Allocations 2021/22 £000	Allocated within the Revenue Budget	Reflected within 2021/22 Out-turn Position £000	Reflected as an Agency Arrangement 2021/22 £000
General un-ringfenced grant - held corporately					
- Covid Repsonse Grant	0	4,975	Council-wide	4,975	0
Specific ring-fenced grant allocations - reflected within Service budgets;					
- Infection Control funding for adult social care	0	3,423	Adult Social Care	3,423	0
- Covid Winter grant scheme	0	804	Childrens Services	804	0
- Children's Well-being for Education Return	10	25	Childrens Services	35	0
- Local Authority Additional Restrictions grant - discretionary	0	1,568	Place	1,568	0
- Self Isolation Support grants - discretionary	106	117	Place	223	0
- Practical Support for thise self-isolating grants	0	216	Place	216	0
- Welcome Back Fund	0	256	Place	256	0
- Bus Operators grant	16	108	Place	124	0
- Emergency Active Travel grant	0	95	Place	95	0
- Home to Schools Transport grant	0	414	Place	414	0
- Covid Travel Demand grant	36	0	Place	36	0
- Leisure Recovery Fund (further allocation in 21/22)	283	33	Place	316	0
- Emergency Assistance for Food & Essential Supplies grant	53	0	Corp Services	53	0
- Covid Local Outbreak Management Plan Fund	724	0	PH & Reg Services	724	0
- Covid Local Authority Compliance and Enforcement grant	0	0	PH & Reg Services	0	0
- Covid Contain Outbreak Management Fund	4,723	1,284	PH & Reg Services	6,007	0
- Covid Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Individuals grant	133	359	PH & Reg Services	492	0
- Council Tax Hardship Fund / Council Tax Support Grant	0	1,923	Resources	1,923	0
Specific ring-fenced grant claims - reflected within Schools / DSG;					
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium	0	145	Schools Budget	145	0
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Mass Testing	0	87	Schools Budget	87	0
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Free School Meals	0	3	Schools Budget	3	0
Specific ring-fenced grant claims - reflected within Services;					
- Income losses grant for sales, fees & charges	0	886	Council-wide	886	0
Grants received to undertake Central Govt functions;					
- Local Restrictions Support (Addendum) grant	450	0	n/a	0	450
- Closed Business Lockdown grant	339	0	n/a	0	339
- Local Restrictions Support (Closed) grant	-10	0	n/a	0	-10
- Restart Business Grants	0	10,866	n/a	0	10,866
- Self Isolation Support Grants to Individuals	112	0	n/a	0	112
TOTAL GRANTS	6,975	27,587		22,805	11,757
Included as 'income' within the Council's Revenue Budget;					
- ring-fenced revenue grants	6,084	11,746		17,830	0
- un-ring-fenced revenue grant	0	0		0	0
Not included within the Council's Revenue Budget	891	10,866		0	11,757
TOTALS	6,975	22,612		17,830	11,757

MONITORING OF 2021/22 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

APPENDIX 6

	APPROVED BUDGET							MONITORING TO 31 AUGUST 2021						
	Prior Years	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	FUTURE	TOTAL	Prior Year	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	Future Year	ESTIMATED	INDICATIVE
	Budget £	Phased Budget £	Phased Budget £	Phased Budget £	Phased Budget £	Phased Budget £	APPROVED BUDGET £	Spend £	Actual Spend £	Commitments £	Estimated Costs £	Estimated Spend £	TOTAL SPEND £	PROJECT VARIANCE £
Asset Management & Property Programme														
Locking Parklands Health Centre	556,901	4,975,690	-	-	-	-	5,532,591	556,901	117,287	3,989,668	4,106,955	868,735	5,532,591	-
Chestnut Park	5,821,948	210,729	-	-	-	-	6,032,676	5,821,948	10,380	-	10,380	200,349	6,032,676	-
Baytree Special School - Brookfield Walk Clevedon	954,341	4,276,500	9,864,159	-	-	9,864,159	15,095,000	954,341	69,613	353,009	422,622	13,718,037	15,095,000	-
Banwell Primary School	-	1,100,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000	1,100,000	-
Major Infrastructure schemes														
MetroWest Rail	24,460,335	9,411,793	31,372,655	42,236,811	8,951,124	82,560,590	116,432,718	24,460,335	1,607,912	509,777	2,117,688	89,854,694	116,432,718	-
Weston Transport Enhancement Scheme	2,302,819	4,582,181	-	-	-	-	6,885,000	2,302,819	835,212	3,051,598	3,886,811	1,263,283	7,452,913	567,913
HIF - Banwell Bypass	1,153,364	11,276,374	17,140,029	37,150,609	-	54,290,638	66,720,376	1,153,364	926,756	2,371,612	3,298,368	62,268,644	66,720,376	-
HIF - Winterstoke Hundred academy Expansion	783,165	4,775,835	12,531,000	12,257,174	-	24,788,174	30,347,174	783,165	939,458	49,394	988,852	32,085,884	33,857,901	3,510,727
Winterstoke Rd Bridge	357,611	1,846,389	6,658,000	2,421,000	-	9,079,000	11,283,000	357,611	267,714	347,127	614,842	10,310,547	11,283,000	-
Major Road Network (A38)	244,751	188,249	-	-	-	-	433,000	244,751	61,349	-	61,349	126,900	433,000	-
North South Link	17,273,697	1,560,143	-	-	-	-	18,833,840	17,273,697	680,430	129,921	810,350	749,793	18,833,840	-
Summer Lane Flood Relief Scheme	1,393,066	413,273	-	-	-	-	1,806,339	1,393,066	79,010	-	79,010	334,263	1,806,339	-
Leigh Woods Parking	78,802	162,771	-	-	-	-	241,573	78,802	41,630	1,841	43,471	119,301	241,573	-
A371 Safer Roads	81,690	900,310	-	-	-	-	982,000	81,690	14,686	6,275	20,961	879,349	982,000	-
Weston to Clevedon Cycleway (Tutshill Sluice)	329,044	2,826,396	-	-	-	-	3,155,440	329,044	110,441	6,632	117,073	2,709,323	3,155,440	-
Integrated Transport Schemes	7,821,316	2,167,701	-	-	-	-	9,989,017	7,821,316	203,108	137,824	340,932	1,826,769	9,989,017	-
Pot Hole and Challenge Fund	-	278,356	-	-	-	-	278,356	-	-	-	-	278,356	278,356	-
City Deal Transport	-	1,690,000	-	-	-	-	1,690,000	-	-	-	-	1,690,000	1,690,000	-
Highways Maintenance Schemes	32,876,568	6,420,502	-	-	-	-	39,297,070	32,876,568	321,570	2,605,725	2,927,295	3,493,206	39,297,070	-
NSC Capital Unclassified Roads	13,190,535	1,340,781	-	-	-	-	14,531,316	13,190,535	326,645	668,345	994,990	345,791	14,531,316	-
Community Priorities														
Weston Marine Lake - Dredging	-	300,000	-	-	-	-	300,000	-	14,940	4,900	19,840	280,160	300,000	-
Portishead Lakegrounds	-	250,000	-	-	-	-	250,000	-	-	-	-	250,000	250,000	-
Clevedon Marine Lake	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	150,000	150,000	-
Programmes in Development														
Asset Management Plans	2,741,529	883,241	-	-	-	-	3,624,770	2,741,529	-	4,844	4,844	878,397	3,624,770	-
Accommodation Strategy	-	-	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
Development Strategy	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
Over £5m														
Disabled Facilities Grants	10,844,694	3,162,293	2,081,237	2,081,237	2,081,237	6,243,711	20,250,698	10,844,694	582,736	115,688	698,424	8,707,579	20,250,698	-
Repurchase Leasehold Properties	12,136,545	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	4,500,000	18,136,545	12,136,545	582,450	-	582,450	5,417,550	18,136,545	-
Sovereign Centre Investment	40,172,312	2,000,000	3,000,000	-	5,000,000	8,000,000	50,172,312	40,172,312	-	-	-	10,000,000	50,172,312	-
Weston General Stores	-	1,765,000	-	-	-	-	1,765,000	-	116,082	226,313	342,395	1,422,605	1,765,000	-
Brownfield Release Sites	-	1,075,000	-	-	-	-	1,075,000	-	-	-	-	1,075,000	1,075,000	-
SUB TOTAL MAJOR SCHEMES	175,575,033	72,489,506	85,147,080	97,646,831	17,532,361	200,326,272	448,390,811	175,575,033	7,909,410	14,580,494	22,489,904	254,404,514	452,469,451	4,078,640
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	10,765,976	4,203,364	2,285,000	1,750,000	100,000	4,135,000	19,104,340	10,765,976	223,652	891,517	1,115,169	7,223,195	19,104,340	-
ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES	2,101,611	510,001	300,000	300,000	300,000	900,000	3,511,611	2,101,611	-	17,164	17,164	1,392,837	3,511,611	-
HOUSING	820,516	811,723	-	-	-	-	1,632,239	820,516	57,823	-	57,823	753,900	1,632,239	-
CORPORATE SERVICES	3,291,573	4,080,178	-	-	-	-	7,371,751	3,291,573	174,576	106,941	281,517	3,798,661	7,371,751	-
PLACE	84,540,017	11,274,311	520,909	914,904	45,778	1,481,591	97,295,919	84,540,017	1,435,255	422,473	1,857,728	10,898,175	97,295,919	-
SUB TOTAL OTHER	101,519,694	20,879,577	3,105,909	2,964,904	445,778	6,516,591	128,915,861	101,519,694	1,891,305	1,438,095	3,329,400	24,066,768	128,915,861	-
TOTAL CAPITAL	277,094,727	93,369,082	88,252,989	100,611,735	17,978,139	206,842,863	577,306,672	277,094,727	9,800,715	16,018,589	25,819,304	278,471,281	581,385,312	4,078,640

MONITORING OF 2021/22 CAPIT.

APPENDIX 6

	APPROVED FUNDING					PROPOSED						TOTAL FUNDS
	APPROVED FUNDING					SUBJECT TO DECISION						ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDING £
	Prior Year Funding £	Borrowing £	Grants & Contbtns £	Reserves & Revenue £	Capital Receipts £	Review Project £	Grants & Cont £	RCCO / Reserves £	Borrowing £	Partner Funding £	To be confirmed £	
Asset Management & Property Programme												
Locking Parklands Health Centre	556,901		4,975,690	-	-							5,532,591
Chestnut Park	5,821,948		210,729	-	-							6,032,677
Baytree Special School - Brookfield Walk Clevedon	954,341		14,140,659	-	-							15,095,000
Banwell Primary School	-	738,591	361,409	-	-							1,100,000
Major Infrastructure schemes												
MetroWest Rail	24,460,335	49,531,000	37,783,513	288,879	4,368,990							116,432,717
Weston Transport Enhancement Scheme	2,302,819	716,000	3,866,181	-	-						567,913	7,452,913
HIF - Banwell Bypass	1,153,364	-	65,567,012	-	-							66,720,376
HIF - Winterstoke Hundred academy Expansion	783,165		29,564,010				3,510,727					33,857,902
Winterstoke Rd Bridge	357,611		10,925,389	-	-							11,283,000
Major Road Network (A38)	244,751		188,249	-	-							433,000
North South Link	17,273,697		1,560,143	-	-							18,833,840
Summer Lane Flood Relief Scheme	1,393,066		322,426	8,770	82,078							1,806,339
Leigh Woods Parking	78,802	140,172	-	22,600	-							241,573
A371 Safer Roads	81,690		900,310	-	-							982,000
Weston to Clevedon Cycleway (Tutshill Sluice)	329,044	125,479	2,700,917	-	-							3,155,440
Integrated Transport Schemes	7,821,316	16,299	2,151,403	-	-							9,989,018
Pot Hole and Challenge Fund	-		278,356	-	-							278,356
City Deal Transport	-		1,690,000	-	-							1,690,000
Highways Maintenance Schemes	32,876,568	1,858,924	4,561,578	-	-							39,297,071
NSC Capital Unclassified Roads	13,190,535	111,996	1,228,785	-	-							14,531,316
Community Priorities												
Weston Marine Lake - Dredging	-	300,000	-	-	-							300,000
Portishead Lagoons	-	250,000	-	-	-							250,000
Clevedon Marine Lake	-	150,000	-	-	-							150,000
Programmes in Development												
Asset Management Plans	2,741,529	700,000	59,329	59,158	64,754							3,624,770
Accommodation Strategy	-	1,000,000	-	-	-							1,000,000
Development Strategy	-	1,000,000	-	-	-							1,000,000
Over £5m												
Disabled Facilities Grants	10,844,694		9,406,004	-	-							20,250,698
Repurchase Leasehold Properties	12,136,545		-	-	6,000,000							18,136,545
Sovereign Centre Investment	40,172,312	10,000,000	-	-	-							50,172,312
Weston General Stores	-		1,765,000	-	-							1,765,000
Brownfield Release Sites	-		1,075,000	-	-							1,075,000
SUB TOTAL MAJOR SCHEMES	175,575,033	66,638,461	195,282,091	379,406	10,515,822	-	3,510,727	-	-	-	567,913	452,469,454
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	10,765,976	2,021,409	6,289,252	-	27,703	-	-	-	-	-	-	19,104,340
ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES	2,101,611	-	1,410,001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,511,612
HOUSING	820,516	421,498	317,000	-	73,225	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,632,239
CORPORATE SERVICES	3,291,573	1,100,000	1,263,164	136,606	1,580,408	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,371,751
PLACE	84,540,017	4,048,748	6,944,541	1,379,490	383,124	-	-	-	-	-	-	97,295,919
SUB TOTAL OTHER	101,519,694	7,591,655	16,223,958	1,516,096	2,064,460	-	-	-	-	-	-	128,915,862
TOTAL CAPITAL	277,094,727	74,230,116	211,506,049	1,895,502	12,580,282	-	3,510,727	-	-	-	567,913	581,385,316

	2021/22 Capital Programme Budget £000	2022/23 Capital Programme Budget £000	2023/24 Capital Programme Budget £000	2024/25 Capital Programme Budget £000	Total Capital Programme Budget £000
ORIGINAL APPROVED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGETS	50,131	34,036	53,460	29,027	166,654
Adj P10 - P12	4,148	337	869	0	5,355
Budget as per P12 Out-turn	54,280	34,373	54,329	29,027	172,009
Planned Additions to the capital Programme - Exec, 11/2/21	19,085	38,042	44,658	8,951	110,736
New Investments to the capital Programme - Exec, 11/2/21	8,810	0	0	0	8,810
Slippage of approved budgets from 2020/21	24,505				24,505
TOTAL ORIGINAL CAPITAL BUDGETS	106,679	72,416	98,987	37,978	316,060
AMENDMENTS TO THE PROGRAMME IN					
Months 1-3					
Addition - DP090 Public Enquiry Equipment - KFI115	29	0	0	0	29
Addition - SBL - KDT107	322	0	0	0	322
Addition - CY31 Ravenswood - KCE262	125	0	0	0	125
Addition - AVTM - KDT141	300	0	0	0	300
Addition - CSD022 - Footpath Yatton Co-op to School	109	0	0	0	109
Addition - CSD032 - ICT Capital Programme - KFI115	100	0	0	0	100
Addition - CS12 Mendip Green Autistic (ASD) Resource Base	50	0	0	0	50
Addition - MetroWest Rail	329	0	0	0	329
Saving - Project spend financed prior year on KFA101 not KFA104	(100)	0	0	0	(100)
Saving - Grant Funding of Affordable Housing - KAH203	(816)	0	0	0	(816)
Saving - Nailsea Autism hub - KCE258	(1)	0	0	0	(1)
Saving - SEMH Mendip - KCE261	(107)	0	0	0	(107)
Saving - remove commercial investment from the programme	0	0	0	(20,000)	(20,000)
Funding Swap - J21 - KDT202	0	0	0	0	0
Funding Swap - WTC - Funding as per LGF/EDF	0	0	0	0	0
Funding Swap - MRN Grant for S106 KDT204	0	0	0	0	0
Rephase - Vehicles - KDS303	100	(100)	0	0	0
Rephase - Breach Classes	(3,250)	1,625	1,625	0	0
Rephase - Gordano - KCS216	(30)	30	0	0	0
Rephase - SEMH Nailsea -	(100)	100	0	0	0
Rephase - ASD Hubs School Clusters	(150)	150	0	0	0
Rephase - SMH School Clusters	(180)	180	0	0	0
Rephase - Commercial Investment - Sovereign Centre	(3,000)	3,000	0	0	0
Rephase - MetroWest Rail	(1,465)	1,465	0	0	0
Month 4					
Addition - CSD141 Clarence Park	20	0	0	0	20
Addition - DP135 Kubota	17	0	0	0	17
Addition - DP137 Gym Equipment	48	0	0	0	48
Virement - KDH199 to KDH106 ST2102	0	0	0	0	0
Virement - Corporate Asset Management to Ashcroft House	0	0	0	0	0
Virement - Corporate Asset Management to Ravenswood Roof	0	0	0	0	0
Rephase - Baytree	(8,387)	8,387	0	0	0
Month 5					
Addition - CY20 Baytree School	465	0	0	0	465
Addition - DP117 Clapton Lane Pitches	120	0	0	0	120
Addition - DP132 Street Cleansing Measures KDS128	17	0	0	0	17
Addition - Brownfield Release Fund	1,075	0	0	0	1,075
Addition - City Deal Transport Funding - new grant	1,690	0	0	0	1,690
Virement - Corporate Asset Management to VLC Ashcroft House	0	0	0	0	0
Re-phase - Office Accommodation Programme	(1,000)	1,000	0	0	0
Funding - DP146 Tutshill Sluice - changes to funding	0	0	0	0	0
Funding - NSL correction to grant/capital receipts	0	0	0	0	0
Addition - Banwell Primary School - urgent repair works	361	0	0	0	361
Virement - Banwell Primary School - urgent repair works (from AM)	0	0	0	0	0
REVISED 2021/22 CAPITAL PROGRAMME	93,369	88,253	100,612	17,978	300,212

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2021

Subject of Report: MTFP & Revenue Budget Update

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Councillor Ashley Cartman, Executive Member for Corporate Services

Key Decision: No

Reason: For information and noting

Recommendations

The Executive is asked to note;

1. The updated range of revenue budget projections and risks within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as detailed within the report;
2. The process, next steps and timescales for finalising the MTFP for the period 2022 to 2025, and also for setting the revenue budget for the 2022/23 financial year;
3. The update provided in respect of the Government's proposals for Health and Social Care.

1. Summary of Report

This report provides an update with regards to assumptions which underpin the council's medium-term financial plan, covering the 3-year period to 2024/25, specifically in relation to resources and spending pressures and the associated risks currently being considered and managed with the financial modelling process.

The report also provides an overview of the recent Government announcements in respect of proposed changes to Health and Social Care and the impacts that these may have on the council's finances and operational arrangements as well as residents and social care providers.

2. Policy

The council has a well-established and embedded process to continually review and assess its financial performance and position, both in terms of the current financial year as well as across the medium-term.

The council recognises the importance of aligning limited resources and allocating them to the priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, which means that it continually reviews all aspects of financial planning and considers new risks, issues and challenges as they emerge. This is essential given the uncertainties, pressures and impacts which have arisen as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

There is a legal requirement to prepare and approve a robust revenue budget for the 2022/23 financial year, along with relevant council tax bandings and rates. Ultimately the MTFP will work towards delivering these and will culminate in a report being presented to Council in February 2022.

3. Details

The council follows a traditional incremental approach to its annual budgeting cycle whereby the approved revenue base budget is used as a starting point to build from and various factors and assumptions are considered and incorporated where they are deemed material in nature and aligned to delivery of statutory responsibilities or Corporate Plan priorities. A similar approach is adopted in respect of creating funding forecasts.

The council's financial plans were last formally approved in February 2021 although iterative updates have been provided to the Executive at meetings since then, this report provides the opportunity to share further details in respect of changes to budget assumptions and the associated impacts these may have on the financial modelling.

3.1. Update on resources

The council funds its net revenue budget and spending plans each year from 'resources' which are a combination of grants from central government and locally generated resources, levied on both residents and businesses through council tax and business rate demands.

Income from council tax and businesses is brought into the revenue budget each year by estimating a fixed sum in advance, known as a 'precept', which is drawn against the collection fund.

The accounting arrangements for the collection fund are different to other parts of the council's budget and mean that the council will receive its fixed annual precepted sum each year and should there be any movements compared to this budgeted position at the end of the year, then any final surplus or deficit positions would be transferred into a reserve and reflected within the budgets for subsequent years.

As a result, the council's financial planning needs to reflect both the assumed annual income sums, as well as the one-off surplus or deficit balances in respect of prior years.

3.1.1. Council tax, annual income – council tax forecasts are based on a complex series of information and assumptions relating to timing and delivery of new housing growth, discounts and exemptions as well as collection rates of the income sums due.

Each of these assumptions is reviewed on a monthly basis as part of the council's budget monitoring processes to understand the impact they may have on the forecast for the end

of the current financial year, as well as assessing any sustained impacts for future years, which can be fed into the council's MTFP modelling.

The latest update for council tax indicates that the council's annual income forecasts for future years, i.e. from April 2022, will be approximately £500k higher than previously calculated, largely related to more housing growth and lower levels of council tax discounts. It should be noted that this change is relatively minor compared to the base sum, which is in excess of £120m.

3.1.2. Business rates, annual income - a similar approach is adopted for business rate income – the latest forecasts show that the council's business rate annual income will be slightly lower from 2022/23 than previously planned. The majority of this change relates to a re-assessment of the baseline position for existing businesses, as well as lower growth planned for new or expanding businesses, some of which will have been delayed as a result of Covid.

3.1.3. Collection fund surplus - in addition to the ongoing annual impacts for council tax and business rates in future years, the MTFP has also been updated to reflect the final position in respect of the 2020/21 financial year for these areas. As a result, a one-off surplus of £2m has been reflected within the modelling for the 2022/23 financial year, £500k of which relates to council tax and £1.5m for business rates.

The most significant reason for this movement relates to a change in approach in how the council assessed the level of business rate income that it was due to receive for the year, after taking into consideration the issue of 'appeals' from businesses. Councils are required to reflect a provision within their accounts for any rating appeals that have, or may be lodged from businesses, in respect of their ongoing liabilities. Given the Covid related economic uncertainties being seen at that time, there was a concern across the sector that this would lead to an increase in the volume of appeals lodged by businesses as it could be viewed that they would have experienced a material change in their circumstances.

Appeals obviously reduce the amount of income that councils can expect to collect however, at the end of the financial year the government issued new guidance in respect of appeals which could be potentially be lodged by businesses for a '*material change in circumstances*' or MCC's brought about as a result of Covid. The guidance ruled that MCC's were not allowable, meaning that councils were no longer required to reflect a provision within their accounts or reduce their annual income. This increased the council's final year-end position compared to the original forecast.

3.1.4. Social care funding

Councils with responsibility for social care services have experienced significant increases in costs over recent years as a result of both rising demand and inflationary cost pressures. This has led to the government providing additional funding at a national level to help maintain and support these essential services. It can be seen that some of the additional funding has been given to the council directly by the government, by way of a grant, whilst other funding has been generated locally because the government has allowed the council to levy a 'social care precept' on top of its annual council tax rise to residents.

Decisions in respect of funding for the sector and allocations to individual councils are taken at a national level by central government and reported through the local government

finance settlement. For the past two years these funding decisions have been shared on an annual basis, which means that it has been difficult for the council to build an effective medium-term financial plan for all of its services, as it has not been in control of all of the information needed.

Once received the local government finance settlement will share details of whether the government will provide any extra resources to councils, and if so, how much of this additional funding will be given through grant income or how much councils could choose to levy locally themselves, through the social care precept.

Previous MTFP reports advised that the council's financial modelling assumptions have been updated to show that prior year grant funding allocated for adult social care services will continue to be received in future years, and in addition to that, the council would expect to receive a further increase in funding for future years to recognise the sustained increases in social care service costs. The modelling assumes that all of this income will be received through a grant.

Whilst the council's financial modelling is perceived to be fairly robust in terms of the value of additional funding that may be provided for social care needs in future years, it is important to recognise that it is now unlikely that all of this funding will be provided by way of a government grant as currently assumed.

Following recent announcements made by the Prime Minister in respect of the changes for Health and Social Care, it is possible that the Spending Review may indicate that local government should make a contribution towards raising the additional resources needed to fund social care pressures themselves, which would be delivered by allowing councils to approve a local social care precept for their areas.

In practical terms this would mean that the council would need to increase council tax levels beyond the baseline of 1.99%, which is the council tax increase currently included within the MTFP financial modelling.

Whilst it may be the intention and policy of central government to offer councils the option of approving a social care precept, all decisions relating to proposed levels of council tax would be for North Somerset's own elected Members to make when it approves the budget and council tax charges in February 2022.

Should a precept be made available and not progressed, then the council would be required to re-visit its current financial plans and underlying assumptions to ensure that a balanced budget could still be achieved.

3.2. Update on service pressures and priorities

Assumptions have made to forecast future levels of expenditure because whilst the council can control some of its costs by managing its budget effectively, other elements are dependent upon national and economic drivers such as inflation, interest rates, pay awards and pension charges. The council is also required to consider and provide for the sustained increases in demand levels for some of its services, as has been the case in recent years.

The current year's budget monitoring (which is being considered elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting) is a good source of information to identify existing financial pressures being experienced by services, although clearly there will also be other new and emerging issues to consider. The monitoring report shows that material issues in 2021/22 which may

continue into the future include; support to disabled children and their families, placements for adults with special needs and home to school transport primarily in relation to transport for special educational needs and disabled children, as well as continued shortfalls in income budgets. Although in addition, there are a number of smaller impacts which when considered collectively, do need to be recognised and assessed within the financial planning framework.

The council also recognises that it has a degree of choice or flexibility in how it chooses to

	Budget pressures		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000
Inflation on pay and pensions	1,523	1,550	1,577
Inflation on contracts and energy	956	910	966
Supporting capital programme	950	0	0
Adult social care services	6,081	4,805	4,805
Childrens services	1,045	471	488
Corporate services	638	247	245
Place	1,484	2,333	750
Public Health & Reg Services	45	0	0
Corporate Priorities	500	0	0
TOTALS	13,222	10,316	8,831

fund investment in priority areas and so has reflected an initial sum within the council's financial planning, with further details to be shared later in the process.

The latest MTFP modelling includes the following provision for known and emerging budget pressures. It should be noted that

each of these items will continue to be reviewed throughout the planning process to ensure that they are still required and held at appropriate values.

At the time of writing the spending pressures do not reflect any financial impacts which may arise from the Prime Ministers' Health and Social Care announcements, although these will be considered and changes incorporated into the next update where appropriate. Clearly any changes in future levels of spending will impact on the budget gap, which will in turn impact of actions being required to close the budget gap and balance the budget.

3.3. Update on the funding gap and actions being taken to close the gap

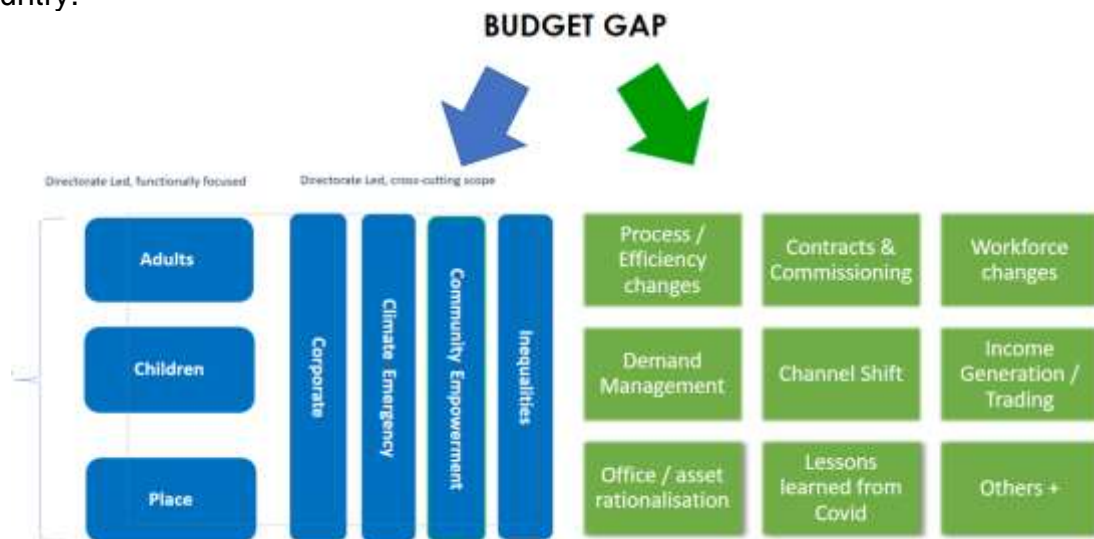
As described above, the council has updated its financial modelling to reflect the latest known information in respect of its resource forecasts as well as its spending pressures. The corporate leadership has taken care to assess and challenge all of the anticipated cost and demand increases which have been proposed to date to ensure that the budget is prepared in a robust and sustainable way, but without increasing the budget gap to unachievable levels, as this would mean that the council would be required to identify greater reductions in other areas of the budget to close the gap.

As would be expected at this point in the financial planning process, the council's latest budget gap has reduced from previous levels and is currently projected to be in the region of **£3.8m**, and whilst there may be further changes made to address current or emerging risks over the Autumn period, work has now started on developing savings proposals to enable delivery of a draft balanced budget later in the year.

The leadership team are keen to ensure that efforts will be focused on retaining and protecting front-line services wherever possible, although this approach clearly becomes more challenging as time goes on as the opportunities for further savings reduce. Budget reductions have previously included driving efficiencies in core service costs as well as improving commissioning arrangements and achieving better value from our contracts

however, the council recognises that this strategy is no longer sustainable in isolation, and so is supportive of embedded transformational and innovative approaches being taken by directors.

The graphic below depicts the dual approach being used by the corporate leadership team to close the budget gap and shows that we are seeking to incorporate and integrate transformation and innovation themes and ideas within budget planning processes, at the same time as adopting those traditional savings proposals used by many councils across the country.



To focus attention on closing the budget gap for next year the corporate leadership have had discussions about the overall quantum level of savings required and as a result indicative directorate ‘target’ ranges have been agreed for each of the directorates to work towards. These targets are based upon the average proportionate budget shares across the council although it is recognised that these could, or should, be flexed in the future should the budget gap change.

Directorate leadership teams are therefore working with the support of Finance Business Partners to identify a list of potential savings for 2022/23 and beyond in order to address the budget gap. All draft savings proposals will be reviewed and assessed in detail before they are incorporated into the council’s financial modelling, taking great care to consider a range of impacts and issues, such as equalities, customers, climate change, deliverability. Further details will be shared more widely in future reports when the proposals have been sufficiently scoped and developed.

3.4. Risks within the MTFP

3.4.1 Revenue budget risks

In setting the revenue and capital spending budgets, the council must take into account the key financial risks that may affect its future service delivery plans noting that if these materialise then they would either need to be explicitly provided for within the future base budget as a growth item, be offset and held against the unallocated contingency budget or in extreme circumstances, be funded from the council’s general fund working balance.

An MTFP risk register is held and regularly updated to ensure that the most significant risks are captured and reviewed, some of which may be linked to current spending plans or

service delivery, although others may relate to potential future actions, such as changes in regulatory frameworks or requirements, increases in demand, responses to external factors and changes in economic circumstances or market conditions.

The council scores each of the risks recorded within the register as this helps to understand and prioritise the most significant areas of risk which may be of concern and also focuses attention on any actions which may need to be taken to mitigate the risk. The scoring assessment includes estimating the indicative financial values for each risk item and categorising these into 5 bandings, with 5 being the highest value at over £5m;

- 1 Up to £500k
- 2 Between £500k and £1m
- 3 Between £1m and £2m
- 4 Between £2m and £5m
- 5 Over £5m

Risks are also allocated a score based upon the probability or likelihood of the risk materialising, with 5 being the most likely risk to occur;

- 1 Up to 10%
- 2 Between 10% and 25%
- 3 Between 25% and 50%
- 4 Between 50% and 75%
- 5 Over 75%

At this time the MTFP risks with the highest combined scores are shown below;

- Further demand for adult social care services, placements for disabled children and home to school transport services, beyond the levels currently provided within the MTFP,
- Further inflationary increases for areas such as the national living wage, pay award, inflation on energy prices and contract indices – this would impact on all directorates and would materialise in staffing costs and contractor payments,
- Requirement to re-base income budgets in areas which are reporting sustained reductions, e.g. car parking, campus, HB overpayments and summons costs,
- Impact of the Health and Social Care announcements, covering both the Levy and the proposed changes to operational service delivery

The following section identifies new and emerging risks, which currently do not feature within the MTFP spending pressures, although have a higher chance of occurring and so will continue to be monitored and re-assessed before the next MTFP update is shared;

- Increase in waste disposal costs arising from higher volumes,
- Increase in insurance costs arising from changes in market prices and claims experience,
- Loss of income for land charges arising from changes in regulations,
- Impacts arising from HGV driver shortages and potential reductions in the value of recyclates

Other risks which are potentially material in terms of scale, although the financial impact on the council's own resources are not yet known or fully quantified include the following;

- Impact of the Social Care Funding Reforms, i.e. changes in the capital limits, cap on care costs, self-funders, fair price for care and training and support for social care workers – the council's additional costs could potentially be over £10m by the time all of the changes have been implemented, although the government have stated that they will distribute additional resource allocations. As little information has been

shared it is not possible to assess whether the funding will be sufficient to cover all of the anticipated costs at this time.

- Dedicated schools deficit balance – this is currently forecast to be over £11m by the end of the financial year although accounting regulations require the deficit to be held in a reserve on the balance sheet and a temporary statutory over-ride (for 3 years) prevents the council from using its own resources to fund it. The council has submitted a deficit recovery plan to the Department for Education which will aim to reduce the deficit from growing further; and is currently awaiting information with regards to the governments plans at the end of the over-ride period – at this time it is anticipated that the period will be extended until a longer-term national solution is identified.

3.4.2 Resource related risks

In addition to the risks associated with the operational revenue budget. there remain inherent uncertainties within the local government finance sector, particularly with regards to proposed arrangements surrounding the Spending Review and its timeframe, and also other changes to business rate retention, national re-set of business rate growth levels and the national fair funding review which have been deferred in recent years. The risk register scoring for these areas all reach some of the highest levels as they are both material in nature and also feature a high probability of occurring.

The council recognises that these risks, together with the timeframes surrounding the announcement of funding settlements and legislative changes, does attract a high degree of risk in terms of financial planning, and that these risks spread from the very short-term through to the end of the council's longer-term planning period. Such risks are also influenced by strategic changes within the government policy and key personnel, and so they remain uncertain and out of the council's control at this point, although it is hoped that further information will be known in the Autumn.

Other key risks noted within the council's resource risk register include;

- Delivery of new housing and business rate growth,
- Potential reductions within the business rate baseline following removal of business rate relief to sectors impacted by Covid-19,
- Reductions in the collection rate for council tax and business rate income,
- Increase in the amount of council tax discounts and benefits

3.5. Review of Health and Social Care proposals

Members will be aware that, on 7 September 2021, the Prime Minister set out plans to invest £36 million in the health and social care sectors with the aim of addressing the Covid backlogs, reforming adult social care, and bringing the health and social care system closer together on a longer-term, sustainable footing.

Funding to support the NHS recovery and the reform of Social Care Funding investment will be raised from a Health and Social Care Levy and this was subsequently passed through Parliament.

The full details of the proposals for the spending of the Levy are included in the following document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care>

3.5.1 The Levy

The Levy is equivalent to a 1.25% increase in employer, employee and self-employed National Insurance Contributions and will be introduced from April 2022. It is estimated that it will make c. £12bn per annum available to the Department of Health and Social Care from 2022/23. Most of this funding in the first three years will go to the NHS, although it is reported that it will be phased more towards social care in later years.

The announcement also made it clear that the new funding was not intended to support existing social care pressures, demographic and demand growth rises or cost inflation; instead, these are to be funded through council tax, the adult social care precept or other “long term efficiencies”. That being said, it is anticipated that the Spending Review will see some more real terms growth in social care funding than in previous years.

When the new money for social care generated from the Levy is received, it is anticipated that it will fund reduced income levels from clients who currently contribute towards the cost of their care and also paying a “fair rate for care” to providers. The new money provides little in terms of increasing capacity, quality or improving recruitment and retention. However, there are more details to follow in relation to workforce investment, housing solutions and support for unpaid carers. The report indicates that a White Paper will follow later this year.

3.5.2 Social Care Reforms

In terms of the social care charging reforms, the main elements proposed within the announcement are listed below; these will apply from **October 2023**:

- A **cap on care costs** such that no-one will have to pay more than £86,000 for personal care costs during their lifetime (excluding “daily living costs”). Once the £86,000 cap is reached, local authorities will pay for all eligible personal care costs. No-one will need to make a contribution from their income towards these care costs. People may choose to “top up” their care costs by paying the difference towards a more expensive service, but this will not count towards the cap.
- A change in the **capital limits**, with the implications as follows (all subject to the cap above):
 - If a person’s **total assets are over £100,000**, full fees must be paid
 - If a person’s **total assets are between £20,000 and £100,000**, the local authority is likely to fund some of their care. People will be expected to contribute towards the cost of their care from their income, but if that is not sufficient, they will contribute no more than 20 per cent of their chargeable assets per year. If by contributing towards care costs, the value of a person’s remaining assets falls below £20,000, then they would continue to pay a contribution from their income but nothing further from their assets.
 - If a person’s **total assets are less than £20,000**, they will not have to pay anything for their care from their assets. However, people may still need to make a contribution towards their care costs from their income.
- To allow people receiving means-tested support to keep more of their own income, the Government will unfreeze the Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) for those receiving

care in their own homes and Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA) for care home residents, so that from April 2022 they will both rise in line with inflation.

- Self-funders will be able to ask their Local Authority to arrange their care for them so that they can find better value care.

3.5.3 Financial considerations

There are a number of financial issues and risks that arise from the announcement, which will need to be considered and integrated within the council's financial planning over the next few months. The principal issues are as follows:

- The council will need to increase the staffing budgets for the staff it directly employs to recognise the increase in employer NI contributions it will be required to pay from April 2022, although it is anticipated that this will be offset by increased funding from Government. The estimated cost is c. £450 per annum although further work will be undertaken to quantify this sum before budgets are finalised.
- The council will need to consider the impacts on its contracted services of increased employer NI contributions that they will also be required to pay; although it is not yet clear whether the Government intends to compensate local authorities for these increased costs and so clarification is being sought.
- The council may need to consider the impact on low paid staff of the increased employee contributions they will be required to pay, this could apply to both internal and external staff, particularly in areas where it is difficult to recruit and is impacting on service delivery.
- It now appears clear that the Government intends that an adult social care precept (levied as an additional charge on council tax levels) will be a recognised, accepted and ongoing part of the funding towards adult social care cost increases, both in the short and medium term, although the full details are not yet known.
- The extent of the costs (and lost income) to the council of the social care reforms from October 2023 are currently unknown but will be in the £millions. The mechanism for distributing funding to local authorities has yet to be developed, but there are clear risks that the funding will not be sufficiently developed to ensure that all costs are covered.
- Significant time, resources and systems will be needed to plan, prepare, communicate and deliver the changes to the way in which social care service users (including self-funders) will need to be financially assessed and to monitor their spend against their "care cap".

These considerations will continue to be reviewed and incorporated within the council's financial processes, either directly within updated resource and spending levels, or held as risks within the risk register. Further information will be shared in future reports.

3.6. Ongoing Covid-19 impacts

There are a small number of Covid-19 related expenditure pressures and income losses which could potentially be ongoing into next financial year, which are as yet not included within the latest MTFP forecasts.

Whilst we have gratefully received continued ring-fenced funding from Government for some of these pressures in the current financial year (for example; extending Sales, Fees and Charges income compensation scheme to June 2021, the continuation of the adult social care infection control funding and ongoing support to leisure providers), there has not yet been any guidance regarding funding or support measures from government for any impacts which may continue into future years.

Covid-19 related pressures continue to be monitored as part of our monthly budget monitoring processes for the current financial year and so will be considered within the MTFP processes should the issues progress beyond risks.

4. Consultation

The government, through its legislative framework, clearly expects that local authorities will be able to demonstrate that they have in place mechanisms to ensure that 'representatives of local people' are being appropriately informed, consulted or involved in services, policies or decisions that affect or interest them.

There are many aspects of service delivery which impact on our residents, customers and other stakeholders and members of the public, and so we recognise that it is our responsibility to ensure that any changes we make to them through the budget, need to be considered and consulted upon. Failure to do so adequately could result in aspects of the budget being subject to legal challenge.

The council is fully committed to ensuring that residents, business and other stakeholders from across the district are included within its MTFP planning and an engagement plan was presented within the previous report. Officers are currently preparing to deliver the first stages of the plan which is likely to include both targeted engagement with the citizens panel and town and parish councils, as well as broader engagement with residents through e-Consult, North Somerset Life articles and video messages shared over social media. Public meetings across the area have also been considered although if these were to be progressed they would need to meet the appropriate government guidelines in place at the time.

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 is an integral part of the financial administration process.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

No specific impacts to note at this stage, although climate and environmental related implications will be at the forefront of our thinking when considering underlying service policies, priorities and strategies associated with the revenue budget, as well as through

formulating investment plans and determining options to make reductions in energy costs and climate initiatives.

8. Risk Management

Risks associated within the MTFP planning process are described in detail in the sections above and officers will continue to test the impact of varying assumptions within the medium-term financial planning process to assess the sensitivity of the indicative budget figures and compare these to evidenced based facts and information wherever possible, as this informs decisions about spending plans, savings proposals and ultimately the level of working balances needed to provide assurance as to the robustness of the budget estimates.

The council recognises that in addition to the risks documented within its register, there are now many more uncertainties and unknown factors within the financial planning which include the associated impacts and legacies arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, for both service delivery and resource levels, although at times it is difficult to establish a definitive link and cause.

9. Equality Implications

In considering its vision, ambitions and financial planning the council is mindful of its Public Sector Equalities Duties to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- Encourage good relations between groups.

As per previous years, we will undertake thorough Equality Impact Assessments, (EIA), for all significant budget savings plans which will be incorporated within the relevant budget papers throughout the MTFP process.

10. Corporate Implications

The Corporate Plan and MTFP are vital tools to help align effort across the organisation and ensure that services are all pulling in the same direction. 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

Ensuring value for money and protecting public funds continue to be core considerations by all service managers across the council who actively contribute in the councils financial planning processes. As a result, the council will consider a range of options throughout this period it is aware of the importance of managing its financial position effectively to ensure that it can continue to provide the range of services to residents and businesses within communities, some of whom are extremely vulnerable and most in need of support.

Author:

Amy Webb, Director of Corporate Services, amy.webb@n-somerset.gov.uk

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

MTFP & Budget Setting Reports (Executive & Council, February 2021 & September 2021)

Budget Monitoring Reports (Executive, July-October 2021)

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 21 October 2021

Subject of Report: North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) Annual Report 2020/21

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Tony Oliver (Independent Chair, NSSAB) and Hayley Verrico (Director Adult Social Services)

Key Decision: No

Reason: No direct financial implications and no specific impact of individual wards

Recommendations

Executive is recommended to:

Receive the NSSAB Annual Report 2020/21.

Note the developments, achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement in this critical area of work.

Note the future work of the NSSAB.

1. Summary of Report

To present to the Executive the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21. To invite questions and scrutiny in relation to the NSSAB's activities

Further develop understanding of the role of Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (LSABs) and how the North Somerset LSAB operates locally.

Promote the importance of safeguarding of adults, ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's business.

2. Policy

The proposals support North Somerset Council's Corporate Plan of 'An open, fairer, greener North Somerset'.

The Care Act 2014 enshrined in law the principles of Safeguarding Adults and the Safeguarding Adults Board became a statutory body in April 2015 (as detailed below).

3. Details

North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board is a statutory body, established by the Care Act 2014 and implemented in April 2015. The overarching purpose of a Safeguarding Adults Board is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. The board does this by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care act 2014.

Safeguarding Adults Boards have three core duties. They must:

- develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute
- publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been
- commission safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the statutory criteria.

The annual report provides information about the achievements and challenges during the year 2020/21.

Provisional key data on safeguarding activity is included based upon 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 (To note, full end of year data is not published until November 2021).

The NSSAB agreed a 3-year strategic plan in 2018 which includes four priorities:

- Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support;
- Preventing abuse and neglect by ensuring that learning from reviews is embedded and best practice is researched and implemented;
- Robust governance scrutinising effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes;
- Effective transitions to adulthood.

The annual report details the board and the subgroups' activities, and outlines progress against the above strategic priorities.

Proposed strategic priorities for the next three years are detailed in the report as follows:

- *Preventative Safeguarding*: Develop and implement strategies for preventing abuse and neglect (including self-neglect) by ensuring that learning from quality assurance activity and reviews is embedded, and best practice is researched and implemented.
- *Quality of care and support*: Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support;

- *Transitional Safeguarding: Tackling Adult Exploitation:* Make sure that all services have appropriate systems and processes in place and services in place to protect adults from exploitation;
- *Robust Governance:* To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board. Scrutinise effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes;
- *Safeguarding response: Recovery and the aftermath of a pandemic:* Develop robust multi-agency response for transition from the pandemic.

4. Consultation

The report is available for all partner agencies. Subgroups of the board submit an overview of progress for the annual report.

The NSSAB works with Safer and Stronger Communities across North Somerset since there is a range of areas of shared interest. Tackling Adult Exploitation, for example, features as a priority for the NSSAB.

5. Financial Implications

Financial pressures on public services, demand and capacity is a challenge for partner agencies of the NSSAB, particularly in relation to subgroup membership and activity. However, there are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

Costs

The NSSAB has a budget built through the contributions of statutory partner agencies.

Funding

As a statutory partner, North Somerset Council contribute to the board.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

The Care Act 2014 requires North Somerset Council to have a Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and provides for accountability of the Independent Chair to the Chief Executive of the council.

There is a statutory requirement for LSABs to meet the core duties as detailed in the above sections, in line with the Care Act 2014.

There is a statutory requirement to publicise the LSAB Annual Report from 1st April 2015 in line with the Care Act 2014. It is to include the number of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, lessons learnt and any actions incomplete.

The NSSAB assessed and addressed implications of the Coronavirus 2020 Act. Annex D safeguarding guidance, published on 1 April 2020, which sets out that the Coronavirus Act does not remove the Care Act Section 42 safeguarding duty, nor the need for safeguarding training.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The NSSAB is mindful of its impact and aims to reduce the carbon footprint where possible. Emissions – vehicle use for board activity is currently significantly reduced due to holding meetings remotely. Electronic systems are used for documents meaning paper use has decreased. With meetings held virtually, online processing and power use has increased.

8. Risk Management

The NSSAB monitors risks and challenges through its risk register. Since 2017 the register has included the risk of not having a Business Manager and, as a result, the limited capacity and resource in delivering the core duties.

Note, although not in the reporting period of the annual report, the NSSAB have now secured agreement from core member organisations (BNSS CCG, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the Local Authority) to fund a Business Manager post. The post was recruited to in August 2021.

The risks associated with not appropriately managing responses to safeguarding, and risks of ongoing abuse and neglect, must be acknowledged. This includes the risk of harm to, and the death of, adults with care and support needs. Further, the risk of serious organisational and/or reputational damage to statutory and non-statutory organisations in North Somerset.

The NSSAB ensures multi-agency safeguarding training to raise awareness about safeguarding adults and to ensure that partner agencies are equipped to recognise and respond to abuse and neglect of an adult with care and support needs.

9. Equality Implications

No formal equalities impact assessment is carried out on the Strategic Plan. However, the performance data collected by the NSSAB includes reference to gender, race/ethnicity, disability and other protected characteristics to ensure that the profile of safeguarding data is tested and any related issues identified and acted upon.

How and in what ways we safeguard adults at risk must reflect the differing cultural values and norms within communities. Although the legal framework is universal, how we ensure adults at risk and their carers/families understand, recognise and respond to potential safeguarding issues varies and is reflected for example in our work to reach out to faith communities and voluntary sectors.

10. Corporate Implications

Adult protection became a corporate statutory duty on 1 April 2015. Improving the effectiveness and impact of the NSSAB will contribute to the Adult Social Services Directorate commitments to the North Somerset Council Corporate Plan.

11. Options Considered

The production of the annual report is a statutory requirement.

Author:

Hayley Verrico, Director of Adult Social Services.

Appendices:

North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21.

Background Papers:

As per Appendix above.

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



1. Introduction

The North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board's (NSSAB) Annual Report is designed to give an overview of the multi-agency work across North Somerset in pursuit of the Government's aims to:

- *Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible*
- *Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs*
- *Safeguarding adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live*
- *Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned*
- *Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect*
- *Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult*
- *Address what has caused the abuse or neglect*

In line with statutory requirements and best practice this annual report will be shared with:

- The Director of Adult Social Services
- The Chief Executive of North Somerset Council
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset Police
- The Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership
- The North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Adult Services Scrutiny Panel

Should you require the report in any other format to support accessibility please contact the Business Manager for the NSSAB: SABmanager@n-somerset.gov.uk.

Message from the Independent Chair

I am pleased to present the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) Annual Report for the period 2020 /21 in which I am delighted to report on all the good work which has been achieved during a very difficult year.

The role of the Board and the partner organisations who sit on it is to support and develop safeguarding of vulnerable adults who have care and support needs across North Somerset.

At the time of writing our 2019/20 report, Covid-19 was in its infancy, little did I know, or even contemplate, that 17 months on, the impact of this horrible virus would continue to be making worldwide news headlines.

I have had the luxury, if that is what it is, to have been working from home. All our SAB and SAB subgroup meetings have been held virtually but I acknowledge that a very large number of our colleagues in the care sector, the NHS, Police, indeed all our front-line partners who are represented on our Board and our SAB subgroups, have continued to “go into the office” and to provide as normal a service as possible in, sometimes impossible circumstances.

This year's report will mirror the format of our last report as it will lead the interested reader to specific web links where further reading will be available.

You will note that some of our priorities detailed in our Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021, were not fully achieved. This is as a direct consequence of the extraordinary pressures presented by Covid. These priorities will form part of our 2021 - 2024 Strategic Plan.

Attendance at our virtual Board meetings has been good but I long for a return to face-to-face meetings where so much business is conducted in the coffee break!

During the year, despite the pandemic, we have been able to recruit new members onto the Board including representatives from the voluntary sector and the Department of Work and Pensions. Their contributions to Safeguarding in North Somerset are already measurable.

Regardless of the additional workloads, I believe that the NSSAB and its subgroups have continued to effectively monitor and assist in the development of safeguarding practices across our area. That commitment to Safeguarding is evidenced within the body of this report.

Tony Oliver, Independent Chair, North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board

Contents

About the Board

Local Demographics

North Somerset Safeguarding Year end Data

The work of the Board

Learning and Development Subgroup

Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup

Policy and Procedures Subgroup

Mental Capacity Act (MCA) / Deprivation of Liberty
Safeguards (DoLS) / Liberty Protection Safeguards
(LPS) Subgroup

Tackling Adult Exploitation Subgroup

Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Subgroup

Summary

- Review of Strategic Objectives 2018/21

- Key Strategic Objectives for 2021/24

Next steps

About the Board

Safeguarding Adults Boards have three main duties:

- Develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute.
- Publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been.
- Commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria.

The North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board has an independent chair, Tony Oliver. The board structure consists of quarterly full board meetings, quarterly meetings of the subgroup chairs and quarterly meetings of the board's six subgroups:

- Learning and Development
- Quality Assurance and Performance
- Policy and Procedure
- MCA/DoLS/LPS
- Tackling Adult Exploitation
- Safeguarding Adults Review

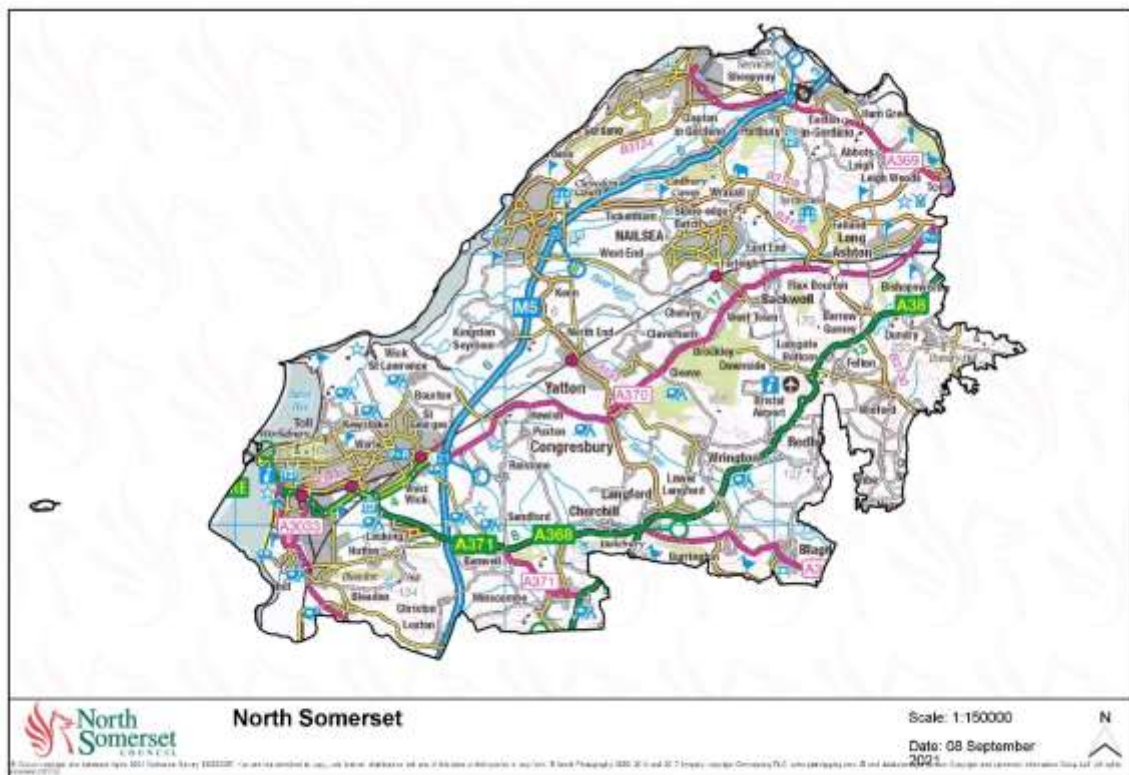
Local Demographics:

In North Somerset there are 171,754 adults over 18 (ONS 2020 Mid Year Estimates)

- 12,594 adults aged 65-69
- 14,136 adults aged 70-74
- 10,580 adults aged 75-79
- 14,693 adults aged 80+

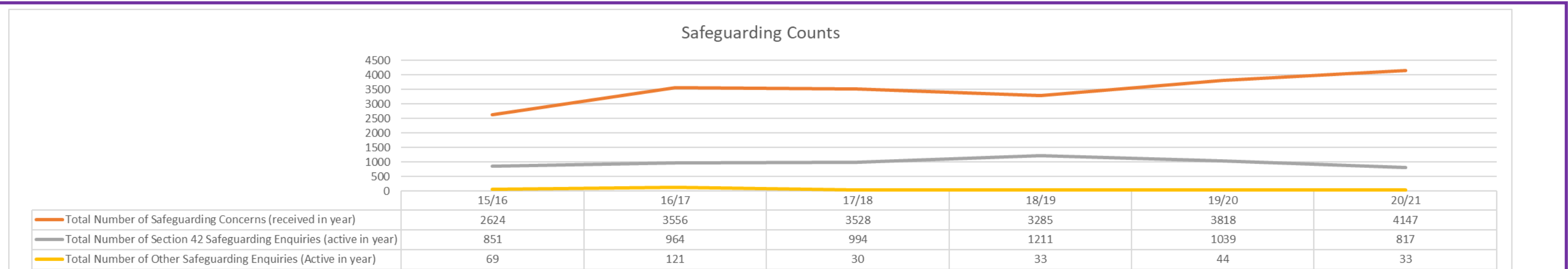
This means 30% of adults in North Somerset are 65 and over. With 8.5% of the adult population being 80 or over.

2018 population projections from ONS estimated that in 2018 that people aged 65 and over were 24% of the total population, this is predicted to rise to 26% in 2030 and 28% in 2043.



North Somerset Safeguarding Adults 20/21 Year End Data

The data recorded in this report is taken from the North Somerset Council Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC) Statutory data returned to NHS Digital comparative data for 20/21 with other LA's not yet published.



The number of Safeguarding Concerns received for North Somerset in 20/21 was the highest recorded for the past 6 years at 4147, however there was a drop in the number of S42 Enquiries. The number of 'other' enquiries has remained stable after rise in 16/17. It is worth noting that concern to enquiry is not a hierarchy but rather an appropriateness of response in line with Section 42 1 and 2 of the Care Act 2014. A considerable amount of work is undertaken for concerns that do not progress to an enquiry.

Year	White	Mixed and Other Ethnic Groups	Ethnicity not recorded
20/21	73%	0.5%	26%
19/20	81%	0.4%	18%
18/19	77%	1%	22%
17/18	82%	1%	17%

* may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Ethnicity recording will again be a focus to improve on over the next year.

Year	Male	Female
20/21	42%	58%
19/20	41%	59%
18/19	39%	61%
17/18	38%	62%

The gender split is broadly similar to previous years

Year	Physical Support	Sensory Support	Support with Memory & Cognition	Learning Disability Support	Mental Health Support	Social Support	No Support Reason	Not Known
20/21	54%	1%	8%	8%	11%	5%	14%	0%
19/20	62%	1%	7%	11%	8%	4%	7%	0%
18/19	64%	0%	6%	10%	11%	9%	0%	0%
17/18	57%	0%	7%	10%	10%	3%	12%	1%

A support reason is not required for an enquiry to take place

Type of Abuse	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Physical Abuse	13.8%	13.4%	16.0%	15.9%
Sexual Abuse	2.8%	3.4%	2.7%	3.4%
Psychological Abuse	15.6%	14.8%	13.6%	13.0%
Financial or Material Abuse	12.3%	11.7%	12.7%	12.5%
Discriminatory Abuse	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Organisational Abuse	2.4%	4.1%	4.3%	0.8%
Neglect and Acts of Omission	36.8%	41.3%	39.9%	46.7%
Domestic Abuse	4.5%	2.0%	4.5%	2.0%
Sexual Exploitation	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Modern Slavery	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Self-Neglect	11%	8.5%	5.1%	5.1%

There may be more than one type of abuse recorded per enquiry, and types of abuse are recorded against types of risk this data is taken from SAC table SG2a

Year	Service Provider	Other - Known to Individual	Other - Unknown to Individual
20/21	30%	65%	5%
19/20	32%	54%	14%
18/19	40%	55%	6%
17/18	48%	47%	5%

Counts of Concluded S42 Enquiries by Location				
Location	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Own Home	49%	42%	46%	42%
In the community (excluding community services)	2%	0%	4%	4%
In a community service	1%	1%	0%	1%
Care Home - Nursing	14%	18%	22%	18%
Care Home - Residential	21%	19%	18%	25%
Hospital - Acute	4%	4%	4%	4%
Hospital - Mental Health	2%	4%	4%	3%
Hospital - Community	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	7%	12%	2%	3%

Concluded S42 Enquiry Risk Outcomes: Where a risk was identified, what was the outcome / expected outcome when the case was concluded?				
	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Risk Remained	7%	5%	9%	39%
Risk Reduced	63%	56%	56%	53%
Risk Removed	30%	38%	35%	8%
Risk Reduced and Removed (combined from above)	93%	95%	91%	61%

It should be noted that due to the nature of the measure and the Adult at risks own personal choices it may not always be possible to remove or reduce all risks.

Page 197	For each enquiry, was the individual or individual's representative asked what their desired outcomes were?				
	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18	
Yes they were asked and outcomes were expressed	73%	86%	63%	63%	
Yes they were asked but no outcomes were expressed	8%	1%	6%	7%	
No	10%	3%	23%	29%	
Don't know	5%	7%	0%	0%	
Not recorded	4%	3%	9%	2%	
Of the enquiries recorded as Yes in row 1 of this table, in how many of these cases were the desired outcomes achieved?					
Fully Achieved	66%	72%	66%	63%	
Partially Achieved	25%	13%	7%	26%	
Not Achieved	9%	13%	28%	9%	
Fully and Partially Achieved (KCPI Indicator)	91%	85%	72%	89%	

Due to the nature of the measure it may not always be possible to fully or partially achieve a person's desired outcomes.

Commentary:

Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic

There are some changes that are likely due to the pandemic. Predictably, there is an increase in own home as a location of abuse. This is most likely because care homes have spent a significant proportion of the reporting period with visits restricted.

There is an increase where the source of the risk is someone known to the adult.

There is a definite rise in domestic abuse and self-neglect.

Data Recording:

We note that there is a lack of recording on ethnicities this is something that is being improved across all partner agencies and will be an ongoing message during 21/22.

Audits:

Organisational abuse shows a significant variation over the reported year. This needs to be understood.

The increase in self-neglect concerns requires better understanding and planning in preparation for the lifting of lock-down restrictions.

Comparative data:

At time of completing this report the National SAC data is not available for 20/21 as soon as this is published by NHS Digital comparative data will be reported to Board.

The Work of the Board

Much of the work of the board takes place in the subgroups. The chairs of the groups submit reports of their quarterly activity to the quarterly Subgroup Chairs Meeting. The meeting is chaired by the Service Leader for Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, North Somerset Council. The subgroup chairs discuss and



analyse their work, developing a coordinated knowledge of each other's activity, and agree recommendations to the safeguarding board. An overall summary of the subgroup chairs' activity is circulated to board members and key areas of activity are considered at full board each quarter.

With regards reporting on subgroup activity, we are mindful not to place additional burdens on practitioners. Thus, subgroup chairs were asked to provide a summary of their achievements this year, as below.

Learning and Development Subgroup

Purpose: to coordinate matters arising from Board meetings and to carry out the actions identified in the Strategic Plan. This includes ensuring that all learning and development interventions that are offered are fit for purpose, well evaluated, properly embedded, inclusive, reflective, developed in partnership and up to date.

Learning and Development Subgroup Achievements:



- Strong training and peer support offering on-line
- L&D Subgroup Terms of Reference updated
- Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) have received some useful legal update training and have adjusted well to learning on-line
- Safeguarding adults video produced for care homes
- Majority Safeguarding assessments moved to telephone as a result of the coronavirus pandemic
- New recruits to the subgroup from Police and Provider Representatives.
- Safeguarding Enquiry Training for Social Workers trialed with mental health staff
- Safeguarding Update for Coordinators course now available virtually
- Action Plan created for subgroup that aligns work completed with that of the Strategic Plan
- Safeguarding Level 3 for Health Workers has gone on-line
- Safeguarding training for GPs is being rolled out across a wide group

Training Reviews:

"I was given the opportunity to reflect and continue to reflect on my day to day work all the way through the course"

"I personally found the use of up-to-date safeguarding case studies very helpful and have gained a lot of confidence when executing Care Act duties"

Feedback from training has been positive, although a lot of participants reported that they were looking forward to the return to face-to-face training. Overall, most participants commented that their confidence had increased with regards to how to record cases, when to communicate concerns and share them.

Internal training delivered:

- 4 on-line MCA and DoLS in Practice sessions to 87 participants
- 4 Safeguarding Update Sessions to 45 participants
- 3 in-depth Safeguarding Enquiry Training to 42 participants.
- 12 Safeguarding Adults Awareness half-day courses delivered within care home settings
- 6 Safeguarding Adults for Providers full-day courses delivered

A mixture of multi-agency peer support forums were also hosted in adult safeguarding (e.g. the Good Practice Forum) and external speakers were invited to internal peer support sessions for social workers at all levels. These included representatives from Avon and Somerset Lighthouse Unit, Gemini Domestic Abuse Support and Sirona Care and Health.

Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup

Purpose: to develop and implement a Quality Assurance Framework which will enable the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) to evaluate the effectiveness of the inter-agency safeguarding processes for safeguarding adults at risk in North Somerset. To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board.



Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup achievements:

The subgroup have developed a multi-agency Quality Assurance Framework.

The subgroup have established a baseline of monitoring activity for local authority safeguarding data.

Local Authority safeguarding performance data is presented to the subgroup quarterly. The data is scrutinised and patterns and emerging trends are identified. This informs further analysis by way of quality assurance activity.

Within the reporting period the subgroup have examined the following:

Quality of Referrals

The group designed a survey to capture methods of referral into the local authority. The group examined each agency's method of raising a safeguarding concern.

The findings showed that the overall conversion rate for concerns to enquiries is around 20% with concerns from Sirona and Weston General Hospital being much higher, the Police had a conversion rate of 20%, NHS 111 was 9% and SWAST was 14%.

The group have recommended a review of the SWAST referral form; to include specific reporting criteria to distinguish what is safeguarding upon receipt:

- Welfare concern
- Request for assessment
- Safeguarding (Protection from abuse)

The subgroup is currently looking at repeat referrals. The aim is to identify patterns from the data that can inform the board on areas to focus in relation to preventative work, better use of risk management reviews and greater use of multi-agency risk management.

Adult Exploitation

The subgroup have devised a survey for all partner agencies to complete in respect of adult exploitation. The aim is to determine the level of knowledge and skills amongst staff. This will form a baseline to work to in terms of recommendations for

training. It will also be incorporated into the multi-agency Tackling Adult Exploitation Strategy under the auspices of the safeguarding board.

The current performance data reporting format has a category titled 'Others'. The category includes sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyber-crimes, modern slavery. The group requested that data is broken down into each of the categories to provide a local picture. The performance data dashboard is being further developed to encompass each sub-category which will support the quality of data available.

Self-neglect

We have seen an increase in safeguarding concerns featuring self-neglect. The local authority have introduced more sub-categories to the wider type of 'Neglect' so that we can enhance our understanding of what is happening in the community. This will inform a strategic response in terms of early identification and response.

Policy and Procedure Subgroup



Purpose: This subgroup focusses on the revision and creation of policy, procedure and practice guidance, to support professionals from all organisations working with adults in North Somerset. The group takes into account learning from audits, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews to help embed learning into daily good practice and workforce development.

Policy and Procedure Subgroup achievements:

- Progressing Pressure ulcer protocol
- Increased group membership with sEap joining
- Published updated Threshold Support Tool
- Board member induction Handbook developed
- Updated Transitions/Safeguarding Adults position statement published
- Responding to safeguarding adults concerns (Local practice guidance for Local Authority Staff): Major update published
- Membership development with appointees from North Somerset Housing, and Environmental Health.

MCA/DoLS/LPS Subgroup



The subgroup's objectives were to monitor the implementation of Mental Capacity related legislation in the North Somerset locality. It also acted as a forum for the dissemination of relevant case law and consideration of MCA specific local practice and systems.

At the start of the 2020 financial year LPS (Liberty Protection Safeguards) was added to the group's title (MCA/DoLS/LPS subgroup, previously MCA/DoLS subgroup) in recognition of the imminent rescinding of the DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) legislation.

The group met on 3 occasions in this reporting period (30/6/20, 8/10/20, 1/2/21). It was subsequently disbanded with several of its local authority functions transferred to North Somerset Council's Performance and Quality Board. Other functions in regard to LPS implementation are being explored presently across all relevant partner agencies. Whilst the group was functioning it considered / explored the following areas;

- Completed and prompted initial scoping exercises for LPS implementation.
- Quality Assurance work with local advocacy provider.
- Dissemination of project considering MCA and assistive technology
- Explored developing flashpoints / tensions between public health restrictions (through Coronavirus) and MCA/DoLS (individual / human rights based).
- Considered MCA implications within context of new 'Coronavirus' initiated systems / issues (e.g. discharge to assess, capacity in regard to Covid-19 testing and vaccination)
- Monitoring and overview of DoLS function by partners.

Tackling Exploitation Subgroup



Purpose: Under the auspices of the board, agree the key elements of our strategic response to Adult Exploitation and how this will be achieved.

Unfortunately there has been inconsistency in chairing arrangements for the subgroup. This is due to demand and capacity across partner agencies. As an interim arrangement, the Service Leader for Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance has coordinated and chaired two meetings this year.

Tackling Adult Exploitation Subgroup achievements:

The subgroup has assisted the board with the development of tackling exploitation priorities for the strategic plan.

The subgroup has begun for form links with other relevant groups to avoid duplication and to develop a joined-up approach to tackling adult exploitation.

The group has joint worked with the Quality and Performance subgroup to devise a survey to determine the level of skills and knowledge across the partnership in respect of adult exploitation (as reported above). The findings will underpin the development of the multi-agency Tackling Adult Exploitation Strategy.

Safeguarding Adults Review Subgroup



Purpose: The Care Act 2014, sections 44(1), (2) and (3), requires that a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) is undertaken where an adult with care and support needs has died or suffered serious harm, and it is suspected or known that the cause was neglect or abuse, including self-neglect, and there is concern that agencies could have worked better to protect the adult from harm. Under section 44(4) a SAR can be undertaken in other cases concerning adults with care and support needs.

The purpose of a SAR is to promote effective learning and improvement action to prevent future deaths or serious harm occurring again.

The group's membership consists of the three key statutory partners; North Somerset Local Authority, BNSS CCG, Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The group meet to consider all referrals for potential SARs. Once a decision is made to conduct a SAR an independent reviewer is then appointed.

SAR Subgroup Activity:

- Recommendation agreed to create SAR Subgroup as alternative to convening panel on ad-hoc basis.
- Subgroup met on three occasions however the referrals did not meet the criteria for a statutory SAR to be commissioned. Subgroup was quorate on all occasions.
- Subgroup identified theme of Self-Neglect from referrals.
- In response to the identified theme, the Safeguarding Adults Manager, North Somerset Council, presented a learning briefing about Self-Neglect to board.
- Subgroup analysis completed in line with ADASS report on Safeguarding Adult Reviews.
- Report recommendations assessed as a benchmark to identify opportunities and report back to board. Action plan agreed to apply learning.
- Subgroup membership increased with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership joining.

Summary



Revisiting our board vision and key priorities:

For everyone to work together effectively to enable the people of North

Somerset to live free from abuse and neglect, and to embed the message that
safeguarding is everybody's business.

Our Strategic Objectives

Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support:

The board leads a learning culture where best practice is shared through presentations, and areas for improvement are communicated through briefings.

We continue to provide quality support through training and peer support groups for our frontline practitioners and care providers. Regular procedural updates have helped aid clear communication, and application of protocols.

We note that whilst feedback on training remains positive, there has been a reduction in this feedback. As we continue to navigate these uncertain times, we recognise the value of feedback in enabling our training to evolve to meet changing needs.

As part of our forthcoming review of subgroup membership, we intend to further extend invites for representation to the provider sector. The aim is to ensure the voice of providers is present in board activity and in the development and progress of the key priorities.

Preventing abuse and neglect by ensuring that learning from reviews is embedded and best practice is researched and implemented:

The Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Subgroup considered all referrals with a quorate and professionally curious approach. Whilst none of the referrals received in the reporting period met the criteria to conduct a SAR, where

necessary, the subgroup have ensured single agency actions as appropriate. The board have striven to identify quick wins in relation to existing processes and circulated successes as well as opportunities. The completion of our

learning briefing in relation to self-neglect continues to support staff in identifying early warning signs and suitable preventative action.

Increasing our ability to hear the service user voice remains a key part of our work to inform our services. A review of our existing processes will support the board to embed effective joint working.

Robust governance scrutinising effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes:

The key functions of the board continue to be met. During the year the board considered how best to develop interagency working. To this end the decision was taken to create the position of board manager. As a jointly funded position we are confident it will further enhance our partnership working across the core agencies; North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Police and the Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Our business intelligence continues to provide us with valuable insights, and we are eager to consider new methods to build on this. Further utilising our partnership data will enable additional analytics and a further piece of the picture in making safeguarding personal.

Effective transitions to adulthood:

As a board we have identified the need for clarity on what we mean by 'transitions'. Traditionally 'Transitions' has related to care teams and services; CAMHS to AWP, disabled children's team to adult services' team. The term 'Transitional Safeguarding' coined by Research in Practice is relevant to the work of the safeguarding board. As a board it is acknowledged that a system wide multi-agency conversation is needed in terms of local safeguarding systems. This will inform our local priorities.

Final comment:

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the work of all of the partner agencies. Effective remote working has enabled the board to continue to function effectively despite these challenges. We are encouraged by the progress of our board in this last year but remain conscious of the challenges and opportunities facing us moving forward.

Having reviewed the **performance data**, the achievements of the board and subgroups, and areas for development, the key strategic objectives for the next three years are:

Preventative Safeguarding: Develop and implement strategies for preventing abuse and neglect (including self-neglect), by ensuring that learning from

quality assurance activity and reviews is embedded, and best practice is researched and implemented.

Quality of care and support: Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support.

Transitional Safeguarding: Tackling Adult Exploitation: Make sure that all services have appropriate systems and processes in place and services in place to protect adults from exploitation.

Robust Governance: To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board.

Safeguarding response; Recovery and the aftermath of a pandemic: Develop robust multi-agency response for transition from the pandemic

Next Steps

- As noted in our summary, the appointment of a board manager will be a pivotal step in our growth and development. Once appointed, the board manager will champion our processes as we look to achieve the key priorities of the board.
- Terms of Reference for each of the subgroups will be more focused to align with the three-year strategic plan.
- Review subgroup membership with a view to increasing multi-agency representation.
- Further develop board activity in accordance with the NSSAB Quality Assurance Framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the inter-agency safeguarding processes for safeguarding adults at risk in North Somerset.
- Once the NSSAB Strategic Plan is finalised, the Quality and Performance Subgroup will develop an annual audit plan based on the key strategic priorities.
- The Quality and Performance Subgroup will establish a baseline of monitoring activity for each strategic priority dimension. This will include a scoping exercise of each partner agency to determine accessible and relevant data.
- The increase in safeguarding concerns featuring self-neglect requires better understanding to inform strategic planning in terms of early intervention and response across the partnership. We will examine demographic data to ascertain if there are any identifiable inequalities. Our aim is to understand the lived experience of neglect of self-care which will inform our approach and policies and procedures.
- To complement the regional People in a Position of Trust (PiPoT) Framework the NSSAB will develop a local multi-agency protocol for managing cases where allegations have been made against a person in a position of trust.
- The board will drive recruitment for multi-agency representation on the Tackling Adult Exploitation Sub-group and ensure a permanent Chair is assigned to the group.
- The local authority will provide a quarterly summary report to the Board in respect of whole home investigations.
- The board will ensure close links with the development of the Adult Social Services Co-Production Charter and ensure that we have adults with lived experience contributing and influencing the board and its priorities.
- The board will establish links with partner agencies' frontline practitioner forums to ensure their experiences and views are known to the board and influence development and priorities.
- A standing item at the quarterly board meetings will be to review and update on respective partner agency activity in accordance with the key strategic priorities. This will feed into next year's annual report.
- Once recruited, the board manager will have oversight for the NSSAB budget contributions and expenditure.

What to do if you are Worried about an Adult.

For more information please [Click Here](#) to visit our website.

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 20 October 2021

Subject of Report: Draft Calendar of Executive Meetings 2022/23

Town or Parish: None

Officer/Member Presenting: Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Key Decision: No

Reason:

The proposal does not incur expenditure or make savings of £500,000 or over and is not significant in terms of its effect on two or more wards.

Recommendations

That the Executive approves a draft calendar of Executive meetings for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

1. Summary of Report

The report sets out suggested dates for Executive meetings for 2022/23.

2. Policy

None

3. Details

3.1 As required under the Constitution, the municipal calendar is approved each year at the Annual Council meeting in May. To allow councillors and officers to plan ahead and to give members of the public as much notice as possible of forthcoming meetings, the aim is to have a draft municipal calendar for 2022/23 in place before the end of 2021. It is proposed to submit a draft municipal calendar to Council in November for approval. The draft calendar will be subject to final approval at the Annual Council meeting in May 2022 but will provide provisional dates well in advance.

3.2 Before submitting a draft calendar to Council the Executive is asked to consider draft dates for its own meetings for 2022/23. Members will recall that prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the plan was to hold some Executive meetings in the community ie Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea, and also to hold some meetings at 6.00pm to improve accessibility. This plan did not proceed due to the pandemic and the Coronavirus Regulations 2020, with all meetings taking place virtually using Microsoft Teams. Whilst physical meetings have now resumed, Executive meetings are still livestreamed and also available to view after the meeting, continuing to provide accessibility to meetings and improved openness and transparency around the decision-making process.

3.3 It is not proposed to resurrect previous plans to hold meetings at alternative venues and times due to the additional costs and resourcing associated with facilitating meetings in the community and given the greater accessibility offered by livestreaming meetings.

3.4 On the assumption that the number of Executive meetings remains at six and having regard to dates in 2021/22, the following dates are suggested.

Executive (all meetings to be held on Wednesdays at 2.30pm at the Town Hall)

22/06/22

07/09/22

19/10/22 *

07/12/22 *

08/02/23 *

26/04/23

[Denotes meeting required at this point to accommodate the budget process]*

4. Consultation

Executive Members and senior officers have been consulted on proposed dates.

5. Financial Implications

Any decision to hold meetings at venues other than the Town Hall will incur additional costs in respect of venue and/or audio equipment hire and ICT support, and will require additional resourcing.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

None

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Holding virtual meetings under the Coronavirus Regulations 2020 avoided the need for members, officers and other participants to travel to and from meetings. Livestreaming physical meetings continues to provide for other interested parties to watch meetings online thereby avoiding the need to travel to the Town Hall. Active travel to and from physical meetings would reduce the environmental impact associated with journeys to and from the Town Hall.

8. Risk Management

None

9. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

The livestreaming of Executive meetings has increased accessibility and opened up the decision making process to a wider audience.

10. Corporate Implications

None

11. Options Considered

As contained within the report.

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Municipal Calendar 2021/22

Minutes of the Executive 23/10/19

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