

Up To £18k Restart Grants Give South Hams and West Devon Businesses A Boost

From beauty salons and book shops to campsites and village halls, many local businesses could get a cash boost of up to £18,000. South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils open applications for the Government's new Restart Grant on 8 April to give practical financial support as our high streets prepare to reopen safely.

The Government's Restart Grant is a one-off payment for businesses that mainly offer in-person services to the general public and have been impacted by lockdown closures. It is available in two strands.

Non-essential retail businesses, such as gift stores or florists, are in Strand One and could receive a one-off grant up to £6,000 to help them to reopen safely from April 12 2021.

Hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses, covering everything from animal groomers to pubs and B&Bs, are covered by Strand Two. These business could receive up to £18,000 as they may open later under the plans laid out in the Government's roadmap or may be more restricted.

How much is the grant worth?

The amount eligible businesses will receive depends on their rateable value.

For non-essential retail businesses, the following thresholds apply:

Businesses with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 or under on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £2,667.

Businesses with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £4,000.

Businesses with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or over on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £6,000.

For hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gyms, the following thresholds apply:

Businesses with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 or under on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £8,000.

Businesses with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £12,000.

Businesses with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or over on 1 April 2021 will receive a payment of £18,000.

Who is eligible?

To qualify for a grant, your business must:

Be registered for Business Rates and have premises on the Council's rating list on 1 April 2021

Be trading on 1 April 2021 (carrying on a trade or profession, or buying and selling goods or services in order to generate turnover)

Not be in liquidation, dissolved, struck off or subject to a striking-off notice.

How to apply

To apply, go to the Councils' websites to fill in a simple form:

In the South Hams: www.southhams.gov.uk/businesscovid19

In West Devon: www.westdevon.gov.uk/covid19business

To keep the process quick and easy for you, and to make sure you are paid the grant as soon as possible, please have the following information ready to share, including:

Your original application number; this is your five digit reference number beginning RP/*****

Number of employees

A short description of your current business activity

Your business type and the main service you provide

The date your business was established

Your Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code – you can find this on the ONS website: https://onsdigital.github.io/dp-classification-tools/standard-industrial-classification/ONS_SIC_hierarchy_view.html

Your contact and bank details, including a copy of your most recent bank statement as proof of trading

When will the payment be made?

Grants will be paid direct to the account registered. If all the correct information is submitted, the team aim to make payments within three weeks of the initial application. Please be aware that the Restart Grant is taxable income and will need to be included in the tax return of your business.

The Restart Grant replaces the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) and is being paid alongside ongoing ARG grants. If your business is not eligible for a Restart Grant, please complete the updated ARG Grant form which is available from 8 April 2021 here:

South Hams: www.southhams.gov.uk/article/7387/Additional-Restrictions-Grant

West Devon: www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/7387/Additional-Restrictions-Grant

To stay up-to-date on business news and information, please sign up for the Councils' newsletter at: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSWDEVON/subscriber/new>

Continental-style Al Fresco Culture Coming To Our Towns this Summer

South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils invite local hospitality businesses to apply for outdoor seating licences so they can start trading as quickly as possible.

The current Government guidance states that hospitality businesses can use outdoor seating areas to re-open no earlier than 12 April 2021.

South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council know that many local businesses do not have their own space to be able to re-open under these social distancing guidelines.

To help get our hospitality businesses back up and running as quickly as possible and to give them a boost this summer, they can now apply for a temporary licence to use nearby Council-owned land or the pavement.

Businesses have two different routes to apply.

To find out more about using land that is considered the adopted highway, (such as the pavement, an adopted road or footpath), follow this link:

South Hams: www.southhams.gov.uk/pavementlicence

West Devon: www.westdevon.gov.uk/pavementlicence

To find out about using Council-owned land, (such as market places etc.), that is not considered the adopted highway, follow this link:

South Hams: www.southhams.gov.uk/useourland

West Devon: www.westdevon.gov.uk/useourland

Last year, many businesses took the opportunity to set up tables and chairs on council-owned land or pavements so they could safely serve customers. This included The Kings Arms, using Whitestrand in Salcombe, The Bull Inn, using The Rotherfold in Totnes, and Taylors Restaurant, using Bank Square in Tavistock.

The application process is straightforward and the Councils aim to determine them within 10 working days for pavement licences or five working days for applications to use Council-owned land. The licences for using Council-owned land will run until 31 October 2021 inclusive. Pavement licences will run until 30 September 2021. Both will be offered for one season only as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the responsibility of the business to comply with the requirements of the licences, which includes time limits and disposing of litter correctly.

The scheme is intended to help local hospitality businesses with existing business premises. It is not intended for new or mobile businesses. Where there is more demand for outside seating than space available, adjacent businesses will be given priority.

To find potential locations for outdoor seating in towns across the South Hams, and to apply: <https://southhams.gov.uk/article/7040/South-Hams-Available-Land>

To find potential locations for outdoor seating in towns across West Devon, and to apply: <https://westdevon.gov.uk/article/7041/West-Devon-Available-Land>

From 12 April - Respect, Protect and Shop

When the high streets reopen on 12 April, South Hams District Council is asking shoppers to show RESPECT - give each other space to shop and relax, PROTECT - yourself and others by wearing a facemask and SHOP - there is so much to offer locally why go anywhere else?

From 12 April, our local high streets in Salcombe, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth, Ivybridge and Totnes will be open for business. With so much on offer locally and so many businesses desperate to throw open their doors and welcome visitors back – the overriding message is let's all be sensible; respect and protect each other and enjoy the shopping experience.

Our towns across the South Hams have always offered something a bit different that keeps locals and visitors coming back. Now, as restrictions lift, you'll find some innovative solutions to help keep everyone safe so you can shop, eat and enjoy with confidence.

For example, in Salcombe, you'll find markers on the ground to help you keep a safe distance as you stroll along the streets. In Totnes, you'll discover beautiful planters greening up the town and acting as a natural traffic calming solution to make the High Street more pedestrian-friendly. The unique layout of Dartmouth, with a myriad of quiet back streets, parks and the large, open Embankment along the river, means the town is naturally suited to social distancing. It's the same story in Kingsbridge, where the wide streets make social distancing as you browse the unique independent stores a breeze. In Ivybridge, and all our towns in the South Hams, you'll discover that local traders have also taken all the necessary steps to keep customers and their staff safe. This includes offering hand sanitiser and restricting the number of people who can enter their premises at a time.

Look out for signs in the towns that are there to help remind people of the rules – it is easy for us all to forget what we're supposed to do when we start to relax and enjoy ourselves. For even more peace of mind, South Hams District Council's COVID Compliance Officers will also be regularly visiting our towns to chat to business owners and the public to help make sure everyone feels safe.

South Hams District Council's Environmental Health Team said: "The lockdown has been a long, painful experience for many of our businesses who would have desperately loved to have served their customers over the last 12 months, but due to the COVID-19 restrictions have been closed.

"We are all very much looking forward to kick-starting the recovery of our towns and our high streets. But here is a slight word of caution, we still need to be careful, so if we all show respect and protect each other, we can all have a lovely, safe shopping experience.

"We know that our excellent local food and drink is part of what makes the South Hams so special. From locally-made ice-cream and the perfect flat-white to pies or vegan pizza, there's something to suit every taste. So enjoying food and drink safely is also high on the agenda. Last summer, our towns embraced the al fresco experience. It was great to see people enjoying eating out comfortably and safely thanks to pop-up tables, chairs and benches. Once again, local venues will be able to make the best use of the outside spaces in our towns, so you can relax and enjoy a slice of continental al fresco living."

Respect: give each other space to shop and please stick to the social distance rules. Respect the COVID measures of individual shops and please be courteous to staff

Protect: everyone around you and yourself by wearing a face covering

Shop: your local town needs your help more than ever. So go on – treat yourself to a coffee or more and do your bit to help your local community

CVS - Latest Training

South Hams CVS The upcoming CVS sessions are now open for bookings:

11 May: 10 a.m to 12 p.m. – Charity Trustee Roles & Responsibilities

This session is for anyone new to being a charity trustee, considering the role or just wanting a reminder of what it's all about.

2 June: 10 a.m to 12 p.m. – Funding for Community Groups

Find out more about local funding opportunities and get top tips on funding bids

15 June: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – GDPR

This session looks at what voluntary organisations should be doing to make sure that they comply with GDPR and review what they have done so far.

These sessions are to be held via Zoom. Free to not for profit organisations and volunteers in the South Hams. Email events@southhamscvs.org.uk to book your place.

Respect, Protect, Enjoy - South Hams and West Devon

South Hams and West Devon are planning for a bumper spring and summer tourism season this year, as many people choose a staycation.

With outdoor leisure now open, the Councils are asking residents and day trippers to comply with three simple requests:

Please respect the places you visit

Protect each other by following social distancing

And enjoy experiencing our District and Borough

On 29 March the travel restrictions that were put in place to halt the spread of COVID-19 were lifted. Local residents are now able to travel for exercise and day trips.

While the government's guidance still states that there should be no overnight stays until 12 April, there will be a lot of people locally who will want to get out, breathe some lovely fresh air and take their exercise in our countryside and at our beaches.

Residents can also now use local tennis courts, multi-sport games areas, football pitches and skate parks.

The Council's Locality Officers, who you might see around this spring and summer, would like you to help them keep our lovely spaces pleasant and safe for everyone.

They have said: “We cannot wait to welcome visitors back to South Hams and West Devon, and we will be in our towns and beauty spots to ensure they are safe and welcoming spaces for visitors to enjoy.

“Our job is to be on the ground to spot any issues and to report them back to the councils. We are also here to support with guidance and advice. This year there will be more of us on the ground to keep our lovely spaces looking great.

“However, to keep our towns clean and safe can we ask you to also do your bit too. Please RESPECT the places you visit. Please take your litter home, if the bins are full please do not leave the litter beside the bins, park sensibly when we are busy and be mindful of local residents.

“Please also remember that we are still in a pandemic and much of the tourism industry is still closed for business. Until 12 April, you may not be able to get lunch or find activities to do in your chosen location, so why not try something different, pack a picnic, plan a long walk or visit one of our outdoor sports areas instead of visiting the well-known spots.

“We think that it is also important that we PROTECT each other and continue to follow the social distancing rules. The rules are in the process of being relaxed, along with the Government’s roadmap to recovery, so it is important that while we are all really excited to get back to some normality and enjoy outside activities, that we do not forget the risks and do not do things before the roadmap allows.

“Thirdly we want you to enjoy South Hams and West Devon, and everything that it has to offer, so please help us to keep our lovely communities, villages, beaches, countryside and towns looking at their very best for everyone to enjoy.”

Follaton House To Become New Vaccination Centre

South Hams District Council office headquarters, Follaton House, will be used by the South Dartmoor and Totnes and South Hams Primary Care Networks as a COVID vaccination centre from Wednesday 7 April.

The Council has supported the community throughout the COVID pandemic and with Follaton House being located on the outskirts of Totnes, with an easily accessible car park, they were happy to offer their offices as a community vaccine hub.

The new centre will welcome its first patients from Wednesday 7 April and is planned to operate over the summer period. Each day the new site is in operation double the vaccinations are expected to be carried out for local residents.

A spokesperson for South Hams District Council, said: “We’re absolutely delighted to be able to be offer our office space to our local team of GP surgeries so that more of our community are able to get their COVID vaccines as quickly as possible. One of our top priorities is the health and wellbeing of our residents, so for us it was an easy decision to make.

“As a Council our staff have had the opportunity to work flexibly, from home or the office, as part of an agile working strategy for a number of years. As a result of the strategy, the majority of staff were able to carry out their normal work from home.

“When the pandemic arrived, we simply asked all our staff and Members to work from home, using video conferencing for communicating and Council meetings. This temporary unused office space is now being put to excellent use with the vaccination centre.

“Being on the edge of Totnes, we’re well placed for quick access to other towns with easy, level parking. The building’s ground floor has separate rooms just off the reception, so the more frail or elderly can be treated quickly and easily. While the upstairs office space has plenty of room for the vaccination stations, before returning via a one-way system back to the car park, without having to meet another person. There’s plenty of room to move around safely, which is what makes Follaton House a perfect setting for a vaccination centre.”

Two Primary Care Networks have been involved in making the vaccination centre a reality. One being the South Dartmoor and Totnes Primary Care Network, which includes GP surgeries from, Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Catherine House, Leatside and South Brent. Along with the South Hams Primary Care Network which includes surgeries from Chillington, Dartmouth, Modbury, Norton Brook and Redfern.

Patients at these surgeries will be offered vaccinations at Follaton House that will allow the surgeries to double their current capacity.

Initially the site will be for patients who are due their second dose and patients at these surgeries will be contacted to inform them of the change in their location.

Martin Randall, Lead Manager, South Dartmoor & South Hams COVID Vaccination Service, said: “We are very excited about moving to Follaton House, which will enable us to double our capacity per day as we move to second phase of the programme. This will allow us to provide first doses for our younger population whilst administering second doses for our earlier cohorts. The site is located more centrally and will reduce travelling times for those who live in the south of the area.

“We are very appreciative of the support we have received from the Diocese of Plymouth and our incredible group of volunteers during the first phase of the campaign. We now look forward to our partnership with South Hams District Council as we move forward with this unprecedented vaccination programme.”

The Local Vaccination Service will move from St Boniface, Buckfast, to Follaton House, Totnes, from Wednesday 7 April and patients will be contacted by their practice to confirm this when providing an appointment for their second appointment.

Funding for Smaller Coastal Communities and Tourism Centres

Following the decision at Council on 25th March to approve a fund of £100,000 for improving the built / natural environment to deliver local economic improvements within our smaller coastal communities and tourism centres, I just wanted to let you all know that we will provide Members with more details in the next two weeks.

The additional recommendation was included as a result of the Council being awarded specific Welcome Back Funding from the Government. Similar to the Re-opening High Streets Safely grant, this funding is European funding (ERDF) and therefore has numerous strict criteria that must be satisfied before we can claim the funds.

As the Leader stated in Council, we were only notified of our award on 23 March and as of today the criteria have yet to be fully defined. There are calls in place with MHCLG next week to discuss this. Once officers have a clear position, we will then design our scheme for bids from our communities to access this funding. I would anticipate having a scheme open by the end of April at the very latest.

Fusion update

Fusion Leisure centres are gearing up to Spring Back into action when local restrictions lift. In line with the government roadmap, outdoor group exercise classes will restart at Ivybridge Leisure Centre on Monday 29 March.

From 12 April, swim schools, gyms and swimming for individual and family exercise will also commence. Fusion Lifestyle hopes to be able to reopen indoor groups exercise, sports halls and other activities in May, as stated in the Government's Roadmap to recovery.

Fusion has planned a campaign on social media to encourage people back to use the facilities, which we will support. Please look out for these posts and share with your communities.

SHCVS Training - GDPR

Due to the importance and popularity of their GDPR training, SHCVS is offering an additional date. Please state your preferred date when booking.

6 May OR 15 June 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. GDPR

A three hour session, plus a little preparation

This session looks at what voluntary organisations should be doing to make sure that they comply with GDPR and review what they have done so far. It includes questions around marketing and fundraising – and the issue of consent. It is suitable for those with no previous experience, as well as those wanting to catch up or refresh their knowledge and includes

What is Data Protection?

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Finding the correct legal basis for your use of people's data

The six Data Protection principles

How to provide people with the right information and options

Avoiding the kind of mistakes that generate complaints

Plus opportunity to submit your individual questions

Session to be held via ZOOM, Free to not for profit organisations and volunteers in the South Hams. Email events@southhamscvs.org.uk to book your place, when booking please state your organisation.

Residents and visitors urged to ‘find a bin or take it home’ in new litter campaign.

Devon’s residents and visitors are being urged to ‘find a bin or take it home’ in a new county-wide anti-littering campaign.

As lockdown eases and the warmer months beckon, the multi-agency partnership Clean Devon wants to encourage everyone to take more responsibility for their rubbish whilst enjoying the beautiful moors, beaches, wildlife, countryside, towns and villages.

Littering is an increasing burden on society, both financially and environmentally and the partnership aims to improve the issue through preventing, detecting and deterring this type of behaviour in Devon.

Principal Waste Manager from Devon County Council and Clean Devon Co-ordinator, Annette Dentith, says: "One of our key priorities is to protect and enhance Devon's wonderful environment. Local authorities do their best to keep bins emptied however with increased visitors over the warmer months we must take responsibility for our own rubbish. If bins are full, bring your own bag and dispose of it when you return home. Please don't leave it next to an already full bin as this contributes to littering and is considered fly-tipping for which you could be fined. It's really important we protect our beautiful county, not only for ourselves but for future generations."

Ann Maidment, Regional Director for the Country Land & Business Association in the South West says: “Whilst out enjoying what Devon has to offer, we would urge the public to not leave their litter behind but to also stick to footpaths, bridleways and respect other users of the rights of way.

"The spirit of the Countryside Code is generally adhered to by the majority of people, but there are a few worrying trends that are either based on anti-social behaviour or a lack of awareness of the working countryside.

"Accessing the fresh air and getting close to nature have widely researched health and wellbeing benefits, but visitors need to act responsibly in order to protect our natural environment and its inhabitants. Take home your memories and your litter.”

For additional advice and facts please visit Clean Devon's website.

Keep your eyes peeled for the Clean Devon campaign which is due to be launched on social media by the end of this week. Promotional material will also be distributed to businesses in Devon with the aim to reach visitors and encourage the same respectful behaviour towards our environment.

OUTDOOR GROUP EXERCISE CLASSES TO KICK OFF PHASED RE-OPENINGS IN WEST DEVON AND SOUTH HAMS ON 29th MARCH

Fusion Lifestyle, West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council are pleased to announce that in line with the government roadmap, outdoor group exercise classes will restart at Ivybridge Leisure Centre and Meadowlands Leisure Centre on Monday 29th March.

The outdoor exercise programme will see some of Fusion's most popular group classes brought into the fresh air, giving fitness fans the chance to get back to the classes they love, in a safe and secure way.

In line with the latest government guidelines, Fusion Lifestyle plan a phased reopening from 12th April across all South Hams and West Devon centres, including the facilities at Ivybridge Leisure Centre, Quayside, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth, Meadowlands, Parklands and Totnes Pavilion.

From 12th April swim schools, gyms and swimming for individual and family exercise will also commence. Fusion Lifestyle hopes to be able to reopen indoor groups exercise, sports halls and other activities in May, as stated in the Government's Roadmap to recovery.

Those planning to visit will be required to book and pay online, minimising contact required at the centre and allowing for the track and trace process to be implemented. Centre users will be asked to arrive ready to exercise and to be beach ready. These measures, combined with meticulous cleaning routines, are designed to keep customers safe and offer complete confidence to use the facilities and classes.

Earlier in the year, the Government announced a £100 million fund in support of the recovery of publicly owned leisure centres. Out of this fund, South Hams District and West Devon Borough Council have been awarded £170,985 (SH) and £85,493 (WD).

The decision to pass this funding over to Fusion in addition to the revenue support that both Councils have already provided, has now been agreed by South Hams Council and will be discussed by West Devon in the coming days.

Sport England's Chief Executive, Tim Hollingsworth, has said:

“Leisure facilities have a vital role to play in supporting the health of the nation and in particular in serving our more disadvantaged communities.

“They have been hit especially hard over the past year, so this investment is crucial and will help thousands to reopen when it becomes possible to do so – supporting the recovery and helping people get back to the activity they have badly missed.

“Sport England has worked at pace to enable the distribution of the investment to happen as quickly as possible and remains committed to doing what we can to continue to support this crucial part of our sector.

Anthony Cawley, Director of Operations at Fusion said, “We are really excited we will be able to start welcoming the local community back to our centres, starting with outdoor activities from 29th March. We know how important our leisure facilities for the health and wellbeing of the local community so we'll be doing our best to offer the choice of as many outdoor options as we can while we are waiting to open more facilities.”

Chris Brook, South Hams and West Devon's Director of Place said “We're delighted that our leisure facilities will start to reopen in March, and we hope that from the 12 April many

indoor facilities will be open to individuals and families, followed by all indoor activities before the summer.

“Across both areas we have some fantastic facilities including, large family swimming pools, a brand new one with a retractable roof and in other centres renewed and refurbished gyms and sports halls.

“These centres are going to be vitally important to our local communities as they emerge from lockdown, both in terms of mental and physical health. And with many people choosing a staycation these centres could be very busy this summer.”

Bookings can be made up to seven days in advance, via download of the Fusion Lifestyle app or visit www.fusion-lifestyle.com to register and use the booking facility.

Call for Remote Meetings to continue

Council Leader Judy Pearce has written a letter to Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg to call for the provision for council meetings to continue remotely beyond 6 May, in line with the Prime Minister’s Roadmap Out of Lockdown.

Community Renewal Fund & Levelling Up Fund

The Government prospectus on the Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Fund came out this week.

The Community Renewal Fund is a revenue bid, aimed at investment in:

skills

local business

communities and place

supporting people into employment.

There is a maximum bid amount of £3m per county and bids will initially be prioritised by DCC for the County area. The fund identifies 100 top places across the country and South Hams is unfortunately not included.

The Levelling Up Fund is a capital bid of up to £20m, with one bid per MP constituency area. The priorities for the fund are; transport investments, regeneration and town centre investment and cultural investment.

Again, prioritisation of areas was undertaken, putting areas in either category 1, 2 or 3, with 1 highest and 3 lowest. South Hams is in category 3.

Both the Levelling Up and Community Renewal Funds need to contribute towards the UK target of net zero by 2050. There are real opportunities within these funds for our area and officers will be working on both as a priority.

South Hams Executive March 11th 2021

Plymouth and South Devon Freezone

Urgent Item Briefing Paper

Recommendations:

That the Executive:

1) notes the briefing note as set out below;

2) agrees that the Council works with MHCLG and partner organisations to work up the detail

of the Plymouth and South Devon Freezone;

3) notes that once the detail of the Plymouth and South Devon Freezone has been finalised the

Director of Place and Enterprise will bring a further report seeking a formal decision whether to proceed or not.

Background

Freeports are one of the key national economic development and job creation policies of the UK

over the next ten years. There are few alternatives and we need to embrace this policy and make it

work for us.

All members will be aware from the information circulated in the member's bulletin on the 5th

February that we supported a joint non-binding bid to MHCLG for Freeport status. The bid included

three sites, Oceansgate in Plymouth, Langage and Sherford Business Park in South Hams. 22 bids

were received.

As part of the budget announcement on 3 March 2021, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced

that our bid had been selected as one of the 8 potential Freeport sites, above some very strong competition. In view of the need to progress work on the details of the proposals quickly, this item

is being brought to the Executive as an urgent item.

The Bid

The bid was able to draw on the success and credibility of the Joint Local Plan (JLP), cross boundary

working and strong governance that it has created. By proposing the use of pre-identified employment and growth sites from JLP, we are able to use national policy to facilitate the delivery of

our local policy agenda: Delivering the JLP, inclusive growth and responding to the climate emergency (decarbonising maritime innovation and delivery, getting cargo direct via short sea rather

than road, local job creation).

The bid anchors Princess Yachts and Babcock in the region both of whom are keen to expand into

Sherford/Langage, and onshore elements of the supply chain and manufacturing process. Crucially it

also provides transport gap funding which has held Langage in particular, back for so long.

Next steps

There is a great deal of due diligence work to do and it starts with governance arrangements before

addressing the particulars of business rate retention and the interface with the transport authority

(DCC) and PCC as partner organisations. In the coming weeks MHCLG will appoint a lead officer to

our bid team, with the aim of working through the many aspects of the project, preliminary business

case and ultimately full business case.

V1.0

Accordingly, a report will be brought to Executive and Council setting out the proposition in full,

including governance (board structure), opportunities, employment impact, financial impact and

business rate position for consideration when enough detail is known so that formal decisions can

be taken. In the meantime, senior officers will work up the details of these arrangements with the

identified partner organisations and MHCLG.

The bid identified this due diligence phase and money has been secured within it to fund both the

team and external advice on specific topics, such as HMRC tax areas and customs advice.

The whole

process, subject to member approval, is anticipated to take around seven months or more.

Conclusions

This is an opportunity to shape national policy around our own objectives, secure up to £17m of

infrastructure funding, drive inward investment and exceed our already ambitious JLP delivery

targets for employment sites, jobs and the economy. The decision to further commit once the detail

of the Plymouth and South Devon Freezone has been finalised will be subject to a further report.

Council Tug Has a Shiny New Refit

Dartmouth Lower Ferry's Hauley VI has had a top to toe refit to one of its three tugboats.

Owners, South Hams District Council, funded the refit and removed the tug from the water for a complete renovation in April 2020 during the start of the national lockdown.

The engine received a complete rebuild with treatment for corrosion in the wheelhouse and replacement of flooring steelwork. The entire deck receiving an overhaul from top to bottom, with beams, planks and other components all being refitted. Although, the hull and keel were in good overall condition; large areas were resealed to make them watertight and areas were strengthened throughout to ensure all construction standards were met.

A complete electrical rewire was carried out and old electronic equipment was replaced with new. A fuel tank, compatible with new regulations, was installed to allow access to the forward towing point. If that wasn't enough, a replacement rudder, propeller and shaft were also fitted. With the external contractors works completed, the vessel was then completely repainted and prepared for launching.

Following successful sea trials and a MCA inspection, Hauley VI was passed fit for service on 11 January 2021. Hauley VI is now up to current standards and ready for service.

Cllr Hilary Bastone, South Hams District Council's Executive Member for Assets, said: "I'm delighted that we've funded the works needed for the Hauley VI. This will give the tug a new lease of life for many years to come.

"The Dartmouth Lower Ferry is not only an essential part of life for our residents to go about their daily lives, but it's also an iconic part of our local history. It has been transporting vehicles and foot passengers between Dartmouth and Kingswear since the 1700s. It's also a real tourist attraction and draws visitors far and wide to experience the delights of the River Dart and its nearby towns and villages."

The ferry is operated using a floating platform pushed along by a tug and the river crossing offers stunning views of the surrounding area and the open sea.

South Hams District Council's Ward Member for Dartmouth and East Dart, Cllr Jonathan Hawkins, said: "I would like to thank all the staff and crews for the amazing job they do serving our two communities, particularly during the past 12 months."

Cllr Rosemary Rowe, South Hams District Council's Ward Member for Dartmouth and East Dart, said: "I am really pleased that the work has been completed to such a high standard. We now look forward to a busy summer season ahead."

To find out more about the Lower Ferry and its timetable, go to:
www.southhams.gov.uk/dartmouthlowerferry

How Much Council Tax South Hams Residents Will Pay Is Confirmed

An average increase of 5% (£99.73) on the total average bill of £1,990 (for a Band D property) from last year is confirmed as South Hams residents prepare to receive their Council Tax bills for 2021/22 this week.

When Council Tax bills land on doorsteps across the South Hams this week, householders will discover that the cost has gone up to an average £2,090.55 a year for a Band D household – an increase of £99.73 for the year (5.01%).

When you receive your Council Tax bill, it will have the logo of South Hams District Council on the top. This is because the District Council is responsible for billing and collecting the Council Tax on behalf of a number of other statutory bodies.

Although the District Council sends out the Council Tax bill, the vast majority of the Council Tax income collected is passed onto Devon County Council, the Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and local Town and Parish Councils, to pay for the local services that they all provide.

The largest part of the Council Tax bill that residents pay will go to Devon County Council to pay for the vital services that they provide including elderly care (social care costs), education and schools, children's services, roads (including potholes) and transport. Devon County Council have increased their share of the Council Tax bill by 4.99%, with 1.99% being for general services and 3% dedicated solely to adult social care costs. The Council Tax increase set by Devon County Council means an increase in the Council Tax bill of £71.82 (4.99%) for South Hams residents. As a result, a Band D household within Devon will pay £1,511.28 to Devon County Council in 2021/22.

Earlier in February, South Hams District Council agreed to increase its share of the Council Tax bill by £5 to £175.42 for a Band D household – an increase of 2.93%. Therefore of an average Band D Council Tax bill of £2,090.55, only 8% (£175.42) goes to South Hams District Council to provide local services such as refuse collection and recycling, planning, environmental health, benefits and housing.

The Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner has increased its share of the Council Tax bill by 6.73% from £221.64 to £236.56 for a Band D property – an increase of £14.92 for the year.

In addition, the Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue service has increased its share of the Council Tax bill by 1.99% from £88.24 to £90 for a Band D property – an increase of £1.76 for the year.

On average, the amount of the Council Tax bill which has been set by Town and Parish Councils will increase by £6.23 per year. The actual amount will differ from Parish to Parish. Each individual Town or Parish Council sets their own element of the council tax bill.

Cllr Judy Pearce, Leader of South Hams District Council, said: “We know that any increase is going to hit people hard this year, but it is critical that our frontline services continue and that residents and businesses get the help and support they need and deserve. Many people think that all their Council Tax goes to the District Council to cover the services we provide. In reality, our charge is only 8% of the overall bill (£175.42 a year). That pays for essential services like waste and recycling collections. The rest of your Council Tax bill is split between the other statutory bodies to cover everything from caring for our elderly and children’s services, to must-have policing and fire and rescue services and local parish and town needs.

“We ask residents, if you can, please continue to make your Council Tax payments in the usual way as this is paying for vital services. However, if you are struggling, please be aware that we may be able to help. There are measures, such as the Hardship Fund for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, to support financially vulnerable people and households.

“Our officers can support residents with completing a welfare benefit check to ensure they receive all they are entitled to. Please contact us via the website or through our Customer Support Team on 01803 861234.”

South Hams District Council fully recognise the economic problems that many households will be experiencing as a result of the Coronavirus emergency, and they understand that some residents will find it difficult to meet Council Tax payments.

That is why they are committed to doing everything they can to support residents at this very difficult time. They are urging residents to find out what support is on offer if they are having difficulties with payments.

If you are worried about paying for your Council Tax, you can find out more information here:

www.southhams.gov.uk/article/5438/Worried-about-Paying

Find out about reductions (discounts and exemptions) here:

www.southhams.gov.uk/counciltaxdiscount

On a low income? Find out more here:

www.southhams.gov.uk/article/6643/Low-Income-Council-Tax-Reduction

The Government has also just published further details on the support scheme for the self-employed for those that have lost income due to Coronavirus. HMRC will contact those that are eligible for the scheme and invite them to apply online.