

CABINET

11 January 2023

Present:-

Councillors R Croad, A Davis, R Gilbert, J Hart (Chair), S Hughes, A Leadbetter, J McInnes (Vice-Chair), A Saywell and P Twiss

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

J Brazil and C Whitton (in person)

Y Atkinson, J Bailey, F Biederman and M Wrigley (remote attendance)

* 261

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* 262

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 263

Announcements

The Chair welcomed Julian Wooster, newly appointed Director of Children and Young People's Futures (Interim) to the Council and his first meeting of the Cabinet.

* 264

Petitions

There was no petition received from a Member of the Public or the Council.

* 265

Question(s) from Members of the Council

In accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules, the relevant Cabinet Members responded to three questions from a Member of the Council on the following matters:

- update and progress on Tipton St John School, the School Rebuilding Programme and EDDC's local plan consultation;
- investigation into former Councillor John Humphreys and publication of independent investigation report; and
- 20mph application for the Ottery St Mary community.

The Cabinet Member also responded orally to one supplementary question arising from the above.

[NB: A copy of the questions and answers are available on webpage for meeting and the supplementary question and answer may be observed through the webcast of this meeting]

* **266** **Budget Targets for 2023/2024**

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DF/23/02) on the Target Budgets for 2023/2024, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

In previous years, Cabinet had agreed target budgets for services in December, based on financial planning forecasts constructed in advance of the provisional settlement. However, this year, there had been much more uncertainty in terms of central government funding for local government, combined with the most challenging budget round that the Authority has faced in recent decades.

It was therefore prudent to defer setting service budget targets until January, after the announcement of the provisional settlement.

On 19th December 2022, the Rt Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, released a written Ministerial statement to Parliament setting out the provisional local government finance settlement for the 2023/24 financial year. The settlement was in line with the Spending Review 2021 and updated for the announcements made in the Autumn Statement of 17th November 2022.

Budget targets for the 2023/24 financial year were set out in the table at paragraph 3.8 of the Report, reflecting a net increase in service budgets of £66.2 million, which was a 10.5% increase.

The provisional local government finance settlement for 2023/24 was a single year settlement and the key matters in that settlement were outlined in paragraph 2.2, including an increase of 9.6% in core spending power, the flexibility in setting Council Tax by setting the referendum limit at 2.99% (and that social care authorities could increase the adult social care precept by an additional 2%), Business Rates to increase in line with the September CPI, Social care grant, the new Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (to support hospital discharge), the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund (split equally between councils and the NHS, to support hospital discharge and had to be pooled into the Better Care Fund), Service grant (reduced due to the cancellation of the National Insurance increase and to transfer funding to Supporting Families programme) and that the 'Fair

Funding Review') and a reset of Business Rates growth would not be implemented in the next two years.

The tables at paragraph 2.3 outlined the Authority's Core Funding of £107.2 million and showed the other government grants that had been announced so far. Other existing grants were expected to be published soon and would be reported as part of the overall budget papers in February, if known by then.

In terms of Service Targets, the cost of living and geopolitical situation had created huge financial pressures nationally and the Authority had faced unprecedented price and demand pressures in the current year. Although significant savings had been found, many had been one-off measures.

To enable the Authority to set a balanced budget, savings, alternative funding and additional income of £49.1 million had been identified. Overall, there was additional funding of £66.2 million or 10.5% for service budgets next year.

Integrated Adult Social Care - £339,302,000 – an increase of 8.8%
Children's and Young People's Futures £208,60,000 - 18.4%
Public Health, Communities & Prosperity £21,395,000 - 5.4%
Corporate Services £44,848,000 - 6.2%
Climate Change, Environment & Transport £81,900,000 - 3.5%

The target budgets above included inflation and the National Living Wage settlement as well as other pressures as well as savings, alternative funding and additional income which gave the target budgets as outlined above.

The Cabinet noted that as had been consistent with previous years, the Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2027/28 would be presented to Cabinet at the February budget meeting.

The Leader, Cabinet Members and those speaking under standing order 25(2) paid tribute to the work of the Director of Finance and Public Value and her team.

The matter having been debated and the other relevant factors set out in the Director's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Twiss, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the provisional local government finance settlement set out in paragraph 2.3 of the Report be noted;

(b) that the revenue budget targets for 2023/24 as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the Report be approved; and

(c) that the Capital Programme be determined by Cabinet on 10th February 2023.

* **267** **Budget Monitoring - Month 8**

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DF/23/01) on the Budget Monitoring position at Month 8, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

At month 8, it was estimated that budgets would overspend by just over £7 million, an increase of £679,000 from month 6. This position excluded the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit. This was made up of an underlying overspend of £33 million reduced by £26 million of Financial Sustainability Programme (FSP) proposed savings and income. Work was ongoing to identify services and projects in both revenue and capital that could be transformed, modernised, remodelled, funded differently, ceased, or postponed.

An inflationary pressure risk continued to be present which could result in increases to the forecast overspend if it could not be contained.

The Cost of Living Crisis and geopolitical situation had created huge financial pressures nationally and the County Council was similarly affected.

The Dedicated Schools Grant projected deficit, relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), was forecast to be £40.6 million, an increase of £3.7 million from Month 6. The outcome of the discussions with the Department for Education as part of the Safety Valve Intervention were still awaited.

The table in Section 2 of the Report detailed the forecast outturn position by service area at month 8. The underlying overspend, column (c), detailed the forecast outturn position before the impact of the Financial Sustainability Programme (FSP) was taken into consideration. The impact of the proposed FSP savings was shown in column (d) and the final Month 8 overspend or underspend in column (e).

Non-Service items, which included capital financing charges and business rates pooling gain were forecasting an underspend of £6.8 million. The underlying position was a forecast pressure of £5 million, predominantly the forecast impact of the 2022/23 pay award. The FSP had identified further savings of £11.9 million.

The Month 8 position reflected £26 million of proposed savings identified through the Financial Sustainability Programme. A high level summary by

type of saving (delaying / pausing, additional income, reducing spend, stopping and targeted funding) was included in section 3.3 of the Report.

The approved Capital Programme for the Council was £212 million and incorporated amounts brought forward from 2021/22, and other prior year approvals. The year-end forecast was £170.3 million of which £147.5 million was externally funded. Slippage was forecast at £41.8 million. The main areas of net slippage could be attributed to scheme variations and programme delays in Planning, Transportation and Environment, which reflected the complexity of the major schemes within this service area.

Material and labour price increases continued to be experienced which were impacting the delivery costs and tender prices being returned, within the Capital Programme.

Corporate debt stood at £2.5 million, being just under 0.99% of the annual value of invoices, against the annual target of 1.9%.

In summary, the month 8 position remained broadly in line with the month 6 forecast, however, and action continued to bring the Outturn back to a balanced position. As the Council moved into the last few months of the financial year, it needed to redouble efforts to bring the outturn closer to a balanced position and address the challenges being experienced within the DSG.

The matter having been debated and the and other relevant factors set out in the Director's Report having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Twiss, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

- (a) that the month 8 budget monitoring forecast be noted;
- (b) that the action being taken to safeguard the financial sustainability of the authority be supported;
- (c) that the savings and additional income resulting from the Financial Sustainability Programme be noted; and
- (d) that the extension to the Dedicated Schools Grant statutory override relating to accumulated deficits also be noted.

* **268** **Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone - Higher Bullring Public Realm Enhancement Project**

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/23/1) which sought approval to progress to tender and subsequently construction for the Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme (being delivered by Historic England) was a £95 million programme to unlock the potential of high streets across England, fuelling economic, social and cultural recovery and breathing new life into high streets for future generations.

The Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement project, delivered as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone, had the following objectives:

- enhance the heritage setting of the town centre;
- reduce the dominance of motor vehicles; and
- provide an extended space for community events and cultural activities while providing a focus for civic pride.

The streets and spaces in the town centre were currently dominated by traffic, narrow pavements, poor quality surfacing, and little planting or street furniture.

The design has been developed with a consultant led concept approved by Mid Devon District Council and was built on the Town Centre Masterplan. Key considerations in the design included the War Memorial, the street trees, the bus stop, facilitation of loading and unloading and the parking in the area.

In summary the key changes were:

- carriageway width – reduced to enable the creation of the enhanced public realm whilst remaining sufficient to maintain the current traffic flows;
- bus stop – moved south of the St John Court access, freeing up the setting of the War Memorial;
- pedestrian crossing – realigned slightly to reflect the new kerb alignments;
- disabled parking bays – realigned to enable the offset pedestrian crossing to function safely; and
- market access – designed such that the market could continue to access the space to facilitate market days. The creation of the larger public realm allowed for future market expansion.

A parking demand survey had also been undertaken during the initial concept design process, Appendix 2.

A two-stage public consultation had also been undertaken and this was outlined in full at section 5 of the Report.

The Scheme was well-aligned with a range of actions within the Strategic Plan, insofar as it would increase walking and cycling opportunities and therefore encourage more people to walk and cycle and support a green economic recovery from COVID-19 for businesses.

The table in the Report summarised how the proposals would impact achievement of relevant Strategic Plan actions according to a seven-point scale.

Cabinet noted that Mid Devon District Council were the lead partner and accountable body for the programme.

An Impact Assessment had been circulated with the Director's Report and could be found at - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/higher-bull-ring-heritage-action-zone-improvement-scheme-impact-assessment-december-2022/> This highlighted that the design process had required that the Scheme was 'fully accessible and inclusive to everyone, including mobility and visual impairment'.

An overarching project aim was to ensure that the enhancement design 'delivered a coherent and unifying design for the whole study area that met the current and future needs of the community'. All necessary highways safety audits would be undertaken through the detailed design and construction phases.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability (including carbon impact), risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Director's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Davis, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the public realm enhancement design (developed as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project) for the Higher Bullring area of Cullompton, as set out in Appendix 1, at a cost of £828,016, to proceed to tender and construction be approved, noting there is no cost to Devon County Council;

(b) that the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Local Member and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the scheme design; and

(c) that an increase to the 2022/23 capital programme by £96,711, funded by developer contributions, be approved.

(NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/higher-bull-ring-heritage-action-zone-improvement-scheme-impact-assessment-december-2022/>).

* 269 **Contract Extension for the Supported Living Options Framework for Children Looked After and Eligible Care Leavers**

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing (Deputy Chief Officer), (CS/23/1) which sought approval for an extension to the current Framework Agreement for 16+ Supported Accommodation, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Services provide supported accommodation to 16-18-year-old children in care and eligible care leavers that promoted independence and preparation for adulthood. This commissioning enabled the Council to deliver statutory duties to children in care and care leavers in line with Devon's Corporate Parenting Strategy, A Place Called Home Devon Sufficiency Strategy and Devon's SEND Strategy.

The Supported Living Options Framework Agreement secured accommodation which catered for a broad range of needs, including emotional and behavioural issues, allowed young people to thrive and enabled them to transition to independence or reunification with family.

All supported accommodation providers accommodating young people aged 16 and 17 needed to be registered with OFSTED by October 2023. This required providers to submit the necessary documentation and would precede OFSTED inspection visits from April 2024.

The current Framework Agreement had two lots;

- Lot 1 – Supported Lodgings for Children Looked After & Eligible Care Leavers in Devon & Neighbouring Authorities.

- Lot 2 – Semi-Independent Residential and Shared Accommodation for Children Looked After & Eligible Care Leavers in Devon & neighbouring Authorities.

The Report highlighted that in 2020, the Government had consulted on a series of reforms to supported accommodation provision for children in care and care leavers, including the introduction of statutory regulation of this sector. The introduction of the mandatory national standards had been welcomed by providers currently on the Framework Agreement and they were committed to working with the Council to prepare for, and meet, the national standards.

In summary, the Framework Agreement had been working well with the majority (71%) of young people placed in on-Framework Agreement placements which were achieving a better weekly average cost compared to those not placed within this Framework Agreement. By including an entry point during the extension period there would be scope to include more providers and properties within the framework to increase capacity and choice.

Under Lot 1, there was 1 provider on the Framework Agreement offering supported lodgings placements across Devon and under Lot 2, there were 23 providers offering in 68 settings (50 settings in Devon, 1 in Plymouth and 17 in Somerset).

The future procurement model would need to take into account the new national standards and the proposed extension period was required to complete this essential work through engagement with providers and key partners.

An options appraisal was outlined in the Report with the recommendation of Option 3 which was to extend the current Framework Agreement for 8 months until 31st January 2024, with an additional entry point at the start of the extension period, to go live at the start of February 2024.

The projected financial expenditure during the 8-month extension was £4,515,100 at current framework prices based on November live placement data.

The Cabinet noted there were no negative impacts from an equalities perspective anticipated from the extension to the Supported Living Options Framework Agreement.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability (including carbon impact), risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Leadbetter, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that an eight-month extension to the existing Supported Living Options Framework Agreement for 16-17-year-old children in care and eligible care leavers, be approved, with an additional entry point at the start of the extension period, to go live at the start of February 2024;

(b) that approval of the future commissioning and procurement strategy be delegated to the Director of Children and Young People's Futures in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services; and

(c) that an increase of 5% to Framework Agreement prices for the duration of the extension period be applied.

270

Notice(s) of Motion

(a) Istanbul Convention to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Girls and Article 59 - Councillor Atkinson

(Councillor Atkinson attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillor Biederman attended in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

On 1st November the UK's ratification of the Istanbul convention to prevent and combat violence against women and girls and domestic violence finally came into force.

However, the Government has reserved article 59 of the treaty opting out of protecting migrant women. By quietly reserving article 59 of the treaty, the Government is still failing some of the most vulnerable women living in Devon: migrant women.

The Government's National Statement of Expectations on Domestic Violence sets out what local areas like Devon need to put in place to ensure their response to Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) issues is as collaborative, robust and effective as it can be so that all victims and survivors can get the help they need. The Home Office expects to see local strategies and services that, amongst other things, put the victim at the centre of service delivery.

This Council believes:

- The Devon County Council and UK Government not being obliged to provide VAWG support and protection to migrant women effectively reinforces the two-tier system of support for victims, as some remain discriminated against because of their migration status.

- The Government must immediately remove the reservation to this article and provide equal protection for every woman in need, irrespective of migration status.
- All women, regardless of where they come from, deserve protection against violence.
- That DCC resolves to make available to migrant women in Devon services and support that it provides for other women.

Members considered the Officer's factual briefing note on the matter (LDS/23/1) which referred to the Council's recognition of the issue of people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) being unable to access support and services when attempting to flee domestic abuse. It also outlined the Council's understanding of the impact of the reservation to Article 59, the picture in Devon and the impact of having NRPF (for people affected by Article 59 and beyond) in Devon.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken):

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED that Council is committed to ensuring that victims presenting for domestic abuse support by local services commissioned by DCC receive the support they need and are not disadvantaged because of their status and therefore the Council will:

(a) work with local providers to explore how we can further improve access to support and services to be completely assured that no one is turned away on the basis of their immigration status;

(b) work with colleagues to understand how the issue presents itself in Devon within local migrant and settling communities (including those seeking asylum, those housed under the homes for Ukraine scheme and those housed in Home Office hotels, bridging hotels and in resettlement schemes);

(c) engage with organisations that already support and others that may be in a position to support this group to identify solutions that may minimise the impact of the reservation of Article 59 and ensure access to bespoke support; and

(d) create an opportunity to look at this issue in the context of the wider system and engage stakeholders, particularly DWP, housing, health, generic support services, police and adult and children social care, in this conversation focused on increasing awareness and developing shared solutions.

(b) Stop Short-changing Devon - Save our Services - Councillor Brazil

(Councillor Brazil attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillors Biederman and Whitton attended in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

'While the Conservative Leader of Devon County Council reports that the authority's **'financial situation has never been so bleak as it is now'**, the Government has slashed the surcharge paid by UK banks from 8% to just 3% and lifted the threshold before the levy is even paid from £25million to £100million.

Yet again, while local government faces huge challenges to support the most vulnerable in our community and maintaining services, it is not increasing support to Councils that is at the forefront of the Conservatives in Government, but helping their banker mates.

The Cost of Chaos budget from short-lived Prime Minister Liz Truss which sparked the mortgage interest rate rise has also helped boost Bank earnings with NatWest, Santander, HSBC and Barclays, among others, reporting their earnings boosted in the last quarter as mortgage rates surged.

And while energy companies, fat on the profits of record increases in the price of gas and electricity, were slapped with a windfall tax, the Conservative Chancellor decided not to do the same for banks.

Devon County Council believes the budget delivered by Chancellor Jeremy Hunt was a very poor deal for the people of Devon and has done nothing to address the real terms cut of 72% in core funding for Devon in the 11 years to 2021/22. Cuts now being considered by the county council are a direct result of the Government's failure to support this authority and the Leader is instructed to write again to the Chancellor and Prime Minister setting out the devastating impacts for Devon and to call, once more, for fair funding for Devon'.

Members considered the Officer's factual briefing note on the matter (LDS/23/1) which referred to the policy paper 'Amendments to the surcharge on banking companies' and actions in budget statements that related thereto, support to local authorities to fund social care (outlined in the Autumn Statement in November 2022), the additional 'flexibility' in setting Council Tax for 2023/24, the December 2022 written ministerial statement to Parliament on the provisional local government finance settlement for 2023/24 and the actions of the Council in lobbying Government.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed and already undertaken:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED that Council be asked to;

(a) note the concerns expressed in the Notice of Motion regarding the fair funding of Services; and

(b) continue County Council's lobbying campaign, working in partnership with Devon MPs, the LGA and CCN on matters of common concern and in the best interests of the people of Devon.

(c) Voter Photo ID - Councillor Wrigley / Bailey

(Councillor Wrigley and Bailey attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillor Biederman attended in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Government has recently introduced a requirement for photographic identification before electors are to be permitted to vote.

This is to take effect for all elections from May 2023.

Devon condemns the introduction of the requirement for Voter Photo ID and considers that the introduction of photographic ID for elections is completely unnecessary, as voter fraud is extremely rare, and at the last count, a single prosecution was taken forward on the matter. The move would have the effect of suppressing voter participation in democratic processes.

The requirement for Voter Photo ID will disenfranchise anyone without a UK Driving Licence or Passport in their hands at the time of voting. The range of additional acceptable IDs is limited and skewed towards the elderly.

The Council considers that the new rules would place a considerable burden on Returning Officers, Presiding Officers, and polling staff who would have to adjudicate on identification issues. Staff at polling stations would inevitably have to deal with angry would-be voters turned away from the polling stations. Furthermore, District councils are expected to deliver free IDs with no funding or guidance yet issued, despite it being less than six months until the elections.

The Association of Electoral Administration considers that the timelines for the new rules under the Elections Act 'are optimistic at best, undeliverable at worst'. Details of how voters without photographic ID can apply for a 'Voter Authority Certificate' has not even been published yet.

The move could suppress the number of residents who should be able to vote, which does not reflect British standards for democracy and respect for voters.

Motion

The Council therefore agrees;

1. To ask the Local Government Association (LGA) and the County Council Network (CCN) to raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities expressing its great concern about the proposed use of photographic identification for May 2023 elections.

2. In particular the Council stresses its concern about the procedures to be introduced, which will have a disproportionately detrimental impact on younger voters for whom the procedures will be more challenging than for older voters. The Council asks the LGA and the CCN to press the Government to actively seek to encourage young people to participate in elections, **not** to place obstacles in the way of young would-be voters.

3. Asks the LGA and the CCN to press the Secretary of State not to introduce voter photographic identification for the scheduled 2023 elections. The Council also asks the LGA and the CCN to urge the Secretary of State to engage in debate with the LGA and CCN about the need for voter photographic identification, and should it be concluded that it is necessary that a more acceptable system be considered.

4. The Council agrees to send a copy of its message to the LGA and the CCN to its MPs and the Prime Minister.

Members considered the Officer's factual briefing note on the matter (LDS/23/1) which referred to the requirements of the Elections Act 2022, the types of ID required, the concerns of electoral administrators and also the position with voter fraud. It further reported on the new burden funding allocations and the readiness of District Councils as well as the position of the LGA on the matter. It concluded with a summary of the proposed public awareness campaign from the Electoral Commission.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation now before them and the actions now proposed:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED

(a) that Council note the concerns raised by the Notice of Motion, in particular the additional requirements on Local Authorities to deliver Voter ID in a short timescale and also the additional financial costs at a time when budgets are constrained and squeezed;

(b) that Council share the concern of the Local Government Association, as articulated by its Chair, Cllr James Jamieson and further supports its view of the Gould Principle whereby electoral law should not be changed within six months of an election that the change would impact; and

(c) therefore, Council agrees to write to the LGA outlining its support of the LGA's position and that the letter be copied to the CCN and the Devon MP's.

* 271

Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership - Annual Report

(Councillors Biederman and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Chair of the Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership (TDSAP) and the Chair of the Board, Paul Northcott, attended the meeting remotely to present the Report. The Cabinet noted that it was a statutory requirement, under the Care Act 2014, for each Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) to produce and publish an Annual Report and present this to Health and Wellbeing Board(s). As in previous years, the TDSAP would present the Annual Report to the relevant Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet.

The TDSAP provided strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across Torbay & Devon and was independent, with an independent chair. It acted as the key mechanism for agreeing how agencies worked together to safeguard and promote the safety and wellbeing of adults at risk and/or in vulnerable situations.

The Report outlined the structure of the TDSAP, noting that it had undertaken a review of its subgroup structures to ensure they remained fit for purpose and in section 4 of the Report, its partnership Members which included the Statutory Partners.

In terms of safeguarding activity, the Report highlighted that in Devon the number of concerns had continued to rise, however in Torbay the number remained at the same level as in 2021/22. However, whilst both authorities had seen an increase in the number of reported concerns, both were still under the national rate.

The number of safeguarding adults enquiries, (concerns that met the criteria for further section 42 enquiries) undertaken by both authorities, had increased over the last three years. Both authorities were again below the national rate for section 42 enquiries. However, the TDSAP would continue to monitor data to identify trends and learning that could improve service delivery.

Section 6 outlined the Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SAR's) and activity during 2021/22. There had been four SAR referrals during 2021-2022 which had met the Care Act Criteria for a SAR.

Section 7 highlighted the work of all the subgroups including the Community Reference Group, Learning & Improvement Subgroup, Performance and Quality Assurance Subgroup and the Operational Delivery Group.

The Strategic Priorities for the TDSAP had been agreed at a Development Day in July 2021, attended by TDSAP Partners. Four priorities had subsequently been published in the 2021-2024 TDSAP Business Plan, outlined below.

- to embed the learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) into organisational practice;
- to work with partners to better understand and reduce the risk of 'Hidden Harm', especially in the context of COVID 19;
- to improve outcomes for people with needs for care and support by finding the right solution for them; and
- improving Involvement and Engagement with people in receipt of safeguarding services.

The Report concluded with the Key Partner Achievements During 2021/22 and also looked ahead with the subgroups continuing to manage, monitor and deliver the aims of the 2021-2024 strategic priorities.

Members welcome the work of the Board and thanked the Chair for his robust and strong leadership.

More detailed information about the work of the TDSAP was available on the TDSAP website: [Home - Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership](#)

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Leadbetter, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED that the TDSAP be thanked for their work and the production of an informative Annual Report.

* **272** **Question(s) from Members of the Public**

There was no question from a Member of the public.

* 273 **Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Davis, and

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the following be endorsed and any recommendations to Cabinet therein be approved:

Farms Estate Committee – 5 December 2022
Farms Estate (Interviewing) Committee – 19 December 2022
Farms Estate (Interviewing) Committee – 20 December 2022

It was further **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Leadbetter, and **RESOLVED** that the most recent minutes of the Children's Services Improvement Partnership Board and SEND Improvement Partnership Board be noted.

* 274 **Delegated Action/Urgent Matters**

The [Registers of Decisions taken by Members under the urgency provisions or delegated powers](#) were available for inspection, in line with the Council's Constitution and Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. [Decisions taken by Officers](#) under any express authorisation of the Cabinet or other Committee or under any general authorisation within the Council's Scheme of Delegation set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

* 275 **Forward Plan**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet reviewed the [Forward Plan](#) and determined those items of business to be defined as key and framework decisions and included in the Plan from the date of this meeting onwards reflecting the requirements of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.54 am