

## Budget update

### Report of the Director CCET

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

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## 1) Recommendation

That the Committee be asked to:

- (a) Note the position with regard to the Waste Recycling Advisers (WRA) contract and support the decision to reduce the contract extension period
- (b) Note the position regarding the Clean Devon Liaison Officer and agree that the Clean Devon Partnership can reallocate the funding according to their priorities
- (c) Note the plan to develop a proposal for the October committee following a behaviour change review workshop

## 2) Introduction

The approved budget for 2024/25 is detailed below.

Project	Budget (£)
DLDGW	41,000
WRA	123,092
Clean Devon	27,000
Extend food waste work	9,000
Total	200,092

### Waste and Recycling Advisors Contract (WRA)

The Waste and Recycling Advisors Contract (WRA) which supports 3 officers to give advice to residents on the doorstep in targeted areas has been running for 6 years, since 2017. The current contract which started in April 2021 is a 2 year + 1+1+1 years extension. It has been extended for 1 year so far, and at the October committee a further extension of 1 year was approved. The cost of the contract in 2024/25 was estimated to be £123,092 based on inflation at 5%. This was recently adjusted to £122,529 once the inflation figure was confirmed.

On discussion with the incumbent contractor Resource Futures (RF) it became evident that they could not afford to continue to deliver the service for the price they tendered at in April 2021 plus inflation. The reasons for this included:

- The cost of the living wage increases
- Their initial term bid included a discount
- Their HR costs had been more than anticipated due to staff sickness and turnover

Following negotiations RF offered to deliver the service for 10.5 months. This was accepted and approved by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee in February 2024 and the extension began. The contract will terminate on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2025.

#### Clean Devon Liaison Officer

The Clean Devon Liaison Officer was employed in September 2023 on a 1 year contract for 2 days a week. It was agreed at the October 2023 committee that the post could be extended for a second year ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee, 17/10/2023 14:15.](#)

The key objectives for the first year were to

- 1) To ensure that waste crime incident reporting data achieves a high degree of Data Quality, in accordance with reporting guidance including WasteDataFlow. Good progress was made with this and the local authorities' fly tipping statistics should now be more accurately compiled.
- 2) To engage with Partners to identify best practice for waste crime policy and enforcement activity and identify systems and processes which could support greater collaboration and intelligence sharing. This work has been completed and will be presented to a future committee.
- 3) To explore opportunities for a Partnership wide waste crime surveillance resource within available budget, compliant with legal obligations. This work has been completed and will be presented to a future committee.

The Clean Devon Liaison Officer has recently resigned after 9 months to take up another post and her last day was June 4<sup>th</sup>. The post can potentially be readvertised for a 6 month period or the £20,000 could potentially be allocated to projects that partners have planned which are ready to implement such as installing surveillance equipment or duty of care campaigns. The Clean Devon Partnership meets on June 19<sup>th</sup> and approval is sought for the Clean Devon partnership to consider the options and decide on the best use of the funds according to the Partnership's priorities.

#### Don't let Devon go to waste

It is early in the financial year for any significant expenditure on this budget line, but as per the October budget proposal activities will include supporting:

- National Food waste week
- National Refill Day
- Buy Nothing new month
- National Recycle Week
- The Reuse Project
- Focussing on high carbon materials

- Food saving organisations

The £9000 to extend the food waste work will be used to offer kitchen caddies to householders.

### **3) Moving forward**

Further to the shortened WRA contract extension it is proposed that the contract is not extended for the final year. It is therefore proposed that a workshop session will be undertaken over the summer period to develop an effective alternative. Food waste remains the single most prevalent material in the residual bins and recognising the successful campaign work in Teignbridge last year this could be an area for further work. A proposal will be brought to the October meeting of this committee as part of the budget report proposals for 2025/26.

### **4) Options / Alternatives**

Options for developing an effective alternative to the WRA contract will be reviewed over the summer. There was little alternative to extending the current contract by 10.5 months this year given that increasing the budget was not an option.

There are a number of options for the Clean Devon element of the budget, e.g. recruitment, communications, surveillance. These will be considered by the Clean Devon Partnership at their meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **5) Technical Data**

When looking further into options at a summer workshop it will be useful to have regard to the waste analysis carried out in Oct 2022 which was detailed in a report to this committee in February 2023 [Residual Waste Composition Analysis Result.pdf \(devon.gov.uk\)](#). The results indicate the volume of each material that remains in the residual bins. It is a useful data set to assist with identifying which materials should be targeted. Food waste was the greatest percentage (28%) followed by dense plastics and plastic film if added together (6.8 and 8.6%). Other materials with high percentages were paper (9.6%), sanitary waste (9.9%) and garden waste (6.8%).

### **6) Strategic Plan**

The priorities in the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 include responding to the climate emergency. Reducing waste, reusing and recycling all contribute to reducing the carbon impact of waste management thereby contributing to the strategic objective of "Ensuring resources are used more efficiently by waste reduction, reuse and recycling". Children will benefit from workshops on how to reduce waste; recycling and reuse contribute to a sustainable economy; reducing food waste and distributing surplus food can help reduce food poverty; and a supportive and collaborative approach to waste management within communities has positive public health impacts and assists with resilience.

## **7) Financial Considerations**

The 2024/25 budget is expected to be spent as proposed, notwithstanding the fact that the WRA contract for which £122,529 is allocated will end in February 2025 and the Clean Devon Partnership will determine how the overall £20,000 allocated for a Clean Devon Liaison Officer will be spent this year.

## **8) Legal Considerations**

There are no specific legal considerations.

## **9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)**

This Report has no specific sustainability implications that are not already covered in the paragraphs above.

## **10) Equality Considerations**

This Report has no specific equality implications.

## **11) Risk Management Considerations**

No risks have been identified.

## **12) Summary**

This report summarises the current budget situation noting the need to offer a shortened extension period to the incumbent WRA contractor and the need for the Clean Devon Partnership to re-allocate the budget for the Clean Devon Liaison Officer this year. Following a workshop in the summer, a budget proposal for 2025/26 will be brought to the October committee.

### **Meg Booth**

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

**Electoral Divisions:** All

### **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Nil

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