

Budget Proposal for 2021/22

Report of the Chief Officer Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect

Recommendation: that the Committee be asked to

- (i) Agree the proposed budget for 2021/22 and confirm the re-tender of the Waste and Recycling Advisors Contract for 2 years with a potential 3-year extension;
- (ii) Note the 2020/21 budget position.

1. Summary

This report summarises the options for the proposed funding allocations for 2021/22. It includes a report on the Waste and Recycling Advisors contract and bids for the funding of 'Reuse credits', 'Don't let Devon go to waste', "Clean Devon" and an allocation for a Waste Audit to be carried out in October 2022. It also summarises the current position with respect to the 2020/21 budget.

2. Introduction

Over the last 3 years the budget has been allocated to 3 major areas of spend. These have been the Waste and Recycling Advisors contract; continued funding of Reuse Credits and the 'Don't let Devon go to waste' campaign work. In addition, approximately £7,000 has been allocated each year for use in relation to the Clean Devon Partnership for reducing litter and fly tipping.

3. Proposal for budget allocation 2021/22

Re-use Credits

In 2019 the Reuse Credit Scheme was reviewed with proposals presented to the 17th October 2019 DASWC Committee (HIW/19/76). Members recognised the contribution that the scheme has made to encouraging furniture reuse in Devon through the commitment of staff, volunteers and customers, but agreed to discontinue the scheme through a phased reduction in allocation as below.

2020-21 (Scheme Year) – Allocation: £49,000 with group allocations as appendix I.

2021-22 (Scheme Year) – Allocation: £25,000 for furniture only.

Since the review, groups were offered a voluntary programme of business support. In addition, improved reuse signposting for residents will help support groups to continue without ongoing DASWC support. More detail is provided in Appendix I.

Don't let Devon go to waste

This campaign forms the backbone of waste communications in Devon and Torbay – it includes a website, public relations, social media, one-to-one engagement and publications. All the work is monitored and campaigns targeted and researched to ensure maximum impact. The focus in 2020/21 has been on food waste and home composting but has also been extended to plastics, paper and textiles with further specific work to support each authority. For 2021/22 given the high percentage of food and plastic waste in residual bins and particularly the carbon impact of plastic, campaign work will continue to focus on these areas as well as on metals and bulky household waste. The proposed budget bid is for £41,000. See Appendix II for more detail.

Waste and Recycling Advisors Contract

This Committee originally agreed to fund the Waste and Recycling Advisors (WRA) contract for £85,000 a year (plus an inflation sum) for two years from April 2017. Since then the contract has been extended for 2 years. It is designed primarily to increase recycling participation rates by focussing on doorstepping householders across Devon and Torbay. There is now an opportunity to re-tender the contract. The contract is proving very successful and gives all the authorities additional resource to help encourage the public to reduce, reuse and recycle more waste. An update can be found at Appendix III. Given the excellent progress made it is recommended that the contract is retendered for a sum of £95,000 (the current cost per year) a year for 2+3 more years.

Litter and fly tipping – Clean Devon Partnership

An allocation has been made since 2018/19 to 'work with partner bodies across the region to develop behavioural change and education initiatives to help reduce litter and fly tipping'.

The Clean Devon Partnership now has 27 members, the newest being the Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and the CPRE. Further information is provided at Appendix IV. The Partnership was formally launched early this year and the first campaign ran in March 2020, focussing on the waste Duty of Care. A police volunteer designed the website which was valuable in-kind assistance to the project. Others are beginning to offer in-kind design support and provide established communications networks for the dissemination of key messages. Task groups have been formed to take on packages of work to progress the key areas of work. Further campaign work, development of a communications hub, and further brand development are planned for the remainder of 2020/21. It is proposed that a further £7000 is allocated to Clean Devon to support the project going forward.

Waste Audit 2022

The draft Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon notes that an audit of dustbin waste was carried out in 2017 and that this should be carried out at 5 yearly intervals. This gives an invaluable insight into the contents of residents' bins and therefore an understanding of which materials are in the wrong bin. The authorities can then measure progress from previous years but most importantly target their communications appropriately.

The 2017 analysis showed that for Devon 40.8% more could be recycled with current collection services (51,245 tonnes) and 58.6% more could be recycled with a district wide aligned option (73,600 tonnes). The net costs of this missed recycling are approximately £3 million and £4.4 million respectively, plus the loss of income of £1 – 1.5 million. If all residents put the right waste in the right bin in the above scenarios, the recycling rates would increase to 70.4% and 76.7% respectively.

For Torbay the figures show that 52.9 % more could be recycled with current collection services (14,375 tonnes), and the net costs of this missed recycling are approximately £840,000, plus the loss of income of £280,500. If all residents put the right waste in the right bin in the above scenario, the recycling rate would increase to 66%.

Encouraging waste prevention, reuse and recycling will help to get closer to these figures, and this is where behavioural change campaigns will need to continue to focus.

The cost of a waste audit of approximately 200 households per authority is estimated to be between £40,000 and £50,000. It could potentially include the Household Waste Recycling Centre residue too. It is therefore proposed that the £24,000 saving made from reducing Reuse Credits in 2021/22 is allocated towards this activity to be carried forward to 2022/23 when the remainder of the Reuse Credits savings could be added to give a total sum of £49,000.

4. Budget Statement 2020/21

Spend is going to plan for 2020/21 as follows.

Project	Budget	Spend for Q1/Q2	Planned outturn
Waste and recycling Advisors' Contract	£93,804	£28,255	£93,804
Reuse Credits	£49,000	£0	£49,000
Don't let Devon go to waste	£41,000	£930	£41,000
Clean Devon	£7,000	£0	£7,000
Total	£190,804	£29,185	£190,804

5. Conclusion

The proposed budget allocation for 2021/22 is listed in the table below.

Initiative	Budget
Reuse Credits	£25,000
Don't let Devon go to waste (DLDGTW)	£41,000
Waste and Recycling Advisors Contract	£95,000
Litter and fly tipping campaign	£7,000
Waste Audit 2022	£24,000
Total	£192,000

The total bids including the WRA contract, result in a potential budget of £192,000.

The draft top slice allocation is attached at Appendix V.

6. Financial Considerations

The draft budget allocation is detailed in paragraph 5 above. Supporting the proposed projects leads to waste being dealt with in line with the waste hierarchy. Reducing, reusing and recycling and composting bring cost savings for both collection and disposal authorities. Managing an element of the budget via a contract gives more accountable financial control over budget expenditure and allows performance to be driven by measurable targets.

7. Legal Considerations

There are no legal issues arising in relation to this report.

8. Environmental impact considerations (including climate change)

The initiatives proposed under this budget paper will all contribute to a reduced impact on the environment including on climate change.

9. Equality Considerations

There are no negative equality considerations relating to the recommendations. The proposals for Don't let Devon go to Waste and the Waste and Recycling Advisors contract will have a positive effect on the environmental as well as on people's understanding of how to reduce, reuse and recycle, potentially saving them money too. The Clean Devon litter and fly tipping partnership will contribute to improved community relations. Litter and fly tipping both have a negative effect on community environment and wellbeing and initiatives to reduce these will therefore be beneficial.

10. Risk Management Considerations

The DASWC Risk Register will be amended in light of recommendations being agreed. There are no significant risks associated with the Waste Recycling Advisors contract, the Reuse Credit Scheme, Don't let Devon go to waste and Clean Devon budget allocations.

11. Public Health Impact

There are no impacts to public health identified.

12. Reason for Recommendation

The Devon and Torbay local authorities have long worked under the auspices of the Committee to drive sustainable waste management by sharing resources and best practice. The budget proposal for 2021/22 will enable them to continue with this valuable work benefiting from the economies of scale that partnership working brings.

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Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
Nil		

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Reuse Credit Scheme

The Reuse Credit Scheme (RCS) was established in 1996 by the Joint Committee (DASWC) as an incentive mechanism to reduce the amount of bulky furniture sent for disposal. The RCS currently supports 12 registered groups through a financial ‘credit’ paid for furniture (and other items) diverted from the domestic waste stream for redistribution. ReFurnish Wrangaton (SHDC) and MASH (Torbay) closed during 2019/20 scheme year.

Whilst the RCS supports the diversion of waste from disposal, the 2019 RCS review also highlighted a range of other principal benefits, particularly social, such as ‘supporting families in need’ and training and employment. Whilst these wider benefits are recognised and valued, they are not, as principal benefits, sufficiently aligned to the Committee’s Terms of Reference or strategic ambitions to warrant continued funding from this limited and dedicated joint waste budget in an increasingly diverse and competitive reuse marketplace.

In October 2019 (HIW/19/76), Members agreed that dedicated funding provided through the RCS should be discontinued and that RCS groups offered a voluntary programme of business support to optimise their operations, and through improved signposting for residents, help them become more self-sustaining following the withdrawal of the RCS from April 2022.

Group allocations for 2020-21 are shown below (£49,000) with allocations for 2021-22 (£25,000 – furniture only) approved in April 2021 following allocations based on previous year group performance.

DASWC Reuse Credit Scheme - Allocations	2020/21
	<i>Approved</i>
East Devon	
RiO East Devon	£2,102.59
TOTAL (EDDC)	£2,102.59
Exeter	
Turntable Exeter	£7,385.34
TOTAL (ECC)	£7,385.34
Mid Devon	
Refurnish Crediton	£6,174.00
TOTAL (MDC)	£6,174.00

North Devon	
Refurnish South Molton	£4,069.27
Refurnish Barnstaple	£3,986.85
TOTAL (NDC)	£8,056.12
South Hams	
ReFurnish Wrangaton (closed)	£0.00
ReFurnish Totnes	£9,672.55
ReFurnish Dartington	£433.16
TOTAL (SHDC)	£10,105.71
Teignbridge	
ReFurnish NA	£3,757.00
Refurnish Buckfastleigh	£894.19
TOTAL (TDC)	£4,651.19
Torbay	
MASH Torbay (closed)	£0.00
TOTAL (TORBAY)	£0.00
Torrige	
Refurnish Bideford (formerly SMR)	£2,332.88
TOTAL (TORR)	£2,332.88
West Devon	
ReFurnish Tavistock	£4,712.21
Proper Job Chagford	£1,569.96
TOTAL (WDBC)	£6,282.17
DASWC Reuse Credit Scheme	2020/21
Group Allocation (total)	£47,090.00
<i>Management Fees (Refurnish)</i>	<i>£1,910.00</i>
Total DASWC Reuse Credit Scheme Budget	£49,000.00
	<i>Approved</i>

Don't let Devon go to waste proposal for 2021/22

Don't let Devon go to waste is the umbrella campaign for waste communications in Devon and Recycle Devon communication channels are used in practice.

Joint waste communications achieve economies of scale and help to ensure consistency of message. The focus this year is to address the waste hierarchy and specific local authority needs whilst also considering the carbon issue. The findings from the proposed waste analysis will ultimately be used to determine future strategic direction for communications in order to achieve behavioural change. Based on the research and performance available now, a proposal of activities is as follows:

Reduction of residual waste

- Reduce food and garden waste by producing and disseminating a Composting Information pack for new residents and first-time buyers.
- Raise awareness and support the Community Fridge and Larder project if funding is awarded.
- Prevent plastic waste by expanding the Refill Devon initiative to include other items such as plastic cups and containers in addition to bottles.

Increase Reuse

- Improve bulky household waste reuse and recycling by providing communications support for community reuse and repair groups. This will raise awareness for existing groups and help to facilitate new groups.
- Produce a series of online Reuse and Repair workshop videos.

Recycling

- Continue to liaise with and support individual authorities with communications for service changes and capture of specific materials or contamination issues.
- Expand the Metal Matters campaign to other Devon authorities and build on the successes achieved in Teignbridge and Mid Devon.
- Increase recycling of food waste and waste electronic and electrical equipment by using residual waste bin stickers

Reduce carbon

- Produce a series of short video clips using local resources and children to engage with adults. One short film for each priority material will be produced to highlight how you can reduce and reuse plastics, textiles and food.

Motivate

- Normalise and celebrate waste prevention, reuse and recycling by providing more feedback to residents to Thank them and let them know how well they are doing. Social norming is a positive way to motivate others to change their behaviour too.
- Further work in partnership to ensure that all waste communications are consistent and clear across the county.

Engagement

- Publicise and further develop access to waste facilities for the public by organising visits to sites such as Anaerobic Digestion plants to raise awareness of food waste (should the Covid 19 situation allow).
- Increase one-to-one engagement where possible. It is vital that waste communicators engage with residents on a one-to-one basis to retain a high level of understanding of attitudes and needs.

Market Research

Market Research is used to survey a sample representation of people across the county. The research provides valuable quantitative data on awareness and behavioural change actions. It is proposed that the research is carried out during March 2021.

Proposed expenditure 2021/22	Estimate
Countywide and LA specific campaigns to support achievement of the Waste Prevention and Reuse Action Plan targets as detailed above	£30,000
Recycledevon.org annual hosting fee, Domain name renewals and SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificates	£800
Recycledevon.org Search Engine Optimisation fee	£3,000
Online continuous creative development	£1,500
Monitoring and evaluation research	£5,700
Total	£41,000

Recycle Devon achievements 2020 – 2021 to date:

- Coordinated Covid-19 announcements and advice

- 10 County-wide paid or organic campaigns taken place
- Updated brand for Recycle Devon
- New and improved recycledevon.org website launched

Recycle Devon annual performance 2019 – 2020

- 12.4% increase in visitors to Recycledevon.org (120,000 for year)
- 8.9% increase in Facebook likes (12,800 for year)
- 8.5% increase in Twitter followers (2,600 for year)
- 17,722 Mailing Preference Service sign-ups to prevent junk mail
- 13 events across the county
- 3,700 pledges to Reduce, Reuse or Recycle
- 1,300 face-to-face interviews carried out to gain feedback and understanding from residents

Proposal for the 2021/22 budget - Waste and Recycling Advisors (WRAs) Contract

The contract with Resource Futures has been in place for three and a half years and is going well with positive reports from all authorities involved. A team of three experienced advisors work in three local authority areas each mainly making face-to-face calls to residents to assist them with waste prevention, recycling and composting activities. Time allocation for each authority is based on population numbers and the division of areas is based on geography and travel considerations.

The WRAs continue to provide much needed one-to-one engagement with residents particularly at a time when authorities are introducing new or changed services. A plan of work is developed and approved each year considering specific local authority needs. Working in partnership for this kind of work achieves economies of scale and sharing of expertise across all authorities.

Annual performance for 2019/2020 includes:

- 13,571 doors knocked with 4,690 people spoken to. The remainder often receiving a 'Sorry we missed you' card or service guide leaflet.
- High contact rates for most areas, often over 40% demonstrating effective use of WRA time.
- 3,445 containers given out to people who are not recycling, would like to recycle more including their food waste or need a replacement.
- 3,260 Mailing Preference Service cards given out contributing to 17,722 sign-ups across Devon and the reduction of junk mail.

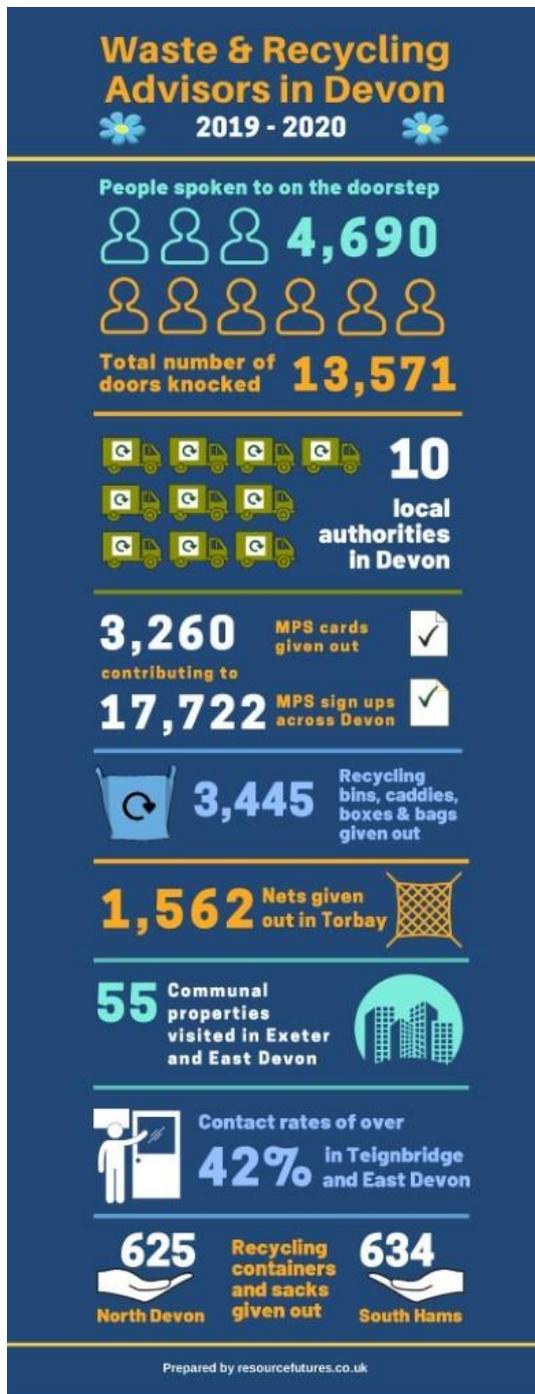
The infographic below shows further details.

Achievements for the first quarter in 2020/2021:

Despite Covid-19 and the need to furlough some WRA staff for two months valuable work has taken place. Highlights include some insightful work on non-social media communication opportunities, survey analysis in West Devon and a review of Torbay Council's online information in preparation for the switch to the new waste and recycling service provider SWISCo. . This enables them to address concerns and queries from residents on subjects such as the avoidance of single use plastics, sustainable textiles, home composting and the prevention of food waste.

All WRAs are now working and have been since mid-July. The response from members of the public on the doorstep is positive and having an opportunity to talk to someone in person about their recycling service and waste in general is much appreciated.

The impact of Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme and Consistency have yet to be clarified but currently changes are expected from 2023. Consequently it is proposed that the initial term will be for 2 years with the option to extend in annual increments for a further 3 years.



Proposal for the 2021/22 budget - Clean Devon

The Clean Devon Partnership is now established and includes all the local authorities and 15 partners including the Police, the Environment Agency; Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks; the Federation of Small Businesses; Devon Wildlife Trust; the National Farmers' Union, the Country Landowners' Association and Devon, Somerset and Torbay Trading Standards. The newest members are the Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and the CPRE.

The Partnership was formally launched early this year with a logo designed via a public competition. The waste Duty of Care campaign held earlier in the year relates to the need for everyone to dispose of their waste legally by using registered waste carriers. The website (<https://cleandevon.org/>) received more than 12,000 unique visitors and there were articles in magazines including the Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce e-newsletter "Profile".

Task groups have been formed to take on packages of work to progress the key areas of:

- intelligence and information sharing;
- engaging and informing businesses, landowners and the public;
- aligning protocols, procedures and policies;
- and monitoring, recording and mapping baseline data.

An online communications hub is also in progress.

As the Partnership strengthens the partners are beginning to offer in kind work such as videos for campaigns, design material and Information Sharing templates in addition to the ideas that are generated at the meetings. The partnership also offers a vast network for sharing messages on social media and other mediums.

With all the litter issues arising over the summer there have been a plethora of local communications and the messaging such as Keep Britain Tidy's Great British September Clean has been shared by Clean Devon partners. It has been agreed that a campaign will run in March 2021 to prepare residents, visitors, landowners and businesses alike for a potentially similar situation next year, learning from this year's events, e.g. fly camping and discarding of disposable BBQs. The detail has yet to be confirmed but will potentially link to the Countryside Code.

It is proposed that a further allocation of £7,000 is made to progress the project in 2021/22. A decision on how this would be used will be developed by the Partnership with key input from the local authorities. Assuming the COVID19 situation has abated there will be the opportunity to involve businesses in supporting the Partnership through sponsorship.

