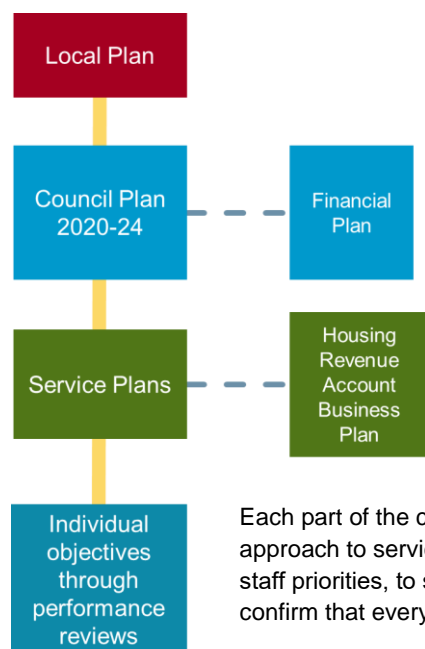


Finance Service Plan 2023-24

Version 0.7

April 2023 – March 2024



Each part of the council plays its part in a joined-up approach to service delivery- from this plan that sets out our staff priorities, to staff's individual performance reviews to confirm that everyone is doing their part.

Director: Simon Davey

Portfolio holders:

Service Plan Template 2023-24: Contents Page

Section 1	Brief description of service and purpose(s)
Section 2	Key achievements in 2022-23
Section 3	Looking forward: what we will do in 2023-24 Looking forward: what we will measure, how often and for whom
Section 4	Workforce planning
Section 5	Carbon and resource use
Section 6	Service risks: new/emerging
Section 7	Digital / Data Transformation
Appendix	Workforce Plan

Notes for Director and Assistant Director/Service Leads:

*Certain parts of this form will be pre-populated. This will include your turnover, full time equivalent/headcount and absence rates.

Shaded areas are for guidance.

When you have completed your Service Plan:

- ✓ Save to O:\Service Plans. Final versions will be placed on the intranet/internet
- ✓ Communicate it to your staff
- ✓ Keep it under review – make it a live document which adds value!
- ✓ Use it to formulate individual objectives

Section 1 – Brief description of service and purpose(s)

What we do and who we deliver to

Revenues, Benefits & Financial Resilience, Corporate Fraud & Compliance:

Benefits: Providing means tested financial support in respect of housing and council tax costs in accordance with prescribed legislation and a local determined scheme. We pay approximately £18m in Housing Benefits and have 3,600 claimants. We provide Council Tax Support of £9.2m to nearly 8,300 households.

The service now includes Financial Resilience Officers to support the Council's Poverty Strategy. The focus of this work being to work with residents on low incomes to build financial resilience and reduce indebtedness.

Purpose - To pay the right amount to the right person at the right time.

Council Tax: This is collected on behalf of Devon County Council, Devon & Cornwall Police Authority, Devon & Somerset Fire Authority, EDDC & town/parishes. Although the charge is set locally this is a national tax which has to be administered in accordance with legislation. We have to collect £132.6m this year and have 73,000 households. The average bill is £2,129.50.

Purpose - to collect the right amount from the right person at the right time.

Non Domestic Rates: This is a tax that is set nationally but collected by the local authority. A proportion is retained locally to fund Council services. We have 7,500 rating assessments and are responsible for collecting circa £35m once reliefs have been discounted.

Invoicing and collection all Sundry accounts on behalf of other departments of the Council. Total of bills issued is £7m with 7,000 accounts raised.

Benefit Overpayment: Collection of circa £1.9m.

	<p>Corporate Fraud & Compliance: Dealing with main types of public sector fraud, error & compliance – welfare benefits, tenancy fraud, council tax, business rates, procurement and payroll.</p> <p>Customer Service Centre (CSC):</p> <p>This is the main the first point of contact to the Council. The team deals with enquiries from various access channels. Primarily telephone, face to face, and web. They are responsible for main reception, general enquiries and specifically on a one and done basis from customers relating to: Waste, Street Scene, Street Name & Numbering, Environmental Health (dogs and pests), parking services, Planning & Electoral Registration. The team answered a total of circa 130,000 enquiries across all access channels.</p> <p>The team are also supporting with supporting Revenues and Benefits Service with the implementation and administration of government support schemes – initially for Covid and now to support residents with the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Financial Support/Government Grant Administration:</p> <p>Since the start of Covid, the Revenues, Benefits and Corporate Customer Services Team have been at the forefront of delivering on numerous financial schemes on behalf of government to support businesses and residents initially impacted by Covid but in the last year this has now turned into schemes to support residents with rising household bills in particular with energy costs. Further details are contained under key achievements.</p> <p>Financial Services:</p> <p>Accountancy: Providing financial advice to officers and members of the Council. Budget preparation, monitoring and reporting, Treasury Management, VAT, Statement of Accounts, statutory returns and provision of a financial system and procedures. Latest Statement of Accounts show the Council having gross expenditure of £93m.</p>
--	--

Income & Payments: Administer all EDDC creditors and pay all of the council's suppliers through the Creditor's team with over 17,000 invoices paid; administration of the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS). Processing and allocation of all income to the council with over 240,000 transactions (Business Rates, Council Tax, Sundry Debts, Rents, Parking Charges, Benefits Overpayments and Housing Advances) equating to £320m through the Cashier's team.

Procurement:

Professional procurement advice is currently managed through a Service Level Agreement with Devon County Council Procurement Services.

Internal Audit Services:

This service is provided through the South West Audit Partnership. An Annual Audit Plan is approved through the Audit & Governance Committee.

ICT:

This service is provided through Strata; a separate business plan is approved by a Joint Committee of EDDC, ECC & TDC. Each of the 3 authorities Council's adopt the Plan annually.

Place, Asset and Commercialisation – Separate Service Plan produced.

Carparks Service:

We own and manage 52 car park property assets, taking a strategic view of parking provision, whilst exercising fair and proportionate enforcement of parking restrictions across the District. We endeavour to meet the competing parking needs of short and long stay visitors, as well as those of residents, businesses and commuters. The core objectives of car park management are to achieve improved traffic flow, increased road safety, better environmental quality and suitable provision for disabled motorists. However our car parks also have a role to play in meeting the wider agenda's relating to economic growth, tourism and climate change, through bespoke parking offers, seasonal tariffs and the introduction of electric vehicle charging.

	Car parking revenue offers an essential contribution to Council finances and we have nearly 5,000 regular permit customers and over 2 million pay and display transactions each year. Car parking spaces are of a finite amount and need to be managed to meet the long term aspirations of the Council as well as the future needs of motorists. Working in partnership with neighbouring authorities and the County Council will ensure a fair and consistent approach to parking provision across the region, whilst also allowing access to funding and opportunities to improve long term parking provision in East Devon.
How we deliver and ensure equal access	In the main services are provided in house with specialist and contract support in some areas. Each area has carried out equality assessments and staff have had appropriate training. We provide services in differing ways in order to meet the needs of our customers. Any changes in service which members consider is accompanied by an equalities assessment.
How we compare	Where national performance is measured; Council Tax and business rate collection and speed of processing benefits we are one of the top performing authorities. The costs of running our services are low and the service areas offer good value for money. Details are included under key achievements.
Statutory elements of the service	The majority of the work carried out is a statutory requirement. The remaining elements are in the main linked to services which are of a statutory nature.
Current net budget (excludes Internal support charges and capital budget)	See Budget Book

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

	<p>Briefly describe key achievements and what outcomes were created. This will contribute to annual reviews of our Poverty Action Plan, Health & Wellbeing and carbon reduction work.</p>	<p>Link to Council Plan priorities and other strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - • Greener East Devon • Better Homes and communities • A resilient economy • Poverty action plan • Health & wellbeing • Carbon reduction
1	<p>National Published Performance Information shows excellent performance</p> <p>Housing Benefits</p> <p>DWP speed of processing statistics for FYE 2022 show the average number of days to assess a new claim is currently 20 days and change of circumstances is 3 days for Great Britain. The South West processing days is 18 for new claims and 3 for change in circumstances. It should be noted that processing times across the country have been increasing as Benefit teams have been tasked with providing support through the pandemic and the distribution of emergency funds such as the Household Support Fund.</p> <p>East Devon's processing times for new claims in Q4 of 2022 was 14 days and 2 days for change in circumstances. Below is the processing figures for the other Devon authorities. Based on these figures we have continued to perform well despite the challenges we have faced over the last two years.</p>	

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

DWP Housing Benefit (HB) Speed of Processing - Quarterly figures on New HB Claims and Change of Circumstances to existing HB Claims, by local authority (LA) Q4 2021 to 2022

Local Authority Name	New HB Claims			Change of Circumstances to existing HB Claims		
	Total number of processing days	Total number of processed cases	Average speed of processing	Total number of processing days	Total number of processed cases	Average speed of processing
East Devon	1,302	95	14	9,555	4,884	2
Exeter	2,967	222	13	15,018	3,597	4
Mid Devon	1,692	93	18	5,846	4,093	1
North Devon	3,621	143	25	13,827	4,351	3
South Hams	842	59	14	10,404	3,722	3
Teignbridge	1,466	111	13	12,407	4,621	3
Torridge	2,849	72	40	9,733	1,863	5
West Devon	836	58	14	6,682	1,821	4

Since April 2022 all LAs must now review a number of cases sent to them by the DWP known as Housing Benefit Award Accuracy and Housing Benefit Matching Service. East Devon's targets are as follows.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

Type of review	Full case review (HBAA)	Self-employed review	HBMS
Target	521	94	91

We are currently on track to achieve our targets for 2022.

We also have a number of Verify Earnings and Pensions Alerts (VEP) to complete each year.

Period FYE 2022	Volume of VEP tasks sent	Total number of VEP tasks actioned	% volume of VEP task outcomes recorded against all those sent
Q1	315	279	88.6%
Q2	293	287	98.0%
Q3	265	265	100.0%
Q4	281	281	100.0%
Full year 2021/22	1154	1116	96.7%

Our performance on VEP cases was in the top quartile of LA performance in the country. Top quartile of country performance for FYE 2022 - 96.5%, compared to 96.6% for the South West region.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

	<p>Council Tax</p> <p>Not only do we have a track record of having the highest collection rates in Devon but also in the South West and nationally we're 5th highest out of 316 councils.</p>	
2	<p><u>Government Grant Administration</u></p> <p>Since the start of Covid, the Revenues, Benefits and Corporate Customer Services Team have been at the forefront of delivering on numerous financial schemes on behalf of government to support businesses and residents initially impacted by Covid but in the last year this has now turned into schemes to support residents with rising household bills in particular with energy costs. Since the start of 2022 the teams have been delivering on:</p> <p><u>Business Support schemes</u></p> <p>1.Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG) scheme – January to March 2022</p> <p>Government guidance here: Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant Guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government announced this scheme on 21 December to support businesses in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sector in recognition of the rise in the Omicron variant which was likely to cause businesses to struggle.• Two parts to the scheme – criteria based scheme linked to business rates and a discretionary element where additional funding was provided under the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG).• Scheme had to be delivered at pace as only received the guidance at the very end of December 2021 and need to be live as the scheme closed on 31 March 2022 and any unspent funding needed to be returned to the government.• Like previous grant schemes the team worked with Teignbridge and Exeter (Strata partners) to design a common online application form.• Scheme designed and we were live by w/c 24 January 2022• Although we received 1,095 applications only 1,017 were approved. In total paid out £3,072,940.	

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

2.Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) – January to 30 September 2022

- Scheme was to provide discretionary rate relief in respect of 2021/22 only.
- Although the Government announced on 25 March 2021 (part of Spring budget) a new rate relief scheme to support businesses affected by the pandemic that had been ineligible for previous support, the guidance wasn't actually issued until 15 December 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-additional-relief-fund-carf-local-authority-guidance>
- As this was discretionary funding a policy needed to be developed on how we would utilise the £2,162,973 allocation to East Devon.
- Copy of the Cabinet report and policy are available here: [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 02/02/2022 18:00 \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)
- Significant amount of modelling had to be undertaken in order to inform our local scheme and all funding had to be used by 30 September 2022 otherwise any unspent funding would be repaid back to government.
- Scheme designed was primarily a formula based scheme and allowed for 32% rate relief to eligible businesses. Initially this was based at 28% with a £30,000 cap. However as there was remaining funding it was agreed to increase the thresholds (as set out in the recommendation to Cabinet) in August 2022 to ensure all funding was utilised.
- In total 595 businesses benefitted from CARF rate relief.
- As at 30 September all CARF funding had been spent.

Grant scheme post payment assurance checks

As part of our requirements when administering the Covid grant schemes we have been required to carry out post payment assurance checks that relate back to 2020.

This involved BEIS providing a list of postcodes and from that we would then have to supply evidence and responses to the following questions:

- Details of the claim process that was used for that grant scheme – application form, 2 factor authentication (pin and business rates number),

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

- Declarations used as part of the claim process including details within the form of them being mandated to shut and still an active business
- Evidence had to be supplied on:
 - Business was still trading – copies of spotlight, transactions on bank statement etc.
 - Business was trading day before restrictions came out – provided evidence of self-declaration and confirmation of spotlight search
 - Business was required to close due to restrictions – self-declaration and post payment checks by internal fraud team
 - Business was dependant on direct in-person services – self-declaration and post payment checks
 - Grant value was in line with scheme guidance – review and compare of award and business rates system
 - Grant paid to the correct entity

Grant schemes reviewed since April:

LRS2 (Nov 20 Grant)Local Restrictions Scheme Grant	Completed by 26.04.22
LRS3 & 3.1 (Jan - Mar 21 Grant)	Completed by 26.04.22
Restart (Apr 21 Grant)	Completed by 12.10.22
Omicron (Jan 22 Grant)	Completed by 14.06.22

Residents Support Schemes - Energy Rebate Scheme

Government announced on 3 February that there would be an energy rebate of £150 paid through Council Tax and those that paid by Direct Debit would get their money paid into their bank account in April.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

Guidance issued on 22 February 2022 which set out the eligibility and criteria of the scheme. [The council tax rebate 2022-23 – billing authority guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance)

Scheme in two parts – main scheme and discretionary scheme.

Main scheme based on government criteria and discretionary scheme based on local policy.

Main scheme closed on 30 September 2022 and Discretionary Scheme closes on 30 November.

Key issues:

- This is the largest scheme we've had to deliver at such short notice.
- This scheme was supporting circa 49,000 households
- Although scheme criteria was based on Council Tax our existing system could not be used to deliver this Energy Rebate Scheme without changes being made. This meant we had to design a system outside of this.
- Although eligibility was based on occupation as at 1 April, the Council Tax data isn't static which meant that we needed to continually reflect changes to council tax records with the Energy Rebate data to avoid errors being made. Due to the volume of changes that the Council Tax team process each day this work was complex to do.
- We had to carry out a significant amount of data cleansing to prevent paying the Energy Rebate to those not entitled. For example; fuzzy matching of Direct Debit details (liable name and Direct Debit name needed to match), checking for duplicate liable name (to prevent paying landlords as not eligible), second home owners, etc.

Main scheme:

- This was an incredibly challenging scheme to set up due to having to design systems to be able to handle the different elements to the scheme and the limited time we had to do this under.
- Even with the majority of eligible household being paid via their bank (using their Council Tax DD details) it still left over 12,000 households to claim via the claim process.
- Due to recruitment issues we've had to redirect Customer Services and Council Tax staff to administer this scheme between April and September which has resulted in work falling behind in other areas of work.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

- We've had to have on average 4 admin staff on this full time throughout this period as well as management resource to deal with the technical issues, queries, reconciliations and management reporting, etc

Discretionary Council Tax (Energy) Rebate scheme

Discretionary scheme policy was approved by Cabinet. [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 4th May, 2022, 6.00 pm - East Devon](#)

Although the policy was approved in May there were delays in getting this live due to ICT resources in the form development. Scheme went live in September.

- East Devon was allocated an amount of £269,850 to provide extra support with energy costs.
- Scheme is in two parts – targeted support and application scheme
- Households that were targeted to receive a payment were all sent a letter with an access code inviting them to apply for their rebate on-line. Help is being provided to those households who are unable to complete their application on-line. 4001 households were sent a letter advising them they were able to receive a payment of either £150 or £40.
- Follow up work was carried out to contact those who had not yet completed their applications towards the end of October 2022.

Scheme closed 30 November as per government guidance and government return had to be completed.

In total **£7.265m** was paid to **50,035** households in East Devon

Household Support Fund April 2022 to September 2022

Household Support Fund ran between 1 April 2022 and 30 September 2022. Spend for the Household Support payments are broken down in line with the Department for Works and Pensions reporting requirements.

As part of Team Devon's approach £90 was paid to all pensioners in receipt of Council Tax Reduction. These payments were made via the Post Office pay out scheme. 3667 payments were made totalling £330,030.

A further £111,670.00 was allocated to East Devon and the breakdown of spend is as follows:

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

	Households with children	Households with pensioners	Other households	Total amount
Spend	£76,944.17	£620.00	£34,185.10	£111,749.27
Volumes	642	7	345	994

	Energy and Water	Food	Essentials linked to energy and water	Wider essentials	Housing costs	Total
Spend	£77,200	£22,020.77	£2838.47	£9690.03	£0.00	£111,749.27
Volumes	641	269	21	63	0	994

Household Support Fund 3 (October 2022 – March 2023)

Now live with Household Support Fund 3 and we have been allocated an amount of £323,033.00. Policy was approved by Cabinet on 2 November ([Public Pack](#))Agenda Document for Cabinet, 02/11/2022 18:00 (eastdevon.gov.uk) This scheme is now live and will support households struggling with the cost of living over the winter. Our policy aims to utilise two thirds of the spend on targeted support and one third via an open application.

Homes for Ukraine

Homes for Ukraine scheme commenced in April 2022. All guests under the scheme are entitled to a one-off payment of £200 on arrival in the UK. Each host is eligible for a sponsor thank you payment of £350 per month paid in arrears.

Due to the different services involved with the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the Benefits team is responsible for administering the payments to hosts and guests.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

	<p>Interim guest payments are now paid either by BACS into guest bank accounts or by Post Office pay out now scheme. (Previously paid in cash collectable from Blackdown House)</p> <p>291 individuals have been paid an interim payment (161 family groups) totalling £58,200.00.</p> <p>129 hosts have claimed a sponsor thank you payment.</p> <p>To date 103 (85%) of all host payments due have been paid to date. The outstanding 15% are due to a delay in DBS and safeguarding checks being outstanding meaning we are not able to pay as per government guidance. 9 payments are not yet due as their guests have not been residing with them for a month.</p> <p>Total amount of host sponsor payments made up to 31 August 2022 = 158 £55,300.00.</p> <p>Changes to our Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to carrying out a full review of our CTR scheme • Cabinet agreed at their meeting on 2 November 2022 to go out and consult on changes to the scheme which would lift the lowest income households out of paying Council Tax altogether from April 2023 if approved by Members • Cabinet members to consider the proposed final scheme at their meeting on 4 January 2023 <p>New Cost of Living Hardship Fund</p> <p>Following Council agreeing 19 October for officers to investigate creating an additional scheme to support residents with the cost of living crisis. Proposed scheme was being considered by Poverty panel on 8 December 2022 which Members have supported and will now being presented to Cabinet on 4 January 2023.</p>	
3	<p>Key Corporate Strategies have been developed and approved during the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Plan 2022-2033 • Procurement Strategy 2022 – 2027 • Digital Strategy (including Customer Access Strategy) 2022 <p>There has also been a review and update of the Council's Contract Standing Orders.</p>	

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2022-23

4	<p>The Financial Services Team were involved in setting up financial processes to help administer the various Government Grant Administration identified above in 2. As with the Revenues, Benefits & CSC teams this is over and above the day job.</p> <p>The team has also been involved the largest IT project this Council has entered into with the replacement of its Finance System working in partnership with Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council – to date EDDC element of the project is being delivered on time by those involved working with Strata.</p>	
5	<p>Car Park Charges were increased for the first time in 10 years in 2022 which required the parking services team to administer a number of changes and system updates – this went well and is a credit to the team.</p>	

Section 3 – Looking forward: what we will do in 2023-24 (service objectives)

This service agrees that it will undertake the work required under the Financial Sustainability Model adopted by Council in its Financial Plan in reviewing the service under the following 6 areas:

- System Thinking
- Digital Transformation
- Customer Access
- Performance Management Data
- Asset Management
- Income Maximisation

3.1 Service priorities we will deliver in 2023/24 which support the Council Plan Priorities; the Poverty Action Plan and Health & Wellbeing. (Carbon reduction activities see section 5 below)	Financial/ corporate resource	Lead Officers
Financial Sustainability Model – Now adopted the implementation and processes involved needs to be organised. The Strategic Lead Finance working with the enablers identified in the Model will undertake this work including the agreement of timetable of service reviews to start in the final quarter of 2022/23 and through 2023/24.	This will require the time of those individuals identified as Enablers in the Plan and that of the Strategic Lead Finance and from services when reviews begin.	Strategic Lead Finance
Procurement Strategy 2022 – 2027 – Now adopted a key theme within the Strategy is the Global Climate Emergency, we will work with Devon Procurement Services to develop a matrix of activities to embed practices in our procurement processes to reduce our carbon footprint in line with our commitments.	Time of the Strategic Lead Finance working with Devon Procurement Services. There will be costs implications and these will have to be determined within procurement choices and will be presented to members to consider/decide.	Strategic Lead finance
An Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Charging Strategy is required to be developed and adopted by the Council which needs to include the role of our assets in particular our car parks. The Parking Services Manager needs to work with the Climate Change team to develop and implement this strategy. The adoption should be within the Q4 of 2022/23 including seeking external funding with implementation planned from 2023/24.	This will require the time of the climate Change Team and the Parking Services Manager	From Finance - Parking Services Manager
Poverty Strategy – To continue to develop the Poverty Dashboard to drive the Council’s response to help residents with the cost of living crisis, the development and approval of the Household Support Fund 3 and	This will require the time of Service Lead - Revenues and Benefits and the Benefits Manager to develop the schemes	Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services

Discretionary Fund (working with the Poverty Panel) in Q4 of 2022/23 with support being given in 2023/24.	and the Revenues & Benefits Team to implement.	
Council Tax Reduction Scheme – Currently a revised, more generous scheme with a 100% reduction being proposed for the top band is being consulted on. The new scheme if agreed will be implemented leading up to 2023/24.	This will require the time of Assistant Director - Revenues and Benefits and the Benefits Manager and the Systems Team to implement	Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services
Implementation of Business Rates Revaluation & government schemes announced in the Autumn budget.	Business Rates team, Revenues, Fraud & Compliance Manager, Systems Team (Revenues & Bens)	Revenues, Fraud & Compliance Manager
Carry out a review of telephony across the Council. This will including reviewing management data to consider how we can automate the routing of calls, dynamic automated messages, promotion of online services, etc. Alongside this we will also review resources for customer facing roles across the two sites to see how we can create greater efficiencies. (Carried forward)	This will require resources of Customer Services Manager, Assistant Director (Revs, Bens, Corporate Customer Services) Revs and Bens Data analyst. Once an initial review has been carried out a plan will be developed that may well involve other services.	Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services
Carried forward Implement online services via Firmstep including automation to reduce the amount of paper bills issued and to create more efficient ways of working. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-service / e-billing ➤ Move in /move out form for Business rates changes ➤ Move in/ Move out form for Council tax changes. 	This will require resources within the Revs, Bens & CSC service.	Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services

<p>➤ Contact us form for council tax, business rates and general CSC matters (replace emails)</p> <p>We will measure the efficiencies and paper savings this will create. This objective also sits within 'better homes and communities for all'.</p>		
Carry out a feasibility with Exeter City Council Revenues & Benefits Service on exploring opportunities for partnership working/ scoping how services can be better aligned.	This will require the time of Officers involved and some external independent support maybe required but this can be met within the draft budget.	Assistant Director – Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services.

3.2 Service development / project * (this will be monitored in SPAR)	Expected outcome	Resources required
Implementation of new Finance System	New system implemented with the benefits defined in the business case – modern system with closer working with ECC & TDC	Capital Budget has been approved for 3 year project
Link to Council Plan priorities	Financial Stability	
Milestones	Due date	Lead officer
1.TDC to go live (detailed project plan agreed)	April 2023	Financial Services Manager -TDC
2.EDDC to go live (detailed project plan agreed)	April 2024	Financial Services Manager - EDDC

3.ECC to go live (detailed project plan agreed)	April 2025	Financial Services Manager - ECC
---	------------	----------------------------------

3.2 Service development / project * (this will be monitored in SPAR)	Expected outcome	Resources required
Implementation of Motorhome Policy	To engage with Town Councils and where requested develop a local agreement and designate car parks for overnight stay	Parking Services Manager
1. To be determined		
Link to Council Plan priorities	Resilient Economy	
Milestones	Due date	Lead officer
1. To be determined		

3.3 Service measure/indicator	How often – monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually	For whom? Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny	Responsible Officer for production of management information	Retain this measure (yes/no) or new
Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Monthly	Scrutiny & Cabinet	Service Lead – Revenues & Benefits	Yes
Percentage of Non-domestic Rates Collected	Monthly	Scrutiny & Cabinet	Service Lead – Revenues & Benefits	Yes
Days taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events	Monthly	Scrutiny & Cabinet	Service Lead – Revenues & Benefits	Yes

Section 4 – Workforce Planning key findings and actions (see appendix for detailed Workforce Plan)

Major demands impacting on the workforce have been identified as:

Financial Services (including car parks)

Growing areas of specialist technical accounting areas are required.

Growing demand for financial expertise in projects/one off pieces of work creating additional demand and skills required to support other services.

New finance system will require a higher level of system administration resource and knowledge.

Revenues, Benefits & CSC

Customer demand levels have increased with a growing district both households and businesses.

Increased poverty and cost of living crisis requires us to support more individuals and often requiring significant time of trained officers.

It is anticipated that there are two new government schemes to support households with the energy crisis that will need to be delivered at pace in 2023

All

Lack of project management skills /qualifications exist and is an area where the service is increasingly delivering on a number of projects against incredibly tight timelines and it is important managers have the right skills and training to deliver these projects. Many projects are needing to be delivered using agile methodology, which is how Strata

	are delivering against their projects and therefore relevant that our managers who interact are also trained in agile methodology.
Major issues impacting on workforce supply have been identified as:	<p><u>Financial Services (including car parks)</u></p> <p>As a small team often only one individual with a particular specialist knowledge which is high risk.</p> <p>No capacity to support additional non routine work</p> <p><u>Revenues, Benefits & CSC</u></p> <p>Attracting staff where alternative employment on similar salary is available with less responsibilities.</p>
Priority workforce actions that have been agreed by the Service Management Team in liaison with their HR Business Partner are:	<p><u>Financial Services (including car parks)</u></p> <p>Proposal of redirecting available staff funding into additional capacity to support a post for projects/one of pieces of work and aid cover in specialist areas.</p> <p>An aim of the new Finance System is to create processes and a finance system that is understood and looks the same for the 3 authorities involved in Strata to enable the sharing of knowledge and resources between the authorities.</p> <p>Need to decide on system administration of the Finance System shared by 3 authorities.</p> <p><u>Revenues, Benefits & CSC</u></p> <p>The pay review outcome should help with attracting staff to vacant posts.</p>

	<p>The use of apprenticeships to bring staff into the team and to give opportunity to train and develop a career.</p> <p>A refresh of system thinking training – initial focus on Council Tax processes to review demand (carry out data capture) in order to eliminate waste (double handling, failure demand) and ensure E2E processes are streamlined.</p> <p><u>All</u></p> <p>Project Management Training and the provision of a corporate project management software. Different project management tools – Agile training.</p> <p>Data analyst officer & Assistant Director. Data analytics – require training in predictive modelling so we can identify future patterns and trends.</p> <p>Equalities training – Training for managers on undertaking and carrying out impact assessments to ensure that we meet our equalities and accessibility duties – needed for front line managers in Revs, Bens & CSC.</p>
The service Workforce Plan will be reviewed by the Management Team, in liaison with the HR Business Partner, on the following basis:	6 monthly

Section 5 – Carbon and resource use

5.1 Short term objective	Expected outcome	Resources required
Identified above: Procurement Strategy key actions linked to matrix being developed and EV strategy	Reduction in carbon to quantified as work progresses.	Within Budget
Link to climate plan action plan		
Milestones	Due date	Lead officer
1.Transition parking operational vehicles to EV on expiry of existing lease arrangements	March 2024	Parking Services Manager
5.2 Long term objective	Expected outcome	Resources required
To be defined		
Link to climate plan action plan		

Section 6 – Risks

New/emerging risks consider with your team any new and emerging risks to be reported to the Management Information Officer.

Any current risks that are emerging as high risk should also be reported to the Management Information Officer.

Section 7 – Digital / Data Transformation

Digital and data are essential building blocks of a successful organisation. Digital transformation will enable teams to work in a more streamlined and efficient way, reducing duplicated work and automating manual processes, in support of our service plans.

Digital refers to a technology-enabled way of working that uses modern tools, technology and capability.

Data refers to digital information about people, things and systems.

Aims: Digital transformation will make accessing and delivering our services to the customer far quicker and simpler. To deliver a better service for our customers we require fast and efficient digital services, high quality data and skilled staff.

7.1 Current and ongoing digital/data projects

*Use this section to record current and ongoing digital/data projects within your service relating to systems, software, processes or anything that requires a digital or data solution. Please provide details of the project objective, progress, difficulties and showstoppers currently affecting the project, a record of these will be kept across iterations of the service plan to track their progress. The Digital and Data team will analyse these projects and contact you to discuss potential solutions to the issues you identify.
(Please use one table per project, copy and paste table as needed)*

Name of project

1. The creating of a corporate management dashboard comprising of service area dashboards.
From the service dashboard – car parks income is still in progress
2. Process for customers to sign up and receive paperless council tax bills & business rate bills.
3. There will be a number of routine system upgrades through the year across the service.
4. New Finance System

Impact on service (low/med/high)

1. med
2. high
3. high
4. high

Names of key members of staff/project leaders involved in the project (including Strata and third parties – include organisation name)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John Symes, Richard Easthope & Andrew Hopkins 2. Libby Jarrett, Strata 3. Michele Retter, Mark Worth, Andy Staines. Richard Easthope – Capita, Oneadvanced, Taranto 4. Mark Worth, John Symes, Strata - Oneadvance
Project objective/desired outcome/goals - how does this project support the council's digital/financial sustainability strategy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better management and ability to drive decisions based on data. 2. Customer access & carbon reduction 3. Necessity – security, legislative upgrades and some customer improvements possibly. 4. Many features will support digital strategy – customer portal, electronic scanning of invoices etc
Description of project, system/software used, current progress, difficulties and showstoppers currently affecting the project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very quiet on progress, slow progress. 2. Slow progress, lack of Strata resources originally now our own team 3. Should be prioritised and factored in 4. On track, good resourcing.

7.2 Potential future digital/data transformation projects

*Use this section to identify potential new digital/data transformation projects, this may be changes to systems, software, processes or the procurement of new products that may increase the digital capabilities, efficiency of your service and income generation for the council. The Digital and Data team will analyse these projects and contact you to discuss potential solutions to the issues you identify.
(Please use one table per project, copy and paste table as needed)*

Proposed name of project

From the adopted Digital Strategy we now need to define key projects – review with Services as part of the financial Sustainability Plan and the use of service planning should help develop that work plan.

Telephony review

Single sign on /E-billing

Impact on service (low/med/high)

High

Key member/s of staff that you can commit to the project (EDDC only)

EDDC, Strata & Strata Partner Authorities

Project objective/desired outcome/goals - how does this project support the council's digital/financial sustainability strategy?

To create a more cost effective service

Description of project, system/software used, transformational action/training needed for project to succeed

Details to be determined

Is your service currently able to commit a staff resource to this project? - please specify details

Yes