

**Teignbridge District Council**  
**Executive**  
**3 October 2023**  
**Part i**

**NEW HOMES BONUS AND DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK**

**Purpose of Report**

To provide Members with oversight on receipt of New Homes Bonus and engagement with Dartmoor National Park (DNP) and any potential redistribution.

**Recommendation(s)**

**The Executive Committee RESOLVES to:**

- (1) Retain all New Homes Bonus received with no onward distribution to Dartmoor National Park**

**Financial Implications**

The financial implications are contained within the report – specifically in section 3. The main implication is that any agreed payment to DNP is not budgeted for and would create a further budget pressure for which funding would need to be found or cuts in services. No payment is recommended by the Chief Finance Officer.

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**Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Government guidance is merely for the local authority to consult with the DNP about any redistribution.

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**Risk Assessment**

Risks are identified in section 5. There are no specific risks apart from the potential financial pressure identified above and detailed in section 3.

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## **Environmental/ Climate Change Implications**

There are no environmental or climate change impacts arising from this report.

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## **Report Author**

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## **Executive Member**

Councillor Richard Keeling – Executive Member for Resources

## **Appendices/Background Papers**

None

### **1. PURPOSE**

- To review the process for receiving New Homes Bonus (NHB) and any further redistribution to DNP.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1** Teignbridge District Council receive NHB as the principal housing authority. This covers the whole of the District area including the National Park. Government guidance only states that the District has to consult with the National Park over any possible redistribution. Historically we have only provided small payments in the past and nothing since Covid.
- 2.2** North Devon District Council have never provided Exmoor National Park with any funding from NHB. South Hams have not made a contribution recently but West Devon have paid a sum of £78,500 in 2023 in return for keeping a visitor centre open which is linked to their NHB receipts over a 3 year period.
- 2.3** DNP have contacted the Managing Director asking for us to consider making a payment to them but not for any particular reason or project.

### **3. FINANCIAL**

- 3.1** Traditionally officers have provided guidance in relation to whether a payment is thought to be appropriate however it is considered that Members should

revisit this process and provide advice on its use going forward. We do carry out significant work which benefits DNP totally funded by the Council. This includes a housing officer who works approximately two thirds of their time on housing issues within the National Park.

Since 1 April 2020 the housing enabling that has been spent and fully funded by Teignbridge District Council includes various assessments, surveys, consultation costs and capital grants and match funding (excluding officer costs above) with further commitments in 2023/24 and 2024/25 which amount to £158,000. This work has covered schemes in Widecombe in the Moor, Moretonhampstead, Ashburton, Dunsford, Christow and Manaton.

We have an economic development team that operates across the whole district, including our part of the DNP supporting business expansions and relocations.

We have heavily supported the Greater Dartmoor Leaf project which brought in more than £1.5 million grant funding for Teignbridge projects, many of which were within the National Park.

Of the first £160,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund that went towards the Green Business Grant in excess of £45,000 was spent on Dartmoor Projects.

Green infrastructure – maintenance and capital upgrades of play areas in the DNP fall to Teignbridge. This has required us to set up a separate capital fund to enable play area upgrades within the DNP area which amounts to £114,000.

Teignbridge provides and maintains an array of green space infrastructure within DNP without the support of DNP. This ranges from closed cemeteries (e.g. Widecombe in the Moor) to formal park space.

Tennis courts – we are currently in the process of refurbishing our tennis courts including the facilities in Buckfastleigh which will require use of Teignbridge capital funds.

We have adopted and maintained play areas within DNP including Minors Close and Barnsey Gardens at Ashburton and Market Close at Buckfastleigh.

Officer views are that the benefits attributed to the work carried out for the benefit of DNP which are met at no cost to DNP more than outweigh any share of additional distribution of NHB receipts.

- 3.2** The number of affordable homes that have been built in the National Park amount to 45 in total for the last 3 years. We used to receive NHB for a period of 6 years once a property had been built. This was reduced to 4 years and is now for only one year. It is calculated that for all homes built within the National Park within the District the income received via NHB would be approximately £56,000 which equates to just under £19,000 a year on average for these properties. All NHB is budgeted to support the activities that

we do – provide contributions to capital and support the officer costs of work done throughout the District including the DNP as described above and the ongoing costs of running services within the area.

- 3.3** There is no budgetary provision to make a payment to DNP and recognizing the work we do throughout the District and the significant budget gap we have it is not recommended that a payment is made to DNP. Any such payment would have to be found from cutting an alternative budget and would set a precedent for future years. We are aware of other budgetary pressures which need addressing including replacement of the refuse fleet and a significant increase in leasing costs which are not currently budgeted for in the medium term financial plan.

#### **4. LEGAL**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

#### **5. RISKS**

The only risk is of a financial nature being that there is no budget set for such a payment nor a requirement to make any payment at all. It is the view of the Chief Finance Officer that no payment should be made taking account of the other work we do and our mounting budgetary issues.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT**

There are no environmental/climate change implications.

#### **7. DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION (CONFIRMATION OF DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL-IN)**

10.00 a.m. on 10 October 2023