

Item 8

QBR1: 2020 -2021



(Pages 12 – 47)

QBR1 June 2020

Goal 1 - Prosperous and Sustainable Economy



Highlights

- ✓ Speedy payment of grants to support local business
- ✓ 99.3% of invoices paid on time
- ✓ Good progress with Future High Street Fund Bid
- ✓ In depth Architectural Heritage Fund Viability study for the Globe in Torrington
- ✓ Safe re-opening of high streets

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Goal 2 – Safer, Stronger, Healthier Communities

Highlights

- ✓ Housing Options maintained high level of service during lockdown
 - ✓ Accommodation of 11 individuals in response to Covid
 - ✓ Temporary accommodation provided for all owed an accommodation duty (24-26 households accommodated during lockdown)
- X No progress on empty homes
- X Low numbers regarding the delivery of new homes/affordable homes

QBR1 June 2020

Goal 3 – Protecting & Enhancing our Quality Environment

Highlights

- ✓ Waste and recycling collections continued during lockdown
- ✓ Record recycling levels (57.3%) mainly due to increased collection of glass/cardboard



QBR1 June 2020

Goal 4 – Effective Customer Focused Council

Highlights

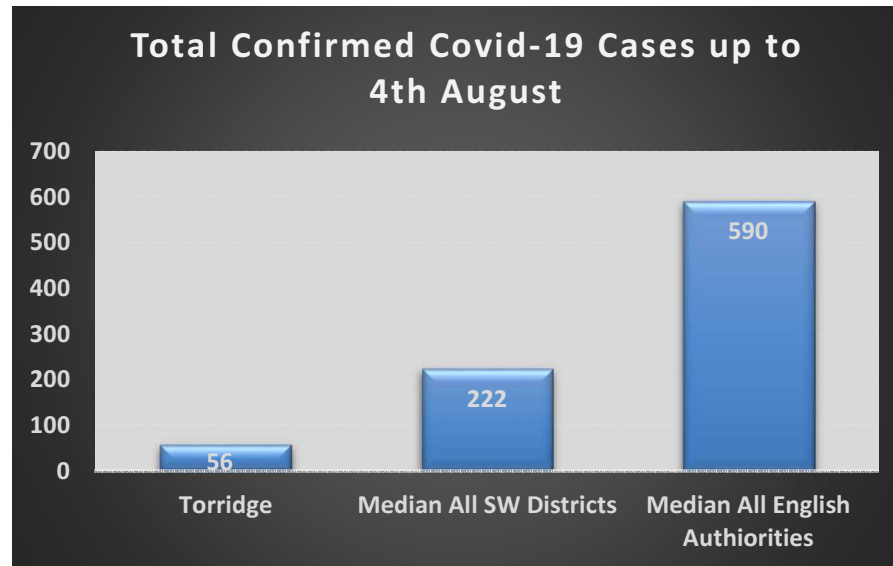
- ✓ Fast response from IT team enabled homeworking for an average of 120 officers per day, allowing for uninterrupted delivery of most services
 - ✓ Zoom technology rolled out to allow decision making Committees to re-convene
 - ✓ Improved turnaround time in planning applications
 - ✓ 53% increase in Environmental Protection Enforcement activity
 - ✓ Reduced sickness levels!
 - ✓ Staff redeployment during lockdown to help address the crisis
 - ✓ Good levels of cooperation between the Council and other agencies
- X Reduction in Council Tax and Business rate collection levels



Our district has escaped the worst impact of Covid-19, with confirmed cases well below the regional and national levels

9,000 people were furloughed in Torrige (35% of the workforce)

4,100 self employment income support claims (72% of total) in Torrige



Supporting our local economy

Torrige have paid grant support to 2,404 local businesses, totalling £26,240,000

Torrige ranked 42 out of 314 Council's in terms of speed of payment

Preparations made for Council Tax Hardship payments

£50,000 provided to support P&T Councils to support voluntary/community groups



Channel Shift – April, May, June 2020



36,000 calls answered (reduced by 13%)
28,000 calls made (increase of 3.5%)



272,000 emails received by Torridge (increase of 31%)
124,000 emails sent by Torridge (increase of 14%)
742,000 internal emails (increase of 30%)
1.5 Million blocked emails (increase of 72%)



580,000 hits on the Torridge website (increase of 29%)



150% increase in reach



93% increase in Tweet activity



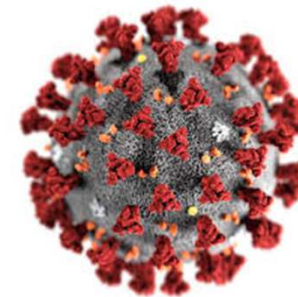
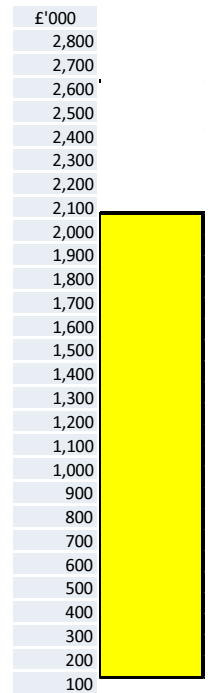
73% increase in Instagram followers

Quarter 1 – 2020/21 Projected Financial Outturn



Financial Impact of Covid-19 as reported to C&R

- Car parking Income
- Planning Income
- Building Control Income
- Land Charges & Licensing Income
- Commercial Income
- Short Term Investments
- Other lost Income
- Additional Expenditure
- Council Tax Income
- Business Rates
- Less Central Government Support



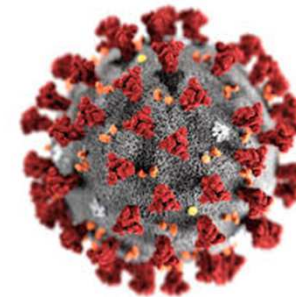
Quarter 1 – 2020/21 Projected Financial Outturn



Current Projected Financial Position

- Car parking Income loss
- Interest Receivable from Temp Investments
- Contractual issues arising from Covid-19
- Council Tax deficit (realisable in 21/22)
- Business Rates deficit (realisable in 21/22)
- Legal Fees
- Homelessness related pressures
- Contribution to Property Maintenance
- Support for apprentices and trainees
- Courts Costs & Covid-19 Grants to Parish & Town Councils
- Less funding for admin of Business Support grants
- Less Central Government Covid-19 Grants
- Less Government compensation for loss income (estimated)
- Planning Income **above** budget
- Transport Related savings

Deficit £'000
1,800
1,700
1,600
1,500
1,400
1,300
1,200
1,100
1,000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
Break Even



Quarter 1 – 2020/21 Projected Financial Outturn



Caveats and uncertainties



Future Lockdowns – reduced income from car parking, etc



The number of claims for Local Council Tax Support as furlough unwinds is not known; it can only be estimated at this juncture



Council is exposed where businesses fail and empty relief is awarded; for which no Central Government Grant funding is available.



Council decisions:

- Free Car Parking, and other support to business community
- Support for voluntary sector and wider community
- Reopening Leisure facilities

Quarter 1 – Other Financial Highlights



- Cash Balances include balance of Business Support Grants monies; not spent....circa £7m will be returned to Central Government from £35m allocation at the end of August 2020.
 - Cash flow forecast for Torridge shows circa £2-£3m balance as at March 2022.
- Capital expenditure in Quarter 1 delayed by Covid-19 lockdown; e.g. Contractors delayed getting on site for the homeless hostel on the High Street. Issues with accessing homes for Disabled Facilities Adaptation works; and Eco Flex Energy efficiency works.

Recommend to Community and Resources that:

- £110k be set aside to reserves to contribute towards the backlog of maintenance pressures
- £51k to set aside to reserve to allow the Council to continue to support the apprentices and trainees.