



CORPORATE SERVICES

AGENDA ITEM No 4

Council Corporate Services Improvement Plan 2020-21

COMMUNITY



DEMOCRACY



ECONOMY



ENVIRONMENT



WORKING FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



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Coronavirus Statement

The advent of Coronavirus in March 2020 represents an existential and extreme threat to health and the economy. As such much of the 'business as usual' constituents of the service plan necessarily defer to the 'new normal' of dealing with the pandemic and its effects. Initially, March – July, lockdown and reopening.

Thereafter – unlocking community and economy, bringing services back on stream as appropriate and, as/when necessary, responding to national or local recurrences of the pandemic.

Alongside and consequential to the foregoing is a major in-year threat to the finances of the organisation. Tavistock Town Council typically generates approximately £2 commercial income for every £1 precept enabling it to subsidise community services (such as the Town Hall and grounds/park maintenance). A combination of deferred rents to support local businesses, market closure (and even with re-opening nil and then reduced charging) and an inability to raise revenue by other means results in a reduction in income - currently in excess of £200,000 per quarter. In other words negligible to nil commercial income.

There is also the real possibility (likelihood) that, following the impact of lockdown, there will be considerable challenge in keeping the £2m capital programme, to which the Council is contractually committed, to budget. Unless there is a profound change in either the economic outlook, or the support available from Government (currently none to this part of the Council sector), the level of loss being experienced by the Council will likely not be sustainable for the whole of the current financial year.

In summary it is submitted that the Council can have only one overriding priority for the next 12 months. Namely, to seek to ensure that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in the financial year does not exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it. That is not in any way to diminish the other goals and objectives of the authority to support the community. But it is recognition that those can only be achieved with a financially sustainable Council. Regular reporting is being undertaken on the financial position of the Council.

Delivering the Business of the Council

More generally, and subject to the final paragraph (below) Tavistock Town Council adopts a plan led approach to the delivery of Council business and performance management. Higher level organisational goals and the principles underpinning the operation of the Council are set out in the Strategic Plan 2017-2021. These are then embedded in the organisation through annual service planning (integrating the operational with the strategic), regular reporting, monitoring and the staff appraisal system. A Medium Term Financial Plan has been in development but is presently in abeyance pending greater certainty as to the short-medium term impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.



As such these documents are distinct from a Neighbourhood Plan (relating substantially to land use/the built environment) or a Community Plan/Town Vision (setting out the wider needs &/or aspirations of the community). The primary purpose is to set out those tasks or activities by which the success of the Council can be judged year on year in the context of the Council priorities and with regard to how we conduct Council business on behalf of our community.

This annual Corporate Service Improvement Plan has been prepared to accord with those strategic goals included in the higher Council Plan but necessarily now tempered (superseded) by the Coronavirus pandemic as outlined above. Together these form the basis from which service activities and goals are identified, prioritised, resourced and delivered. In particular it should be noted that the projects listed are largely in addition to the day to day running/operation of the Council & service delivery (for those activities readers should refer to the service plan summaries).

1 Service – The Corporate Plan

1.1 Name of Service

Corporate Services

1.2 Responsible Officer

Town Clerk & RFO

1.3 Future Challenges

The most significant organisational challenges envisaged over the next planned period are those posed by/deriving from Coronavirus. They include:-

- In year financial viability (to 2021) in the face of an unprecedented impact on commercial income streams;
- How to support safety in the community (and with staff and stakeholders) at this time as well as support the community more generally;
- Year on year financial viability 2021 onward;
- The capacity of the existing (minimal) staffing establishment to continue to meet organisational demands in key areas of finance, compliance, management, relationship and project management in the current financial year. A year which was already predicted to represent '*a period of excessive draw on capacity*' has grown considerably more challenging. Before Coronavirus it was reported that the demands on a small cohort of key workers might be unsustainable. Whilst that concern has not materialised in the way then envisaged staff turnover/vacancies in both management and supervisory positions have placed considerable stress on the organisation, exacerbated by turnover and absences. Those demands, and the associated pressure on those staff who remain, have grown considerably during and since the pandemic.

Additionally there are outstanding significant financial commitments of a contractual nature which the Council is obliged to meet. Not least:



- a. Delivery of the final stage of the Townscape Heritage Initiative regeneration Scheme for Tavistock. Principally but not solely, in the form of works to the Guildhall Square (estimated cost originally £285,000). Continuity of staffing/resourcing, alongside external pressures, were already a particular challenge for this national pathfinder project utilising the General Power of Competence. Delays caused by Coronavirus, as well as a challenges posed by the disproportionate approach taken by Historic England, have raised the cost of the final public realm project significantly over budget. A revised costing will be brought to Council as soon as the amended work programme is complete.
- b. Delivery of the Guildhall WHS Gateway Centre proposal in partnership with Tavistock Heritage Trust to ensure sustainable and affordable future operating arrangements. The largest single capital/activity project (iro £1.85m) undertaken by the Council in association with Heritage Lottery Fund with associated resourcing/capacity implications now and for the future. Delivery of the capital project to time and budget (which had been subject to extensive value engineering) were particular areas of challenge, also future revenue underwriting/funding. With Coronavirus those challenges have grown and, as indicated above, it is important to be mindful the cost implications are not restricted to in-year capital costs but extend to the long term annual (revenue) subsidy. As regards capital spend a revised costing will be brought to Council as soon as the amended work programme is complete.
- c. Public Conveniences – presently the Guildhall toilets are being operated by WDBC. The Town Council has offered to pay the extra/over costs of additional Covid related cleaning for an initial period of 6 months. However, at the time transfer takes place there will be capital, revenue and capacity implications.
- d. Reserves - the draft of this report prior to lockdown said - *The priority attached to rebuilding the General Reserve to required levels and the Capital Reserve to acceptable levels (and, by implication, reduction in & control of spend). All available Council reserves are fully committed based on current spend projections (which in view of the nature of outstanding commitments may yet be underestimates). This has been made materially more challenging by decisions of the Borough Council – the potential implications of which on Town Council expenditure range from iro £66,000-£100,000+. It is submitted that, from September (projected opening of the Guildhall Project) funding will be the major organisational challenge, and without disciplined management, could easily become the critical organisational risk alongside capacity overload.*

The position has, inevitably, deteriorated substantially (see above) as in the first quarter alone the Council (through lost and deferred income) received over £200,000 income less than projected and the



second quarter is expected to be similar. Consequently, with the need to deploy the general reserve (an emergency measure) the Council now faces the dual challenge of in year viability (as above) and rebuilding of reserves first to adequate, and then sustainable levels.

- e. It is acknowledged that alongside the foregoing there are other matters which, in more 'normal' times, would be in the list above such as:-
- i. the continuing development of a new sustainable themed market use and related offer for the Butchers Hall.
 - ii. The equitable rationalisation of long term lease arrangements.
 - iii. The continuing/challenging legislative and financial environment within which Local Government operates, including the impact of the wider economic situation, an increasing regulatory burden and potential for government controls over spending. Linking to this the general pressures on town centre rental levels and the potential consequential impacts upon Council income streams.
 - iv. Potential strains on (as well as a greater dependence on) partnership and collaborative working in a deteriorating public/voluntary service environment together with anticipated (and unforeseen) demands which might come to be placed on Council resources. For example service 'hand-down' from partners (such as toilets in the current year).
 - v. The resourcing, development and delivery of/adherence to effective neighbourhood, strategic and service planning arrangements.
 - vi. The operation of the Council and the organisational, skill, cultural, capacity and behavioural demands of effectively operating in, and delivering probity in, public service at a time of unprecedented delivery demand.
 - vii. Supporting and developing the new (2019-23) Council at a time of extreme demand on organisational capacity and low/no available/uncommitted financial resources – whether in the policy (such as town planning or sustainability and the environment) arenas or general duties (such as work initiatives).
- f. It should also be recognised that, having deployed the overwhelming bulk of resource for the past 7 years toward high value regeneration and community projects, there is a considerable deficit in routine and operational practice to be made good. Whilst it is not possible to be



precise it is reasonable to estimate that, if the Council did nothing new, bringing those systems and activities up to where they should be will take 3 or more years (see also section 6) based on the current establishment (and assuming all relevant posts occupied). The risk of failure in these areas will only grow with the passage of time.

1.1 Purpose of Service

- to support the democratic process and co-ordinate corporate direction to meet Council goals and objectives.
- to secure and maintain appropriate standards of organisational governance and probity including the requirements of the S151 (Responsible Finance Officer) role.
- to ensure customer-focussed, professional and cost-effective front – line, stewardship and support services are provided to the Council and Community.
- to support community leadership and grow community capacity.

1.2 Function of Service

On a day-to-day basis the main Corporate Services normally provided are the following:-

- Ensuring the efficient, effective and economic use of resources (including measures of control and assurance) to secure ‘best value’ and promote continuous organisational improvement;
- Promoting the modernisation agenda for Local Government and supporting Councillors in their strategic and representational roles;
- Leading, motivating, co-ordinating and managing all aspects of a multi-disciplinary organisation and associated organisational, commercial and project planning;
- Facilitating and supporting the identification, development and delivery of strategic projects and initiatives;
- Providing strategic and policy advice and guidance;
- Promoting both locally based and strategic partnerships and other forms of collaborative and intra/inter agency working for and on behalf of the community of Tavistock;
- Maintaining probity and advising on the application and construction of legislation, the common law, council procedures and best practice relating to the work of the Council and associated organisational arrangements;
- Developing, implementing and securing compliance in relation to statutory obligations, organisational rules, procedures and practice;
- Providing effective arrangements for the management of Council assets;



- Leading the work of the management team in delivering organisational goals and objectives;
- Discharging the duties of the Proper Officer, Responsible Finance Officer and such statutory and other obligations as are placed upon the Town Clerk as Chief Officer of the Council.

More specifically with regard to the general office function¹:

- Maintaining high levels of occupancy (and low levels of debt) for Council lets, managing day to day tenant relationships in accordance with Council Policy, legal obligations and good practice;
- The management and delivery of certain human resource services together with payroll, purchasing and finance functions;
- Maintenance of statutory and organisational records and compliance with legal obligations in relation to administrative, financial and related corporate matters;
- The provision of civic, democratic and mayoral support, updating of the Council website, communications, publication of the town guide & council newsletter, administration of council grant scheme and the Jessie Ann Alford Charity;
- Provision of general office & corporate/democratic administration and support services.

1.3 Legal Requirements

Are principally:-

- Local Government Act 1972
- Health & Safety at Work Acts
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
- Common Law in relation to meetings
- General Data Protection Regulation & Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960
- Public Health Acts
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equality Act 2010
- Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 and 1984
- The Tavistock Acts
- Localism Act 2011
- Planning legislation and guidelines
- Auto-enrolment legislation

¹ Developed from former Administration Office Service Plan prior to consolidation



1.4 **Committee**

Budget & Policy/Council



2 Projects/Tasks

This section deals with planned high level projects or actions for the service/Council².

Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
NEW – Funding Gap Immediate: in-year management of expenditure so as to avoid incurring a budget deficit ³	Current financial year	July 2020	March 2021	Council TC/RFO	Y	All
Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (THI) - <i>Accountable Body role</i> ⁴	Delivery Phase Delivery of actions in stage 2 bid	2014	Autumn 2021 ⁵	TC/THI PMB	Y	D1,2,C1,3 En1, 2, Ec1,2,4

² Note – securing the Charter for Member Development and progressing a Neighbourhood Plan were previously removed by virtue of capacity issues/current overall position. The Council reserved the potential to review the latter when the review of the Conservation Area Management Plan had been completed and this has now been re-included.

³ The Council may not lawfully incur a deficit (ie allow expenditure to exceed income and reserves). Current projections indicate that the whole of the general reserve may be required this financial year.

⁴ Note this will now also include Scheme Evaluation in the final year.

⁵ Note – HLF extension for Guildhall Square Public Realm Works.



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (THI) – TTC Landlord delivery	Delivery of actions in stage 2 bid for TTC critical bldgs: public realm & Complementary Initiatives	May 2015	By 2021 (each project has its own timetable)	GM/TC	Y	En 1,2, Ec1,4,5
Funding Gap ⁶ – ongoing, Reserves ⁷ - to apply discipline and introduce a plan to secure the rebuilding of General and other Reserves to acceptable (and then sustainable) levels	To replenish General reserve (£400,000) & capital reserves within 3-5yrs (suggested to bring up from 0 to iro (capital) £500,000)	July 2020 ⁸	(General Reserve), May 2022 (Capital Reserves) May 2025	Council & TTC/RFO	Y	Ec4,5

⁶ Note – this provision acknowledges the extant decision to seek a PWLB loan.

⁷ Originally this target was solely regarding Capital Reserves, the current position now extends to the General Reserve.

⁸ Revised from original of May 2018



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
Funding Gap – ongoing, Revenue expenditure, to balance revenue commitments. ⁹	Introduce arrangements to manage anticipated future increased revenue funding costs.	July 2020 ¹⁰	Autumn 2020 Budget/ Precept setting	Council & TTC/RFO	Y	All
Guildhall Gateway Centre Round 2 HLF Project delivery	Manage, co-ordinate & deliver HLF supported project to time, budget and HLF conditions. This will include £400,000 loan from PWLB ¹¹	Summer 2019	Autumn 2021	TC/GM	Y	C1, 5, En 1, 2, Ec 1, 2, 3

⁹ note current arrangements reflect anticipated (estimated) commitments regarding, in particular, the cost of underwriting Guildhall Gateway Centre delivery and (some) public convenience costs. The extent to which revenue comes under pressure will be impacted by the sustainability of diverse income streams and the extent of discipline applied to spend. This pre-existed 'funding gap – immediate' above and (subject to the former being addressed, then comes back into play

¹⁰ Revised from original of May 2018

¹¹ Public Works Loan Board – previously authorised and applied for to receive in July 2020



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
Localism Project(s) (tbi) - Identify, develop and undertake one or more partnership based localism projects – ongoing brief ¹²	Identify & implement collaborative projects for the Town	ongoing	n/a	TC/GM	Project specific -as required	C1, Ec 2
Working together in the Interests of Tavistock (closely related to the above) – ongoing brief ^{13*}	Co-ordinated approach in delivery of local authority services/ activities. Currently reviewing the possibility of co-location with WDBC Also the longstanding 'working together in the interests of Tavistock' grouping	Ongoing (but reducing input from partners)	n/a	TC/GM	Y	All

¹² * indicates significantly limited capacity

¹³ For example partnering with Tavistock BID Co Ltd and WDBC regarding 'reopening' the Town.



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
Public Conveniences – assuming responsibility from WDBC	To take on Guildhall Public Conveniences	2020	2020	TC/GM	Y (in principle)	D1, D3, C5 Ec1,
NOTE amongst the following a) <i>Italics</i> indicates not active or not capable of being resourced fully in current circumstances: b) Removed from last year are <ul style="list-style-type: none">o staffing/job evaluation review (completed, report awaited for implementation¹⁴);o Open Spaces Sport and Recreation Plan;¹⁵o Policy Development Review (undertaken with new Council 2019)o Compilation of Minutes ready to bind;o Council Newsletter.						

¹⁴ No significant financial implications are expected

¹⁵ Identified in-year as most appropriately delivered by the LPA in consultation with TTC;



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
<i>Planning for the future – to review the approach to be taken in relation to a Neighbourhood Plan for the Town following adoption of the Joint Local Plan¹⁶ and completion of the review of the Conservation Area Management Plan¹⁷ and Appraisal</i>	To review next steps when the other documents are in place	Spring 2020 ¹⁸	2-5 years	Member led tba	Subject to review Autumn 2019	D1, D3, C1 En1, En6,
<i>Sustainability and the Environment</i>	To continue to develop good practice for the Council and help facilitate community led activity.	Autumn 2019	ongoing	Member led re community/ facilitation	Group yes Actions tbc	D3, C1, En En3-6
<i>WHS 'Key Centre status' for Tavistock</i>	Progress toward achieving Key Centre status for Tavistock	Heavily dependent on above (G'hall refers)	Subject to completion of tasks set out in adopted action plan	TC & WHS Team	Y	Ec1, 2, 3

¹⁶ Now complete

¹⁷ Now commenced

¹⁸ As indicated by the Local Planning Authority for completion of the Conservation Area Management Plan.



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
<i>Development and introduction of Property Maintenance Plan</i>	To identify the long term on-going costs associated with council properties + plan repairs	Under way	Re revised Autumn 2019	GM	Y	En 1,2, Ec4 5
Review Strategic Plan. NOTE this will follow on from and be necessitated by the work to be undertaken regarding the new financial imperative	To review and then introduce an overarching plan for the council for the next 4 year plan period.	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	TC	N	All
NEW develop a Medium Term Financial Strategy for the Council NOTE this will follow on from and be necessitated by the work to be undertaken regarding the new financial imperative		Winter 2020	Summer 2021	TC	Y	All
<i>Market Test exercise regarding Surveyor Services</i>	Review service and test market	On completion of outstanding legal issues	tbc	TC/ATTC	n/a	



Projects/Tasks	Target	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Completion Date	Responsible Officer	Approval Status (Committee Yes/No)	Link to Council Priorities
Accessibility regulations	Website regulatory compliance	April 2020	September 2020	ATTC	N/A	D5
<i>Updating of records and publication requirements</i>	To hold necessary records and documents in the recommended format	Under way	ongoing	ATTC/TC	N/A	Ec 4
<i>Long Leases (public)</i>	to rationalise public long leases in the interests of the Town	Sept 2015	Some complete. Subject to negotiations revised est early 2021 ¹⁹	TC	Y	Ec 4
Long leases (private)	to settle &/or rationalise private long leases	Sept 2015	Subject to negotiations & proceedings est'd 2019-22	TC	Y	Ec 4, Ec5, Ec6

¹⁹ Originally estimated 2020 but Courtgate arrangement extended in view of Coronavirus



²⁰In relation to the general office function

<p><i>Civic and special events (inc. Civic Service and Civic Ball)</i></p> <p>NOTE significantly impacted by Coronavirus</p>	<p>To deliver successful civic and related special events at minimal cost to Tavistock Town Council</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>ATTC</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>D4, Ec 4</p>
<p><i>Provide support to other departments for Goose Fair, Garden Festival and other civic & community events</i></p> <p>NOTE 2020 cancelled by Coronavirus</p>	<p>To help and support with the delivery of all events run by Tavistock Town Council</p>	<p>July to October annually (for Goose Fair) ad hoc for other events</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>ATTC (for office)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Ec 4</p>
<p><i>Initiate such organisational improvement initiatives as appropriate to improve capacity and compliance</i></p>	<p>Probity & compliance</p>	<p>August 2018</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>ATTC/TC/GM</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Ec4</p>

²⁰ Footnote 1 above refers



3 Consultation Plan

This section deals with any consultations planned by the service in the year 2020/21.

Description	Method & Style of Consultation to be employed	Date
NEW Financial Position of the Council (as/if needed)	To be determined – likely to be community wide	To be determined
Localism projects and/or working together in the interests of Tavistock	Consultation with service users/stakeholders and partners as/where necessary	To be determined as eligible projects are identified
Guildhall Gateway Centre	Commensurate with guidance of HLF & Bid documents	As required and as appropriate
WHS – Key Centre	As necessary to meet required standards	As necessitated by the project timeline(s)
Townscape Heritage Initiative – oversight of required consultation(s)	Principally now the evaluation process	Autumn 2020 (dependent on NLHF extension date)
Neighbourhood Plan	As required by the statutory process	As required
²¹ Continue the Annual Report /Council Newsletter	The Annual Report/Council Newsletter allows the Council to inform Tavistock’s residents.	Commenced 2017. Up to two publications per year
Capital Projects eg THI Public Realm	To be consistent with good practice and HLF requirements	In accordance with individual project plans

²¹ Note – unlikely to be capable of continuing to be delivered on a partnership basis



4 Performance Indicators

Description	Type (KPI, C or Local)	Responsible Officer	Actual 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Actual 2019-20	Target 2020-21	Comments
Prop's – No of Properties void for more than 3 months	L	TC	2	0	2	0	Awaiting wks dep't refurbishment
Staff (1) Average No of days sickness taken by staff	C	MT	12.88	7.5 max threshold	11.89	7.5 max threshold	Unacceptable performance. Now forms part of performance appraisal of managers (see below). Long term absence issues have been permanently addressed.
Staff (2) New (2019-20) Number of errors in recording sickness &/or leave per Dep't	C	MT	n/a (new)	n/a (new)	n/a (new) Est'd 60% failure rate	Yr 1 target = 1 occurrence per staff member managed Yr 2 target (2020-21)	Improved record keeping needed. 'Errors' include mistakes and omissions, failure to follow policy. Yr 2 target will be 0.
Staff % delivery against annual core training needs	C	MT	n/a	100%	See note 85% est'd	100%	The last period for which figures are available is 2017 at 68.5%. the figure shown is very much an estimate. An area that requires attention with regard to coordination (activity itself is significant). This is primarily an operational measure.



Description	Type (KPI, C or Local)	Responsible Officer	Actual 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Actual 2019-20	Target 2020-21	Comments
Councillors – % Members of Council who have attended 3 or more 1 st tier training events in yr 1 (post election) and 2 in each year thereafter.	L	TC	47% le 8/17 Councillors attended 2 or more events	100%	12/17 or 70.6%	100%	This represents an overall indicator of training take up/ commitment in relation to the local council sector by elected members
Finance % orders made requiring a purchase order per service area that have a PO	L	MT	94.89%	100%	93.63%	100%	Performance within 'acceptable' parameters but improvements can be made
Audit – % of Internal Audit recommendations implemented within 6 months of due date	L	MT	100%	100%	tbc	100%	Performance awaited pending last audit report. Note some audit issues may be picked up at particular junctures
Complaints – % formal complaints concluded within policy time	L	MT	100%	100%	100%	100%	1 formal complaint received
H&S – % of risk assessments/safe systems of work in place and reviewed within previous 24 months	C	MT	Not reported	100%	100%	100%	The last period for which full figures are available is 2017 at 93.25%. These were all reviewed by the HS lead in preparation for Covid 19



Description	Type (KPI, C or Local)	Responsible Officer	Actual 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Actual 2019-20	Target 2020-21	Comments
Note – MT = Management Team Non discretionary overtime = that which is not necessarily incurred as part of a project or schedule of activities agreed by Council eg Goose Fair or weekend litter picks. A = Annual Indicator							



5 Efficiency Gains

5.1 Efficiency Gains to be Achieved – 2020-21 ONWARDS

Description	Expected Efficiency Gains
<i>Describe measures, explain any calculations and indicate if "cashable".</i>	2020-21
<p>Council services are tasked with continuing to seek best value including maximising income and minimising expenditure across the authority. In addition substantial grants and equivalent contributions have been sourced to offset spend and improve the value offer the Council can make. The Council has also committed to increasing the precept to meet additional (such as public conveniences/Guildhall) revenue costs and introducing robust controls on financial management going forward.</p> <p>To assist with cost savings currently the staffing establishment is operating at $\frac{3}{4}$ capacity</p>	See service specific plan proposals



6 Risk Management

This section deals with organisational issues of business continuity and risk management.

Please also note that

- individual projects – such as the Guildhall Gateway Centre and Townscape Heritage Initiative have individual risk registers;
- there are a number of areas (please refer to footnotes) where severity and/or likelihood have increased within corporate risks.



Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				



NEW	<p>Risk details – the risk is that the Coronavirus Pandemic will lead to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -an avoidable incidence of the virus leading to adverse health impacts or, in the most serious scenario, death with attendant liability, loss and reputational damage; - a long term reduction in commercial income streams for the Council and/or substantial diminution in its commercial operations such as to jeopardise the viability of the current business model (which is predicated on the ability of commercial income to subsidise community activities); - losses of commercial income sufficient to jeopardise the ability of the Council to balance its budget in year in accordance with its legal obligations or (if of a lesser scale) substantially eroding the general and earmarked reserves to an extent that exposes the organisation to an unacceptable level of risk of future financial and/or service failure and attendant damage; - inability to meet the covenants, contracts and other obligations of the Council, or a fundamental reconfiguration of them out-with Council control, leading to financial failure and reputational damage; - loss of organisational credibility and associated reputational damage. 	5	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council’s General Safety Policy outlines roles and responsibilities in Council in relation to Health and Safety; - The Council employs a highly trained health and safety professional and is implementing Covid 19 risk assessments and safe systems of work; - Appropriate H&S Policies and Guidance on line, supported by free in-house training; - performance management reporting; - policies under review by Health and Safety lead; - Training events for staff; - Robust Service Planning and performance management system; - Appropriate levels of general reserve for normal circumstances; - Regular financial and other reporting to Council; - disciplined approach to reinstating reserves and only incurring funded costs; - commitment to consultation and 	1 st July 2020	2021 date tbd	Council, Clerk, MT
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Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
				engagement with stakeholders.			



<p>C1</p>	<p>Increasing Costs and Reductions in Income The risk is that costs will continue to increase, income will reduce and service demands will increase resulting in the Council not being able to meet its commitments, or having to cut significant service areas. This includes the possibility that government introduces precept capping</p> <p>In particular there is a risk that the Guildhall project as presently developing will substantially increase the financial liabilities faced by the Council over the long term and/or the capital cost envelope will be breached as a result of scheme changes &/or building price inflation/unforeseen works.</p> <p>The risk is that the Council will fail to secure efficiencies or manage spend adequately leading to a loss of future capacity to re-invest in the business/community services</p>	<p>4²²</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Mitigation: Service Planning and performance management system roll out; Improved reporting of financial details to Council and improved debtor management; Development of Management Plans in key areas such as Pannier Market and property maintenance Council decision to 'replace' reducing localisation tax each year Mitigation: disciplined approach to reinstating reserves and only incurring funded costs. Loan to be secured. Mitigation – mitigation strategy in place, additional grant funding sought. Control: Budget management and monthly reporting / escalation and management response. Revised operational areas oversight arrangements</p>	<p>Ongoing In place Started</p>	<p>Ongoing "" Ongoing Ongoing ongoing</p>	<p>TC/MT</p>
<p>C2</p>	<p>Infrastructure Maintenance</p>	<p>4²³</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Control: improving Asset Management Planning</p>	<p>started</p>	<p></p>	<p>MT</p>



Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
	The risk is that the Council will not prioritise spending/attract core funding so as to maintain standards of infrastructure long term, resulting in sub optimal asset condition and usage, increased exposure to claims, danger of injury and additional cost. There is also the risk that consequential impacts of infrastructure maintenance create liabilities that impact upon capacity and/or resources.			(includes management plans), including contracting arrangements Mitigation: Property maintenance plan Mitigation: Council Business Planning Mitigation – consultation with tenants/stakeholders throughout and taking of professional advice.		ongoing	GM (maint'ce plan)

²² The emerging increased costs and liabilities associated with the Guildhall project caused an increase in the weighting attached to likelihood two years ago. It continues to be the case that if the mitigation measures proposed to address the projected capital overspend do not succeed the case grows to revisit the weighting attaching to this risk. Note the wider Covid financial risk is captured by the prior new risk.

²³ Note In view of the above and the challenges faced in delivering major works schemes together with concentrated/limited staff resources the severity has been increased to 4 and likelihood continues to be under review.



C3	<p>Partnership Working Effectiveness The risk is that the changes required to enable the Council to work effectively and in an open and honest way with its Partners will not be identified and delivered resulting in partnership commitments not being achieved and sub-optimisation of service delivery. Accelerated timescales for integration/collaboration could risk effective joint working between partners and the importance of professional relationships based on mutual trust and respect needs to be recognised. The THI is a key project whose risks fall, in part, under this category including the challenges that might arise as between the role of Council as accountable body and as landlord.</p>	4 ²⁴	3	<p>Control: Key Partnerships under review through Service Plans Control: Performance management and monitoring The Council will engage and consult as widely as possible with partners on integration/different models of commissioning/delivering /co-working in public services prior to commencing any activity, and activity will be supported by business cases. A consensus will be sought amongst partners as to what the priorities are and the evidence base to support them to inform subsequent commissioning plans and arrangements. For the THI separate accounting and bespoke governance arrangements Regarding the Guildhall the delivery stage will necessitate significant collaboration. Mitigation – an experienced project manager is in place.</p>	Under way	ongoing	Council/ TC/GM
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Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
C4	<p>Resourcing Capacity and Capability/Corporate Leadership</p> <p>The risk is that the required corporate management arrangements to deliver the service improvements needed will not be established to enable effective delivery to be achieved.</p> <p>The risk is that the Council(lors) and staff lack the skills/capacity to deliver business as usual, organisational transformation and the modernisation agenda for local government resulting in customer and community needs not being met.</p>	4 ²⁵	4	<p>Control: Service Planning</p> <p>Control: Performance management and monitoring</p> <p>Mitigation: Member review of the Councils work programme.</p> <p>Mitigation: service planning and development of core training programmes.</p> <p>Succession planning and measures to co-ordinate resources in linked areas of activity.</p> <p>Control: Regular Performance meetings focusing on Performance Management</p> <p>Mitigation: Management Development Programme emerging.</p> <p>Mitigation: Training and networking opportunities to be provided to Councillors</p>	ongoing	ongoing	Council/MT

²⁵ This risk previously increased as a result of the demands of organisational transformation and the breadth and depth of organisational commitments in relation to available resources. Severity has been increased back to 4 but, as deficiencies in performance indicators elsewhere show there is now significant systemic risk attaching to staff capacity. Consequently Likelihood is shown as 'probable', albeit this may now be argued as between 'probable and 'certain'.



Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
C5	<p>Health and Safety of Employees, Customers and Service Users</p> <p>The risk is that some employees are exposed to hazardous situations, come into contact with potentially confrontational service users, or are lone working, potentially resulting in serious injuries or death.</p> <p>High risk areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer related services (in particular those related to the night time economy) Handling dangerous tools, equipment and chemicals Manual handling Liabilities arising from the Council's role as landowner, employer etc. Gaps in inspection regimes will lead to difficulties in defending civil claims, leading to financial exposure. There is also the possibility that staff in particular roles may face unsustainable demands. 	3 ²⁶	3	<p>Mitigation: Council's General Safety Policy outlines roles and responsibilities in Council in relation to HS.</p> <p>Mitigation: Appropriate H&S Policies and Guidance on line, supported by free in-house training</p> <p>Mitigation: performance management reporting</p> <p>Mitigation policies still under review by GM.</p> <p>Mitigation: Introduction of new/improved inspection processes as part of the property management plan</p> <p>Mitigation: Training events for staff</p> <p>Mitigation – new slips/trips/falls register</p> <p>Control – re-engagement of external H&S Advisor</p>	Commenced	Ongoing	MT/Council

²⁶ This has not changed solely because the higher level health risks of Covid 19 are captured in the new bespoke risk



Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
C6	Effectiveness of Communication (Corporate Image) The risk is that the systems and resources are not in place to manage bad and negative news which may damage the council's reputation amongst the public, employees and other stakeholders.	3 ²⁷	3	Mitigation: closer working with WDBC Comm's Team + press releases on major issues as appropriate Budget allocation made Offer from WDBC re support for Heritage related projects	Commenced	ongoing	MT

²⁷ Severity has been adjusted from 2 to 3 reflecting recent challenges and capacity impacts



Risk No	Risk Details	Risk Matrix		Action Details	Est'd Start Date	Est'd Finish Date	Responsible Officer
		Severity out of 5	Likelihood out of 5				
C7	<p>Performance and Risk Management</p> <p>The risk is that the Council will fail to improve its performance, compliance and risk management arrangements resulting in an inability to recognise and correct poor performance, breach of duty and/or a failure to demonstrate improvement or provide/sustain robust governance arrangements.</p> <p>The risk is that the Council will lose focus on effective performance, probity and risk management resulting in a decline in the quality of service delivery and/or failure to protect the Council and its resources.</p>	3	4 ²⁸	<p>Mitigation: service planning</p> <p>Mitigation: risk register</p> <p>Mitigation: Integrated reporting is developing at the corporate level and challenge at MT will improve</p> <p>Mitigation: Strategic Plan reviewed</p> <p>Mitigation: Training to be provided to MT and training opportunities made available to councillors</p>	Commenced	ongoing	MT/Council

²⁸ Likelihood was two years ago increased to 4 reflecting pressure on limited resources. Severity this year has been increased to 4.



<p>29C830</p>	<p>Safeguarding Resources & Capacity The risk is that the Council will fail to safeguard resources such as through -neglect or failure to put in place adequate financial planning/service funding arrangements; - financial overreach; - unrealistic projections leading to financial or other loss</p> <p>And/or the Council will fail to recognise the extent of demands placed upon the organisation to deliver major projects/initiatives alongside 'business as usual' leading to failures to deliver &/or demands on organisational capacity will not be adequately resourced leading to loss.</p>	<p>4³¹</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Mitigation: Financial regulations/ standing orders updated regularly re model templates Mitigation -Strategic Plan refers to financial probity Mitigation: Council insurance policy in place Mitigation: Annual external audit Internal Auditor appointed & Mitigation: regular review of financial probity Mitigation: External local authority specialist accountancy practice engaged Mitigation: Appropriate financial software packages in place Mitigation: Regular financial reporting to every Council meeting Mitigation: Disciplined approach to replenishing reserves and only committing to funded spend Mitigation: a realistic approach combined with appropriate project planning Mitigation: Appropriate phasing of activities linked to skills sets/resources Mitigation: buying in of necessary skills/resources Mitigation: increasing staffing and other resources where necessary.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Council/RFO</p>
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Risk Evaluation Table (used to complete Severity and Likelihood columns above)

	Consequences and financial impact					
Severity or impact on the Council	1 = None	2 = Minimal	3 = Moderate	4 = Major	5 = Catastrophic	
	Probability of Occurrence – Threats					
Likelihood	1 = Remote	2 = Unlikely	3 = Possible	4 = Probable	5 = Certain	

²⁹ The likelihood weighting of this risk has been increased from 2 to 4 in view of the current historically low level of reserves and unfunded components of the capital programme. It should also be recognised that there is a case for severity increasing from 3 to 4 given the known and anticipated draw on Council funding absent a rigorous plan for replenishment.

³⁰ Note – this risk now combines the previous year C8 (Capacity) and C9 Safeguarding Resources

³¹ The extent of the current funding 'gap' has led to an increase from 3 to 4 of projected severity.



Tavistock Town Council

Working for the local community
