

Date: 13 November 2013
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To:

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Councillors Tim Wood (Chairman); Graham Troman (Vice Chairman);
Mike Allen; Peter Bowden; Derek Button; David Chapman;
Maddy Chapman; Deborah Custance Baker; Vivien Duval Steer;
Roger Giles; Peter Halse; John Humphreys; Sheila Kerridge;
David Key; Frances Newth; John O'Leary; Brenda Taylor; Chris Wale;
Eileen Wragg; Steve Wragg; Claire Wright)
Portfolio Holders
Chief Executive; Deputy Chief Executives

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 21 November 2013 at 6.30pm

Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth

AGENDA

Page/s

1. **Public question time** – standard agenda item (15 minutes)
Members of the public are invited to put questions to the Committee through the Chairman. Councillors also have the opportunity to ask questions of the Leader and/or Portfolio Holders during this time slot whilst giving priority at this part of the agenda to members of the public
2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 24 October 2013. 5 - 8
3. To receive any apologies for absence.
4. To receive any declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda.
5. To consider any items which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances.
(Note: Councillors please notify the Chief Executive in advance of the meeting if you wish to raise a matter under this item, who will then consult the Chairman).
6. To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are **no** items that the officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
7. Decisions made by the Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview Procedure Rules under Part 4.5 of the Constitution. There are **no** items identified.

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|-----|---|--------------------------------|
| 8. | Cabinet Agenda
Members are asked to notify in advance the Chairman or the Democratic Services Officer any Cabinet items they wish to debate.
Members to debate any issues of concern on the current Cabinet agenda in order for the Chairman to feed this back to the Cabinet at its meeting on the 27 November 2013. The website link to the Cabinet agenda will be e-mailed to Members on 18 November 2013. | Please refer to Cabinet agenda |
| 9. | Consultation on Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Devon
Presentation from Devon County Council on the strategy that is open for consultation on local flood risk management

Over the past 18 months Devon Council Council has been working with representative from the District Council and other agencies including the Environment Agency, South West Water, Natural England and Natural parks to prepare a strategy.
One of the key objectives of the strategy is to encourage partnership working with all of the authorities and local communities with the aim of achieving better flood risk management in Devon. The strategy will provide clarity about policies and responsibilities, including important information on Development Control, Sustainable Drainage and Emergency Planning. It also provides an opportunity to manage expectations by clearly setting out our priorities and what the partners can afford to do. The strategy is due to be released for a two month consultation period at the end of November and will be made available on the County website. | Verbal presentation |
| 10. | Car Park Management Review
This report and recommendations is being presented to Cabinet on the 27 November 2013. This is an opportunity for the Committee to comment on the report and make any further recommendation to Cabinet if felt necessary. | 9 - 22 |
| 11. | Portfolio Holder Update - Environment
Continuing from the last meeting, an update from Councillor Iain Chubb on the work in his portfolio, specifically covering Streetscene.

Budget breakdown on Streetscene | To follow

23 |
| 12. | Fees and Charges Task and Finish Forum Final Report
Following the interim report considered on the 26 September, this is the final report that will go forward to Cabinet on the 27 November 2013. Members are asked to consider the recommendations made in the report to recommend on to Cabinet. | 24 - 37 |
| 13. | Quarterly Monitoring of Performance – Second quarter 2013/14
Members are asked to consider the performance information against the Council Plan for the second quarter. | 38 - 47 |
| 14. | Budget Task and Finish Forum Notes 7 November 2013
For information. | to follow |

Members are asked to note the forward plan.

Public Information

- There is a period of 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to ask questions.
- The Chairman has the right and discretion to control questions to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time. The Chairman is entitled to interrupt the speaker to ask for their question to be put.
- In addition, the public may speak on items listed on the agenda. After a report has been introduced, the Chairman (Leader of the Council) will ask if any member of the public wishes to speak and/or ask questions.
- All individual contributions will be limited to a maximum period of 3 minutes – where there is an interest group of objectors or supporters, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group.

This meeting is being recorded for subsequent publication on the Council's website. Audio recording is permitted by press representatives and members of the public from the public area, subject to their notification to the Chairman prior to the start of the meeting of a wish to record all or part of that meeting. If you are exercising your right to speak during Public Question Time, but do not wish to be recorded, please inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording to cease while you speak.

Should anyone have any special needs or require any reasonable adjustments to assist them in making individual contributions, please contact Debbie Meakin (contact details at top of page). A hearing loop system will be in operation in the Council Chamber. Councillors and members of the public are reminded to switch mobile phones to silent during the meeting.

Decision making and equality duties

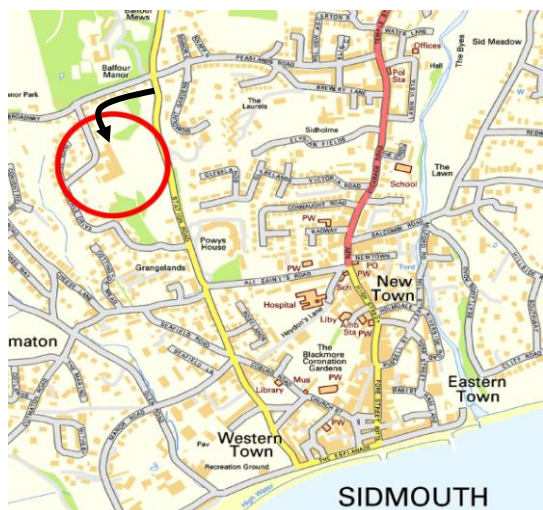
The Council will give due regard under the Equality Act 2010 to the equality impact of its decisions.

- An appropriate level of analysis of equality issues, assessment of equalities impact and any mitigation and/or monitoring of impact will be addressed in committee reports.
- Consultation on major policy changes will take place in line with any legal requirements and with what is appropriate and fair for the decisions being taken.
- Where there is a High or Medium equalities impact, Members will be expected to give reasons for decisions which demonstrate they have addressed equality issues.

Members and co-opted members remember!

- ❑ You must declare the nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests. [Under the Localism Act 2011, this means the interests of your spouse, or civil partner, a person with whom you are living with as husband and wife or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners]. You must also disclose any personal interest.
- ❑ You must disclose your interest in an item whenever it becomes apparent that you have an interest in the business being considered.
Make sure you say what your interest is as this has to be included in the minutes. [For example, 'I have a disclosable pecuniary interest because this planning application is made by my husband's employer'.]
- ❑ If your interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest you cannot participate in the discussion, cannot vote and must leave the room unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee.

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The following buses all terminate at the Triangle in Sidmouth. From the Triangle, walk up Station Road until you reach the Council Offices (approximately ½ mile).

From Exeter – 52A, 52B; From Honiton – 52B
From Seaton – 52A; From Ottery St Mary – 379, 387 (Please check your local timetable for times)

For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee held
at Knowle, Sidmouth on 24 October 2013

Present:	Tim Wood (Chairman) David Chapman (Acting Vice Chairman)	
	Mike Allen Peter Bowden Maddy Chapman Deborah Custance Baker Roger Giles	Sheila Kerridge Frances Newth Claire Wright
	Officers: Andrew Ennis, Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager John Golding, Head of Housing Charlie Plowden, Countryside and Leisure Manager Giles Salter, Solicitor Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer	
Also Present	Councillors: Ray Bloxham Peter Sullivan David Atkins Pauline Stott David Cox	Iain Chubb Tom Wright Graham Godbeer Paul Diviani Phil Twiss
	Apologies:	
	Committee Members: Derek Button Vivien Duval Steer Graham Troman David Key John O'Leary Brenda Taylor Chris Wale Steve Wragg	Stephanie Jones Andrew Moulding

The meeting started at 6:30pm and ended at 8.35pm.

***33 Public Question Time**

The Chairman welcomed Councillors to the meeting. There were no public questions at this point of the meeting.

***34 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September 2013 were confirmed and signed as a true record. A copy of a letter sent by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny to the Secretary Of State For Communities And Local Government on the subject of government funding restrictions would be circulated.

***35 Environment Portfolio Holder Update**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Iain Chubb, Portfolio Holder for Environment, to update the Committee on aspects of his portfolio. Due to the wide extent of the portfolio, the update and discussion centred on the following areas:

- Public health services
- Countryside and leisure
- Arts Development
- Crime and Disorder
- Licensing
- Car Parks

Public Health Services

Councillor Chubb outlined the work of the Environmental Health Team, who work closely with many sections of the Council including housing, licensing, and planning. They also work with external bodies, including the carrying out of neighbourhood assessments. He also spoke on the function of the Commercial Team, who cover food safety control, health and safety at work, and statutory registration and licensing processes.

In response to a question relating to air quality in Honiton, Andrew Ennis, Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager, advised that an action plan was being developed for publication in 2014.

In response to a question on the discretionary elements of the service, the value of the Neighbourhood Assessments in cost to undertake was very small, but yielded huge benefits, including close working with other agencies to resolve local issues.

Countryside and Leisure Services

Core work of this service covered:

- Local Nature Reserve management (12 in total)
- Environmental education working with local schools
- Trees
- South West Coast Path management
- Public engagement and events programme
- Volunteer engagement – including the volunteer network, Tree Warden scheme, and Junior Rangers
- Axe Wetlands and Water Vole Recovery projects

In response to a question on CIL funding, Charlie Plowden, Countryside and Leisure Manager, was hopeful that the service would benefit from open space contributions. He advised the Members that a new post of Green Infrastructure Project Manager was in place.

The Committee recognised that the service was discretionary. Because of the reduction in budget over the past few years, the service had been continually developing income streams to add to the funding awards, including introducing charges for public events that had previously been free. Surveys are undertaken on a regular basis to evaluate the public awareness of environmental issues in the area and the service continues to attract funding.

35 Environment Portfolio Holder Update (continued)*Arts Development**

This area covered the Manor Pavilion and the Thelma Hulbert Gallery. A number of operational improvements had been made to the Pavilion and the new summer season had proved very popular, increasing income. The Gallery was due to discussion in depth at the next Cabinet meeting but the Portfolio Holder reported an increase in income, with a positive response to the new retail area and wider price range in goods available. Next steps were to further develop the business plan for the Gallery, and review the options for a private sector partner for the cafe.

Members praised the work put into both locations. The Deputy Portfolio Holder encouraged Members to come to Cabinet for the debate on the Gallery the following week.

Crime and Disorder

Members were reminded of the work of the Community Safety and Anti-social Behaviour Coordinator, and the close work with Mid Devon District Council. The Portfolio Holder reminded the Committee of Domestic Abuse Awareness week, which commenced on the 25 November.

Licensing

Environmental Health teams work closely with the Licensing team, providing front line inspections and investigations that ensure appropriate safety and welfare standards are maintained in a range of licensed premises.

Car Parks

The Committee were reminded of the large proportion of revenue that comes from the Council's car parks. The Portfolio Holder was keen to stress that the service strived to maintain a balance between the availability and price of car parking and the success of the District's town centres. He outlined some of the results of the pricing trials that commenced for a six-month period starting in April of this year. Trial car park income was down compared to those parking areas on the existing pricing tariff. Half price offers had not changed customer behaviour to stay longer. The good weather over the summer had benefited the car park income, particularly for the coastal car parks.

Members raised issues relating to car parks, including:

- Campervan parking at Exmouth seafront. The Portfolio Holder reminded Members that this area was of the responsibility of the County Council, but did explain that research was going into the viability of offering suitably sized parking bays in the Maer and other areas, subject to some restriction to avoid impacting on local camp sites;
- Differing opinions on the general knowledge of the trial tariffs. Signs had been in place in each car park involved in the trial;
- Consider free parking from 3pm onwards for Exmouth car parks to encourage use of the local shops on Mondays and Fridays;
- Parking spaces in Sidmouth were too valuable to be used for market stalls; however, Manor could be utilised differently to provide an income.

The Portfolio Holder welcomed any suggestions from Ward Members for ideas for the car parks in their Ward, encouraging them to e-mail him as soon as possible.

***35 Environment Portfolio Holder Update (continued)**

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Portfolio Holder, his Deputy, and the officers of the related services for their valued work.

***36 Notes from Budget Task and Finish Forum**

The notes from the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Forum of 17 October 2013 were noted.

***37 Committee Timetable review**

The Chairman presented a paper outlining some options for committee timing, to avoid the sometimes long delay between minutes of a committee being put before a full Council meeting. Options included a six-week cycle for full Council but it was not clear how this would impact on the work of the Cabinet, who took the majority of decisions outside of the statutory elements of planning and licensing. Another option was an eight-week cycle for full Council. Research into neighbouring authorities had revealed a number of variations, with no obvious clear model to consider.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Business offered his help in developing alternative timetables as part of his current work.

The Committee agreed that alternative timetables should be pursued further, and reported back for future debate.

***38 Forward Plan**

A further request was made to bring forward the item on office relocation. Officer availability and progression of work on the topic was an issue that would prevent the item coming before the Committee prior to the agreed date in January.

The delay in the Business TaFF was also raised, with a request for the research with the local businesses to be progressed despite the TaFF not meeting.

Following discussion at the previous full Council on Trees, the Committee agreed that a Forum be set up with scope to be determined and agreed. Officer resource would be an issue both in providing experts and administrative support and Forum could not be progressed until the spring of 2014. Volunteers at the meeting for this Forum were Councillor Claire Wright and Councillor Roger Giles.

Chairman Date

Agenda Item 10

Cabinet

27 November 2013

AE



Car park management review

Summary

This is a wide-ranging review of a number of operational matters that we think should be considered and reviewed by Members to ensure that our car parks continue to support our town centre economies whilst taking into account the impact of any changes in the charging structure on the council's finances. We have been careful to avoid increasing our basic £1 per hour parking charges and again for the fourth consecutive year we are proposing no further increase. However it is considered to be essential that we make the best possible use of our car park assets and realise a reasonable return on our land holdings.

Recommendations

1. Extend the “park for 3 hours and get the 4th hour free” special offer to apply in all short stay car parks for a further trial period commencing 1 April 2014.
2. Extend the £1 special offer in any inland town car park and to approve in principle the extension of Seaton's Harbour Road £3 offer for a further trial period commencing 1 April 2014.
3. To approve the Council's policy encouraging daytime visitor parking but discouraging overnight parking and long-term parking of motor homes in car parks.
4. To not increase the basic hourly charge for pay and display parking leaving it at £1 per hour for the fourth consecutive year.
5. To approve the proposed increases in parking permit charges as set out in the report.
6. To adopt an all year round tariff for car parks commencing 1 April 2014
7. To approve a Christmas 2013 parking concession in EDDC's car parks
8. To approve the revised tariff for Maer Road Car Park, Exmouth.
9. To delegate authority to the Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to establish a process for allowing a limited number of approved events and other activities to take place in car parks.
10. Delegate to the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder the power to implement the other matters arising from this review.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To keep car parking services under review, to be responsive to changing demands and to protect revenue.

b) Alternative Options

This is an annual review of a range of operational matters relating to car park and a range of alternative options have been considered and are set out in the report.

c) Risk Considerations

The recommendations have been made after a careful balancing of risks to the Council's revenue and the risks to the economic wellbeing of the towns that our car parks serve.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

In carrying out this review we were always mindful of both the needs of our residential communities and the Council's desire to do everything possible to encourage thriving town centre economies. These recommendations are consistent with policy and budgetary constraints and are consistent with ideas presented to the fees and charges TAFF this autumn.

Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out the duties of all local authorities in respect of a range of traffic related functions including the provision of off-street parking. The proposals contained within this report are consistent with these duties. In chief, local authorities are required to ensure that they do nothing that would result in the unsafe or inconvenient use of the highway. These proposals will not interfere with the security of (or access to) any other premises, they are not prejudicial to the amenity of any affected locality and they are in all other material respects consistent with other relevant factors including in this case our desire to encourage thriving town centre economies.

e) Date for Review of Decision

November 2014

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the end of 2012 Members considered a review of a range of options relating to the operational management of our car parks portfolio. It was agreed that a number of special offers would be put in place on a trial basis commencing 1 April 2013 and that officers would monitor closely the impact of those offers on both car parking availability and revenue. This report provides a further review of the issues, evaluates the impact of these trials and sets out a number of new proposals for consideration.

2. Summer Trials 2013

General Observations

- 2.1 We applied our summer special offers over the 26 week period commencing 1 April 2013. In summary, we can clearly see that there was an upturn in gross income (before VAT) of £77,000 compared to the equivalent period in 2012. However, on closer inspection it becomes obvious that this upturn was not assisted in any way by the above offers.
- 2.2 The special offer car parks collectively earned £12,000 less in revenue than they did during the same period in 2012. The

overall increase this summer is very clearly attributable to the “other” car parks where there were no special offers. For example, in just 2 weeks (commencing 4 July 2013) income was very significantly higher than the equivalent weeks in 2012 (commencing 8 July 2012).

- 2.3 At Manor Road Sidmouth the increase in visitor numbers and income was around £11,000 in extra income earned from an extra 3,500 transactions compared to 2012. We can see a similar pattern elsewhere with Lime Kiln car park in Budleigh Salterton yielding an additional £16,000 from 6000 extra visitors.
- 2.4 Pay for 3 hours parking and stay free of charge for up to another hour in Sidmouth’s Ham car park.
- 2.4.1 After holding discussions with representatives of Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce we were persuaded that there might be a significant level of demand in the town for extending short stay parking from a 3-hour maximum stay to a 4-hour maximum stay. Anecdotally we were told of customers hurrying out of the town’s shops complaining that 3 hours had not given them sufficient time to enjoy Sidmouth. We were concerned that longer stays could potentially block car parking spaces at critical times but having studied ticket sales data for previous years we were satisfied that this risk was small with most short stay customers choosing to stay for less than 2 hours.
- 2.4.2 Our research showed us that during the year ending 31 March 2012 only 18% of customers using Sidmouth’s Ham car parks paid the full £3 maximum payment. 72% paid between more than £1 but less than £3. As a result we were happy to recommend that we should trial a special offer of allowing customers to pay for 3 hours parking and then get a 4th hour added on at the end of their stay for free. We were confident that this would address the Chambers’ complaints and that it might even encourage visitors to stay in Sidmouth for longer and could convert some of those customers who were buying just 1 or 2 hours parking to upgrade to a 4-hour stay.
- 2.4.3 The outcome was that the number of visitors using the Ham actually went down by a total of just over 3000 ticket sales during the six month trial period and earned just over £1600 less in revenue than in the equivalent six months in 2012. However, perhaps not entirely surprisingly the analysis suggests that the whilst the proportion of visitors staying for less than an hour remained about the same (between 9% and 10% of customers), there was a small shift in customers moving from a ticket price of less than £3 to a £3 ticket. The shift amounted to around 2000 more visitors paying for the maximum permitted stay. The average ticket price in 2012 was £1.75 and in 2013 it was £1.78 which I think demonstrates just how small the overall shift in behaviour was.
- 2.4.5 Although it is impossible to be precise, it does appear that the Sidmouth experience reflects the common sense interpretation in that during periods of good weather the use of those car parks that serve nearby beaches like Sidmouth’s Manor Road car park saw a very significant upturn in use. In Manor Road our summer revenue went up by over £13,000 from £143,784 to £157,545, visitor numbers increased as evidenced by over 4000 more ticket sales to 54878 in 2013. The buy 3 hours and get the 4th free offer does appear to have had a small influence on customer behaviour and although overall numbers were down this year, the weather appears to have been the deciding factor.

- 2.4.6 In view of the exceptional weather this summer, it seems sensible to repeat this offer for an extended trial period to fully assess its overall impact. It also seems sensible to extend the offer to other short stay car parks to enable visitors to other towns to avail themselves of the extra free hour by purchasing a £3 ticket if they so wish.
- 2.5 Park for half price in Exmouth's Maer Road Car Park.
- 2.5.1 It was very interesting to observe the effect of offering visitors a genuinely half-price tariff in Maer Road car park this summer. This car park is a little less convenient than Queens Drive and Foxholes for visitors to Exmouth's beach and the experiment was designed to help us better understand the extent to which our visitors are sensitive to the cost of parking. Despite clear signage of the "half price offer" in close proximity to both of these more popular car parks, it appears that customers were not persuaded to change their behaviour and Maer Road continued to be used primarily as an overflow car park once Queens Drive and then Foxholes car parks were full to capacity.
- 2.5.2 Although Maer Road car park earned around £17,500 this summer (as compared to the £12,000 it produced in 2012) the transaction numbers increased from 7,300 to over 13,000 leading to the reasonable conclusion that if a full price tariff had been in place the car park could have earned double the revenue it actually did. Over the same period Queens Drive and Foxholes attracted an additional 11,000 visitors earning an extra £32,000 compared with 2012, confirming that the gains at Maer Road did not reflect equivalent losses elsewhere. The shift therefore appears to be all due to good weather bringing visitors to Exmouth's beach and, I would suggest, nothing whatsoever to do with the price of parking there.
- 2.5.3 We believe that this exercise has helped us to understand that the availability of parking in preferred locations seems to be a more important factor than a price reduction in persuading people to use a particular car park. In other respects I think that it is clear that this offer was not successful and should not be repeated.
- 2.6 In any inland town car park, park from 3pm on Saturday right through to 8am on Monday for £1.
- 2.6.1 Anecdotally the situation in towns such as Honiton and Axminster tends to be that there is a reasonable level of activity in these towns on a Saturday morning. However as the weekend continues the footfall simply isn't there and this is supported by ticket sales in our car parks. Our offer of pay just £1 after 3pm till 8am Monday morning was designed to encourage visitors to spend more time in the towns on Saturday afternoons and Sundays but disappointingly few people have taken advantage of this offer. In fact in Honiton for example weekend visitor numbers were down by around 1000 to below 35,000 ticket sales compared to summer 2012. Ticket sales on offer (i.e. after 3pm) actually went down by 8% compared to a reduction of just 2% before 3pm. Again the weather is a likely contributor encouraging visitors to spend time at locations away from the towns during periods of prolonged sunshine. The offer does not appear to have caused any particular harm and could be left in place for a further trial period.
- 2.7 In Seaton's Harbour Road long stay car park, arrive after 1pm on any day and stay for the rest of that day for just £3.

- 2.7.1 In coming up with this offer we looked at activity every day from 1 April to 30 September during the summer of 2012 and it was clear that 90% of our Harbour Road long stay income has already been earned by 2pm.
- 2.7.2 Furthermore 70% of income is in by 1pm and only around 600 of the transactions after 1pm were for more than £3 (and almost all of those were for only £4 to £5) so the offer of £3 to park for the rest of the day after 1pm would in a worst case scenario risk losing revenue of something a little over £600 in total over the whole of the proposed six month trial period.
- 2.7.3 The car park took £46,309 from around 15,487 transactions during this period in 2012.
- 2.7.4 We also identified a potential for some of the 2000+ £2 transactions that took place after 1pm would be tempted to up their ticket purchase to £3 possibly gaining up to an extra £2000 of revenue over that same period.
- 2.7.5 Looking back now at what actually happened during the 2013 trial, it is interesting to observe first the activity after 1pm: There were 200 (3%) more customer transactions after 1pm in the long stay car park and the corresponding increase in revenue was a little over £300 and the average transaction was a little over £2. Activity also increased by a similar amount with pre 1pm transactions up by 2% and revenue up by almost £500. During the trial period the car park took £47,109 and there were 15,689 transactions.
- 2.7.6 Again this special offer does not seem to have altered customers' behaviour but it has a number of potential benefits for the town and appears to have caused no harm to our revenue so there may be an opportunity to repeat the offer in 2014 prior to changes arising from the development of Seaton Discovery Centre.
- 2.7.7 However the Discovery centre development may commence as early as spring or summer 2014 and at this stage it is impossible to know how much of this car park will be available during the construction phase. The remaining car park following completion will be just 150 spaces (down from the existing 367) so it does seem likely that the anticipated 40,000 to 50,000 visitors expected from 2015 will result in parking spaces here being at a premium and this offer is unlikely to be appropriate beyond 2014.

3. Free of charge parking

- 3.1 We met with representatives of the East Devon Chambers of Commerce on Tuesday 5th November and they have asked us to consider a policy of moving towards free-of-charge parking in East Devon's towns.
- 3.2 The Council's parking team has an accumulated knowledge and expertise in this area and whilst there has been much talk about the harm that parking charging policies are doing to town centre economies, we remain convinced that reasonable charges for parking in key locations is not in itself harmful to local businesses.
- 3.3 Often the convenience of out of town retail offers causes confusion and can skew our perception of the value of ample free parking. The fact is that ample parking is rarely available in towns and there is good evidence to indicate that people visiting towns and other attractions place a higher value on

finding available parking at a convenient location than they do on finding less expensive or even free of charge parking.

- 3.4 Our own experience at Maer Road in Exmouth this summer is consistent with this. Appropriate charges represent a cost efficient means of managing and ensuring the turnover of our limited parking availability and I see no evidence to suggest that customers are choosing to shop elsewhere simply because of the price of parking.
- 3.5 In fact the reverse is often true with parking being charged at a premium in the most successful retail areas (Exeter City Centre would be a good example) whilst if shoppers choose to visit other towns like, for example, Ottery St Mary they would have access to substantial free short stay parking in Hind Street and one of the cheapest long stay car parks around at £1.50 all day in Canaan Way.
- 3.6 In addition to the difficult question of how to replace the revenue that the council currently relies upon, free of charge parking raises two further questions. Firstly, how do we prevent the parking spaces becoming occupied by town centre residents and their visitors (many of our residents do not have an off-street parking space of their own) and by the staff employed by town centre businesses?
- 3.7 Experience elsewhere suggests that free car parks quickly become unavailable to shoppers for this reason. Secondly, some of our car parks in Exmouth, Honiton and Axminster could potentially offer a convenient and inexpensive option for rail passengers, effectively and inadvertently becoming park-and-ride car parks serving Exeter bypassing the local town centre economies.
- 3.8 We will continue to talk to the Chambers of Commerce to seek solutions to this issue but for the foreseeable future we believe that it is appropriate to manage our car parks through a regime of reasonable charges.

4. Christmas Parking Concessions

- 4.1 This year we have been asked by Chambers of Commerce to consider offering free parking all day on every December Saturday leading up to Christmas. Equivalent Saturdays in 2012 produced revenue of just over £30,000 (before VAT) from 22,000 ticket sales but over half of these transactions were for just £1 or less suggesting that many shoppers are actually spending very little time in the towns.
- 4.2 We would genuinely like to be able to offer something to assist town centre economies this year but we are minded that there is always a risk of unintended consequences. Free parking all day may well tempt shoppers to choose one of our towns – and perhaps to spend longer there. However as suggested above, equally those shoppers may instead choose to use the free parking offer in Exmouth, Honiton and Axminster and take a short train ride into Exeter.
- 4.3 Again, there is also a very real risk that shop staff, other workers and town centre residents take full advantage of the offer themselves on these Saturdays and block the shoppers car parks all day.
- 4.4 As an alternative to all three Saturdays we have been asked to consider allowing free or reduced tariff parking on 7 December 2013. This is becoming a nationally recognised day promoting independent retailers under the title “independents’ day”

- 4.5 One solution is to offer a cheap rate all day – possibly an offer transferrable between all EDDC car parks on that day – starting at say 10am, park for the rest of the day for just £2, hopefully generous enough to tempt shoppers but inconvenient for most shop workers and yet sufficiently expensive to discourage shoppers from treating the car parks as a cheap Exeter park and ride.
- 4.6 Finally, we have been asked to consider approaching the Christmas offer from an entirely different perspective. A so-called golden ticket initiative would leave parking tariffs unchanged but we would instead offer a “prize” (perhaps a free of charge parking permit or a cash prize) with winners drawn from the pay and display tickets sold on designated days in specified car parks. Customer would retain their pay and display parking ticket (each of which have a unique reference number) to claim their prize.

5. Motor homes

5.1 Day visitors

- 5.1.2 Motorhomeparking is a UK website dedicated to directing motor home drivers to places where it is legal and safe for them to park. The organisation now claims that now around 25% of all UK local authorities are making specific provision to welcome visitors in motor homes.
- 5.1.2 East Devon does attract a variety of visitors and it is a matter of fact that over the last few years we have witnessed an increase in the popularity of motor homes with our visitors and we are seeing them in our towns and coastal resorts more and more frequently. This means inevitably that the drivers of these larger vehicles are seeking suitable off-street parking in our car parks when they visit our towns.
- 5.1.4 We currently have an unclear policy on where such vehicles are able to park. Some car parks can accommodate small and medium sized vehicles in a single marked bay, perhaps with an acceptable overhang across a grass verge. Others can accommodate vehicles across two adjacent bays and informally we have allowed drivers to purchase two pay and display tickets to allow them to park in this way.
- 5.1.5 At Beer Head, the grass surface car park has no bay markings and motor homes frequently park there without issue. In my view, it is likely to be in the best interests of our town centre economies to encourage the drivers of such vehicles with a clearly stated policy and to make specific provision for daytime parking in designated car parks.
- 5.1.6 It is considered that the layout of the following car parks could be modified to accommodate a few dedicated motor home parking bays:
- Exmouth: Estuary and Maer Road
 - Budleigh Salterton: Lime Kiln
 - Sidmouth: Manor Road
 - Ottery St Mary: Land of Canaan
 - Honiton: Lace Walk
 - Axminster: West Street and Poplar Mount
 - Beer: Cliff Top and Central
 - Seaton: Harbour Road (until 2015) and Orchard Road

5.2 Overnight Parking

- 5.2.1 It has been the subject of occasional complaints over the last couple of years that from time to time, motor homes drivers of motor homes and campervans (of various shapes and sizes and in various states of repair) do take the opportunity to park overnight and it is suggested “camp” in the car park.
- 5.2.2 This seems to be a particular issue in Estuary car park in Exmouth, Manor Road car park in Sidmouth and Beer Head car park. Whilst our Parking Places Order does not prohibit overnight parking, it does prohibit overnight sleeping. I think it is clear that the enforcement of this restriction is by no means straightforward and a CEO would need to establish that not only is the vehicle occupied but that someone had actually slept in the vehicle overnight in order to prove the contravention.
- 5.2.3 In the past a pragmatic view has been taken leading to the current custom and practice that if a vehicle is clearly parked in a suitable location and has paid the required parking fee, then no further investigation would be carried out. In my view we now need to review our policy and then to enforce restrictions in a robust and transparent manner.
- 5.2.4 I would suggest that there are some car parks where we could choose to allow motor home and camper vans to park overnight, initially on a one year trial basis. These would include Manor Road in Sidmouth, Maer Road and Estuary in Exmouth and Lime Kiln in Budleigh Salterton. In all others, overnight parking would be prohibited. We would not offer additional facilities (water, electricity, waste disposal) and in view of this, we could permit a maximum stay of 24 hours, prohibiting their return on the following night. I do not anticipate that the introduction of a legitimate overnight tariff would generate a significant level of additional revenue and for comparison purposes Torridge District Council introduced a policy of allowing overnight parking for just £5. They report that this was implemented this summer without any issues.
- 5.2.5 Alternatively Members may be more comfortable promoting the use of legitimate local camp sites and introducing a blanket prohibition on overnight parking in all our car parks. On balance I am going to recommend a ban on all overnight parking as there appears to be good availability of legitimate overnight camping facilities locally and this is the most straightforward enforcement option.

5.3 Long Term Parking

- 5.3.1 Finally the Council needs to consider its policy on the use of car parks for what is effectively the “storage” of large motor homes. This has now become an issue in Seaton’s Orchard car park and it is not uncommon to find 15 or 20 such vehicles, often occupying (or partly blocking) 30 to 40 spaces in this 168 space car park. Seaton residents have already expressed concerns over the loss of more than half of Harbour Road’s 367 spaces once development of the discovery Centre gets underway and anticipate a shortage of visitor parking for the town.
- 5.3.2 The issue is also apparent to a lesser extent in other towns and invariably the vehicles concerned are displaying a town/area parking permit that costs just £120 for a whole year. This compares very favourably with commercial prices for “secure” storage which I understand tend to be of

the order of around £2 per night or £400 to £500 per year. Again it is suggested that we now need to consider our position in respect of whether we should provide long term parking / storage facilities for those motor homes owned by our own residents.

- 5.3.3 Two options that would merit further debate would be to make it a specific condition of our parking permits that they may be used only by vehicles of up to a prescribed maximum width and length.
- 5.3.4 This would effectively compel owners of large motor homes to pay for their parking on a daily basis (£4 to £10 per day depending on the car park and time of year) and would encourage these owners to seek a less expensive and more secure legitimate storage facility.
- 5.3.5 Alternatively we could adopt a policy that either adopts a blanket prohibition of the overnight parking of motor homes or restricts overnight parking to one night in certain dedicated bays in designated car parks. Either way, these policies would call a halt to this emerging issue.

6. Advertising in car parks

- 6.1 We have identified a possible business opportunity to earn revenue and assist local businesses by allowing, subject to obtaining planning consent, the display of advertisements in key locations within some of our car parks.
- 6.2 We are presently consulting with the East Devon chambers of commerce and will take into account their views before proceeding further.

7. Other uses for car parks

- 7.1 We currently have around 5500 parking spaces under our control and many of these remain unoccupied for much of the year, ready for visitors to our towns and beaches at peak times. These times and dates are reasonably predictable and we have an opportunity to allow or even promote a range of other off-peak activity in some of our car parks. We propose to consult with ward members, town and parish councils and we have already started consultation with the East Devon Chambers of Commerce and the Beer Village Business Forum
- 7.2 Recent examples which have to date been refused include a request to authorise a local person to operate a car valeting business in Lace Walk car park in Honiton, another request to allow someone to trade “farm gate” quality fresh vegetables, also out of Lace Walk car park, the Ward Councillor has asked for consideration of low-season car boot sales in Beer central car park and another local entrepreneur hoping to establish a cream-tea and sandwich takeaway in Exmouth.
- 7.3 The suggestion is that the Council delegates authority to the Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager and Portfolio Holder to give consent to applications that are deemed not to be harmful to the reputation of the Council nor to the economic wellbeing of the town, in consultation with the town or parish clerk and the local ward member. There would be a reasonable charging scheme put in place but to reflect the existing situation, the Council would retain discretion to waive charges for not-for-profit events in support of an approved charity.

8. All-year tariff

- 8.1 Each year we incur both additional costs in reverting to a winter tariff (ticket machine reprogramming and new signage on all machines) along with earning less revenue because of either a cheaper tariff or, in some cases, a free of charge tariff. This is in most cases put in place on 1 November each year and lasts until Good Friday (or 1 April) the following year (whichever comes first).
- 8.2 The current arrangements are summarised in table 1.

Table 1 – Seasonal Tariff Changes

Car Park	Summer Tariff 1 April to 31 October	Winter Tariff 1 November to 31 March
Exmouth:		
Maer	£1 per hour, £6 all day	free
Foxholes	£1 per hour, £6 all day	free
Estuary	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Camperdown Terrace	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Queens Drive	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Beer:		
Cliff Top	£1 per hour, £4 all day	free
Central	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Seaton:		
Harbour Road	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Sidmouth:		
Manor Road	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Budleigh Salterton:		
Lime Kiln	£1 per hour, £6 all day	£1 per hour, £3 all day
Also Exmouth		
	Summer Tariff	Winter Tariff
Queens Drive Echelon	1 April to 30 September	1 October to 31 March
	90p per hour, £6 all day	free

- 8.3 We have consistently avoided increasing our basic £1 per hour parking charges and again this year we are proposing no further increase. However, there is good evidence to suggest that when visitors arrive in a new town, their priority is to find a convenient available parking place and that nowadays they expect to pay for it. A number of our towns enjoy a reasonable low-season visitor footfall and the need to revert to a cheaper winter tariff can now at the very least be reviewed. The suggestion is to abandon the winter tariff in favour of one simple year-round tariff from 1 April 2014.

9. Management of Belsher's slipway Exmouth

- 9.1 Since the closure of Mamhead slipway in Exmouth we have provided a CEO to help with day to day management of the use of Belsher's slipway and to proactively manage the

associated parking issues in the vicinity. General feedback suggests that this role has been helpful and subject to finding the necessary budget, it is proposed that this should continue until a replacement for Mamhead slipway is in operation.

10. Exmouth Land train and Maer Road car park

- 10.1 Maer Road car park is underused for most of the year and has been the subject of a recent proposal by a local company to operate a land train service in the town again.
- 10.2 We are currently in discussions that could see Maer Road car park in use as both overnight garaging for the land train along with its usage as the designated car park for Stuart Line cruise customers. The proposal under consideration is to provide an hourly land-train service on a circular route taking in the seafront, docks and town centre and customers would have an opportunity to purchase a combined parking, land train and cruise deal ticket.
- 10.3 The outstanding question is to review the appropriate tariff for Maer Road. In section 1.3 above it was demonstrated that overall the half price tariff offer does not appear to have persuaded visitors to move to Maer Road car park until other options were unavailable. However, with this new incentive we could well see usage increase and it would seem unwise to leave the half price tariff in place again next year. However the Council has been asked to consider not returning to the full price tariff in order to assist in promoting this new attraction.
- 10.4 The suggestion is to acknowledge that with the added incentive of the land train links, Maer Road car park could well become just as popular as Foxholes and Queens Drive and might even attract visitors away from those car parks. This represents an overall risk to revenue if the Maer Road tariff is significantly cheaper. However a compromise worthy of further consideration would be to introduce a new tariff of £5 all-day.

11. Low Tariff Review

- 11.1 Traditionally East Devon District Council has provided a small number of car parks, primarily for the benefit of local communities, that are available at significantly cheaper rates than the rest. These are:

At 50p per hour (£1.50 all day)

Coombe Lane, Axminster; Land of Canaan, Ottery St Mary

At 40p per hour, (£4 all day)

Underhill, Lymington; Church Street, Sidford; Dolphin Street, Colyton

- 11.2 In addition, we sell around 200 annual parking permits to local residents at just £35 for the following car parks: Underhill, Lymington, Dolphin, Street Colyton, Camperdown Terrace, Exmouth.
- 11.3 These charging regimes might well attract criticism and are capable of being viewed as anomalies and in consequence at times when we are looking in every possible direction to make savings and manage our assets more effectively, they are difficult to justify.

- 11.4 The low hourly rate (40p and 50p) and all day caps could now potentially be brought into line with other car parks to enable us to manage one simple tariff of £1 per hour and a maximum daily charge of £6. However, such a significant increase can only cause harm and my suggestion would be to note the anomaly, to take no action at this stage, but to begin consultation next year and work towards the objective of bringing the charges into line with the rest of the district by 2017 via planned price increases in 2015 and 2016.

12. Parking Permits

- 12.1 All of our other parking permits continue to be popular and represent extremely good value for money. We are proposing to increase permit charges by 10% across the range next year. They will continue to be very affordable and they will represent a very significant discount for regular users when compared with pay and display charges. For example our “All car parks” permit is set to increase from £185 to £203. For comparison, I understand that the equivalent district wide permits in West Dorset and Teignbridge cost £720 and £550 respectively. Our ever popular town / area permit will increase from £120 to £132.
- 12.2 The low tariff resident permits described in 10.1 above cost just £35 and with a 10% increase will still be well under £40 per year. An additional £10 per permit on top would generate an additional £2000 in revenue. Again, my suggestion would be to take no action at this stage (other than the basic 10% increase) , but to include these permit charges in the planned consultation next year and work towards the objective of phasing in increases towards the district norm by 2017 via planned price increases in 2015 and 2016.

13. Seaton Town Hall car park

- 13.1 This car park offers 20 spaces to permit holders only. It has already been noted that Seaton residents have expressed concern about a lack of available parking once the Discovery Centre planning consent is implemented.
- 13.2 The car park is often underused and the introduction of pay and display parking here could be helpful to both the town and East Devon District Council. Spaces in the Harbour Road car parks have been earning us up to £600 per space per year.

14. On-street enforcement

- 14.1 Finally in this review Members are reminded that the Council is now well into its notice period and in a report to its Cabinet on 9 October 2013 Devon County Council has explained that none of the Devon District Councils were able to continue to deliver an on-street service after 1 April 2014 for the amount of money that was on offer.
- 14.2 The costs of providing this service have historically been passed on in their entirety to the County Council on a zero profit basis. The County Council has taken advice from a consultant who has recommended that they could potentially deliver a County-wide enforcement service themselves from a centralised administrative base with significant cost savings. They made a “fixed-fee” offer to all Devon Districts inviting them to continue to deliver services on the basis of a reduced fee (based on their own financial model). East Devon’s offer

was for £102,000 less than it cost us to deliver the service last year.

- 14.3 Like all other districts we looked at the situation very carefully but we were unable to deliver the service as requested and as an alternative we offered to provide a reduced level of service within budget. This was not accepted by the County Council and they are working on their own in-house option. They report that they are simultaneously working with a local authority collaboration comprising officers from Teignbridge, South Hams and West Devon Councils who believe that it may be in the best interests of their Councils to deliver a county wide service.
- 14.4 Our on-street civil enforcement officers have provided an excellent level of service on behalf of Devon County Council and it is with grateful thanks that we should now wish them a smooth transfer into their new roles with either the county Council or the district-led collaboration.
- 14.5 All staff are protected by the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) Regulations and will transfer to the new service provider on 1 April 2014 with their terms and conditions of employment unchanged.

15. Financial consequences

- 15.1 The on-street arrangements with Devon County Council have historically made a contribution to our organisational on-costs, including ICT, premises, payroll, customer services and accountancy. There has also been a contribution towards the shared costs of managing the combined service, although we made very substantial saving in that area when the Parking Service Manager retired in 2011 and his role was combined with the then Environmental Health Manager (Environmental Protection), followed by further efficiency savings arising from the same management team taking on the role of the retiring Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Premises) and some elements of the role of the retiring Head Environment.
- 15.2 Initially our remaining team will concentrate on car parks management and off-street enforcement with the objectives of maintaining high levels of customer service whilst taking into account the impact of any changes in the charging structure on the council's finances.
- 15.3 It is always difficult to predict accurately the financial consequences of introducing even relatively modest changes in the way in which we manage our car parks. We are however confident that extending this year's special offers as discussed along with increasing permit charges is likely to have a positive effect. Introducing a special motorhome tariff, allowing other activities and events to take place in our car parks and making the most of advertising opportunities also have the potential to help us meet the costs of managing and maintaining our car parks. I propose to bring you a further annual review of the service towards the end of 2014.

16. Equalities Considerations

- 16.1 Our car parks offer convenient designated parking spaces for disabled blue badge holders and the proposals for change in this report have been assessed to have a neutral impact. The extra hour's free parking proposed in short stay car parks will be of assistance to residents and visitors with limited mobility, allowing extra time for their journey back to

their car. The proposals for encouraging motorhome users to visit East Devon has been assessed as having a neutral impact and the proposal to not increase the basic hourly rate of £1 will, we believe, have a positive impact for customers on limited incomes. Permit charges are increasing but benchmarking with neighbouring authorities indicate that these continue to represent excellent value for money for all and this proposal is therefore assessed to have a neutral impact.

Legal Implications

Consideration of what amendments will be required to EDDC's Parking Places Order 2008 to reflect any changes approved by this report will need to be made.

This Order is currently in the course of review to consolidate subsequent removal/changes to the extent of certain parking places and to authorise payments by mobile 'phone as well as legislative updating (amended draft submitted to Parking Services for review & inclusion of details of parking fee/restrictions schedules).

Financial Implications

It should be noted that the increase in the VAT rate from 17.5% to 20% on 04/01/2011 is borne by the Authority and has not affected the price of the £1 hour parking charge to the public. This has reduced our income (currently receiving 0.83p, where previously 0.85p was received).

On street Parking service – The financial implications would need to be investigated further once the decision is clear on whether the service transfers to DCC or the Consortium, regarding the TUPE of staff and possible redundancy costs.

Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet

This report has not been the subject of further consultation. The information presented herein has been consulted upon extensively with Ward Members, Town and Parish Councils and Chambers of Commerce.

Background Papers

- ❑ <http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/bp031012cabinetCarParkreport.pdf>
- ❑ Considered by Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet in 2012

Andrew Ennis
Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager
Ext. 2382

Cabinet
27 November 2013

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL REVENUE ESTIMATES 2013/14

STREETSCENE PORTFOLIO

The Street Scene Portfolio covers refuse and recycling, street cleansing, allotments, parks and pleasure grounds maintenance, public toilets, sports grounds, cemeteries, beaches including beach huts, flood prevention,

Service	Mandatory	Mandatory	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary	Mandatory	Discretionary	Mandatory	Discretionary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Discretionary	Mandatory	Discretionary	Mandatory	Discretionary	StreetScene Support Services	Total Street Scene
	Refuse Collection & Recycling	Street Cleansing	Parks & Pleasure Grounds	Public Conveniences	Sports Grounds	Cemeteries	Beach Huts, Beaches and Foreshores	Flood Prevention	Play Equipment	Coastal Protection	Water Safety	Security Lighting	Public Protection	Amenity Facilities	Street Name Plates	Bus Shelters		
Employees	141,830	663,940	775,990	163,330	4,450				0		19,640		11,300		0		679,780	2,460,260
Recharged Capital Salaries																	(23,680)	(23,680)
Premises	188,440		50,890	260,580	64,530	50,350	107,970	71,330	97,940	45,540		49,720	0	7,060		250	(28,120)	966,480
Transport	11,710	252,030	210,260	15,660			7,200		0		2,040				0		77,940	576,840
Supplies & Services	4,853,520	301,340	259,750	50,620	330	46,750	600	8,240	1,010	44,060	24,400		9,220	7,160	7,000	0	38,670	5,652,670
Support Services	273,880	249,790	279,110	184,800	167,340	156,020	313,910	64,220	42,130	31,260	38,880	13,900	35,940	28,070	5,180	10,330	210,370	2,105,130
Total Expenditure	5,469,380	1,467,100	1,576,000	674,990	236,650	253,120	429,680	143,790	141,080	120,860	84,960	63,620	56,460	42,290	12,180	10,580	954,960	11,737,700
Income	(1,600,270)	(15,350)	(149,330)	(64,000)	(55,950)	(80,030)	(254,270)	0	(2,980)	(20,000)				(9,500)		0	(2,251,680)	(2,251,680)
Less: Recharges to Other Services		(203,910)	(659,280)					0	0								(984,960)	(1,848,150)
Net Expenditure	3,869,110	1,247,840	767,390	610,990	180,700	173,090	175,410	143,790	138,100	100,860	84,960	63,620	56,460	32,790	12,180	10,580	(30,000)	7,637,870
Loan Repayment																		0
Capital Charges	495,330	103,240	144,390	160,830	12,340	0	22,690	6,440	218,440	152,950	5,700			35,730	0	13,200		1,371,280
Net Expenditure	4,364,440	1,351,080	911,780	771,820	193,040	173,090	198,100	150,230	356,540	253,810	90,660	63,620	56,460	68,520	12,180	23,780	(30,000)	9,009,150

Service / Events	Annual collection of 20 tonnes of waste and 19 tonnes of kerbside recycling from 64,000 properties	Cleansing of 14 sq km of urban and rural areas, emptying of 384 dog bins and 780 litter bins, dealing with over 400 fly tips a year	Maintenance of over 700 ground sites, four main parks, seven playing fields, five recreational grounds, 1.5 million sq m of grass, 90,000 sq m of hedges	Provision of 47 public toilets	Maintenance of 4 main sports pitches, 4 sports pavilions and 2 bowling clubs	Grant payments to church councils, collection of burial fees, maintenance of 3 cemeteries and 14 closed churchyards	Maintenance of 5 beaches, 225 beach huts, 241 beach hut sites only and 20 chalets	Inspection and maintenance of 14 schemes	Annual inspection and maintenance of over 70 play sites, including 5 skate parks and 5 outdoor gyms	Monitoring and maintenance of defence schemes, infrastructure, and monitoring of cliffs	Contract for Life Guarding Exmouth, buoys and safety signage	19 sites in parks and public gardens	Emergency planning and gas migration monitoring	Norman Lockyer Observatory, Axmouth Harbour, 4 clocks, and 1,000 town seats and benches	New and replacement name plates	Inspection of 52 sites and removal when dangerous	Officer staff costs and vehicles to support all StreetScene Operations fully recharged across Street Scene services.
	Litter & dog bin emptying					Management of unstable memorials	management. Beach levelling and sand clearance/sand dune	Maintenance and clearance of gravel and silt traps. Removal of stream vegetation. Emptying of all									

Assets	10 refuse trucks, 1 skip vehicle	6 Mechanical sweepers and a fleet of vehicles and various specialist cleansing equipment	4 Formal parks	47 public toilets	11 sports grounds/football pitches	3 cemeteries	5 main beaches	40 Land Drainage Sites	Over 70 play sites including 5 skate parks).	Seaton West Walk; Beer - East of Slipway; Sidmouth Pennington Point & Jacobs Ladder; Budleigh - East Walk	Safety Signage	12 light sites. Generally our Parks & Gardens	N/a	Norman Lockyer		52 shelters
	Ro/Ro Vehicle - food waste deliveries	Various cleansing equipment	7 playing fields	3 vehicles	4 sports pavilions.	14 closed churchyards	226 beach huts, 20 chalets				Life saving appliances			Axmouth Harbour		
	20 recycling vehicles		5 Recreation grounds				237 beach hut sites only				Buoys			4 Clocks		
	3 dog bin/caged vehicles		Large fleet of assorted grounds maintenance equipment including vehicles, tractors, ride on mowers and other											1000 Town seats and picnic benches around the district		
	1 bulk waste vehicle													Fromton Heath park old squash courts leased to sport club		
	Routing software															

Customers	64,000 properties	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All users of sports pitches, pavilions and facilities	Burials	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All residents and visitors to East Devon who use our facilities	All operations staff delivering our services, as well as residents and visitors to East Devon
Staff Numbers	3.0	28.8	34.0	8.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.6
																	96.3

Task and Finish Forum Fees and Charges

Final Report
November 2013



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Preface



Councillor Tim Wood

Chairman of the Fees and Charges Task and Finish Forum

Members: Mike Allen; Peter Burrows; Alan Dent; Tony Howard ; Geoff Pook; Tom Wright (prior to May 2013)

The Fees and Charges Forum was set up to consider all the fees and charges of the Council in an environment where Government grants are being reduced and when there are severe controls on increases in Council Tax. It has now completed this task.

There are many areas of Council activity where charges are nationally set or are constrained to enable Councils only to recover the costs of a specific activity. Thus many, if not most, of the Council's charges can only be changed to a very modest degree. Nevertheless virtually all the Council's areas of activity have been reviewed to see whether there are some further possibilities for appropriate but not unreasonable charging. There are a few quite significant areas where, in due course, there may be the possibility of increases in charges to cover costs but where existing contracts make it difficult to alter arrangements in the short term although they need to be reviewed when the opportunity arises.

Areas have been identified where some useful income can be obtained to cover the costs incurred in the particular activity, including in relation to written enquiries on planning matters prior to the possible consideration of a planning application. These, in addition a variety of modest increases in fees and charges listed in the following pages, comfortably achieve the income increase of £50K that was requested of the Forum, with a provisional figure of £85.5K.

The forum has not proposed increases in the income from car parking. The Council does already receive a substantial income from this source. There are continuing discussions on the issue and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet will be discussing these matters further. Most of the recommendations were contained in the interim report and the further recommendations are added from 10 onwards. In relation to the original recommendations, just one change has been made and that is to reduce the proposed charge for Woodland Burial to the same as that proposed for exclusive rights of burial.

The Forum was disappointed not have a clearer picture presented in relation to those fees and charges being administered by the Asset Management Group and considers it a matter of importance to ensure that Asset Management matters are resolved without undue further delay.

I am grateful to all those that have participated in the TAFF and also to all those who have considered and brought forward suggestions as to how the income of the Council might be increased. I would also like to express particular thanks to Debbie Meakin for her work in support of the TAFF.

Tim Wood

November 2013

Recommendations

The Forum recommends the following, based on their interviews, findings and consultation.

- (1) Countryside Service:
 - a) No increase above inflation or to cover significant cost increases for 2014/15 due to the nature of the service objective being educational;
 - b) Investigate as a spend to save initiative shifting the focus of the service to allow the offer of commercial consultation on arboriculture and ecological issues, recognising that this may require additional staff resource in order to maintain the existing service.
- (2) HomeSafeGuard:
 - a) No increase above inflation or to cover significant cost increases for 2014/15 due to the nature of the service objective being predominately for vulnerable people;
 - b) Investigate moving the service into the telecare market as a spend to save initiative.
- (3) Private Water Supplies:
 - a) Increase risk assessment fee by 10% for 2014/15 on completion of inspection of remaining properties on current inspection rota;
 - b) Increase supply sampling charge from £60 to £70 for 2014/15;
 - c) Review actual cost of inspection of caravan sites in preparation for any legislative change that introduces the requirement for a caravan site licence (based on the assumption that this would attract a charge).
- (4) No changes to the current levels of charges for Licensing (including Environmental Health function with licensing administered by Licensing) apart from:
 - a) Increase Hackney Carriage and Private Hire fees in line with full recovery of costs;
 - b) Increase Cemetery Fees for 2014/15 as follows:
 - 1) Interment (Adult) from £415 to £480
 - 2) Interment (Ashes) from £113 to £140
 - 3) Interment (Scattering) from £78 to £100
 - 4) Exclusive rights of burial (Adult) from £622 to £850
 - 5) Exclusive rights of burial (Ashes plot x 4) from £276 to £350
 - 6) Exclusive rights of burial (Ashes plot x 2) from £156 to £200
 - 7) Exclusive rights of burial (Ashes plot x 1) from £78 to £100
 - 8) Headstone from £155 to £170
 - 9) Flat/foot/kerb stone from £155 to £170
 - 10) Vase/tablet/inscription from £70 to £80
 - 11) Chapel Service from £100 to £120
 - 12) Woodland burial plot from £415 to £850 (formerly recommended as £960)
 - 13) Register search from £25 to £30

- (5) Planning:
- Introduce a new charge for letters responding to requests from householders regarding requirement to apply for permission at £35 per written response. Enquiries of a brief nature by phone and at reception to remain free of charge with advice if the response would be substantial enough to require the chargeable written response.
- (6) No changes to the current levels of charges for Building Control due to the competitive nature of the market.
- (7) Streetscene:
- a) The following charges are retained at being increased in line with RPI:
 - 1) Allotments
 - 2) Benches
 - 3) Boats and Winches
 - 4) Schedule 2 Waste collection
 - b) Review of beach hut charges:
 - 1) Review demand at end of season before actioning subsequent recommendations;
 - 2) Charges retained at being increased in line with RPI;
 - 3) Note high demand for sites in Budleigh Salterton and review offer at Budleigh Salterton at end of 2013;
 - 4) Review switch to site only offer and extending terms of lease to year round for 2015/16;
 - c) Set charge of £25 plus VAT for collection of 3 items under Bulky Household Waste; with a subsequent charge of £10 for each subsequent item with limit on number of items to be decided at an operational level;
 - d) Review charges for commercial events with Portfolio Holder to incorporate:
 - 1) Full charge for commercial bodies;
 - 2) Concession rate for community and charity events to cover at least the administration charge;
 - 3) Assessment of charging model used by Exeter City Council
 - e) Make available the hire of a section of Connaught Gardens on a trial basis of up to one event per month during the period April to October, subject to review by the Portfolio Holder to assess feasibility, cost to provide and advertise. It is recognised that, due to the nature of the event market, this may not generate significant income until 2015/16;
 - f) Increase charge for water taxi operation agreement by 10% for 2014/15;
 - g) Review actual costs of cleansing toilets in conjunction with asset review;
 - h) Asset Management Forum to review recovery of costs on sports assets outside of the LED contract, with focus on ability to pay for membership based clubs and community use.

- (8) Hire of Knowle building function rooms to retain same charge level with an RPI increase for 2014/15 due to limited life of the building within Council control.
- (9) Continue approach of 5% increase in office rent rates at the East Devon Business Centre and maintain conference and training room hire at current rates.
- (10) Introduce new charging regime for legal services recovery of costs from third parties from 2014/15 (already partially introduced for 2013/14);
- (11) that the Manor Pavilion Steering Group agree a venue hire increase for the facilities at the Manor Pavilion Theatre at 5% for 2014/15;
- (12) Increase in parking permit price for EDDC's car parks; along with further promotion of the permits to boost take up;
- (13) Retain the current Street name and numbering charge at £129 for 2014/15 due to its higher level than many neighbouring authorities;
- (14) that review of the Council's assets and their associated charges be completed as a priority, as the Forum felt work on this was not progressing quickly enough and there is scope to increase income from those assets;
- (15) that the Policy proposed on Fees and Charges be recommended for adoption by Council.

Review Approach

How does the review relate to the Council Plan?

How the Council funds its services relates to every aspect of the Council Plan.

Scope of the review

Scoping is purely a term to define how the review is to be undertaken. The Forum agreed the scope at their first meeting, making clear what was included; but also just as crucially, what was not. The agreed scope of the review is set out below:

Broad topic area:	Fees and Charges
Specific area to explore within topic area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are fees and charges set? • What benchmarking is done with other authorities or service providers? • What consultation is carried out with customers before a fee or charge is changed? • Are fees and charges aligned with the service cost? • Are charges simple to understand and administer? • What additional services could be charged for that aren't currently? • What services, legislation permitting, can bear an increase in fee or charge? • Do discretionary charges cover cost? • Is any Council subsidy of a charge made clear to the customer? • Would increased marketing help boost use of some services? • Does each service have a clear charging policy – if not, should they? • What social benefit is there of the provision of a service?
Areas NOT covered by the review:	Recharge of overheads Sponsorship Council Tax Car Park charges in full (recently extensively reviewed)
Desired outcomes of the review:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of rationale behind fee and charge setting • Clear consultation on reviewing and setting new fees and charges • Raising additional income where legislation allows, and market will bear increase in fees and charges • Recommend a fees and charges policy to Council to ensure consistency in approach to review of fees and charges
Who should be consulted for evidence	Head of Finance Heads of Service Service Managers

What evidence already exists	Fees and charges policies set by other authorities CIPFA guidance
What experts are needed to help with the review:	Head of Finance Financial Services Manager Heads of Service Service Managers
What other resources are needed:	Accountancy time in collating fee and charge data for each service; Service Manager time at meetings; Democratic Services in collating data both here and from other authorities
Undertaken by the Committee or is a TAFF required:	Task and Finish Forum
Timescale including start date:	Meeting regularly March - September in order to inform the budget process for 2014/15
Who are the recommendations being reported to:	Overview and Scrutiny September 2013 Cabinet October 2013

Evidence sources

Over a number of meetings, the Forum heard from Heads of Service and Service Managers, together with their allocated accountants. Information was provided on charges set by other authorities both from Service Managers and independently sought in some cases by Democratic Services to enable the Forum to benchmark many fees against those set by other authorities.

An interim report was presented to Committee in September 2013. This report covers the recommendations and findings of that report and the completed work of the Forum which held its final meeting on 8 November 2013.

Findings

Charges that cannot be increased

Legislation stipulates limitations in a great many of the fees and charges that fall under the Council's statutory services:

- A set amount – for example planning application fees, regardless of the actual cost it takes to provide that service;
- Limited to cost recovery only – for example, most licensing legislation permits only the recovery of administration.

Other charges are set within our discretionary services at a low level deliberately, to encourage take up by all sections of the community. Whilst some adjustment may be possible following consultation with the public, the overall income level would not be substantially increased. An example of this is a nominal fee set for Countryside events.

Charges exist that are not recovering their actual cost, but increasing the charge may only incur additional cost elsewhere – the typical example being the collection of bulky waste. Whilst the cost could be substantially increased in order to fully recover the cost, advice and evidence indicates that this would only lead to a dramatic drop in the service and result in increased fly tipping.

Market forces are the final issue under this heading, where our customers can go elsewhere for the same service. The Forum noted that the Building Control Service worked hard to maintain efficiency to keep costs down, but had to compete in an open market which prevented anything more than a modest increase in charge.

Where charges cannot be increased to make a significant overall difference to the Council's budget, services must make sure that efficiency drives regular review of the charge to ensure that any loss is kept to a minimum, and any reduction in cost is passed on to the customer. The adoption of a fees and charges policy, which does not currently exist, should help ensure that this regular review is carried out consistently across all services.

Overall, the Forum was content that the review of costs was undertaken, although the regularity was not consistent in some cases. The key issue for the Forum was the ability to determine, for each and every fee and charge, how much it cost to provide that service. In some cases this was difficult to determine because of the way the Council recharges costs across services.

Charges that can be increased

The Forum recognised that the income raised from fees and charges forms a valuable contribution to the budget and helps to keep the Council Tax low. Whilst it would be unreasonable to introduce substantial increases in some case, Officers were questioned to

determine where changes could be made, either with a simple increase, or a change in pricing to encourage higher take-up that overall reached the desired objective - increased income.

The recommendations in this report show specific areas where changes, either brought forward to the Forum by the service, or reached through discussion with the Forum, can bring about an income increase based on projected use for the forthcoming year.

New charges and opportunities to explore

The Forum were keen to discuss with each service any opportunities for new sources of income. Successful grant applications, particularly in the Countryside service, were recognised as contributing significantly to the running of services. New uses for assets, charges in place in other authorities, and making use of officer skills, were explored.

Officers brought a number of opportunities to the Forum to debate, many of which will require further research to form a business case, but should still be explored as a possible source of income for future years beyond the original objective set for the immediate financial year approaching. Many of these will require staff resource, but should be considered as a “spend to save” initiative, or more accurately a “spend to make more income” initiative in order to help future budget balancing.

The recommendations in this report reflect some of those new income areas either recommended for introduction or for further research.

Is there a figure you can put on Social Value?

The Forum received a very positive presentation from the House Manager of the Manor Pavilion Theatre. This demonstrated how a large annual deficit to the Council had been decreased year on year, which, the Forum hoped, would reach the point of cost neutral. The setting of ticket and bar prices was best left in the professional hands of the House Manager, but the Forum did suggest actively pursuing beneficial box office splits where possible to help further maximise income.

With many theatres nationally operating at a loss, the question of value to social benefit was a difficult one to answer. The benefit to the local, and indeed wider, community from the operation of the Manor Pavilion Theatre was clear. But with continuing pressures on the budget, was the cost of supporting a discretionary element beginning to be too high to sustain? In the case of the Manor Pavilion, it was clear that great improvements had been made to strive towards a cost neutral position and the Forum commended the work of the House Manager in drastically reducing the deficit.

The Thelma Hulbert Gallery is operating a larger deficit than the Pavilion, but in light of the pending report on its performance to Cabinet at the time of discussion, the Forum felt it was inappropriate to discuss the charges relating to the Gallery.

Increasing income versus economic viability

The Forum welcomed the approach of the service relating to car parks – balancing maintaining a high income with pricing structures that helped the local economy. The overall results of recent trial pricing structures for some of the Council's car parks were eagerly awaited for revealing at Cabinet in November 2013, but the Forum heard of some of the results.

Winter and summer tariffs were suggested by the Forum as an area of work worth exploring. The promotion of the parking permits sold by the Council did not seem prominent to the Forum overall, hence the recommendation to increase promotion to increase sales. The Forum heard of other tariff proposals being developed, which again demonstrated the efforts of the service to maintain income levels.

Maximising return from assets

The Forum's remit did not extend to making recommendations to specific Council assets. It was difficult, however, in assessing charges relating to the rental of part of all of a council asset, not to stray into the territory of the Asset Management Forum. Charges were considered on a basis of cost recovery or market forces, so the cost and social value of maintaining an asset was a common question by the Forum members.

Councillor David Cox did spend considerable time with the Forum advising of projects underway and reviews ongoing into the assets held. The Corporate Asset Plan was under review and the Forum agreed that this plan should come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the New Year for full debate.

Particular scrutiny was made of the sports pitches and recreational sites in the District, where it was noted that a number were on a minimal rent with maintenance carried out by the Streetscene service. The recently agreed LED Working Party would be reviewing the contractual arrangements with LED so the Forum felt they could not investigate further at the present time. A sports pitch strategy update goes before Cabinet and the Forum trust that such a strategy also looks at the maintenance implications for the authority.

The Forum welcomed a demonstration of the asset register, accessible for elected Members via the Council's intranet. Whilst confidential information is not available for view to Members on this system, comprehensive information is available and records updated as and when work is completed or reviewed on each asset.

Ensuring consistency

The Council does not currently have a fees and charges policy. Many authorities do not; however CIPFA guidance taken from the "Practical Guide for Local Authorities on Income Generation" recommends that a charging policy is in place to ensure a consistent set of charging principles is applied to all of a local authority's charges. The Forum worked specifically from this guidance to form a draft policy as set out below:

East Devon District Council

Fees and Charges Policy

Purpose of the policy:	Consistent approach to the setting and review of fees and charges
Officer responsible:	Head of Finance
Authorisation:	Cabinet
Authorisation date:	
Review date:	

Related Policies, Strategies, Procedures and Legislation

Equality and Diversity Policy

Financial regulations

Standing Orders

Corporate Debt recovery Policy

Licensing Policy

Sex Establishment Licensing Policy

Street Naming and Numbering Policy

1. Reasons for introducing the policy

- 1.1 To ensure consistency of reviewing fees and charges set by the Council to help maximise income, charge fairly across all sections of the community, and consult prior to introduction of new or substantially amended charges.

2. What is the council's policy?

2.1 Cost recovery

- 2.1.1 The Council will look to **at least** recover the full cost of a service through the fee charged, unless one or more of the following factors applies:

- legislation restricts the fee regardless of actual costs to the Council of service delivery;
- partial cost recovery to encourage use of a service which would save on costs of remedial action (for example cost of bulky waste collection versus fly tipping clearance cost);
- Proven value to community for providing the service (concession).

- 2.1.2 The Council will look to maximise income where market rates apply, whilst recognising the need to offer concessions to fulfil its social responsibilities.

2.2 Subsidised services

2.2.1 The Council recognises that some services have to set a charge or fee that is lower than the actual cost, due to:

- a) either offering a concession so as not to disadvantage members of the community, or;
- b) to encourage take up of the service initially.

2.2.2. Heads of service and their officers are asked to consider:

- Should the service be subsidised?
- What is the subsidy achieving?
- How much do residents, communities and businesses value the service?
- How willing and able are residents and business to pay for the service?
- What effect does charging have on the supply and demand of the service?
- What can be done to reduce the cost of the service?

Evidence based subsidised fees must then be publicised with information, to inform the public of the use of public funds.

2.3 Setting of fee and planned rate of increase

2.3.1 The income generated by the Council forms a valuable part of the overall income to run services and help keep the Council Tax for the District low. Therefore making a surplus from some fees and charges where legislation permits is acceptable and helps towards providing the valued services for our residents.

2.3.2 Charge setting will be based on identifying all costs relating to the provision of the service before applying any agreed concessions.

2.3.3 Charges will increase annually at 1% above the rate of inflation. The exception to this will be where a fee is set at cost recovery only, where any increase or decrease will relate to change in actual cost (such as staff pay awards, increase in materials, efficiency savings) as appropriate.

2.3.4 Rates of increase should be consistent across a fee area to reflect increases in costs and market forces where competition exists. Officers must confer with their Portfolio Holder in agreeing a planned rate of increase and the period of time that the increase is planned for.

2.3.5 Any services required by statute to advertise fee increases in advance must do so using Public Notices as required by law.

2.3.6 Regular review of existing fees and charges must take place on annual basis, to ensure that the cost of providing the service is kept under review. Property subject to lease in excess of 3-5years will be reviewed per the rent review clause stated within the lease. All leases will be reviewed on expiry.

2.3.7 Costs will include all staff costs including pension and NI, supplies and services, support services and overheads and capital charges relating to provision of the service.

2.3.8 All service income including reserve funding will be excluded from calculating costs.

2.4 Charge restrictions

2.4.1 Any service with a statutory fee schedule will only charge the relevant current fee e.g. planning application fees.

2.4.2 Any service with a statutory restriction to “break even” will only charge based on recovery of costs e.g. Taxi licenses, land charges.

2.4.3 Any other statutory service will at least recover costs.

2.4.4 Any discretionary service will charge the maximum fee possible after consideration of demand for the service and benchmarking against similar authorities or market levels.

2.4 Concessions

2.4.1 Each concession must:

- be clearly evaluated, to meet with equalities requirements
- have a clear purpose
- be clearly defined and published on the EDDC website and other appropriate publishing options, giving details of eligibility criteria and proof of entitlement.

A concession may cover one, some or all of the listed groups:

- vulnerable people
- age group - to be consistent across the authority
- means tested benefits
- Residency of EDDC – some services maybe available for residents only
- Staff of EDDC
- charity or community group

2.4.2 A concession may also be considered for a period of time to encourage take up of a service.

2.4.3 Clear guidelines should negate the need for discretionary concessions; however if a discretionary concession is requested by a Portfolio Holder, the concessions must be reviewed across that service area to determine if the concession basis needs amending.

2.5 Consultation

2.5.1 Regular consultation must take place with service users for any increase in fee or charge over RPI/5% or where legislation requires so.

2.5.2 Where practicable, a consultation exercise will be undertaken with potential users before the introduction of new charges.

2.6 Payment up front

2.6.1 Where possible, payment should be requested in full in advance to avoid costs incurred in chasing up arrears.

2.6.2 Payment in advance for all services is preferable. However, where charges for a service cannot be predetermined e.g. charging for fitting new locks, an invoicing fee is chargeable based on the actual costs of issuing and processing an invoice.

2.6.3 Loss of income from prompt payment discounts will outweigh the costs of income collection.

3. Appendices and where to find out more

Appendix A – Schedule of services and basis for charges (pending production)

Schedules of fees and charges can be found on the EDDC website under relevant service pages <http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk>

Acknowledgements

The Panel:

Tim Wood (Chairman)

Mike Allen

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The Panel would like to thank:

David Cox

Head of Finance, Simon Davey

Financial Services Manager, Laurelie Gifford

Heads of Service and Managers responsible for reviewing fees and charges

Accountancy Team

Democratic Services

Agenda Item 13

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 November 2013

Quarterly Monitoring Report



Quarterly Monitoring of Performance – 2nd Quarter 2013/14 July to September 2013

Summary

This report provides performance information and progress against our promises and priorities as outlined in the Council Plan. This cumulative quarterly information will be used to provide an annual review of our performance against the Council Plan in the Annual Report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members consider performance against delivery of the promises/priorities in the Council Plan, Key Service Objectives from Service Plans and Performance Measures for the 2nd quarter of 2013/14 so that issues can be addressed in a timely way.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

So that Members can gain a clear view of progress against what we said we would deliver in the Council Plan and deal with performance issues arising.

b) Alternative Options

None

c) Risk Considerations

A failure to monitor performance may result in customer complaints, poor service delivery and may compromise the Council's reputation.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

None

e) Date for Review of Decision

Performance information is provided on a quarterly basis.

1 Main Body of the Report

1. Appendix A is a report showing progress of the Council promises taken from the Council Plan 2012-16 and key performance indicators from our services. The report also highlights Service achievements and performance from the first quarter of the year.

2. Appendix B shows progress against service plan objectives and performance indicators in the form of bar charts. A supplementary page to Appendix B will provide information for Members on all performance indicators and draw attention to any objectives that are showing as a 'variation' or 'concern'.

3. There are no Council promises showing a status of concern but there are 4 service objectives showing concern. These are:

- **Migration to Windows 7 and new Microsoft suite through thin client with partners in Devon.** - The move to Windows 7 has always been the expected first output of the shared ICT services using the new thin-client solution. But as this business case has taken some time the need to find another way to achieve this has become pressing. Even more so since the government security group have declared that not having Windows 7 after April 2014 will be considered a major security breach. Plans are being prepared to carry out an upgrade to every PC in the Council. This may require a focused effort involving a team of contractors for several months.
- **Assess very carefully the role of on-street enforcement and to respond to any issues arising out of Devon County Council's independent review of on street Civil Parking Enforcement** - Ongoing negotiations with Devon County Council over the future of Civil Parking Enforcement in Devon and East Devon
- **Consider the feasibility of introducing transparent canopies over ticket machines to protect machines and customers from the elements** - Not a priority at a time of significant financial constraint
- **Renew the contract for provision of dog warden services and retender alongside consideration of in-house options** - Tenders are "in" and a report is being prepared for October Cabinet with a contracted out and an in-house option - timescales are still very tight and the existing contract ends on 31 October 2013.

Legal Implications

No legal comments are required.

Financial Implications

No direct financial implications.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

Relevant Heads of Service, Corporate Managers and Officers have contributed to the appendices.

Background Papers

- ❑ [Appendix A – Detailed report showing progress against all of the Council Promises, key performance indicators and service achievements.](#)
- ❑ [Appendix B – Bar chart summary for service plan objectives and performance indicators with a detailed report for areas of 'concern' or 'variation'.](#)
- ❑ [Appendix C Explanation and definitions](#)



Quarter 2 Performance Report 2013-14

October 2013

Document Key

Promise Status classification

- Red (Concern) highlights targets with serious problems or significant delays.
- Amber (Variation) indicates actions with mild concerns or minor setbacks.
- Green (Achieved) displays special achievements or early completions.

Performance Indicators (PI)

- The 'Previous Year End' column reports performance at the end of 2011/12, if that information is available.
- The 'Current Target' column represents the annual target some measures no longer have targets or are not suitable for targets.
- The columns 'Q1 Act', 'Q2 Act', etc. show the actual year to date situation for each Performance Indicator. The key for the colours is as follows:
 - Red (Concern) – if the PI is 10% or more below the target.
 - Yellow (Variation) – if the PI is between 10% and 0.1% below the target.
 - Green (Achieved) – if the PI and the target match exactly or the PI is above the target.
- The Direction of Travel column shows if the PI has improved since the same period last year. An up arrow showing improvement, a down arrow showing deterioration and a level arrow showing a static trend

Council Promise - Living in an outstanding place

Outcome - Make more affordable, good quality homes available for our residents

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Bring at least 10 private sector empty homes back into use each year	On track	We have almost completed the review of Council Tax data on homes empty for more than 3 years, and continue to work with very long term empty home owners to persuade them to bring their properties back into use. We have almost completed the Enforced Sale Action on one long term empty home and are beginning the same action on another long term empty property. We have just sent out a mail shot to over 100 empty home owners (Council Tax data) with information about our partnership with Chapter One and Shekinah who bid for funding from the HCA last year and are looking to renovate and lease empty homes in East Devon.
Have all the infrastructure in place to start building homes at Cranbrook in 2012	Achieved	
Meet the local offers / standards commitments to tenants contained in "Our Commitments to You"	Achieved	We are delivering on the local offers and have reported progress in the Annual report to Tenants published in October.
Produce at least 100 new affordable homes per annum	Achieved	Completions so far in 2013/14 are in excess of 100 units
Set a baseline and improve the thermal efficiency of homes in the District	On track	HECA future plan completed 31.03.2013 Devon wide ECO partnership project on going, presentations of tenders for project to take place this month with hoped for commencement of ECO project scheme in early 2014.

Performance Indicator	Prev Year End	Current Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Q3 Actual	Q4 Actual	Direction of travel	Management Notes
Number of affordable homes delivered	124	100	55	64			↑	Increased completion rates at Cranbrook have produced higher numbers than expected for this quarter. We anticipate that Cranbrook will provide above the predicted outputs this year. Currently we are predicting circa 200 affordable homes this year.

Notable Service Achievements

- We are expecting to complete two Community Land Trust schemes, providing affordable homes in rural locations this year.
- The East Devon Local Plan is currently at the examination stage with the Planning Inspector.

Council Promise - Living in an outstanding place

Outcome - Maintain residents' high satisfaction with their area and home as places to live

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Reduce the low amount of waste sent to landfill in the District so that we are amongst the 10 best performing councils in England.	Achieved	
Complete the Eon combined heat and power plant to service Cranbrook, Skypark and the Intermodal Freight Terminal	On Track	Energy Centre currently being commissioned and expected to be fully operational shortly. Programme on track.
Progress delivery of projects identified in the Exmouth Master plan creating new, attractive places to enjoy, live and do business in Exmouth in 2013	On track	Premier Inn capital receipts and land sale concluded, hotel construction beginning in Nov 2013. Rugby Club and Queens Drive project progressing. Mamhead Slipway now included in the work programme.
Help Seaton achieve its Visitor Centre by May 2015	On track	Devon Wildlife Trust selected as central operating partner and detailed project planning underway. Detailed HLF bid in preparation CCF submitted. Principle Regeneration Manager in close communication and the Seaton Regeneration Board has oversight of the project.
Delivery of Residents' Survey results to ensure we can track reputation and respond to feedback	Achieved	Survey undertaken and results published at http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/annualperformance

Performance Indicator	Prev Year End	Current Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Q3 Actual	Q4 Actual	Direction of travel	Management Notes
Number of households living in temporary accommodation	17	40	13	12			↑	
Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping	2	3 (1/4)	2	3			↓	

Notable Service Achievements

- Following fire risk assessment of blocks of flats and communal areas a series of improvements have been made across the district. The most marked is currently at Powell Close in Seaton where new bin stores have been provided externally, and further works are starting internally which will include new fire doors, blocking off postal hatches, boxing in heating ducting and provision of purpose built storage space for all tenants. We also helped set up two new residents associations, in Tucker Court, Honiton and Links Close, Park Way & Green Close in Exmouth with the aim of improving the environment in those areas.

- Through this quarter we carried out estate walkabouts in Axmouth, Uplyme, Combepeyne, Rousden and Nutbrook & Burnside in Exmouth.

- Projects continue to be supported in Exmouth, Honiton and Axminster which help young people develop a variety of skills and we are looking to recruit a local young person as a community development apprentice this year. A number of one off events have been supported in rural communities to engage young people in these areas and make sure they are not excluded.

- Every option to prevent homelessness and reduce homelessness acceptances is being considered and currently we have less than 20 households in temporary accommodation.

- Work is under way on Phase 2 of the 5 year project to significantly reduce the risk of properties flooding at Feniton New Village. Letters have been sent out to land owners affected by these works and survey work has started to enable the detailed design work to be carried out.

Council Promise - Working in an outstanding place

Outcome – Deliver a thriving, competitive local economy

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Hold talks in Honiton, Axminster and Sidmouth to explore the potential for regeneration opportunities	On track	Opportunities considered in all three towns. Axminster town centre project discussions active. Honiton Beehive Community Centre in development. Sidmouth reserved as a future not current prospect.
Economy Strategy to increase the number and variety of job opportunities within and throughout East Devon by building on the benefits emerging from the development taking place in the West End of the District by 2013	On track	Cabinet approval of local skills and employment strategy. To be further developed with partners to be developed with practical tools for employers and providers.
To help secure the necessary infrastructure to create and support sustainable agricultural, business and visitor economies in East Devon.	On track	
To provide business support, innovation ideas, networking opportunities and training for small and medium size businesses. To look to provide or facilitate suitable premises for all stages of their development.	On track	Continued fund of BIP and management of East Devon Business Centre, Riverside Seaton etc. Planning of Colyford and Manstone business units underway. Asset Management Forum providing further possibilities of employment space. Also See News August – Business Units used by SME's
To use the natural assets of the District to strengthen and widen the visitor economy throughout the year by aiding new and existing tourism businesses to provide high quality facilities and accommodation, without damaging the outstanding beauty of the East Devon environment.	On track	Countryside team continue to provide high quality spaces such as the Axe Wetlands. Streetscene and Environmental Health keeping parks, garden and beaches clean and attractive. Planning making sure that growth fits with environmental sensitivity.

Performance Indicator	Prev Year End	Current Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Q3 Actual	Q4 Actual	Direction of travel	Management Notes
Creditor days - % of invoices paid within 30 days	99	99	99	99			↔	
Proportion of Our spend with small and medium sized enterprises	New for 2013/14	Baseline	44.71	Awaiting data				Quarter 2 data will be published in quarter 3
Proportion of our spend with local suppliers	New for 2013/14	Baseline	22.05	Awaiting data				Quarter 2 data will be published in quarter 3

Notable Service Achievements

- Growth Point partners and EDDC continue to offer high quality business space to encourage inward investment. Close working relationships with LEP to date has secured Growth Point Funding and EDDC will engage to LEP strategic planning and investment priorities identification.

- There has been a high demand for premises from small firms over the last few months and by August all of our Business Units were let. The new lets have been taken on by a range of businesses from a fishing bait manufacturer to a glazer and a bespoke carpenter and joiner. In response to the high levels of demand for workshop units the Council has plans in the pipeline to create more units.

- Through ProSpend we can now measure and publish extensive spend data which is uploaded from our finance system on a quarterly basis. 2012/13 statistics became available in May, and Q1 2013/14 data provide the first quarter's statistics for the current year and provide a basic benchmark with which to compare future statistics and take action as appropriate.

- Science Park future funding secured and at the Sky Park business park the first units are now in development.

Council Promise - Enjoying this outstanding place

Outcome – Provide cultural and leisure activities accessible to all residents and visitors

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Develop ideas and income generating projects to keep creative art workshops and international art exhibitions available and accessible in our District	On track	Work progressing.
Fund Leisure East Devon to the tune of £1 million a year	Achieved	
Support healthy lifestyles through our play provision, beaches, cycle routes and footpaths	On track	

For 2013/14 there are no performance indicators for this Council Promise. Progress is being monitored through Service and individual objectives in SPAR.net see appendix B.

Notable Service Achievements

- Over £220,000 was spent this summer on improving and upgrading two of the district's key leisure facilities. In Exmouth the tennis and fitness centre received a £180,000 revamp, with improvements being made to the surface of the tennis courts, new lighting and new doors and windows.

The leisure centre in Sidmouth also had a £40,000 plus refit with new lighting for the sports hall and squash courts. This will be brighter and more energy efficient thanks to improvements in modern lighting technology.

- A review of operational functions of Thelma Hulbert Gallery to consider opportunities to increase income generation has been completed and a full report will be going to Cabinet in October.

- The cafe in Manor Gardens is continuing to do well and is a great addition to the park. Streetscene have added some picnic benches to the park to improve the overall offer and complement the cafe. The cafe will help with retaining our Green Flag status for Manor gardens.

- East Devon saw the start of stage 6 of the Tour of Britain race. Riders including Sir Bradley Wiggins set off from Sidmouth seafront, bound for Haytor on Dartmoor via Sidbury, Honiton and Exeter

- An example this quarter of the Section 106 money in action is at the Ash Hill Play Park in Beer. With £7,500 of section 106 money and a £10,000 Awards for All National Lottery grant local children including those from Beer Primary School were invited helping to design new pieces of play equipment that they wanted. The new play park was opened on the 29th July as part of a Family Fun Day at the park.

- Connaught Gardens in Sidmouth and Manor Gardens in Exmouth have both again received the prestigious Green Flag Award, a sign to visitors that the park is a well-maintained and well-managed high quality green space, with excellent facilities. It's the tenth year in a row for Sidmouth, while Exmouth has now won the award nine times consecutively.

Council Promise - Enjoying this outstanding place

Outcome – Protect and enhance East Devon’s natural environment and its habitats and wildlife

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Complete and promote the Axe Estuary Wetlands as a regionally important wildlife destination, attracting 60,000 new visitors by 2013	On track	Work progressing as planned

For 2012/13 there are no performance indicators for this Council Promise. Progress is being monitored through Service and individual objectives in SPAR.net. This will be reviewed for 2013/14.

Notable Service Achievements

- The volunteering programme in the countryside team going well. Our Volunteers clocked up 1141.5 hours of work for the countryside team in from July to September – equivalent to £9132 in monetary terms – their enthusiasm and hard work is, as always, invaluable to us.

- Number of days that the classroom was used by Junior Rangers for inside work – 0!
Because of the great weather, all the Junior Rangers sessions were able to run outside in the fresh air on the Wetlands throughout the summer, which must be a record. The classroom has been used for many other activities throughout the season, and as autumn approaches, will once more be put to full use for the new intake of Junior Rangers.

- In July EAST DEVON District Council, in partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT), received initial support* from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to help create a Jurassic Coast Discovery Centre in the heart of Seaton. The project aims to create a major tourist attraction, which will use exciting exhibits and an innovative programme of learning and public engagement to reveal the area’s rich marine and coastal heritage.

Development funding of £56,500 has been awarded in this first stage to help the project partners progress their plans to apply for a full grant of approximately £500k in November of this year. EDDC is working closely with Devon Wildlife Trust, Seaton Town Council, Devon County Council and a huge range of local partners and community stakeholders, such as the Seaton Visitor Centre Trust and the Jurassic Coast team.

Council Promise - Outstanding Council

Outcome – Efficiencies: financial and time-saving

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Take forward the Council Accommodation Review	On track	Cabinet and Full Council agreement to the viability, funds and necessity of relocation. Alternative site investigation underway with a projected move date of July 2016.
Development and implementation of "Paperless Committees and Councillor IT" project	On track	With the roll out of the O365 system and Ray Bloxham's report on simplifying the report process and a timetable to go "all electronic", the likelihood is that members will be paperless by April 2015.
Explore the potential for sharing or outsourcing our support services during 2013-14	On track	We are now the lead organisation for creating a business case for setting up a shared ICT service between Exeter, Teignbridge and East Devon. We are in the process of comparing this business case (called Plan C) with the Delt case. Expectation is to get a report to November Cabinet.
Maximise our use and sale of assets to fund our priorities for East Devon	On track	The Asset Management Forum strategy review in preparation, Elizabeth Hall site sold for £1.2 million with major regeneration projects in development.

Performance Indicator	Prev Year End	Current Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Q3 Actual	Q4 Actual	Direction of travel	Management Notes
Percentage of Council Tax collected	98.67	58.14 (6/12)	30.48	57.91			↓	The in-year collection rate is 0.24% less, compared to the same time last year. As mentioned last month, we now have 3051 customers paying by 12 months, whereas this time last year it was 1428. All Devon authorities are reporting a dip in collection rates.
Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected	98.66	60.19 (6/12)	32.19	64.96			↑	In order to reflect performance more accurately, we have changed the monthly targets to the previous year's achieved figures. As mentioned last month, the NDR software has now changed and we are bedding down the conversion work. The main reason for the collection rate being up is the timing of payments. We expect this to level out over the coming months.
Working days lost due to sickness absence	9.14	4.25 (6/12)	1.99	3.93			↑	
Percentage of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse	25.0	30.0	15.4	18.2			↑	
Proportion of outstanding debt that is more than 90 days old from date of invoice	24	No Target	16	24			↑	

Council Promise - Outstanding Council

Outcome – Improved service through understanding our customers and making good use of web & mobile technology

Council Promise 2012-16	Status	Comments
Achieve our equality objectives during 2013/14	On track	The next key activity is for our survey to be sent out through our equality partners and groups so that we can gain specific feedback to support the findings of the annual residents' viewpoint survey.
Improve communications and our knowledge of our customers' needs (use our 2012 action plan to monitor)	Achieved	Delivery of key strategic projects from the Communications Plan have been achieved: e magazine, Knowing East Devon, Annual Performance Report and customer/stakeholder surveys
Select and implement new open source content management system for website as part of a larger communications project.	Achieved	The open source system "Umbraco" has been selected. Training has started and new web screens are being developed.
Complete our redesign of our major frontline services	On track	Service Heads will continue to redesign services for improvement using systems thinking principles.
Integrated Mobile Working Project	On track	Much of the first section of work is achieved with only the SITA in-cab technology project to do to complete the "Streetscene Section" of the programme. Output includes : - operatives having work orders delivered to their smartphones - a citizen smartphone application for iPhone and Android that allows citizen reporting of things like flytipping and graffiti - connections from our website to back office systems through to operatives smartphones.

Performance Indicator	Prev Year End	Current Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Q3 Actual	Q4 Actual	Direction of travel	Management Notes
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	52.41	65	43.91	49.38			↓	The number of applications being received is very high at the moment and cannot be matched in terms of the numbers going out. This is leading to a build up in the system of the highest number of applications on hand for 5 years. Despite this morale remains good and staff motivated to do a good job with the resources we have.
Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	73.87	80	85.11	78.93			↑	
Days taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	5.79	6.03	7.73	6.87			↓	The very busy start to the year continues, following the unprecedented Welfare Changes that took effect from April 2013. Backlogs have been ring-fenced. September's performance shows a further improvement.

Agenda Item 15

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 November 2013



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan 2013/14

Date of Committee	Report	Lead Officer
2 January 2014	Recommended that the 2 January 2014 meeting is cancelled. Whilst two items had been allocated, officer and partner availability has prevented the items being considered at the 2 January date.	
15 January 2014	Special meeting on draft budget and service plans for 2014/15	
30 January 2014	GP Consortium report back on implementation of health reforms Office relocation project update	Richard Cohen
27 February 2014	Poltimore House update presentation (tbc) Corporate Asset Plan update (tbc) Performance monitoring Quarter 3 2013/14	Nigel Harrison
27 March 2014	Council relationship with LEPs (tbc)	Richard Cohen
24 April 2014	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	

Topics for scoping and allocation to the Forward Plan or to Task and Finish Forum:

Proposed date	Topic
Start once Inspector's report published	Review of production process of Local Plan
February 2014	National Parks research findings and debate
February 2014	New waste contract 2016
On completion of TaFF	Business Task and Finish Forum final report
As and when available	Updates from Portfolio Holders

January 2014	Crime and Disorder update, including visit from Police Area Commander
February 2014	Reviewing the general terms of reference for working parties and task and finish forums
To scope and allocate	Improving communication with Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils on District Council work/events/consultations

Portfolio Holder report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 21st November 2013 on the Streetscene Service

Summary

Environment Portfolio Holder Update – Environment – Streetscene Services

An update from Councillor Iain Chubb on the work in his portfolio.

East Devon is an Outstanding Place to Live, Work and Enjoy. The work of our Streetscene teams directly contributes to these Council Priorities.

Our Streetscene teams keep our district clean and tidy and looking beautiful. They protect our environment, service the amenities which our residents and visitors enjoy such as our beautiful beaches, our public toilets and our town centres. They collect waste and recycling from over 64,800 properties. All of this work ensures East Devon continues to be an Outstanding Place.

Service purpose

The service purpose of our Streetscene teams is to clean & maintain the environment and provide advice about the environment. Our Waste & Recycling Teams service priority is to help householders manage their waste and increase recycling, and following collections, leave the environment clean.

The strategy

The Environment Strategy sets out our approach but as with the other parts of the Environment Portfolio our role is to make sure that the environment is being protected, keeping it clean and in a good state of repair, somewhere that people want to live and that attracts and keeps visitors, which in turn supports our economic aspirations by making the Environment somewhere that attracts businesses or supports businesses by encouraging visitors. Improving the Environment where possible and making sure that its value to the economy is properly recognised.

Statutory and Discretionary Services

Streetscene services are made up of a variety of statutory and discretionary service elements. Our main statutory services are collection of waste and providing a recycling service, and to keep the streets clean. The remainder of Streetscene's service areas are discretionary, but have statutory functions. For example we don't have to maintain our parks and gardens, this service is discretionary, but we do have to ensure our land is safe and does not pose a health and safety risk. This is the same for many of the assets Streetscene look after. Our beaches are another example, we are not required to provide any particular assets or amenities on our beaches, but arguably the beaches and their infrastructure draw in visitors and so support our economy. What we must do is keep what we have safe, including the beach itself.

Improving the services

We have already done and continue to do a great deal of work across all of the Streetscene service areas to improve efficiency and reduce costs. We have completed a systems thinking review of Streetscene Operations which has saved us around £120k p.a. in running costs through better optimisation of the workforce and multiskilling. We are currently rolling out mobile working technology which will further improve the capacity of our workforce allowing us to use contractors less. In our Waste and Recycling service we are going through the systems thinking process at the moment, this also includes mobile working projects. One of these mobile working projects has just gone live and it is the East Devon App. This App. may help us save postage costs each year on costly collection date calendars and gives our residents a really useful tool and another medium through which to interact with us. The next development will be the introduction of in-cab technology which will be installed in the waste and recycling vehicle which again will enable better householder interaction by being able to deal with issues as they arise rather than a possible lengthy telephone/computer based interaction.

Through the systems thinking process in Waste Management we have identified various processes that will reduce a certain amount of work and improve our customer interface.

We believe we are a progressive department, often at the forefront of new technologies and ways of working and continually work to improve customer service whilst reducing costs.

1 Statutory Service Areas

1.1 Street Cleansing (Budget £1,351,080) - We have a statutory duty to clean relevant land and highways to keep clear of litter & refuse, so far as is practicable, to standards set out in a Code of Practice. We clean public areas, providing a pleasant place to live, helping to support our businesses and attract visitors.

There is limited scope to reduce this budget. Any reduction in budget would directly affect our ability to deliver the service to the current standard. One could remove seasonal staff and reduce full time teams, but this would only allow minimum cleansing of relevant land. Current high level of cleanliness would not be achieved, no reactive work. Litter that is currently cleared within ½ a day in high use areas may remain for extended periods and accumulations may form.

The provision of dog and litter bins is not statutory. Dog bins could be removed saving around £73,000p.a. This would be a very unpopular move with dog faeces and lack of dog bin provision featuring regularly in customer feedback surveys.

1.2 Waste & Recycling (Budget £4,364,440) – Fortnightly collection of residual waste and weekly collection of recycling and food waste to over 64,000 properties. This is the Council's biggest single spend area and accounts for 22% of East Devon's total spend. This is our primary statutory service which has big implications for our reputation. Our service purpose is to help householders manage their waste and recycling, and following collections, leave the environment clean.

The purpose of the service to collect waste and recycling and leave the area clean is at the centre of what we do and the Waste Management Officers are the staff who interact with the householders and provide information, education and if necessary enforcement of the waste policies. A large part of the 'Waste' budget is the internal charge for the Customer Services Centre who are the first point of contact with the public and deal with the day to day issues such as missed bins and lost containers.

We have a contract with Sita until 2016 which limits any changes to budget or what we can collect, but there is an ongoing process to look at trying to reduce costs wherever possible without compromising the service. There will be opportunities to explore collection of other materials when we tender a new contract, but a new contract may also increase this budget area.

Charging for services

There are certain areas in the waste collection service where there is an option to recoup costs such as bulky waste collections, garden waste and Schedule 2 waste (waste from premises such as holiday cottages, charity shops and camp sites).

These costs are reviewed on a year by year basis.

There are other areas for which charges could be made e.g. clinical waste but until now this has not been considered mainly due to the large number of households that receive this service (840) and it could be seen to discriminate against a section of the community.

1.3 Amenity Facilities Axmouth Harbour (Budget £68,520) – Although Axmouth Harbour is leased to a local Harbour Management Company, we have a statutory duty as the Harbour Authority for safe navigation within the Harbour and to ensure it is run safely for all users. This also falls within the service area of Water Safety. We also have responsibility for the safety of the public who access the harbour, shops and footpath.

1.4 Cemeteries (Budget £173,090) – We provide and maintain 3 active cemeteries and have a statutory duty to maintain a further 14 closed churchyards. This includes maintenance of footpaths, grass, trees, shrubs and listed boundary walls as well as periodic memorial stability checks. East Devon staff are best placed to provide this service as we are already in all areas to carry out other regular maintenance.

1.5 Coast Protection (Budget £253,810) – We have a duty to inspect and maintain cliffs and coastal defence structures, to ensure they are safe for the public. We are the Coastal Protection Authority and it is important that we continue our work in this

area. As we have seen from last years numerous cliff falls this risk is ever present and our work here helps to minimise the risk. As the Coastal Protection Authority only we, and the Environment Agency, are allowed to bid for government funding through Defra to protect our coastal communities.

1.6 Flood Prevention (Budget £150,230) – We maintain and monitor 14 Council owned flood alleviation schemes to protect homes. We have a statutory duty to maintain streams, silt traps, outfalls etc in our ownership. As the Land Drainage Authority we can also intervene to ensure the Riparian Owner is keeping their areas clean to reduce flood risk and are responsible for applying to DEFRA for funding flood alleviation schemes. This work is very important, increasingly so and may be an area which needs a greater budget in the future as we try to ensure new development does not have a knock on affect in land drainage terms for our communities. We work very closely with DCC who are the Lead Local Flood Authority to progress protection schemes. Some current examples are the Feniton scheme which we are leading on and the work in Axminster & Uplyme.

1.7 Public Protection (Budget £56,460) – We undertake civil contingency planning with our partner agencies to help us cope in the event of an emergency, such as the large scale floods we had in 2008 and 2012. We also monitor gas migration at old landfill sites to protect the public.

1.8 Street Nameplates (Budget £12,180) – We have a statutory duty to sign roads in the district and provide street nameplates.

1.9 Water Safety (Budget £90,660) – This service area provides, through a Beach Safety Officer; updated and best practice risk assessment / risk management measures including signage, zone buoys, user involvement and a monitored lifeguard contract for Exmouth. This helps keep our residents and visitors safe on our beaches and assists with the Council's Duty of Care. The service area has most recently provided a code of conduct for PWC users and supports the River Exe Harbour Authority (Exeter City Council) in reducing dangerous use of the waters off Exmouth.

We have a statutory obligation to display water quality information signs and an Occupiers Liability/Duty of Care to ensure visitors are as safe, but not to provide lifeguards. This is another very important service area which adds to the beach amenity and keeps our residents happy and attracts visitors.

2 Discretionary Service Areas

All discretionary service areas have some elements of statutory spend, mainly relating to landlord liability, health and safety - ensuring our assets are safe.

2.1 Parks & Pleasure Grounds (Budget £911,780) – This is a mainly discretionary service, but East Devon's outstanding Green Flag Award Winning Parks and other open spaces attract a lot of visitors each year. Daily visitor numbers at just 4 parks (counted between 08.00 and 15.00 only) totalled nearly 6,200 people in July and over 2,700 people, even on a damp day in November. Many coach trips to Sidmouth for example, include Connaught Gardens as a main attraction. Our parks and gardens help fulfil the government aims to encourage a healthy life and are second only to refuse collection in the number of residents served by this facility on a daily basis.

The service maintains over 700 grounds sites, seven main parks, seven playing fields, five recreational grounds totalling over 1.5 million sq m of grass and 100,000 sq m of hedges, trees, shrubs and floral displays. Streetscene carry out a large amount of grounds maintenance on behalf of Housing – including Individual Garden Maintenance for tenants that are unable to cope with their own gardens. We also work in partnership with Town & Parish Councils, charities and schools to provide a cost effective service, whilst visiting all towns/villages carrying out our regular maintenance.

Our Parks, Gardens and green spaces strongly help us meet 3 out of our 4 Council Priorities; Living, Working and Enjoying this Outstanding Place.

Volunteer groups support the work of our grounds staff in some parks. They are a useful and worthwhile supplement, but can't replicate the work output of our own teams. Volunteer support is transient and it takes a lot of officer time to coordinate. Where flower beds and features have been transferred to volunteer groups we often see these features going for long periods with no maintenance and complaints being received about the standard of work. East Devon staff have the skills required to care for our green spaces and to maintain the high standards our residents and visitors have come to expect.

2.2 Beaches & Foreshores (Budget £198,100) – We already have quite a small budget for the management of our 5 beaches considering they are such an important asset, meeting key Council Priorities, and being enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors alike.

We have a statutory duty to maintain safe navigation markers and inspect water taxi licensing, but all other beach management duties such as sand management, beach levelling and beach huts are discretionary.

2.3 Bus Shelters (Budget £23,780) – This budget was reduced in the 2010 cuts. We now just make sure the shelters are safe, repair them if we can using staff resource and remove them if they become dangerous. We are trying to get Fernbank (bus shelter advertising company) to take on our bus shelters (has happened in Honiton), however Fernbank are reluctant due to low potential advertising income.

2.4 Security Lighting (Budget £63,620) –We light 12 sites, which are generally our public gardens to aid community safety and allow people to enjoy our gardens in the winter. There is no obligation to do this, but dark park spaces may encourage anti-social behaviour and limit their use in the winter.

2.5 Play Equipment (Budget £356,540) – We maintain and improve over 80 play sites, 4 skate parks, several MUGAs and a growing number of outdoor gyms. These sites are important for the wellbeing and health of our population, especially the younger ones. There is no statutory duty to provide play, but it does contribute to East Devon being an Outstanding place to Live and Enjoy.

S106 Contributions provide new play facilities across the district. These can be entirely new areas like at Millwey Rise, Axminster, where £90k of equipment was installed, or enhancing existing areas with new facilities such as £22k of equipment added to Littleham Village Hall play area.

EDDC has been working with Town and Parish Councils and the public to identify a priority list of desired facilities for every town. EDDC organise and provide the facility when there is enough S106 for the highest priority to take place. This has been achieved at Phear skate park, Exmouth, where the highest priority/desired facility was an increase in the size of the park. The area has now been doubled in size and filled with new equipment. It is extremely well used and an attraction to all skaters across the district and beyond.

2.6 Public Conveniences (Budget £771,820) – We provide 47 public conveniences which are an important amenity for all, but especially so in tourist areas. There is no requirement to provide public toilets and some have already been closed as a result of our 2005 toilet review.

2.7 Sports Grounds (Budget £193,040) – As with play, our sports grounds are very important for the health and wellbeing of our residents and contribute to the Council priorities of Living in and Enjoying an Outstanding Place.

The budget pays for the upkeep of 4 main sports grounds, 4 sports pavilions and 3 bowling greens, 3 putting greens, 10 tennis courts and a pitch and putt golf course. The budget is quite high as facilities such as bowling greens and grass tennis courts require a high level of maintenance. Due to the terms of the LED service level agreement, not all costs of maintenance are covered, which leaves EDDC subsidising this amenity.

Notes of a Meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Forum held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 7 November 2013

Present:	Forum Members:	Other Councillors:
	Tim Wood (Chairman)	Iain Chubb
	Peter Bowden	Paul Diviani
	Peter Halse	Graham Troman
	Tony Howard	Andrew Moulding
	Geoff Pook	David Cox
	Ken Potter	
	Philip Skinner	

Also present: Andrew Ennis – Environmental Health and Parking Services Manager
Laurelie Gifford –
John Golding – Head of Housing
Debbie Meakin - Democratic Services Officer
Charlie Plowden – Countryside and Leisure Manager
John Tippin – Licensing Manager

Apologies: Mike Allen

The meeting started at 11.04am and ended at 13.00pm.

12. Public Questions

There were no questions from the public.

13. Portfolio Holder presentation: Environment (minus Streetscene)

Countryside service

The Forum spent some time questioning the Countryside and Leisure Manager, examining the different income into the service and where further savings could be made if income reduced again significantly.

The debate included discussion on:

- Income sources, coming from grants for a large proportion of the total income of the service, with a smaller proportion from charges for events and charges to other bodies;
- Ever decreasing grant levels putting pressure on the Council to further increase income from other sources in order to maintain the current level of service;
- The value to the social wellbeing and environmental protection of the District of the service, as well as tourism implications that lead to economic impact for the District;
- Decrease in the percentage of grant from Natural England had led to an increase in the contribution from the Council in supporting core functions, which some Members questioned was the right approach –

should the percentage of core grant income change, then perhaps the level of service should be decreased instead;

- More detailed breakdown of the individual grants received and the expenditure were requested by the Forum. Whilst there was some questioning of this approach, the Chairman agreed that some detailed examination by two of the Forum Members with officers and the Portfolio Holder could be carried out as an exercise, before considering applying to other services;
- Largest percentage of income related to staff costs. Use of local volunteers continues, and as their skills and experience increases over time, they undertake further work. However volunteers cannot be relied upon to undertake core work by the nature of their agreement to work – on a voluntary basis.

RESOLVED that Councillors Tony Howard and Peter Halse review detailed financial breakdown of the Countryside Service with the Countryside and Leisure Manager and the Portfolio Holder for Environment.

Arts Development

Members present at a recent Fees and Charges TaFF meeting had received a positive presentation from the Theatre Manager of the Manor Pavilion. The Pavilion continued to improve on income and had enjoyed a successful summer season.

The Thelma Hulbert Gallery had been recently discussed in relation to performance at Cabinet. The Arts Council has now funded a consultant to work on the business plan of the Gallery. Income generation is a key issue for the Gallery, and a provisional target of £18K for 2014/15 has been set.

Sports Centres and Swimming Pools

The newly formed LED Working Party would be working on close scrutiny of the subsidy to LED, including maintenance of the centres and associated buildings and grounds.

Car Parks

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have received a number of reports relating to car parking over the past two years. The Forum heard of the proposals put forward by some Chambers of Commerce representatives at a recent meeting with the Portfolio Holder. No increase in the car parking fee was planned for a fourth year, but an increase in car parking permits had been identified as possible whilst still retaining good value for money to the customer. A report with recommendations was being presented to Cabinet on 27 November.

In response to a question on barrier entry car parks, the Forum were informed of the staffing and space issues for the Council's existing car parks. A member of staff would have to be on site should an automatic barrier fail; and considerable space was needed to allow sufficient space for access and installation of a barrier system.