

Public Document Pack

Mid Devon District Council

Homes Policy Development Group

Tuesday, 10 November 2020 at 2.15 pm
Remote meeting

Next meeting
Tuesday, 19 January 2021 at 2.15 pm

Important - this meeting will be conducted and recorded by Zoom only. Please do not attend Phoenix House. The attached Protocol for Remote Meetings explains how this will work.

To join the Zoom Meeting please use the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/96455071905?pwd=RDNuazZPdzR4bkILYTYyNHJURnhPdzo9>

Meeting ID: 964 5507 1905
Passcode: 836581

One tap mobile

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Meeting ID: 964 5507 1905
Passcode: 836581

Membership

Cllr R Dolley (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs E M Andrews

Cllr J Cairney

Cllr S J Clist

Cllr D R Coren

Cllr L J Cruwys

Cllr C J Eginton

Cllr S J Penny

Cllr Mrs C P Daw

AGENDA

Members are reminded of the need to make declarations of interest prior to any discussion which may take place

- 1 **Apologies and Substitute Members**
To receive any apologies for absence and notice of appointment of substitutes.
- 2 **Protocol for remote meetings** *(Pages 5 - 10)*
Group to note the protocol for remote meetings.
- 3 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 4 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**
Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.
- 5 **Minutes** *(Pages 11 - 20)*
Members to consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 15 September 2020.
- 6 **Chairman's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 7 **Performance and Risk Report** *(Pages 21 - 32)*
To receive a report from the Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security providing Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2020/21 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.
- 8 **Financial Monitoring**
To receive a verbal update on financial monitoring from the Group Manager for Finance.
- 9 **Draft 2021/2022 General Fund and Capital Budgets** *(Pages 33 - 70)*
To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) considering the initial draft Budget and options for the Council to set a balanced budget and agree a future strategy for further budget reductions for 2022/2023 onwards.
- 10 **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2021/2022 and onwards** *(Pages 71 - 84)*
To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting proposals for the first draft of the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/2022 and the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021 to 2026.

- 11 **Community Led Housing Fund Grant Policy and Project Group**
(Pages 85 - 114)
To receive a report from the Group Manager for Housing and Forward Planning Team Leader. The Homes PDG set up the Community Housing Fund Project Group in 2018 to consider requests made to the Council for financial support from the Community Housing Fund. There is a need to amend the membership of the Community Housing Fund Project Group to reflect that the Council's housing enabling role has been moved from the Housing Service to the Planning Service.
- 12 **Housing Policy Framework Report** (Pages 115 - 122)
To receive a report from the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services providing an update to Members of the Policy Development Group on plans to deliver a shared policy framework bringing together policies owned and operated by the Building and Housing Services. The new arrangements relating to policy should ensure that it is more closely aligned to the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing and deliver a greater consistency in approach.
- 13 **Housing Service Delivery Report** (Pages 123 - 130)
To receive a report from the Group Manager for Housing Services and the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services providing an update to Members on enforcement and other activity undertaken by Officers in the Housing Service. Members are asked to comment on the format and reporting used in the report because changes have been made to the way in which the data is collected and presented.
- 14 **Housing Tenant Census Report** (Pages 131 - 136)
To receive a report from the Group Manager for Housing Services and the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services providing an update to Members of the Homes Policy Development Group on feedback from the tenant census which was recently undertaken in line with the specific expectations of the regulatory framework. The results of the survey will inform the direction of travel with regard to the future review of the strategy and policy relating to tenant involvement; and also proposals relating to internal changes to the structure of the landlord service.
- 15 **Identification of items for the next meeting**
Members are asked to note that the following items are already identified in the work programme for the next meeting:
- Performance and Risk
 - Financial Monitoring
 - Revised draft General Fund Budget
 - Revised draft HRA Budget
 - Housing Enabling (S106 – Housing Need Allocation – Exception sites)
 - HRA Asset Management Strategy – update
 - Grass Verges Task and Finish Group update

Note: This item is limited to 10 minutes. There should be no discussion on the items raised.

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive
Monday, 2 November 2020

Covid-19 and meetings

The Council will be holding some meetings in the next few weeks, but these will not be in person at Phoenix House until the Covid-19 crisis eases. Instead, the meetings will be held remotely via Zoom and you will be able to join these meetings via the internet. Please see the instructions on each agenda and read the Protocol on Remote Meetings before you join.

If you want to ask a question or speak, email your full name to Committee@middevon.gov.uk by **no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting**. This will ensure that your name is on the list to speak and will help us ensure that you are not missed – as you can imagine, it is easier to see and manage public speaking when everyone is physically present in the same room. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.

If you require any further information, please contact Sarah Lees on:
slees@middevon.gov.uk

Mid Devon District Council - Remote Meetings Protocol

1. Introduction

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations permit remote attendance in Local Authority meetings.

Remote attendance is permitted as long as certain conditions are satisfied. These include that the Member is able to hear and be heard by the other Members in attendance. Also, being able to hear and be heard by any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting (in line with the public participation scheme). A visual solution is preferred, but audio is sufficient.

This also relates to members of the public attending the meeting also being heard. The regulations are clear that a meeting is not limited to those present in the same place, but includes electronic, digital or virtual locations (internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers).

2. Zoom

Zoom is the system the Council will be using for the time-being to host remote / virtual meetings. It has functionality for audio, video, and screen sharing and you do not need to be a member of the Council or have a Zoom account to join a Zoom meeting.

3. Access to documents

Member Services will publish the agenda and reports for committee meetings on the Council's website in line with usual practice. Paper copies of agendas will only be made available to those who have previously requested this and also the Chair of a virtual meeting.

If any other Member wishes to have a paper copy, they must notify the Member Services before the agenda is published, so they can arrange to post directly – it may take longer to organise printing, so as much notice as possible is appreciated. Printed copies will not be available for inspection at the Council's offices and this requirement was removed by the Regulations.

4. Setting up the Meeting

This will be done by Member Services. They will send a meeting request via Outlook which will appear in Members' Outlook calendar. Members will receive a URL link to click on to join the meeting.

5. Public Access

Members of the public will be able to use a weblink and standard internet browser. This will be displayed on the front of the agenda.

6. Joining the Meeting

Councillors must join the meeting early (i.e. at least five minutes before the scheduled start time) in order to avoid disrupting or delaying the meeting. Councillors should remember that they may be visible and heard by others, including the public, during this time.

7. Starting the Meeting

At the start of the meeting, the Member Services Officer will check all required attendees are present (viewing the participant list) and that there is a quorum. If there is no quorum, the meeting will be adjourned. This applies if, during the meeting, it becomes inquorate for whatever reason.

The Chair will remind all Members, Officers and the Public that **all microphones will be automatically muted**, unless and until they are speaking. This prevents background noise, coughing etc. which is intrusive and disruptive during the meeting. The Hosting Officer will enforce this and will be able to turn off participant mics when they are not in use. Members would then need to turn their microphones back on when they wish to speak.

8. Public Participation

Participation by members of the public will continue in line with the Council's current arrangements as far as is practicable. However, to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly and that no member of the public is missed, all those who wish to speak must register **by 4pm on the day before the meeting**. They should email their full name to Committee@middevon.gov.uk. If they wish to circulate their question in advance, that would be helpful.

At public question time, the Chair will invite the public by name to speak at the appropriate time. At that point, all public microphones will be enabled. This means that, to avoid private conversations being overheard, no member of the public should speak until it is their turn and they should then refrain from speaking until the end of public question time, when all microphones will be muted again. In the normal way, the public should state their full name, the agenda item they wish to speak to **before** they proceed with their question.

Unless they have registered, a member of the public will not be called to speak.

If a member of the public wishes to ask a question but cannot attend the meeting for whatever reason, there is nothing to prevent them from emailing members of the Committee with their question, views or concern in advance. However, if they do so, it would be helpful if a copy could be sent to Committee@middevon.gov.uk as well.

9. Declaration of Interests

Councillors should declare their interests in the usual way. A councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest is required to leave the room. For remote meetings, this means that they will be moved to a break-out room for the duration

of this item and will only be invited back into the meeting when discussion on the relevant item has finished.

10. The Meeting and Debate

The Council will not be using the Chat function.

The Chair will call each member of the Committee to speak - the Chair can choose to do this either by calling (i) each member in turn and continuing in this way until no member has anything more to add, or (ii) only those members who indicate a wish to speak using the 'raise hand' function within Zoom. This choice will be left entirely to the Chair's discretion depending on how they wish to manage the meeting and how comfortable they are using the one or the other approach.

Members are discouraged from physically raising their hand in the video to indicate a wish to speak – it can be distracting and easily missed/misinterpreted. No decision or outcome will be invalidated by a failure of the Chair to call a member to speak – the remote management of meetings is intensive and it is reasonable to expect that some requests will be inadvertently missed from time to time.

When referring to reports or making specific comments, Councillors should refer to the report and page number, so that all Members of the Committee have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.

11. Voting

On a recommendation or motion being put to the vote, the Chair will go round the virtual room and ask each member entitled to vote to say whether they are for or against or whether they abstain. The Member Services Officer will announce the numerical result of the vote.

12. Meeting Etiquette Reminder

- Mute your microphone – you will still be able to hear what is being said.
- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- Speak clearly and please state your name each time you speak
- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

13. Part 2 Reports and Debate

There are times when council meetings are not open to the public, when confidential, or "exempt" issues – as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – are under consideration. It is important to ensure that there are no members of the public at remote locations able to hear or see the proceedings during such meetings.

Any Councillor in remote attendance must ensure that there is no other person present – a failure to do so could be in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Member Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, remove them to a break-out room for the duration of that item. They can then be invited back in when the business returns to Part 1.

Please turn off smart speakers such as Amazon Echo (Alexa), Google Home or smart music devices. These could inadvertently record phone or video conversations, which would not be appropriate during the consideration of confidential items.

14. Interpretation of standing orders

Where the Chair is required to interpret the Council's Constitution and procedural rules in light of the requirements of remote participation, they may take advice from the Member Services Officer or Monitoring Officer prior to making a ruling. However, the Chair's decision shall be final.

15. Disorderly Conduct by Members

If a Member behaves in the manner as outlined in the Constitution (persistently ignoring or disobeying the ruling of the Chair or behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs the business of the meeting), any other Member may move 'That the member named be not further heard' which, if seconded, must be put to the vote without discussion.

If the same behaviour persists and a Motion is approved 'that the member named do leave the meeting', then they will be removed as a participant by the Member Services Officer.

16. Disturbance from Members of the Public

If any member of the public interrupts a meeting the Chair will warn them accordingly. If that person continues to interrupt or disrupt proceedings the Chair will ask the Member Services Officer to remove them as a participant from the meeting.

17. After the meeting

Please ensure you leave the meeting promptly by clicking on the red phone button to hang up.

18. Technical issues – meeting management

If the Chair, the Hosting Officer or the Member Services Officer identifies a problem with the systems from the Council's side, the Chair should either declare a recess while the fault is addressed or, if the fault is minor (e.g. unable to bring up a presentation), it may be appropriate to move onto the next item of business in order to progress through the agenda. If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting becomes inquorate through this fault, the meeting will be adjourned until such time as it can be reconvened.

If the meeting was due to determine an urgent matter or one which is time-limited and it has not been possible to continue because of technical difficulties, the Chief Executive, Leader and relevant Cabinet Member, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, shall explore such other means of taking the decision as may be permitted by the Council's constitution.

For members of the public and press who experience problems during the course of a meeting e.g. through internet connectivity or otherwise, the meeting will not be suspended or adjourned.

19. Technical issues – Individual Responsibility (Members and Officers)

Many members and officers live in places where broadband speeds are poor, but technical issues can arise at any time for a number of reasons. The following guidelines, if followed, should help reduce disruption. Separate guidance will be issued on how to manage connectivity – this paragraph focusses on the procedural steps. Joining early will help identify problems – see paragraph 6.

- Join public Zoom meetings by telephone if there is a problem with the internet. Before all meetings, note down or take a photograph of the front page of the agenda which has the necessary telephone numbers. Annex 1 to this protocol contains a brief step-by-step guide to what to expect
- Consider an alternative location from which to join the meeting, but staying safe and keeping confidential information secure. For officers, this may mean considering whether to come into the office, subject to this being safe and practicable (childcare etc.)
- If hosting a meeting via Zoom (briefings etc.), consider creating an additional host when setting up the meeting. The additional host can step in if the main host has problems – remember that without a host, the meeting cannot close and any information on the screens will remain on view
- Have to hand the telephone number of another member or officer expected in the meeting – and contact them if necessary to explain the problem in connecting
- Officers should have an 'understudy' or deputy briefed and on standby to attend and present as needed (and their telephone numbers to hand)
- For informal meetings and as a last resort, members and officers may be able to call another member or officer in the meeting who can put the 'phone on loudspeaker for all to hear – not ideal, but it ensures some degree of participation and continuity
- Member Services will hold a list of contact details for all senior officers

Phone only access to zoom meetings

(Before you start **make sure you know the Meeting ID and the Meeting Password**) – Both of these are available on the agenda for the meeting

Call the toll free number either on the meeting agenda or on the Outlook appointment (this will start with 0800 --- ----)

(Ensure your phone is on 'speaker' if you can)

A message will sound saying *"Welcome to Zoom, enter your meeting ID followed by the hash button"*

- **Enter Meeting ID followed by #**

Wait for next message which will say *"If you are a participant, please press hash to continue"*

- **Press #**

Wait for next message which will say *"Enter Meeting Password followed by hash"*

- **Enter 6 digit Meeting Password followed by #**

Wait for the following two messages:

"You are currently being held in a waiting room, the Host will release you from 'hold' in a minute"

Wait.....

"You have now entered the meeting"

Important notes for participating in meetings

Press ***6** to toggle between **'mute' and 'unmute'** (you should always ensure you are muted until you are called upon to speak)

If you wish to speak you can **'raise your hand'** by pressing ***9**. Wait for the Chairman to call you to speak. The Host will lower your hand after you have spoken. Make sure you mute yourself afterwards.

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 15 September 2020 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

R J Dolley (Chairman)
Mrs E M Andrews, G Barnell, J Cairney,
D R Coren, L J Cruwys, C J Eginton,
S J Penny and Mrs C P Daw

Apologies

Councillor

S J Clist

Also Present

Councillors

R Evans, F W Letch, R F Radford, C R Slade,
Ms E J Wainwright, B G J Warren and Mrs N Woollatt

Also Present

Officers

Simon Newcombe (Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services), Claire Fry (Group Manager for Housing Services), Ian Chilver (Group Manager for Financial Services), Mike Lowman (Interim Building Maintenance Manager) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

14 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Cllr S J Clist had sent his apologies to the meeting. He was substituted by Cllr G Barnell.

15 **PROTOCOL FOR REMOTE MEETINGS**

The protocol for remote meetings was noted.

16 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Quinn, a local resident, asked a question relating to agenda Item 8 – Financial Monitoring.

You will be getting the same verbal Financial Monitoring report that has been given to other Committees and Groups in this cycle. In it, you will be told that £600,000 is being taken from the Housing Revenue Account to settle a 'long running contractual dispute'.

The public have already asked questions, but got no answers - because the matter is subject to a 'confidentiality agreement'. The Officer giving the verbal Financial Monitoring report will probably be saying the same to you.

It seems strange that a 'confidentiality agreement' should have been signed, when much of information on this matter has already been put into the public domain - by both this Council and the liquidator of Pemberton Homes.

Council Officers have published risk reports informing Members of problems with the Palmerston Park and Birchen Lane developments and that a claim against the Council was being considered. Officers stated they were confident that any claim would be rebuffed, as they had obtained 'appropriate legal advice' before the Council terminated the contract – so the risk was 'low'.

The liquidator for Pemberton Homes Limited published the fact that a claim had been made against the Council in respect of the 'alleged wrongful termination of the contract'. The value of the claim was said to be nearly 7 Million Pounds.

The costs of dealing with this claim will also have come out of the Housing Revenue Account, so the total loss on this matter is much more than £600,000.

This is public money and its loss will have a significant impact. Questions should be asked and answered.

This 'confidentiality agreement' ensures that Officers can avoid answering difficult questions, from the public, about the loss of this public money. But Members can ask - internally.

My question to you is:

What do Members of the Housing PDG intend to do about the loss, to the Housing Revenue Account, of more than £600,000 from this matter?

The Chairman stated that since this matter was covered by a 'confidentiality agreement' the Group were not allowed to discuss, ask questions or put forward ideas about this issue in open session.

Mr Gerald Conyngham then asked a question in relation to item 9 on the agenda, concerning the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme. He stated that..... I am the convenor of Welcoming Refugees in Crediton. Our original aim was to campaign for Mid Devon to join the Syrian Resettlement Programme which has happened and a commitment made to take up to 5 families over 5 years. Currently there are 3 families in the District. Our family arrived in March this year just before lockdown so their activities have been very restricted. However they have settled well, are learning English on line and have an allotment. Our group have organised some activities for them to meet people, within the Government guidelines.

We are not a community sponsorship group, however we welcome the plan to encourage community sponsorship and are pleased to hear there is a group in the District set up for this purpose. Not every community is able to undertake the work involved in community sponsorship and so we would like the council to back both types of scheme in the future ie Government and local authority run schemes (especially the new UK Refugee scheme) which are run in partnership with RSD and local communities, as well as community sponsorship schemes. Especially since the local authority scheme does not now involve work for MDDC officers since the work is contracted out to an agency run by South Hams and West Devon. So far only 3 families have been rehoused in mid Devon whereas the target is 5.

My question to the committee is:

Will you back both types of schemes to enable more refugee families to come to Mid Devon, agree to join the new UK Refugee scheme, and commit to take at least 5 families, in addition to community sponsorship ones, once restrictions are lifted?

Anthea Duquemin spoke in relation to the same issue....I am the person who bought the house in Cridton that is being used for the resettlement scheme. I am really delighted with the way that things have worked out and I want to thank the committee and Mid Devon District Council for resolving previous difficulties by agreeing to use SeaMoor Lettings Agency as a third party solution. It seems to work well for everyone involved and SeaMoor make letting the house through the scheme completely simple for me as the landlord and as I understand it there are no associated problems for the Council. All costs to the Council are taken care of through the funds that are administered by the County Council. The family who live in my house are fantastically appreciative of their new lives in Cridton. They have received brilliant support from 'Welcome Refugees to Cridton and they seem to be settling in very well as Gerald has just said. There is no evidence of them experiencing problems similar to those mentioned in the report and it really seems that everything associated with the house in Cridton has been positive.

I am now aware of a specific person who wants to replicate the experience by buying a house for the resettlement scheme in Cridton. This person has cash and is actively looking for a property to buy that would fit the resettlement scheme requirements. With knowledge of how supportive 'Welcoming Refugees to Cridton Group' is and how well the family have settled, it seems ideal to introduce one more family to the town. Whilst the Cridton Group isn't well enough resourced to operate the community sponsorship scheme, they are brilliant at providing the level of contact needed and compliment the services of the refugee support network. It also appears as though the Cridton community have been generally welcoming and there is no reason to believe that another new family from Syria or elsewhere couldn't settle in equally well.

The report notes that 3000 pledges of support have been received from local authorities against a national target of 5000 for the year leading up to March 2021 so Mid Devon District Council's original pledge of 5 families to be resettled presumably means that our remaining 2 places are part of that pledge? So can the committee tell me please, once the international Covid restrictions are lifted sufficient for resettlement to happen again will the Council commit to honouring its original pledge of resettling 5 families under the Resettlement Scheme and can they reassure the potential house buyer that if the house is bought and can be approved suitable for the Resettlement Scheme, will the Council allow for at least 1 more family to be resettled in Cridton either under the existing Syrian Resettlement Scheme or under the UK Resettlement Scheme, whichever is current at the time when the house is approved?

The Chairman stated that the questions posed in relation to this item would be answered once the Syrian Resettlement Scheme was discussed at item 9 on the agenda.

17 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:00:18)**

Members of the Group declared the following personal interests in respect of items on the agenda:

- Cllr Mrs Eileen Andrew was a council tenant.
- Cllr Graeme Barnell taught English to Syrian refugees in Exeter.
- Cllr Jim Cairney had been to several meetings in Crediton to do with the resettlement of Syrian refugees.
- Cllr Mrs Chris Daw lived in the Westex area.
- Cllr Ron Dolley was the Ward Member for Westex, the ward where the Palmerston Park and Birchen Lane developments were and which were referred to in Mr Quinn's question.

18 **MINUTES (00:00:21)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

19 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:00:24)**

The Chairman thanked Cllr F Letch, who had been replaced on the Group by Cllr S Clist, for his previous commitment and contributions to the work of the Homes Policy Development Group.

20 **PERFORMANCE & RISK REPORT (00:00:25)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security providing it with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2020/2021 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

The contents of the report were outlined with reference to the following:

- Since the publication of the report a number of targets which had shown as not being met were now back on track. This was the case with the number of empty homes. The report had stated that this would not be reported on next year but it was felt that, as part of a review of the housing strategy, reporting in this area would still be a valuable performance indicator.
- Work in the gas servicing area had been particularly challenging during the lockdown period with some tenants being loathed to let people in to their homes. However, this was now coming back on track since the easing of the restrictions.
- It was confirmed that 240 boilers had been checked.
- The full extent of the pandemic on housing supply and homelessness was yet to be seen. Nationally the country was in a deep, far reaching, recession and this was likely to be reflected with regard to risk management for some time to come.

Discussion took place with regard to:

- Whether it was possible to have target data in the report with regard to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) showing the number that should be

registered and licenced. It was explained that an appropriate metric was being investigated, however, the number of HMO's available was not under the control of the Council. A percentage number could be applied as to an appropriate minimum number but the response from landlords varied from case to case. It was up to landlords whether or not they wished to have their properties licenced.

- Whether it would be useful to have a metric for social rented housing and affordable housing reflected in the report going forwards. It was explained that officers would discuss this with the Cabinet Member and agree a way forward.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

21 FINANCIAL MONITORING (00:00:36)

The Group Manager for Finance provided the Group with a verbal update regarding the financial position so far in the year and highlighted the following key pieces of information:

- Information was now available from 1 April to the end of July 2020 showing the effect of the pandemic on the Council's finances so far.
- As at the end of June the Council had been looking at a deficit of £1.5m, however, this had reduced to a deficit of £1.2m as at the end of July.
- Significant income deficits were predicted in the areas leisure services and housing rents. Against this some salary savings had been identified and the opening up of the Leisure Centres was helping to improve the position month by month.
- A number of grant receipts had been received from central Government to help local Councils. This would include assistance under the Income Protection Scheme. The Council would receive 75p in every pound for predicted income losses over 5%. Work was currently being undertaken to predict those losses and it was anticipated that the deficit predicted of £1.2m may reduce to £0.4m as a result of the Income Protection Scheme with the balance having to be found elsewhere.
- Post lockdown recovery was continuing but the Council remained very cautious as the upward trajectory was very slow and there was still a lot of uncertainty.
- With regard to the Housing Revenue Account, the predicted deficit was just over £1m with the vast majority of this being related to the loss of housing rental income.

A question was asked as to what the predicted saving would be terms of Members mileage claims for the whole year given that meetings were currently being held remotely by Zoom and would continue to be for some time yet. The Group Manager for Finance stated that he did not have the exact information to hand but that he would circulate this to the Group following the meeting.

The information provided was **NOTED**.

22 SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS REFUGEE SCHEME AND THE NEW UK RESETTLEMENT SCHEME (00:48:00)

The Group had before it a report * from the Group Manager for Housing Services providing a written briefing on the latest developments relating to the Syrian Refugee Settlement Scheme and the new United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme seeking decisions relating to the Council's continuing involvement; and approval for a proposal made by a community sponsorship group to support the resettlement of an additional household in Mid Devon, and to agree consent to enable this to move forward.

The Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services provided a response to the questions posed during Public Question Time:

Will you back both type of schemes to enable more refugee families to come to Mid Devon?

Members had previously agreed to support the existing Syrian refugee scheme so this was not a specific matter for consideration in the report presented to the PDG today. The decision on whether to recommend to Cabinet whether MDDC takes part in the new UK Refugee scheme was covered by recommendation 2 of the report (item 9).

Commit to take at least 5 families?

Potentially another family could be supported by the existing scheme, as set out in recommendation 1 of the report, subject to the scheme reopening post-Covid pandemic. Whether one or more additional families were supported under the new scheme was a matter for recommendation 3. Context on the numbers of additional families being supported by other Devon LAs was set out in section 8.5 of the report.

Regarding the question posed by Anthea Duquemin, the Group Manager stated that it was very challenging to provide assurance to a person wishing to purchase a property at this point in order to resettle a refugee family. There remained to be significant risks involved.

The contents of the report were outlined with particular reference to the following:

- There had been 3 families settled under the 'old' scheme, however, this scheme had currently paused nationally as a result of the pandemic.
- It was envisaged that the 'new' scheme would operate much in the same way as the 'old' scheme and would continue to be administered by Devon County Council.
- Regarding community sponsorship the Council was required to indicate whether to support this or not.
- The Council's involvement could be limited to the provision of a health and safety assessment of a property being made available to the scheme.

Consideration was given to:

- The number of families resettled by other local authorities in Devon.

- Problems caused by the rural locations of some of the properties in relation to transport, a lack of halal food, access to education and health care services.
- The generosity of the people of Crediton who had generally been very welcoming to the refugee families.
- Good transport links to and from Crediton and Exeter.
- Confusion regarding the total number of families to be permitted under the 'old' and 'new' scheme.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- a) The proposal made by a community sponsorship group with regard to the resettlement of an additional refugee household in the district under the existing Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr J Cairney and seconded by Cllr G Barnell)

- b) The Council should take part in the new United Kingdom Refugee Scheme (UKRS).

(Proposed by Cllr G Barnell and seconded by Cllr J Cairney)

- c) A maximum of 5 additional families are supported through either the existing or the new scheme. Should the existing Syrian scheme reopen and be available locally then under existing commitments 2 of these additional 5 families should be supported through that scheme, leaving a balance of 3 families to be supported under the new UK scheme. If none or just 1 family can be supported under the Syrian scheme then the balance of placements should be rolled over into the new scheme.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs C Daw and seconded by Cllr L Cruwys)

Reason for the decision:

The Council is required to agree the proposal relating to community sponsorship before it can go forward, in line with Home Office rules. However, once agreed, the community group will take the lead on this. The Council will be required to confirm that any property chosen complies with relevant health and safety legislation and will be invited to participate in post- arrival visits but there is no requirement to join these visits as DCC can take the lead and report back, as appropriate.

Other local authorities in Devon have pledged to support the UKRS and DCC are keen to promote Devon as a county welcoming to refugees.

Officers recommend that the decision relating to the number of households to be resettled in the District under UKRS should take account of the pledges made by other local authorities in the County.

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

- (ii) Cllr C Eginton requested that his vote against recommendation (c) be recorded.

23 GRASS VERGES LOCATED ON HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT LAND (01:46:00)

The Group had before it a report * from the Group Manager for Housing Services setting out the background and to agree a way forward with regard to decision-making relating to maintenance responsibilities for those grass verges which are located on land owned by the Housing Revenue Account.

The contents of the report were outlined and the complexity of the issues involved explained. The regulatory framework for social housing contains some consumer standards which are also relevant. The Neighbourhood & Community standard applies with regard to grounds maintenance on housing estates, and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard is also relevant. In line with this, tenants need to be consulted with in terms of any future proposals.

Since this was an issue which the Environment PDG were also interested in and they had been invited to attend the meeting to contribute to the discussion of this item.

Discussion took place regarding the following:

- There was no such thing as a traditional 'Council estate' anymore.
- The range, diversity and conflicting nature of opinion from various groups in relation to this issue.
- Biodiversity factors and the need for a possible policy in relation to this to link in with the work of the Net Zero Advisory Group.
- Funding pressures on the HRA especially given the imminent end of the current furlough scheme and its likely effect on rental receipts.
- The amount of confusion and frustration in relation to this ongoing issue.
- Whether a Task and Finish Group was the most productive or efficient way to proceed.
- The onerous extent of the consultation that would be needed with all interested parties including 62 Towns and Parishes.
- Whether a policy based approach was needed rather than a site by site approach.
- The need to move the issue forward somehow and present a position to the Cabinet for a final decision.
- The need for clear timescales and terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group.

The Group **RESOLVED** that a Task and Finish Group be established to consider the issue further and agree a way forward. This Group to consist of 3 Members from the Homes Policy Development Group (Cllrs: Mrs Andrews, L Cruwys and C Eginton) and also 3 Members from the Environment Policy Development Group (Cllrs: R F Radford, R L Stanley and B Warren).

(Proposed by Cllr L Cruwys and seconded by Cllr C Eginton)

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

- (ii) Cllr B Warren declared a personal interest in that he was Chairman of Willand Parish Council and Chairman of the Environment PDG. Both forums had discussed this issue in the past.

- (iii) Cllr R J Dolley declared an interest in that he was the Ward Member in which the Walronds was located.

24 **UPDATE ON HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (02:34:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services providing an update on the current activities being undertaken in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and HMO Licensing.

The contents of the report were outlined with reference to the following:

- A recent press release regarding a property in Cullompton where there had been a successful prosecution.
- The Council was aware of approximately a potential 50 HMO's of which just under 20 were licenced.
- The current approach had been to identify and try and work with the landlords in question. Some flexibility had been exercised in terms of the regulatory regime in order to seek compliance and bring properties to order.

Consideration was given to:

- Several unlicenced HMO's were known to exist in Cullompton. There had also been rumours of 'hot bedding'.
- Responsibility lay with the property owners but the Council also had a duty to seek registration where it could.
- The need to share intelligence with partner agencies.
- Links to issues around modern slavery and human trafficking.
- Common denominators were accommodation and vulnerability.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

25 **HOUSING SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT (02:53:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Group Manager for Housing Services providing an update to Members on enforcement and other activity undertaken by Officers in the Housing Services.

The contents of the report were outlined with reference to the following:

- It was hoped that the report provided a true flavour of the range and scope of housing officer's work and that such a report would be forthcoming at future meetings.
- Anti-Social Behaviour, safeguarding and fraud took up a lot of officer time as large amounts of evidence had to be collected.
- Some of the work could be very sensitive and challenging.
- Increased pressure facing officers working remotely during the pandemic.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

26 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (02:59:00)

In addition to the items already identified in the work programme for the next meeting the following was requested to be on the agenda for the next meeting:

- Now that the weed team had been removed – the effect of this on housing estates. It was explained that this might not be the correct Policy Development Group for this discussion but that the highlighted issue would be directed to the correct forum.
- Housing Service delivery update.

(The meeting ended at 5.18 pm)

CHAIRMAN

HOMES PDG
10 NOVEMBER 2020

PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT

Cabinet Member Cllr Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Housing
Responsible Officer Catherine Yandle, Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security

Reason for Report: To provide Members with an update on performance against the corporate plan and local service targets for 2020/21 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the PDG reviews the Performance Indicators and Risks that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.

The PDG is invited to review the measures suggested for inclusion in the Corporate Plan Performance framework and recommend their approval to Cabinet. (Appendix 4)

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Corporate Plan priorities and targets are effectively maintained through the use of appropriate performance indicators and regular monitoring.

Financial Implications: None identified

Legal Implications: None

Risk Assessment: If performance is not monitored we may fail to meet our corporate and local service plan targets or to take appropriate corrective action where necessary. If key business risks are not identified and monitored they cannot be mitigated effectively.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues identified for this report.

Impact on Climate Change: No impacts identified for this report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Appendix 1 provides Members with details of performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for the 2020-21 financial year.
- 1.2 Appendix 2 shows the section of the Corporate Risk Register which relates to the Economy Portfolio. See 3.0 below.
- 1.3 Appendix 3 shows the profile of all risks for Homes at present.
- 1.4 All appendices are produced from the corporate Service Performance And Risk management system (SPAR).

2.0 Performance Appendix 1

- 2.1 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Deliver Housing:** The targets for annual housing completions of most types have been updated to reflect the Local Plan targets.
- 2.2 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Private Sector Housing: Bringing Empty homes into use** is a now well above target. **Inspections of HMOs** are now up to date.
- 2.3 Drivehall Ltd, the owner of 1B Brook House, in Cullompton has been fined £18,000 plus costs for breaches in regulations pertaining to the Housing Act 2004, following a hearing on 7 August 2020. The case was put forward for prosecution by the Council's Legal and Public Health teams following an inspection of the flat in January 2020. Private Sector Housing Officers found that the four-bedroomed flat was occupied by up to 16 migrant workers.
- 2.4 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Council Housing:** all measures are either at or just below target. In terms of gas servicing compliance this has been affected by Covid 29 and we currently have 19 properties with expired LGSRs. This was 25 properties when last reported, access continues to be difficult.
- 2.5 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Support and grow active tenancy engagement:** The tenant census has had a good response. Work has commenced on analysing the results.

3.0 Risk

- 3.1 Risk reports to committees include strategic risks with a current score of 10 or more in accordance with the Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy. (See Appendix 2)
- 3.2 Operational risk assessments are job specific and flow through to safe systems of work. These risks go to the Health and Safety Committee biannually with escalation to committees where serious concerns are raised.
- 3.3 The Corporate risk register is regularly reviewed by Group Managers and Leadership Team (LT) and updated as required.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 4.1 That the PDG reviews the performance indicators and risks for 2020-21 that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.
- 4.2 The PDG is invited to review the measures suggested for inclusion in the Corporate Plan Performance framework and recommend their approval to Cabinet. (Appendix 4)

Contact for more Information: Catherine Yandle, Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security ext 4975

Circulation of the Report: Leadership Team and Cabinet Member

Corporate Plan PI Report Homes

Monthly report for 2020-2021
 Arranged by Aims
 Filtered by Aim: Priorities Homes
 For MDDC - Services

Key to Performance Status:

Performance Indicators:	No Data	Well below target	Below target	On target	Above target	Well above target
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* Indicates that an entity is linked to the Aim by its parent Service

Corporate Plan PI Report Homes

Priorities: Homes

Aims: Deliver Housing

Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Net additional homes provided</u>	n/a	n/a	393	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Jenny Clifford, Simon Newcombe	
<u>Self Build Plots</u>	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford	
<u>Gypsy & Traveller Pitches</u>	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford	
<u>Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)</u>		133	94	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford	
<u>Build Council Houses</u>	0 (3/12)	26		n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Andrew Busby, Simon Newcombe	
<u>Number of Homelessness Approaches</u>	n/a	n/a	721 for 2019/20	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Simon Newcombe	

Aims: Community Land Trusts

Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Community Land Trusts Assisted</u>	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford	

Aims: Private Sector Housing

Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Deliver homes by bringing Empty Houses into use</u>	84 (6/12)	138	72	1	9	26	31	34	44							Simon Newcombe	
<u>Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)</u>	n/a	n/a	100%						100%							Simon Newcombe	(September) Covid meant inspections did not recommence until July. Therefore no data for April - June. However have caught back with backlog by end of September so currently 100% for year to date (SN)
<u>Landlord engagement and Support</u>	n/a	n/a	9	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	7	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Simon Newcombe	(Quarter 2) x2 pinpoint x1 C-19 HMO specific communication (multi-language) (SN)

Aims: Council Housing

Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
%	100.0% (6/12)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%							Simon	

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Corporate Plan PI Report Homes																	
Priorities: Homes																	
Aims: Council Housing																	
Performance Indicators																	
Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Complaints Responded to On Time</u>																Newcombe	
<u>Tenant Census</u>	n/a	n/a	34%	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a		Simon Newcombe	
<u>% Emergency Repairs Completed on Time</u>	100.0% (5/12)	100.0%	95.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%								Simon Newcombe	
<u>% Urgent Repairs Completed on Time</u>	100.0% (5/12)	100.0%	95.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%								Simon Newcombe	
<u>% Routine Repairs Completed on Time</u>	100.0% (5/12)	99.3%	95.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.4%								Simon Newcombe	
<u>% Repair Jobs Where an Appointment Was Kept</u>	100.0% (5/12)	98.9%	95.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	100.0%	99.0%								Simon Newcombe	
<u>% Properties With a Valid Gas Safety Certificate</u>	99.96% (5/12)	99.82%	100.0%	99.6%	99.4%	98.9%	98.9%	99.2%								Simon Newcombe	

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Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Report for 2020-2021

For Homes - Cllr Bob Evans Portfolio

Filtered by Flag: Include: * Corporate Risk Register

For MDDC - Services

Not Including Risk Child Projects records, Including Mitigating Action records

Key to Performance Status:

Mitigating
Action:

Milestone
Missed

Behind
schedule

In progress

Completed
and
evaluated

No Data
available

Risks: No Data (0+)

High (15+)

Medium (6+)

Low (1+)

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Risk: Affordable and Council Housing Demand Housing supply does not meet local demand or reflect demographic shifts like increased demand for single occupancy

Service: Housing Services

Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
Completed and evaluated	Detailed Analysis of Housing Need	Provision of 'heat map' to show where housing need is gathered by geographical area	Claire Fry	28/05/2013	16/09/2020	Fully effective(1)
In progress	Review of Housing Register	The register is regularly reviewed to minimise the incidence of fraud and to ensure that it represents a true picture of housing need. We also participate in the NFI waiting list matches.	Claire Fry	31/12/2019	16/09/2020	Positive(2)
Current Status: High (16)		Current Risk Severity: 4 - High		Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High		

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Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Risk: Homelessness Insufficient resources to support an increased homeless population could result in failure to meet statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless.

Service: Housing Services

Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
Completed and evaluated	Computer System	New ICT system for recording homelessness data procured and fully functional including reporting facility.	Claire Fry	05/09/2017	16/09/2020	Fully effective(1)
Completed and evaluated	Staff Support	Officers are trained and knowledgeable and the structure of Housing Options team to be reviewed to build resilience. Homelessness strategy was reviewed Autumn 2019.	Claire Fry	22/06/2017	16/09/2020	Fully effective(1)

Current Status: High (16)

Current Risk Severity: 4 - High

Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High

Service Manager: Claire Fry

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Risk Matrix Homes Appendix 3

Report For Climate Change - Cllr Elizabeth Wainwright Portfolio Current settings

Risk Likelihood	5 - Very High	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks
	4 - High	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	1 Risk
	3 - Medium	No Risks	1 Risk	No Risks	2 Risks	No Risks
	2 - Low	No Risks	No Risks	1 Risk	No Risks	No Risks
	1 - Very Low	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	1 Risk	No Risks
		1 - Very Low	2 - Low	3 - Medium	4 - High	5 - Very High
		Risk Severity				

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Draft Key Performance Indicators 2020-24

Corporate References			KPI Details			Context / Narrative			Lead Officer	Approvals		
KPI ref	PDG or Corporate	Cabinet Member	Description of Indicator	Measurement	Proposed Target	Current / Historical Performance	Benchmarking	Any other Comments	Responsible Officer	Approved by LT	Approved by PDG	Approved by Cabinet
		<i>Name of relevant member</i>	<i>Written description</i>	<i>How it is measured? (RAG, %, weight, number, deadline?)</i>	<i>insert</i>	<i>Give last year's data, or previous trend, or explain new indicator?</i>	<i>Why have we proposed the target at this level? Comparison with Devon districts PLUS LG benchmarking family (not just Devon!)</i>	<i>Any other relevant comments from the service</i>	<i>Name of relevant Manager</i>	<i>Needs to go green before PDG/Cab</i>	<i>Needs to go green before Cab</i>	<i>Goes green once new performance framework is adopted</i>
01	ENV	Colin Slade	Residual Waste per Household	Weight	362 kg	365 (365) kg	Devon average 351.5KG we are third highest	Improvement unlikely without round changes: Work on education and enforcement	Darren Beer			
02	ENV	Colin Slade	% Waste Reused, Recycled & Composted	%	54.50%	53 (54) %	Devon average 51% we are third lowest. DCC Stretch target 70% by 2025		Darren Beer			
03	ENV	Colin Slade	Number of FPNS Issued	Number	None	18	Responsive		Darren Beer			
04	ENV	Colin Slade	Missed collections waste	%	0.03%	0.02 (0.03) %	L-T target	1st exceeded 19/20	Darren Beer			
05	ENV	Colin Slade	Missed collections recycle	%	0.03%	0.02 (0.03) %	L-T target	1st exceeded 18/19	Darren Beer			
06	ENV	Colin Slade	Garden Waste Customers	Number	11100	10007 (10000)	Internal 2016/20 CP target	5% new customers 19/20	Darren Beer			
07	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Council Carbon Footprint	Number	19000 CO2t	20402 baseline	Initiatives identified for 20/21 from the action Plan	Refer to Adopted Climate Change Action Plan	Andrew Busby			
08	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	New Solar Initiatives	Number	250	211	Sign-ups to Solar Together	2500 Devon wide so far	Andrew Busby			
09	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Corporate Renewable Energy Projects	Number	1	New	Carlu close 20/21		Andrew Busby			
10	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Electric Car Charger usage	Number	2000	2000	Number of uses per year		Andrew Busby			
11	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Electric Car Charger units	Number	8	New	2 per main town and 2 more		Andrew Busby			
12	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Eco Flex sign ups	Number	600	New	Each LA sets its own grant criteria (Statement of Intent) based on their local circumstances	May cease after 21/22 target 300 next year	Simon Newcombe			
13	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Home Improvement Loans Lendology CIC scheme	Number	5	New	Will be 10 in future. MDDC currently third highest in number of loans approved.	Subject to ongoing capital injections via surplus BCF funding	Simon Newcombe			
14	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Housing Assistance Policy	Number	5	New	Major schemes ECO Flex top-ups. See ECO Flex for benchmarking challenges	Vulnerable persons only	Simon Newcombe			
15	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Corporate Tree Planting Scheme	RAG	Yes/No	New	Develop scheme/Secure funding	Numbers to be reported in future target 500-1000	Andrew Busby			
16	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Community Climate & Biodiversity Grants	RAG	Yes/No	New	Agreeing funding is the first stage	Numbers to be reported in future	Andrew Busby			
17	Climate	Elizabeth Wainwright	Community Schemes	Number	4	New	Work with TCs to improve public assets	Climate conversations	Andrew Busby			
18	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan	RAG	Yes/No	New	Suite of town centre health check indicators to be developed which will aid understanding of health in relation to others and impact of recovery/ regeneration efforts	Review of TC vision, reassess geographic areas for intervention, prioritisation and id of quick win projects, adoption of SPD and delivery plan	Jenny Clifford			
19	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan	RAG	Yes/No	New	Suite of town centre health check indicators to be developed which will aid understanding of health in relation to others and impact of recovery/ regeneration efforts	Adopt the masterplan following stage 2 consultation	Jenny Clifford			
20	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Incubator/Start-up Space planning applications	Number	see note	New	Sites already in operation in Cullompton and Tiverton	Target not yet set as initial work required with the business community to better understand the extent of need over and above sites already in operation	Jenny Clifford			

21	ECON	Bob Evans	Sites for Commercial Development	Number	2 acres	New	Acreage acquired		Andrew Busby			
22	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Business Rates Accounts	Number	3250	3241 (3150)	Proxy for business births and deaths	To monitor change	Dean Emery			
23	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Rateable Value NNDR	£	None	New	Financial measure	To monitor change	Dean Emery			
24	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Empty Properties (EPR)	Number	None	New	Instead of Empty shops	To monitor change	Dean Emery			
25	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Pannier Market Regular traders	%	None	New	Varies between markets on different days. 75% trader occupation Tues, 80% trader occupation	To monitor change	Adrian Welsh			
26	ECON	Richard Chesterton	Community Land Trusts assisted	Number	1	New	There are few CLTs operating in the District currently	Monitor CLT activity	Jenny Clifford			
27	ECON	Bob Evans	Corporate Retail Units Occupancy rates	Number	None	New	3 separate PIs for MDDC units	To monitor change	Andrew Busby			
28	HOMES	Bob Evans/Richard chesterton	Net Additional Homes	Number	393	New	National benchmarking via Housing Delivery Test and Local Plan Review annual delivery rate. HDT target exceeded last 2 years	Link to Housing Delivery Test and monitoring of Local Plan delivery	Jenny Clifford			
29	HOMES	Bob Evans	Affordable Homes	Number	94	94 (100)	Local Plan and Housing Strategy	Target derived from Local Plan	Jenny Clifford/ Simon Newcombe			
30	HOMES	Bob Evans	Build Council Houses	Number	None	26 (26)	Secure Planning permission	Numbers to be reported from 21/22	Andrew Busby/Simon Newcombe			
31	HOMES	Richard Chesterton	Self build plots	Number	5	New	Number of plots delivered	Local Plan	Jenny Clifford			
32	HOMES	Richard Chesterton	Gypsy & traveller pitches	Number	2	New	Number of pitches	Local Plan	Jenny Clifford			
33	HOMES	Bob Evans	Empty Homes brought back into use	Number	72	138 (72)	Comparison with national average benchmark of 0.85% of all registered properties	May cease after 21/22	Simon Newcombe			
34	HOMES	Bob Evans	HMOs investigations	Number	None	New	All potential HMOs reported investigated	Average period to date	Simon Newcombe			
35	HOMES	Bob Evans	Landlord Engagement	Number	9	New	Events/webinars		Simon Newcombe			
36	HOMES	Bob Evans	Homeless Approaches	Number	None	721	Benchmarking is done on prevention duty accomodation secured for 6+ months we are 74% v South West 61%	Monitor due to increased risk	Simon Newcombe			
37	HOMES	Bob Evans	Tenant Census Response Rate	%	34%	New	Census is based on a selection of agreed national Qs.	Carry out and analyse results	Simon Newcombe			
38	HOMES	Bob Evans	% Properties With a Valid Gas Safety Certificate	%	100%	99.9 (100)%	Statutory Target		Simon Newcombe			
39	HOMES	Bob Evans	Complaints responded to on time	%	100%	100 (100)%	Housing Ombudsman Service Complaints Handling Code		Simon Newcombe			
40	HOMES	Bob Evans	Emergency Repairs	%	95%	100 (100)%	Other Councils >95%		Simon Newcombe			
41	HOMES	Bob Evans	Urgent Repairs	%	95%	100 (100)%	Other Councils >95%		Simon Newcombe			
42	HOMES	Bob Evans	Routine repairs	%	95%	99.3 (100)%	Other Councils >95%		Simon Newcombe			
43	HOMES	Bob Evans	Repairs appointments kept	%	95%	98.9 (100)%	Other Councils >95%		Simon Newcombe			
44	COMM	Dennis Knowles	Community Safety Partnership Action Plan	Number	None	New	Actions identified in plan		Simon Newcombe			
45	COMM	Dennis Knowles	Safeguarding Standards for Drivers (Licensing)	%	100%	New	DBS checks/Safeguarding Training		Simon Newcombe			
46	COMM	Dennis Knowles	Mental Health 1st Aiders trained	Number	5	New	Estimate 15 (up from 10)		Matthew Page			
47	COMM	Dennis Knowles	National and Regional Promotions	Number	5	New	Monitor success in engagement with promotions through SM contacts and web hits	Re Health & Wellbeing	Simon Newcombe			
48	COMM	Dennis Knowles/Richard Chesterton	Digital Connectivity Super fast Coverage	%	>24 Mbps	New	Superfast broadband definition by Govnt >24 Mbps, CDS >30 Mbps	Superfast broadband coverage	Adrian Welsh			
49	COMM	Nikki Woollatt	Health Referral Initiatives Starters	Number	15	New	Suspended because of Covid	All Schemes: Cancer Rehab Escape Pain (not funded) Strength & Balance	Lee Chester			
50	COMM	Nikki Woollatt	Health Referral Initiatives Completers	Number	10	New	Suspended because of Covid	Cardiac Rehab & GP referrals	Lee Chester			

51	COMM	Nikki Woollatt	Health Referral Initiatives Conversions	Number	5	New	Suspended because of Covid		Lee Chester			
52	COMM	Nikki Woollatt	Complaints received	Number	None	313	A spike may indicate service delivery issues		Lisa Lewis			
53	COMM	Nikki Woollatt	Complaints resolved on time (stage 1)	%	90%	94 (90)%	Indications so far are other councils monitor satisfaction not time taken	Being reviewed may be more useful to monitor stage 2 complaints	Lisa Lewis			
54	CORP	Andrew Moore	South West Mutual Bank	RAG	None	New	Monitor Progress		Andrew Jarrett			
55	CORP	Bob Evans	Corporate Commercial Units Occupancy rates	Number	None	New	2 separate Pls MDDC units	To monitor change	Andrew Busby			
56	CORP	Nikki Woollatt	Working days Sick	Number	7 days	8 (7)	National Average public sector		Matthew Page			
57	CORP	Nikki Woollatt	Sickness Absence	%	2.78%	2.78 (3.27)%	SW Councils		Matthew Page			
58	CORP	Nikki Woollatt	Staff Turnover	%	14%	18%	SW Councils	Staff Retention strategy	Matthew Page			
59	CORP	Nikki Woollatt	Appraisals completed	%	100.00%	New	By 30 September annually	Collection starting	Matthew Page			
60	CORP	Andrew Moore	Council Tax Collection rate	%	98.50%	98.5 (98.5)%	Broadly the same across Devon/Somerset		Dean Emery			
61	CORP	Andrew Moore	NNDR Collection rate	%	99.20%	99.2 (99.2)%	Broadly the same across Devon/Somerset		Dean Emery			
62	CORP	Dennis Knowles	FOI on time	%	100%	100 (100)%	Statutory target		Catherine Yandle			
63	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Major applications overturned at Appeal	%	<10%	2 (10)%	National Target allowing benchmarking	Measured on a 2 year rolling basis	Eileen Patterson			
64	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Major Appeals	%	None	10%	% of appeals. Can be tracked, but as this is not a national indicator we are not able to benchmark against others	Locally requested	Eileen Patterson			
65	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Minor applications overturned at Appeal	%	<10%	0 (10)%	National Target allowing benchmarking	Measured on a 2 year rolling basis	Eileen Patterson			
66	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Minor Appeals	%	None	13%	% of appeals. Can be tracked, but as this is not a national indicator we are not able to benchmark against others	Locally requested	Eileen Patterson			
67	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Cost of Appeals	£	None	New	Cannot be benchmarked against other Councils. Data not readily available	Cost to MDDC arising from Planning Inspector decisions over appeal cost claims	Eileen Patterson			
68	CORP	Richard Chesterton	Performance Planning Guarantee	%	100%	99 (100)%	Statutory target. Widespread use of extensions of time across Councils to meet planning guarantee	Addressed through seeking extensions of time to reduce risk of planning fee return. Need to reduce reliance upon extensions of time and determine within target timescale of application	Eileen Patterson			

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HOMES PDG
10 NOVEMBER 2020

DRAFT 2021/22 GENERAL FUND AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

Cabinet Member Cllr Andrew Moore
Responsible Officer Andrew Jarrett, Deputy Chief Executive (S151)

Reason for the report: To consider the initial draft 2021/22 Budget and options available in order for the Council to set a balanced budget and agree a future strategy for further budget reductions for 2022/23 onwards.

RECOMMENDATION: To consider the draft budget proposals for 2021/22 and start to plan for additional savings.

Reason for the recommendation: The Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a legal requirement on the Council to approve a balanced budget. These draft budget proposals assist the Council in understanding the extent of the budgetary imbalance and offers options to how this may be addressed.

Relationship to the Corporate Plan: To deliver our Corporate Plan's priorities within existing financial resources.

Financial Implications: The current budget for the General Fund shows a deficit of £3.012M. This highlights the need to take steps to plan for reductions to our expenditure levels, although any remedial measures will need to take account of the unprecedented situation that is currently being faced.

Legal Implications: None directly arising from this report. However, there is a legal obligation to balance the budget. There are legal implications arising from any future consequential decisions to change service provision, but these would be assessed at the time.

Risk Assessment: In order to comply with the requirement to set a balanced budget, management must ensure that the proposed savings are robust and achievable. We must also ensure that the assumptions we have used are realistic and prudent. Failure to set a robust deliverable budget puts the Council at risk of not being able to meet its commitments and casts doubt on its "going concern" and VFM status.

Equality Impact Assessment: There are no Equalities Impact implications relating to the content of this report.

Climate Change Assessment: The allocation of resources will impact upon the Council's ability to implement/fund new activities linked to climate change.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 2019/20 was the fourth and final year of a four year fixed funding settlement. The Fair Funding Review together with the business rates baseline reset, originally set for publication in September 2019, were

delayed a year due to Brexit pressures. That intention to publish in 2020/21 for implementation in 2021/22 is now further delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

1.2 As a result, we are awaiting details of the funding that will be received for 2021/22. This also has a significant impact on our ability to forecast for future years. We expect the Review to alter our funding but we have little indication of what this might involve. The areas we are particularly concerned with are:

- Business Rates baseline reset – how much of our growth are we likely to lose?
- When, or even whether, will we move to 100% Business Rates growth retention? In the Budget 2016, this was to be in place “before the end of Parliament”.
- What will 100% Retention mean in terms of losing other funding streams such as RSDG and what additional responsibilities will we have?
- New Homes Bonus – the mechanics of this will change and we may lose additional years’ (we lost 2 years payments in 2018/19). We expect more of the Bonus to be redirected to the Better Care Fund to help Upper Tier authorities cope with the pressures of Social Care.
- Will we lose funding in relation to our rurality (RSDG)?
- Will we be tasked with administering additional reliefs/services?

1.3 It is worth reflecting that our budgets are affected in a number of ways:

- The funding received from Central Government.
- Devon County Council (DCC) and other public bodies’ budgets are being reduced centrally and hence this pressure is passed on to us in areas we work collaboratively.
- The increasing pressure on social care budgets has a “knock-on” effect to the level of funding that is available to lower-tier authorities.
- Government departments such as Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department of Work and Pensions also have lower budgets and reduced grants.
- Changes in customer demand/expectations in the context of the local/national economy.

1.4 No financial report in these times, would be complete without reference to the implications of Covid 19. The pandemic and the effects of the measures to combat it, have structurally altered the services that we offer, the delivery channels that we employ and our funding mechanisms. In the context of budget setting for 2021/22 and beyond in respect of the MTFP, the question becomes an issue of what assumptions should our expectations be based upon:

- The country was placed into lock down largely for the first quarter of 2020/21. This significantly impacted service delivery and those income streams that depend on this activity. Since that time, services have been able to resume but often with new ways of working especially in our leisure centres.
- Further both the ongoing health and economic implications of the virus have impacted residents’ habits and expectations. This can be seen in planning for example where economic uncertainty has

seen a slowdown in the larger development applications, whilst the smaller home improvement type of application have seen an increase in activity.

- A great deal of uncertainty remains regarding the reoccurrence of the virus in the coming months, if not years, and the measures that may be taken to contain it.
- Since the end of lockdown, we now have 3 months of data which give some indication as to how our income streams may behave going forward. This report is based on those trends continuing. It is quite possible, however, that another infection peak over the winter months, say, could result in measures which further limit service activity and significantly disrupt these trends. In this case our assumptions would prove to be over optimistic and income expectations would need to be downgraded accordingly.
- It is noted that the 2020/21 budget was set before Covid 19 was a consideration. Hence when we look at the major budget variances in section 2 below, we are comparing a pre Covid view of 2020/21 with a post Covid recovery scenario in 2021/22. Even without possible further disruption, income is not expected to recover to pre pandemic levels before the start of 2021/22, resulting in losses from budget year to budget year.
- The Collection Fund is another area of deep uncertainty. Collection rates have been impacted with some residents and businesses struggling to make payments on council tax and NNDR respectively. Whilst we have extrapolated the emerging trends, the robustness of this approach will be tested in the face of the risks mentioned above regarding rising infection rates; along with the ending of the original furlough scheme and a generally declining economy.
- In the face of these threats, Council funding has been supported by grants from government. So far £994k has been received in 3 tranches in Covid 19 emergency funding. A fourth tranche of £1 billion has just been announced and we are waiting to hear what the Mid Devon share of this will be. The Council has also benefited from the Job Protection Scheme and a first application of £608k has recently been made under the government's Income Compensation Scheme. There have also been hints at support in relation to collection fund losses although nothing more substantive as yet. There is however no indication from government that any of this support will continue into 2021/22. As stated above, significant income losses are expected to run into next year but there is no certainty as to how these will be funded.

1.5 Although the priority is to balance next year's budget, strategic decisions will need to be made to accommodate reduced or changes to funding going forward.

1.6 Based on years of public sector austerity many services can no longer continue to reduce cost and still be expected to deliver "business as usual". It is important to remember that some services are statutory and in some cases must breakeven, i.e. we cannot generate a profit. This restricts where savings/cuts can be imposed and section 8 below provides more details.

- 1.7 The proposed savings embodied in the draft budget will need to be agreed by Members, as every proposed saving that is rejected will need to be matched by a suggestion of where a similar saving could be made. Members will be aware that the budget is an evolving process. We have already made a range of assumptions relating to: pay awards, inflation, fees/charges, demand for services, property increases, etc. More information may well change/alter our assumptions in the months leading up to February, when the budget has to be finalised. So the current budget gap of £3.012M will be revised over the next few months, but it is based on the most current information, in conjunction with professional guidance that is available.
- 1.8 The Council continues to look at opportunities to reduce operational costs without immediately reducing service levels. However it remains a real possibility moving forward that some difficult decisions will have to be made relating to what the Council can and can't afford to deliver/support in the future.

2.0 The Draft 2021/22 Budget

- 2.1 The initial aggregation of all service budgets (which also includes assumptions surrounding predictions of interest receipts, contributions to our capital programme, transfers from/to reserves and Council Tax levels) currently indicates a General Fund budget gap of £3.012m (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 At this point it is worth summarising how we have arrived at this deficit. The table shown below shows the main budget variances affecting the 2021/22 draft budget.

Table 1 – Reconciliation of Major 2021/22 Budget Variances

Variances	Pressure £k	Saving £k
<i>Covid 19 Losses</i>		
Income - Leisure	644	
Income – Waste	66	
Income - Parking	58	
Income – Environmental Services (Licencing)	40	
Income - Planning	201	
Income – Council Tax Collection	46	
Income - Other	28	
	1,083	
Collection Fund – Council Tax	138	
Collection Fund - NNDR	405	
	543	
<i>Subtotal</i>	1,626	
<i>Operational</i>		
Income – Waste - SSA		-30
Income - Waste - Garden		-25
Inflationary increases (excl HRA shown below)	46	
Pay award and pension increases	266	

Pension lump sum increase	26	
Pay – CMT increment	39	
Pay – remove DOO (50%)		-46
Pay – CS – Pay movements	25	
Pay – CS – Pay movements - EMR utilisation (vulnerability grant re Customer Welfare Officer)		-15
Pay - FP – revert GM role to full time	13	
Pay – HG - Rough Sleeper Navigator Post & Rough Sleeper Housing Options Accommodation Officer	72	
Pay – HG – Housing Options Officer	38	
Pay – HG – EMR utilisation		-110
Pay – HR – JE's & officer joining the pension scheme	21	
Pay – PS – Climate Change Co-ordinator	23	
Pay – R&B - Restructure		-29
Pay – RS – Covid pressures	42	
Pay - Other	11	
Premises - Blue Frog cleaning contract additional cost	25	
Property Maintenance - 30 year programme	323	
Transport costs		-61
Software upgrade - Efin	52	
Cullompton HAZ – Costs net of grants	169	
Cullompton HAZ – EMR utilisation		-169
Local plan costs	78	
Local plan costs – EMR utilisation		-78
Crediton Masterplan	60	
Crediton Masterplan – EMR utilisation		-60
Garden Village Project	283	
Garden Village Project – EMR utilisation		-283
Other planning projects	64	
Other planning projects – EMR utilisation		-94
Net recharge to HRA (after inflationary increases etc.)		-44
	1,676	-1,044
Other		
Interest Receivable (3RDL + CCLA + Temp investments)		-133
Interest Payable		-123
Finance Lease Interest	111	
3 Rivers Impairment		-131
Capital MRP		-185
NHB - decrease	641	
NHB – EMR transfer		-641
Other EMR utilisation	1,162	
Other small variances	53	
	1,967	-1,213
	5,269	2,257

Deficit	3,012	
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2.3 In compiling the 2021/22 draft budget we have also examined budget performance during 2020/21 and then made any relevant budget corrections for staffing changes, levels of income, changes in legislation, increases in inflation, etc.

2.4 Due to the need to get budget information to all of the PDG and Cabinet meetings during October and November there are key issues that have not been resolved or are still to be fully evaluated. These issues may either improve or worsen the summary budget position currently reported and can be summarised as follows.

- Ongoing impact of Covid 19 on service activity and income streams
- Ongoing impact of Covid 19 and the economic consequences on collection fund receipts
- Further government announcements regarding financial support for the impacts of the pandemic.
- Provisional Finance Settlement in December
- Ongoing service reviews (including changes to fees/charges)

3.0 The Past

3.1 Just to remind Members of the financial journey the Council has been on since the austerity programme in 2010/11, here is a list of some of the challenges that have been presented to MDDC in balancing budgets during recent years.

- Net loss of £4.2m in Formula Grant
- Loss of funding for Housing Benefit admin and Regional Housing Pot removed circa £0.6m
- Council Tax freezes accepted for a number of years
- Costs associated with Local Plan
- Tax and pension related pressures including:
 - Pay award
 - Increased pension back-funding costs
 - Government mandated auto-enrolment to the Pension Scheme
 - National Insurance change
- Apprentice Levy introduced (currently c£49k)
- Covid 19 impacts across all budgets, significantly with regard to income and the collection fund.

3.2 The following lists just some of the actions taken by MDDC to mitigate these funding reductions.

- Significant efficiency agenda has led to service reductions amounting to over £2.5m
- Increased income has been generated by a number of services
 - Waste shared savings agreement with DCC
 - Garden Waste Scheme
 - Improved recycling scheme
- Increased commercialisation

- £200k profit from Market Walk and Fore Street properties
- Business Rates Devon Pool participation
- Set up a Special Purpose Vehicle to return profits to the General Fund, along with a margin on interest received
- Increasing CCLA holding to £5m
- Colocation with Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)
- Revised Car Parking Strategy in 2019/20
- Rationalising MDDC property estate, including depots, parks, toilets and car parks (which has involved significant work with third parties – especially Town and Parish Councils)
- Significant renewable energy investment across the corporate estate to reduce utility expenditure
- Joint working with North Devon DC as part of the Building Control Partnership and providing recent waste management support
- DCC Transfer Station located at Carlu Close

4.0 The Future

- 4.1 Already a lot of work has been undertaken to understand the current position, which indicates a draft budget gap of £3.012m. The task now is to develop our spending plans together with an associated funding plan so that we may deliver a balanced General Fund budget by February 2021 in order to formally set the Council Tax. The work with town and parish councils will continue.

5.0 Capital Programme

- 5.1 In addition to this revenue funding pressure, is our ongoing commitment to future capital programmes, not helped by the current low levels of capital receipts and the assumed future phasing out of New Homes Bonus funding stream. Even greater pressure may be placed on future programmes if additional borrowing is made to fund new Council Houses, Depots, Sport Centre and Town Centre enhancement works, etc.
- 5.2 The draft Capital Programme for 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 3. Excluding the HIF infrastructure schemes and further housing development projects, the size of our current and future capital programmes remains very small, due to the reductions in funding and level of sale receipts and now only includes material projects that are essential maintenance, or asset replacement or income generating/cost reducing.

6.0 The Autumn PDGs and Cabinet meetings

- 6.1 The first round of draft budget meetings will allow discussions with Members, Senior Management, Group Managers and Finance Officers in order to review the proposed draft 2021/22 budget. This will include scrutinising and challenging the initial position (and confirming acceptance of all proposed savings put forward) and discussing any other budget areas that Members would like to see additional savings from.
- 6.2 Before the next round of PDGs and Cabinet in January the Council will receive formal confirmation regarding its Formula Grant, other emerging legislative changes, more information regarding the 2020/21 budget performance etc. At

this point if any of the initial assumptions/estimates significantly worsen, then we will need to bring further savings options forward for consideration.

7.0 Public Consultation

7.1 Last year's consultation highlighted the most valued statutory services were:

1. Refuse Collection & Recycling - 93%
2. Street Cleaning - 59%
3. Planning & Building Control - 58%

And those least appreciated were:

1. Licencing - 11%
2. Electoral Services - 15%
3. Benefit Claim Processing - 20%

Similarly for discretionary services, the most valued were:

1. Parks, Playgrounds and Open Spaces - 69%
2. Town Centre Regeneration - 56%
3. Public Toilets - 48%

And least appreciated:

1. Tourism - 19%
2. CCTV - 28%
3. Outdoor Leisure eg tennis courts and football pitches - 34%

8.0 Statutory, Discretionary Services and the Level of Service Provision

8.1 Whilst the Council has a legal obligation to perform some activities, others are at the discretion of the elected members, subject to funding. Although some undertakings are clearly statutory and others clearly discretionary, there are some service areas that have elements of both.

8.2 The main *discretionary* services of the Council comprise:

- Business development (although a corporate priority)
- Community development (includes community group grants)
- Leisure facilities
- Parks and open spaces (identified as important to the public at 7.1)
- Shops and industrial units

What can we do to balance the budget?

8.3 An activity's net cost could be changed by one or more of these factors:

- a) Changing the frequency of service provision, for example 3 weekly waste collection
- b) Changing the quality, instead of a "Platinum service" we may be forced to offer a "Silver service"

- c) Rescheduling activities to less difficult years. This could apply to some aspects of property maintenance. However, with so many funding challenges ahead, it is not clear when the “less difficult years” might be. In the meantime, our capital assets would be declining and costs would likely escalate as a result.
- d) Reducing the overheads and maximising a lean approach to operations. Whilst this is already the case, we are always exploring new ways of working to improve service delivery and drive savings. One option would be to include a vacancy management policy although in many cases this already happens informally.
- e) Stopping the activity entirely
- f) Different models of service delivery (including partnership)

When considering options which contribute to balancing the budget, operational changes require careful planning, possible trials and implementation periods which add up to a lead time which, along with the costs of implementation, will likely reduce the benefit arising in 2021/22.

- 8.4 Over recent years, this Council has prudently built up its general fund reserve and associated ear marked reserves. These reserves have been built up to prudently provide for the maintenance of services to our residents. They also provide a financial buffer to weather any kind of temporary storm associated with changes to the FF review, business rate review and changes to NHB. Whilst nobody predicted the pandemic, its financial effects could justify utilising this contingency in order to maintain the delivery of critical services when our residents need them the most. If we do this, we must be mindful, that all the other challenges remain and must be met with reduced financial resilience.
- 8.5 Over the last five or six years the Authority has concentrated its efforts in maintaining frontline service levels across all sectors by reducing overheads and raising income. It is now clear that following those budgetary cuts some service areas are struggling to deliver their service plans, within their existing budgets. Indeed in a few cases external reviews have necessitated increasing the resources in a particular service area to meet our legal obligations.
- 8.6 **What options are available if something is *statutory*?** Although we cannot stop the function, we may be able to approach it differently in terms of frequency or quality.
- 8.7 Increasing fees (or start charging for a service). Some of our income streams are influenced by external market forces and in setting prices we have to be mindful of the going market rate. This option becomes further limited in the current environment of reduced demand and economic uncertainty. There is an opportunity to revisit legacy dual use agreements for leisure centres to ensure they represent good value for money. Aside from Council tax, the main income streams are:
 - Building control fees
 - Burial fees
 - Car park charges
 - Industrial unit rent
 - Leisure centre fees
 - Licence fees

- Market tolls
 - Shop rents
 - Planning fees
 - Trade waste fees
 - Garden waste
- 8.8 Any multi million pound business employing staff and utilising assets needs teams to support them and our frontline services are no different.
- 8.9 The key components, some statutory, others essential, include:
- Audit
 - Accountancy
 - Customer First
 - Procurement (Buying goods and services)
 - Human resources (Includes health and safety)
 - IT
 - Legal services
 - Property services
- 8.10 For example our waste service has to have vehicles and depots to operate from, both of which need to be maintained. The staff need to be managed, to be paid, and legislation provides for health and safety considerations. Depots and buildings such as Phoenix House are fixed costs, although even here we have created savings by renting out some space. The “back office” activities are therefore intrinsically linked to the “frontline” and savings from both areas continue to be made.
- 8.11 In section 2 we see that even under the assumption of ongoing recovery from the Covid 19 measures, this draft budget predicts losses arising from the pandemic in the region of £1.6m. Government has shown a willingness to assist local authorities through the worst effects of these difficult times, not least in the form of emergency grants and the Income Compensation Scheme. No announcement has yet been made relating to schemes which would alleviate pressures in 2021/22. However, with many local authorities unable to rely on their reserve base to get through the crisis, it is conceivable that further support will be forthcoming.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The feedback from all of the PDGs and Scrutiny will be reported to the January Cabinet for consideration in order to set a balanced 2021/22 budget. Faced with such a daunting budget gap this is likely to require difficult choices. The Medium Term Financial Plan is in process for presentation to Cabinet in December so that the savings programme for the next 4 years can be achieved based on the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan. Having identified possible savings, there will need to be careful consideration of their potential impact, probable lead times for delivery of that saving and any associated disengagement costs or possible ‘spend to save’ implications that would arise.

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Circulation of the Report: Leadership Team
Elected Members
Group Managers

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GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT DRAFT BUDGET SUMMARY 2021/22

	Budget 2020/2021	Movement	Draft Budget 2021/2022
Notes	£	£	£
Cabinet	5,433,721	292,620	5,726,341
Community	2,890,445	1,546,959	4,437,404
Economy	(549,012)	261,002	(288,010)
Environment	3,736,850	318,215	4,055,065
Homes	303,880	69,180	373,060
TOTAL NET DIRECT COST OF SERVICES	11,815,884	2,487,976	14,303,860
Net recharge to HRA	(1,481,630)	(44,449)	(1,526,079)
Provision for the financing of capital spending	1,052,154	(184,144)	868,010
NET COST OF SERVICES	11,386,408	2,259,383	13,645,791
PWLB Bank Loan Interest Payable			
Finance Lease Interest Payable	48,340	111,070	159,410
Interest from Funding provided for HRA	(49,000)	2,600	(46,400)
Interest Receivable / Payable on Other Activities	439,878	(122,998)	316,880
Interest Received on Investments	(568,322)	(135,968)	(704,290)
Transfers into Earmarked Reserves	2,597,050	(639,978)	1,957,072
Transfers from Earmarked Reserves	(1,369,370)	(169,025)	(1,538,395)
Proposed Contribution from New Homes Bonus Reserve	(960,540)	522,040	(438,500)
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURE	11,524,444	1,827,124	13,351,568
Funded by: -			
Revenue Support Grant	-	-	-
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(466,700)	-	(466,700)
New Homes Bonus	(1,418,190)	641,440	(776,750)
Retained Business Rates	(3,312,727)	255,320	(3,057,407)
Business Rates Pooling Dividend	(150,000)	150,000	-
CTS Funding Parishes	-	-	-
Collection Fund Surplus	(112,000)	112,000	-
Council Tax (28,239.34 x £213.84)	(6,064,827)	26,127	(6,038,700)
TOTAL FUNDING	(11,524,444)	1,184,887	(10,339,557)
REQUIREMENT TO BALANCE THE BUDGET	-	3,012,011	3,012,011

Current Assumptions: -

1. 2020/21 Salary budgets include an assumed increase of 2% across all spinal scale points.
2. Income flows have been reviewed and adjusted for changes in demand and unit price and so reflect the estimated impacts of the pandemic assuming recovery continues according to current trends.
3. Investment income has been based upon the existing lending criteria now in force.
4. Support services have been calculated in accordance with the annual process.
5. All earmarked reserves have been reviewed and adjustment made based upon existing need.
6. New Homes Bonus receipts based on existing legislation changes.
7. Retained Business Rates - s31 grant relating to 100% relief for Retail, hospitality and Leisure in 2020/21 will compensate for deficit brought forward and has been included in this line.
8. Any business rates deficit brought forward from 2020/21 is expected to be funded from EMR and so is not included as a pressure above.
9. It is assumed that in the shadow of Covid 19, there will be no dividend from the Devon Business Rates Pool in 2021/22.
10. Council Tax has been increased by £5 (the higher of £5 or 2%) from £208.84 to £213.84.
11. As with NNDR, any Council Tax deficit brought forward from 2020/21 is expected to be funded from EMR and so is not included as a pressure above.

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2021-22 BUDGETS

Appendix 2

Transfers into Earmarked Reserves

SERVICE	EMR		TOTAL	MAINTENANCE BUDGET	PLANT BUDGET	EQUIPMENT BUDGET	VEHICLES BUDGET	OTHER BUDGET	NEW HOMES BONUS
IE435	EQ653	NEW HOMES BONUS GRANT	776,752						776,752
PS990	EQ685	FORE STREET MAINT S.FUND	5,000	5,000					
PS992	EQ685	MARKET WALK MAINT S.FUND	20,000	20,000					
CP540	EQ686	PAYING CAR PARKS (MACHINE REPLACEMENT SINKING FU	3,000			3,000			
LD201	EQ720	ELECTION COSTS - DISTRICT	25,000					25,000	
LD300	EQ721	DEMOCRATIC REP & MANAGEMENT	5,000					5,000	
PR810	EQ728	STATUTORY DEVELOPMENT PLAN	100,000					100,000	
EQ754	EQ754	PHOENIX PRINTERS EQUIP SFUND	2,200			2,200			
EQ755	EQ755	ICT EQUIPMENT SINKING FUND	189,500			189,500			
EQ756	EQ756	FLEET CONTRACT FUND	559,600				559,600		
GM960	EQ760	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	15,820		15,820				
EQ761	EQ761	RECYCLING PLANT SFUND	20,000		20,000				
EQ763	EQ763	RECYCLING MAINTENANCE SINKING FUND	2,700	2,700					
PS880	EQ765	BUS STATION	5,000	5,000					
ES100	EQ766	CEMETERIES	25,000	25,000					
ES450	EQ767	PARKS & OPEN SPACES	25,000	25,000					
RS140	EQ837	LEISURE SINKING FUND	75,000			75,000			
PS980	EQ837	Property maintenance - new	100,000	100,000					
WS710	EQ839	WASTE PRESSURE WASHER	2,500			2,500			
TOTAL			1,957,072	182,700	35,820	272,200	559,600	130,000	776,752

2020/2021 Budget

2,597,050 182,700 34,360 272,200 559,600 130,000 1,418,190

Movement

(639,978) - 1,460 - - - (641,438)

2021-22 BUDGETS

Appendix 2

Transfers from Earmarked Reserves

SERVICE	EMR	Description	TOTAL	UTILISE NHB	OTHER
EQ638	EQ638	DEV CONT LINEAR PARK	(4,170)		(4,170)
EQ640	EQ640	W52 POPHAM CLOSE COMM FUND	(1,950)		(1,950)
EQ641	EQ641	W67 MOORHAYES COM DEV FUND	(1,630)		(1,630)
EQ642	EQ642	W69 FAYRECROFT WILLAND EX WEST	(4,620)		(4,620)
EQ643	EQ643	W70 DEVELOPERS CONTRIBUTION	(6,650)		(6,650)
EQ644	EQ644	DEV CONT WINSWOOD CREDITON	(3,080)		(3,080)
ES733	EQ652	PUBLIC HEALTH	(65,400)		(65,400)
PR402	EQ652	CULLOMPTON HAZ	(15,000)		(15,000)
CD200	EQ653	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	(45,000)	(45,000)	
PR400	EQ653	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	(80,000)	(80,000)	
EQ755	EQ653	ICT EQUIPMENT SINKING FUND	(189,500)	(189,500)	
PR402	EQ653	CULLOMPTON HAZ	(124,000)	(124,000)	
CM300	EQ653	CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	(58,000)		(58,000)
PR402	EQ722	CULLOMPTON HAZ	(30,000)		(30,000)
PR810	EQ726	BROWNFIELD SHARED PLAN	(36,263)		(36,263)
PR400	EQ728	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	(60,000)		(60,000)
PR810	EQ728	STATUTORY DEVELOPMENT PLAN	(86,270)		(86,270)
PR810	EQ729	CUSTOM & SELF BUILD	(45,000)		(45,000)
HG320	EQ742	HOMELESSNESS EMR	(160,740)		(160,740)
FP100	EQ755	ICT EQUIPMENT SINKING FUND	(20,000)		(20,000)
EQ756	EQ756	FLEET CONTRACT FUND	(524,060)		(524,060)
CS932	EQ766	CUSTOMER FIRST	(19,362)		(19,362)
PR810	EQ821	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING FUNDING	(13,200)		(13,200)
PR225	EQ824	GARDEN VILLAGE PROJECT	(338,000)		(338,000)
LD100	NEW	ELECTIONS	(45,000)		(45,000)
	EQ740	RELEASING OF RESERVES TO FUND THE 21/22 GF BUDGET	-		
APPENDIX ONE SUB TOTAL			(1,976,895)	-438,500	(1,538,395)
IE440	EQ659	NNDR Smoothing EMR	(2,976,607)		(2,976,607)
IE420	NEW	C/TAX SMOOTHING EMR	(180,653)		(180,653)
TOTAL			(5,134,155)	(438,500)	(4,695,655)

2020/2021 Budget

(2,329,910) (960,540) (1,369,370)

Movement

(2,804,245) 522,040 (3,326,285)

Note:

- EMR reserves will be created in 2020/21 for Collection Fund deficits arising from Covid 19. These reserves will then be released in 2021/22 from the NNDR Smoothing Fund and the Council Tax Smoothing Fund to offset the realisation of these deficits.
- The NNDR release of £2.98m includes £2.5m being that deficit arising from the Retail Hospitality and Leisure 100% Relief Scheme which has been funded by s31 grants.
- These deficits and their associated EMR releases offset and are not therefore included in Appendix 1. This leaves only budget year impacts and thus aids clarity.

MDDC Budget - Draft 1 Capital Program

Appendix 3

Estimated
2021/22
£k

Exe Valley Leisure Centre

Evlc - Boilers and CHP	122
Evlc - Fitness Studio renewal of equipment	153

Culm Valley sports centre

Cvsc - remodelling dance studio *	153
Cvsc - Squash court conversion to fitness *	204

**Subject to the ongoing discussions with the school/DCC regarding dual use.*

MDDC Shops/industrial Units

Market Walk Unit 17 - remodelling options	510
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Other Projects

Hydromills Electricity generation Project - Tiverton Weir	800
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HIF Schemes

Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road (HIF bid)	4,141
Tiverton EUE A361 Junction Phase 2 (HIF bid)	4,700

ICT Projects

Additional Unified Communications budget	30
Hardware replacement of Network Core Switch	80

Private Sector Housing Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants–P/Sector	577
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Other General Fund Development Projects

Other projected 3 Rivers Borrowing*	651
3 Rivers Scheme - Riverside Development (rear of Town Hall) Tiverton*	358

3 Rivers scheme - Knowle Lane, Cullompton (note slippage from 20/21 will fund planned spend in 21/22)*	0
Waddeton Park, Post Hill, Tiverton (note slippage from 20/21 will fund planned spend in 21/22)	0

TOTAL GF OTHER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS 1,009

**To be updated after the Cabinet meeting 29/10 considering the company's interim trading request.*

HRA Projects

Existing Housing Stock

Major repairs to Housing Stock	2,275
Renewable Energy Fund	250
Home Adaptations - Disabled Facilities	300

* Housing Development Schemes

HRA Building Schemes - to be identified (note slippage from 20/21 will fund schemes in 21/22)	0
Garages Block - Redevelopment	408
Affordable Housing/ Purchase of ex RTB	500

** Proposed Council House Building / Other schemes subject to full appraisal - update to Homes PDG & next Cabinet meeting.*

HRA ICT Projects

GRAND TOTAL GF + HRA Projects 16,212

Estimated
2021/22
£k

MDDC Funding Summary

General Fund

	2021/22
EXISTING FUNDS	£k
Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve	577
Capital Receipts Reserve	70
NHB Funding	1,030
Other Earmarked Reserves	152
HIF Funding	8,358
Other Funding	0
Subtotal	10,187
NEW FUNDS	
PWLB Borrowing	2,292
Revenue Contributions	0
Subtotal	2,292
Total General Fund Funding	12,479

Housing Revenue Account

	2021/22
EXISTING FUNDS	£k
Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve	0
Capital Receipts Reserve	1,115
NHB Funding	21
HRA Housing Maintenance Fund	0
Other Housing Earmarked Reserves	2,597
Subtotal	3,733
NEW FUNDS	
PWLB Borrowing	0
Revenue Contributions	0
Subtotal	0
Total Housing Revenue Account Funding	3,733

TOTAL FUNDING	16,212
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PDG SERVICE UNIT MOVEMENTS

APPENDIX 4

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY		Budget Net Direct Cost	Current Budgeted Net Direct Cost	Movement	+/- %
		2020/21	2021/22		
	Cabinet				
SCM01	Leadership Team	442,690	414,540	(28,150)	-6.4%
SCM02	Corporate Functions	86,790	89,770	2,980	3.4%
SCM03	Corporate Fees/Charges	365,110	302,060	(63,050)	-17.3%
SCM06	Pension Backfunding	753,571	779,690	26,119	3.5%
SES01	Emergency Planning	7,500	8,150	650	
SFP01	Accountancy Services	436,790	543,590	106,800	24.5%
SFP02	Internal Audit	92,100	94,410	2,310	2.5%
SFP03	Procurement	121,580	112,660	(8,920)	-7.3%
SFP04	Purchase Ledger	47,320	46,500	(820)	-1.7%
SFP05	Sales Ledger	46,210	45,360	(850)	-1.8%
SHR01	Human Resources	377,680	378,570	890	0.2%
SHR02	Mddc Staff Training	33,750	29,870	(3,880)	-11.5%
SHR03	Payroll	48,870	50,880	2,010	4.1%
SHR04	Learning And Development	53,190	48,530	(4,660)	-8.8%
SIT01	It Gazetteer Management	74,880	71,800	(3,080)	-4.1%
SIT03	It Information Technology	919,770	977,590	57,820	6.3%
SLD01	Electoral Registration	203,830	224,019	20,189	9.9%
SLD02	Democratic Rep And Management	490,630	506,910	16,280	3.3%
SLD04	Legal Services	357,890	375,672	17,782	5.0%
SPR01	Building Regulations	(6,430)	47,580	54,010	-840.0%
SPR04	Local Land Charges	(19,200)	(16,050)	3,150	-16.4%
SRB01	Collection Of Council Tax	397,010	430,870	33,860	8.5%
SRB02	Collection Of Business Rates	(103,370)	(105,360)	(1,990)	1.9%
SRB03	Housing Benefit Admin & Fraud	132,520	131,300	(1,220)	-0.9%
SRB04	Housing Benefit Subsidy	5,000	65,000	60,000	1200.0%
SRB06	Debt Recovery	68,040	72,430	4,390	6.5%
		5,433,721	5,726,341	292,620	363.4%
	Community PDG				
SCD01	Community Development	77,650	154,150	76,500	98.5%
SCS20	Customer Services Admin	23,350	23,350	-	0.0%
SCS22	Customer First	716,935	755,120	38,185	5.3%
SES03	Community Safety - C.C.T.V.	6,010	43,590	37,580	625.3%
SES04	Public Health	3,990	3,990	-	0.0%
SES11	Pool Cara	1,280	280	(1,000)	N/A
SES16	Es Staff Units/Recharges	788,210	805,600	17,390	2.2%
SES17	Community Safety	6,220	6,220	-	0.0%
SES18	Food Safety	(25,070)	(24,200)	870	-3.5%
SES21	Licensing	14,400	50,840	36,440	253.1%
SES22	Pest Control	5,000	5,000	0	0.0%
SES23	Pollution Reduction	(650)	(580)	70	-10.8%
SPR02	Enforcement	110,370	93,420	(16,950)	-15.4%
SPR03	Development Control	357,990	856,440	498,450	139.2%
SPR09	Forward Planning	270,620	270,570	(50)	0.0%
SPR11	Regional Planning	99,390	248,273	148,883	149.8%
SRS01	Recreation And Sport	434,750	1,145,341	710,591	163.4%
		2,890,445	4,437,404	1,546,959	53.5%
	Economy PDG				
SCD02	Economic Development - Markets	60,640	81,020	20,380	33.6%
SCP01	Parking Services	(632,962)	(529,250)	103,712	-16.4%
SPR06	Economic Development	427,810	561,280	133,470	31.2%
SPS12	GF Properties Shops / Flats	(404,500)	(401,060)	3,440	-0.9%
		(549,012)	(288,010)	261,002	-47.5%

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY		Budget Net Direct Cost	Current Budgeted Net Direct Cost	Movement	+/- %
		2020/21	2021/22		
	Environment PDG				
SES02	Cemeteries	(85,300)	(62,110)	23,190	-27.2%
SES05	Open Spaces	126,120	236,220	110,100	87.3%
SGM01	Grounds Maintenance	567,810	560,176	(7,634)	-1.3%
SPS01	Asset Management	40,000	40,000	0	0.0%
SPS03	Flood Defence And Land Drain	26,430	26,430	0	0.0%
SPS04	Street Naming & Numbering	7,830	7,940	110	1.4%
SPS05	Administration Buildings	241,380	324,420	83,040	34.4%
SPS06	Mddc Depots	38,190	74,990	36,800	96.4%
SPS07	Public Transport	(15,690)	(15,280)	410	-2.6%
SPS08	Office Building Cleaning	62,250	0	(62,250)	-100.0%
SPS09	Property Services Staff Unit	687,640	729,530	41,890	6.1%
SPS11	Public Conveniences	50,710	63,980	13,270	26.2%
SWS01	Street Cleansing	449,720	424,150	(25,570)	-5.7%
SWS02	Waste Collection	290,450	302,399	11,949	4.1%
SWS03	Recycling	879,630	967,470	87,840	10.0%
SWS04	Waste Management	369,680	374,750	5,070	1.4%
		3,736,850	4,055,065	318,215	8.5%
	Homes PDG				
SES15	Private Sector Housing Grants	(11,640)	(3,890)	7,750	-66.6%
SHG03	Homelessness Accommodation	315,520	376,950	61,430	19.5%
		303,880	373,060	69,180	22.8%
	GRAND TOTAL	11,815,884	14,303,860	2,487,976	21.06%

SCM01 Leadership Team

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	506,234	440,670	406,520	(34,150)
3000	Transport	1,611	3,010	2,010	(1,000)
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	7,567	6,010	6,010	0
7000	Income	(7,182)	(7,000)	0	7,000
	Sum:	508,229	442,690	414,540	(28,150)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
CM100	Leadership Team	414,540
	Sum:	414,540

Major cost increases

0.50 FTE salary saving in part offset by salary inflation.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

SCM02 Corporate Functions

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	106,752	86,090	89,070	2,980
3000	Transport	297	200	200	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	2,782	500	500	0
7000	Income	(43,071)	0	0	0
	Sum:	66,759	86,790	89,770	2,980

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
CM210	Performance, Governance & Data	89,770
CM220	Brexit	0
CM800	Tiverton Hub	0
	Sum:	89,770

Major cost increases

No significant variance to report

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

SCM03 Corporate Fees

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	53,427	56,960	58,090	1,130
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	987,377	176,900	243,970	67,070
7000	Income	58,890	131,250	0	(131,250)
	Sum:	1,099,695	365,110	302,060	(63,050)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
CM300	Corporate Fees	293,060
CM340	Unison	9,000
	Sum:	302,060

Major cost increases

£58k in respect of digital platform for CRM

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Removal of 3 Rivers impairment £131k in respect of the Working Capital loan.

SCM06 Pension Backfunding

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	1,691,667	752,171	778,290	26,119
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	0	1,400	1,400	0
	Sum:	1,691,667	753,571	779,690	26,119

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
CM600	Pension Backfunding	779,690
	Sum:	779,690

Major cost increases

Additional Pension back funding contributions (year 2 of 3 year agreed cost)

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

SES01 Emergency Planning

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	7,510	7,500	8,150	650
	Sum:	7,510	7,500	8,150	650

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
ES500	Emergency Planning	8,150
	Sum:	8,150

Major cost increases

None.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

None.

SFP01 Accountancy Services

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	399,170	368,980	424,260	55,280
3000	Transport	1,293	700	700	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	53,048	67,710	119,630	51,920
7000	Income	(7,754)	(600)	(1,000)	(400)
	Sum:	445,757	436,790	543,590	106,800

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
FP100	Accountancy Services	543,590
	Sum:	543,590

Major cost increases

Salary increase due to Apprentice post moved from Procurement into this budget, CMT uplift, increased hours for vacant GM post & increased overtime budget.

Increased cost of goods and services budget is due to the upgrade of E-Financials.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SFP02 Internal Audit

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	88,991	92,100	94,410	2,310
	Sum:	88,991	92,100	94,410	2,310

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
FP200	Internal Audit	94,410
	Sum:	94,410

Major cost increases

None.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

None.

SFP03 Procurement

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	105,355	116,690	107,700	(8,990)
3000	Transport	531	400	400	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	3,954	4,490	4,560	70
	Sum:	109,840	121,580	112,660	(8,920)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
FP300	Procurement	112,660
	Sum:	112,660

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Apprentice post has been moved into Accountancy Services budget.

SFP04 Purchase Ledger

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	40,693	44,610	43,760	(850)
3000	Transport	51	40	40	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	2,744	2,670	2,700	30
	Sum:	43,488	47,320	46,500	(820)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
FP400	Purchase Ledger	46,500
	Sum:	46,500

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SFP05 Sales Ledger

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	41,987	44,610	43,760	(850)
3000	Transport	51	30	30	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	1,788	1,570	1,570	0
	Sum:	43,827	46,210	45,360	(850)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
FP500	Sales Ledger	45,360
	Sum:	45,360

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SHR01 Human Resources

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	340,275	320,220	349,060	28,840
3000	Transport	3,006	2,970	2,820	(150)
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	30,241	54,490	26,690	(27,800)
7000	Income	(3,260)	0	0	0
	Sum:	370,263	377,680	378,570	890

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
HR100	Human Resources	338,980
HR500	Health & Wellbeing	0
HR600	Health & Safety Officer	39,590
	Sum:	378,570

Major cost increases

Increased Employee costs are a result of a restructure within HR and CMT uplift.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Reduction in the software budget due to no planned system upgrade during 21-22.

SHR02 Mddc Staff Training

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	32,580	33,750	29,870	(3,880)
7000	Income	(3,875)	0	0	0
	Sum:	28,705	33,750	29,870	(3,880)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
HR200	Staff Development Training	29,870
	Sum:	29,870

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SHR03 Payroll

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	48,920	48,670	50,680	2,010
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	20	200	200	0
	Sum:	48,940	48,870	50,880	2,010

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
HR300	Payroll	50,880
	Sum:	50,880

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SHR04 Learning And Development

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	36,825	41,620	38,030	(3,590)
3000	Transport	391	380	380	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	10,171	11,190	10,120	(1,070)
	Sum:	47,387	53,190	48,530	(4,660)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
HR400	Learning & Development	48,530
	Sum:	48,530

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SIT01 It Gazetteer Management

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	67,995	70,670	67,470	(3,200)
3000	Transport	64	50	50	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	4,377	4,160	4,280	120
	Sum:	72,436	74,880	71,800	(3,080)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
IT100	Gazetteer Management	71,800
	Sum:	71,800

Major cost increases

None.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

None.

SIT03 It Information Technology

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	535,368	520,200	531,760	11,560
3000	Transport	1,792	970	970	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	418,468	399,200	445,460	46,260
7000	Income	(4,170)	(600)	(600)	0
	Sum:	951,458	919,770	977,590	57,820

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
IT300	Central Telephones	41,500
IT400	I.T. Network & Hardware	98,140
IT500	I.T. Software Support & Maint.	237,860
IT600	I.T. Staff Unit	332,750
IT700	Cyber Security	43,690
IT800	Phoenix House Printing	11,300
IT900	Digital Services	212,350
	Sum:	977,590

Major cost increases

Increased cost due to a one off installation fee of 20k for computer hardware, increased broadband width provision and additional line rental due to delays in the transfer to the new system.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

None.

SLD01 Electoral Registration

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	112,937	112,570	115,599	3,029
3000	Transport	384	300	300	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	90,254	115,960	115,960	0
7000	Income	(38,119)	(25,000)	(7,840)	17,160
	Sum:	165,457	203,830	224,019	20,189

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
LD100	Electoral Registration	224,019
	Sum:	224,019

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SLD02 Democratic Rep And Management

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	129,954	125,610	133,230	7,620
3000	Transport	16,981	17,100	17,100	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	328,776	348,420	357,080	8,660
7000	Income	(2,661)	(500)	(500)	0
	Sum:	473,050	490,630	506,910	16,280

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
LD300	Democratic Rep & Management	375,440
LD400	Committee Services	131,470
	Sum:	506,910

Major cost increases

Only increases are down to pay award for staff & members.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

None

SLD04 Legal Services

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	281,549	329,020	351,802	22,782
3000	Transport	334	300	300	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	54,574	47,770	42,770	(5,000)
7000	Income	(28,815)	(19,200)	(19,200)	0
	Sum:	307,642	357,890	375,672	17,782

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
LD600	Legal Services	375,672
	Sum:	375,672

Major cost increases

Post of Legal Services Team Leader created, uplift of salary for LT and pay award increases.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Reduction in software costs

SPR01 Building Regulations

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	216,527	208,700	216,410	7,710
3000	Transport	14,075	14,390	14,390	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	15,496	10,480	17,780	7,300
7000	Income	(274,204)	(240,000)	(201,000)	39,000
	Sum:	(28,106)	(6,430)	47,580	54,010

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
PR100	Building Regulations	45,840
PR900	Dangerous Buildings And Trees	1,740
	Sum:	47,580

Major cost increases

None

Major cost decreases and changes in income

PR100 - Income £39k, reduction based on Covid19 recovery and increase of 2% on fees.

SPR04 Local Land Charges

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	59,782	56,200	57,730	1,530
3000	Transport	128	100	100	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	27,491	44,500	44,620	120
7000	Income	(118,376)	(120,000)	(118,500)	1,500
	Sum:	(30,975)	(19,200)	(16,050)	3,150

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
PR210	Local Land Charges	(16,050)
	Sum:	(16,050)

Major cost increases

Only increases are down to pay award for staff.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

SRB01 Collection Of Council Tax

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	338,753	367,610	359,420	(8,190)
2000	Premises	975	0	0	0
3000	Transport	4,258	4,070	4,200	130
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	138,170	134,130	130,250	(3,880)
7000	Income	(113,648)	(108,800)	(63,000)	45,800
	Sum:	368,509	397,010	430,870	33,860

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
RB100	Collection Of Council Tax	430,870
RB800	Ctax Hardship Fund	0
	Sum:	430,870

Major cost increases

0.78 FTE salary saving in part offset by salary inflation.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Forecast reduction of £40k in Court Costs income and £10k in Single Occupancy Discount Penalty income - linked to COVID19 Pandemic and resulting sensitivity on recovery and effect on number of Courts and the volumes they can cope with.

SRB02 Collection Of Business Rates

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	88	90	90	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	6,555	6,760	6,660	(100)
7000	Income	(120,957)	(110,220)	(112,110)	(1,890)
	Sum:	(114,314)	(103,370)	(105,360)	(1,990)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
RB200	Collection Of Business Rates	(105,360)
RB700	Nndr - Business Support Grant	0
	Sum:	(105,360)

Major cost increases

No significant variance to report

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

SRB03 Housing Benefit Admin & Fraud

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	319,731	266,260	262,050	(4,210)
3000	Transport	160	600	230	(370)
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	82,906	80,410	89,070	8,660
7000	Income	(308,094)	(214,750)	(220,050)	(5,300)
	Sum:	94,702	132,520	131,300	(1,220)

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
RB300	Housing Benefit Admin	116,300
RB340	Local Welfare Assist Scheme	15,000
RB900	Economic Vuln&Financial H/Ship	0
	Sum:	131,300

Major cost increases

0.30 FTE salary saving in part offset by salary inflation.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

SRB04 Housing Benefit Subsidy

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	13,547,856	11,651,970	12,975,160	1,323,190
7000	Income	(13,417,592)	(11,646,970)	(12,910,160)	(1,263,190)
	Sum:	130,264	5,000	65,000	60,000

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
RB400	Housing Rent Allowances	65,000
	Sum:	65,000

Major cost increases

Forecast Housing Benefit payments have been realigned to reflect current and projected spend; although it remains difficult to predict how many claims will move to Universal Credit and what the increase in claims will be as a result of the COVID19 Pandemic.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Forecast Housing Benefit Subsidy income has been realigned to reflect current and projected spend in this area & also to factor in uncertainty with further claims moving to Universal Credit and additional claims as a result of the COVID 19 Pandemic

SRB06 Debt Recovery

Group	Description	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	125,128	65,720	69,770	4,050
3000	Transport	226	0	240	240
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	2,452	2,320	2,420	100
	Sum:	127,806	68,040	72,430	4,390

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
RB600	Revenues Misc Income Team	72,430
	Sum:	72,430

Major cost increases

No significant variance to report

Major cost decreases and changes in income

No significant variance to report

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HOMES PDG 2021/22 Service Unit Budgets - GF

Summary of PDG

Service Unit	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
SES15 Private Sector Housing Grants	(443,336)	(11,640)	(3,890)	7,750
SHG03 Homelessness Accommodation	29,235	315,520	376,950	61,430
	TOTALS	(414,101)	303,880	373,060
				69,180

HOMES PDG 2021/22 Service Unit Budgets

SES15 Private Sector Housing Grants

Group	Description	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	0	0	0	0
3000	Transport	350	0	0	0
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	10,701	1,860	1,860	0
7000	Income	(454,387)	(13,500)	(5,750)	7,750
	Sum:	(443,336)	(11,640)	(3,890)	7,750

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
ES354	Private Sector Housing Team	(3,890)
	TOTAL	(3,890)

Major cost increases

Major cost decreases and changes in income

Reduction in Financial Penalties income due to restrictions applied to charging notices from the pandemic.

SHG03 Homelessness Accommodation

Group	Description	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Movement
1000	Employees	272,573	325,730	370,240	44,510
2000	Premises	5,032	8,020	23,180	15,160
3000	Transport	13,942	12,420	8,170	(4,250)
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	447,703	455,170	402,940	(52,230)
7000	Income	(710,016)	(485,820)	(427,580)	58,240
	Sum:	29,235	315,520	376,950	61,430

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Name	2021/22 Budget
HG320	Housing & Homelessness Advice	111,080
HG345	Rough Sleeping Initiative	92,940
HG350	Community Alarms	(114,360)
HG373	Housing Options Staff	256,440
HG376	Ivor Macey House Project	30,850
	TOTAL	376,950

Major cost increases

HG345 - Salaries £32.5k, an addition of a Rough Sleeper Navigator.

HG376 - Premises costs £15k, realigned from goods and services.

Major cost decreases and changes in income

HG320 - Income £15k, loss of Discretionary Rent Allowance grant.

HG320 - Good and Services £35k consultancy costs removed with the addition of the Rough Sleeper Navigator.

HG345 - Income £39k - loss of external grant funding which was only for 2 years.

HG376 - Goods and Services £15k of costs realigned to premises.

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HOMES PDG 10 NOVEMBER 2020

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2021/22 AND ONWARDS

Cabinet Member: Cllr Bob Evans (Housing), Cllr Andrew Moore (Finance)
Responsible Officer: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Simon Newcombe – Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services

Reason for Report: To present proposals for the first draft of the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/22 and the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021 to 2026.

Recommendation: That members of the PDG consider the draft proposals for 2021/22 and note the proposed balanced position on both the budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan at this time.

Financial Implications: The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) currently has a proposed balanced budget for the year 2021/22 and proposals for further years of balanced budgets to 2026.

Budget and Policy Framework: This report forms part of the Council's annual process of setting balanced budgets across all areas of income and expenditure.

Legal Implications: It is a statutory requirement for the Local Authority to set a balanced budget each year

Risk Assessment: Service Managers and Finance staff have assessed volatility in income and large contractor budgets, taking account of current and estimated future demand patterns. In addition prudent levels of reserves will also continue to be maintained.

Equality Impact Assessment: It is considered that the impact of this report on equality related issues will be nil.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The financial resources of the Council impact directly on its ability to deliver the Corporate Plan; prioritising the use of available resources brought forward and any future spending will be closely linked to key Council pledges from the updated Corporate Plan.

Impact on Climate Change: It is considered that the impact of this report on climate change related issues will be nil.

1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The HRA is a ring-fenced account within Mid Devon's financial accounting system. This means that a balanced budget must be set each year including all income and expenditure pertinent to the Council's landlord function and excluding all other income and expenditure (since this would be captured as part of the General Fund budget).

- 1.2 This report will set out management's proposals for a draft HRA budget for 2021/22 and members will see from Appendix 1 that, as it stands, the budget has been balanced and so nets to nil. The report will outline the key issues affecting the HRA today, along with how they impact on the setting of a budget for 2021/22. The report will go on to make recommendations to members to note its content and to highlight issues expected to affect the HRA in the future.

2.0 **Key Issues**

COVID-19

- 2.1 The global pandemic that has been experienced so far in 2020 and continues to be experienced across our region and others has had an obvious and significant impact on the local economy. There have been impacts on every activity that occurs within the HRA, from the Council's ability to collect income to void turnaround times. As a result the impact can be seen in every area of budget setting in this HRA report. It should be noted that, although the financial impact of COVID-19 has been seen mostly during 2020/21, this is not reflected in the 2020/21 budget since that was agreed prior to the pandemic. Thus, we are comparing a pre-COVID budget (2020/21) with a COVID-recovery budget (2021/22).
- 2.2 At present it is unclear how and when many economic uncertainties will be resolved and so medium term planning is also affected. The HRA Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is included as appendix 4 and is based on the draft budget for 2021/22 with inflationary assumptions built in for future years.

Rent Policy

- 2.3 Rent policy set out by central government states that existing rents must be increased annually by the previous September's CPI rate, plus an additional 1%. Although this calculation has been applied (giving a rent increase of 1.5%) the overall increase in dwelling rent budget is only 0.2%. The reasons for this are as follows.
- Increased void turnaround times mean that more properties sit empty at any one time, thus generating no rent.
 - Income collection has become more challenging since the pandemic impacted and this could lead to increased write-offs of arrears.
 - Similarly, the transition to Universal Credit means that some rents that would have been received automatically are now recoverable from the tenant. Where tenants suffer a financial impact from the current climate, arrears are likely to increase with the potential for further write-offs, which represent a cost to the Council.
- 2.4 It is unclear at this stage precisely to what extent our arrears will be affected and for what duration. For purposes of this draft budget it has been assumed that arrears will continue to rise during 2021 and that it may therefore be necessary to increase the bad debt provision at the end of March 2022. A budget to increase the bad debt provision by £150k has been proposed.

Other Income

- 2.5 The garage rents budget is based on rent levels remaining at £10.71 per week (based on a 52 week year) and customer numbers remaining at current levels.

Should customer numbers change significantly there would clearly be an impact on the budget position, either adverse or favourable.

- 2.6 Due to the current economic climate it is proposed to keep garage ground rents at their current level, £275 per annum. This can be reviewed in a year's time when we may have more economic certainty.

- 2.7 Income generated from interest where cash balances have been invested have performed reasonably well over recent years. However, the financial markets have taken a significant dip during 2020 and so cash balances are not generating such high returns. For this reason the budget target has been reduced by 40% and it is hoped that this will be achievable in 2021/22.

Building Services operation carrying out Major, Cyclical and non-HRA works

- 2.8 Each year any low demand periods experienced by our operatives are put to good use by carrying out works that might otherwise require Mid Devon to use an external contractor and so incur additional cost. In doing so, the Repairs team are able to transfer a significant amount of their costs to the relevant area and so reduce the overall Repairs team budget.

- 2.9 For 2021/22, the Building Services team have budgeted to carry out major voids upgrades, installations of both traditional and renewable heating systems as well as other major work and cyclical servicing and remedial fixes. This should result in a transfer of £1,265k of their costs to other areas as well as £619k of disabled adaptations work.

Staffing costs

- 2.10 The corporate management lead for housing is currently working with both HRA service areas and Cabinet lead to develop proposals for a restructuring to create a combined 'One housing' HRA service. Any restructure will therefore bring together Housing and Building Services and is aimed at ensuring a sustainable HRA is in place capable of delivering further service improvements. This will be subject to a business case and wider consultation in due course but may have a positive impact on staffing costs as the service transitions during 21/22 and be more clearly shown in the budget for 22/23 onwards.

- 2.11 In 2021/22 there is a proposal to create two new roles within Housing and Tenancy Services, totalling an additional £78k if approved. The Repairs team are carrying some vacancies at present and it is anticipated that these will be filled. It is also anticipated that in 2021/22 the expenditure on materials and contractors will return to levels similar to 2019/20 and so increases in those budgets are required to meet this need.

Housing Maintenance Fund

- 2.12 Any surpluses generated by the HRA are used to contribute to the Housing Maintenance Fund (HMF). This fund is designed to meet any spikes in the cost of major works in the HRA's plan to 2048. In order to balance the 2021/22 proposed budget, it is proposed that the contribution to the HMF be reduced accordingly by £445k.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTEP)

- 2.13 The HRA MTFP is based on the proposed budget for 2021/22, with assumptions and any known future events used to determine a forecast of both expenditure and income for the period from April 2021 to March 2026.
- 2.14 Rent has been assumed to grow at an average of 1.5% per annum, which is the same as rent increase for 2021/22. Under the current rent setting policy this would mean the Consumer Price Index (CPI) growing by only 0.5% each year.
- 2.15 It is assumed that the costs of providing both the repairs and tenancy services will rise by 2% per year on average. This would lead to the combined cost of these services rising from £5.3m to £5.8m during the term of this forecast. For 2021/22 the budget for movements in bad debt provision has seen a significant rise to £150k. Assuming some measure of economic stability emerges it seems likely that such large increases will not be needed each year and this budget is therefore reduced by 20% each year.
- 2.16 When all of these assumptions are taken into account, the amount available to transfer to the HRA's earmarked reserves should grow from £1.6m to £2.2m during the term. Managers will continue to review this position in order to make policy decisions and allocate funds appropriately.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that members of the group consider the proposals for this draft HRA budget and MTFP along with the details laid out in this report. It is also recommended that members note that this report proposes a balanced budget for 2021/22. This is positive in that it means that there are no savings yet to be found to balance the budget.
- 3.2 However, it should be noted that some items within the budget may change between now and the final budget being agreed by Full Council and these changes could come as a result of members' suggestions, management proposals or central government instructions.

4.0 Future Issues

- 4.1 Following 2021/22, there will be three further years of the September CPI plus 1% rent increases. After that, it is unclear what rent policy central government will set out for us to follow. Clearly, there is great uncertainty of how costs of running the service will increase with inflation over the coming years and so it is hoped that rent collected will be sufficient to meet the needs of the service.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 This report has set out a proposed balanced budget for the HRA for 2021/22, with appendices attached showing the following.
1. The overall makeup of the budget at summary level
 2. The proposed rent for 2021/22
 3. An extract from the Planned & Cyclical Maintenance budget

4. The HRA Medium Term Financial Plan 2021-26

- 5.2 It has been recommended above that members note the contents of this report and details of the proposed budget. A further set of proposals will be brought before this group in January 2021 prior to approval by Full Council in February 2021.

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Circulation of the Report: Cllr Bob Evans, Cllr Andrew Moore, Leadership Team

List of Background Papers: N/A

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Appendix 1

Analysis by service

Code	Best Value Unit	PY Outturn	CY YTD Actuals	CY FY Budget	Movement	Proposed Budget
	Income					
SHO01	Dwelling Rents Income	(12,100,184)	(4,946,102)	(12,366,750)	(22,070)	(12,388,820)
SHO04	Non Dwelling Rents Income	(569,283)	(249,320)	(595,720)	33,880	(561,840)
SHO07	Leaseholders' Charges For Services	(25,310)	(120)	(21,640)	(2,170)	(23,810)
SHO08	Contributions Towards Expenditure	(106,520)	(117,463)	(29,220)	0	(29,220)
SHO10	H.R.A. Investment Income	(110,480)	0	(53,000)	21,200	(31,800)
SHO11	Misc. Income	(18,540)	(4,325)	(7,350)	0	(7,350)
SHO11	Capital Contributions relating to Palmerston Park	(733,519)	0	0	0	0
	Services					
SHO13A	Repairs & Maintenance	3,047,088	1,408,314	3,593,980	69,290	3,663,270
SHO17A	Housing & Tenancy Services	1,312,242	656,949	1,485,620	191,020	1,676,640
	Accounting entries 'below the line'					
SHO29	Bad Debt Provision	134,644	0	53,000	97,000	150,000
SHO30	Share Of Corp And Dem	196,867	161,278	162,640	5,400	168,040
SHO32	H.R.A. Interest Payable	1,117,741	0	1,115,180	0	1,115,180
SHO34	H.R.A. Transfer To/From Earmarked Reserves	1,438,844	0	2,072,410	(444,500)	1,627,910
SHO36	H.R.A. R.C.C.O.	859,027	0	0	0	0
SHO37	Capital Receipts Res Adjustment	(37,700)	0	(26,000)	6,500	(19,500)
SHO38	Major Repairs Allowance	2,532,147	0	2,260,000	0	2,260,000
SHO42	Accumulated Absences Adjustment Account	(10,577)	0	0	0	0
SHO44	Capital Grant Unapplied Cr Hora	733,519	0	0	0	0
SHO45	Renewable Energy Transactions	(148,332)	(3,441)	(89,000)	0	(89,000)
	TOTAL	(2,488,325)	(3,094,230)	(2,445,850)	(44,450)	(2,490,300)

Subjective analysis

Code	Best Value Unit	PY Outturn	CY YTD Actuals	CY FY Budget	Movement	Proposed Budget
1000	Employees	2,810,914	1,439,257	2,891,590	149,190	3,040,780
2000	Premises	148,038	79,124	197,320	0	197,320
3000	Transport	254,776	106,541	256,060	17,310	273,370
4000	Cost Of Goods And Services	9,512,985	678,340	7,532,960	(345,290)	7,187,670
7000	Income	(15,215,038)	(5,397,492)	(13,323,780)	134,340	(13,189,440)
	TOTAL	(2,488,325)	(3,094,230)	(2,445,850)	(44,450)	(2,490,300)

Code	Best Value Unit	PY Outturn	CY YTD Actuals	CY FY Budget	Movement	Proposed Budget
5000	Internal Recharges	1,534,110	0	1,481,630	44,450	1,526,080
6000	Capital Charges	954,215	0	964,220	0	964,220
		2,488,325	0	2,445,850	44,450	2,490,300

	GRAND TOTAL	0	(3,094,230)	0	0	0
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Summary of movements	£k
Dwelling rent increase of 1.5% across all dwelling types	(22)
Garage rent budget reduced since current numbers are less than budgeted	34
Vehicle costs increased to meet current needs and inflationary assumptions	17
Responsive materials and contractors increased to meet expected needs	168
New posts of Policy Officer & Complaints Officer	78
Increase to the transfer of costs out of the DLO	(110)
Investment income reduction	21
New software - Orchard Housing Digital	15
New software - Voicescape	5
In-year Bad Debt Provision movement increase	97
Pension backfunding slight increase	6
Internal recharges increase	44
Housing Business Support inflated to meet current needs	26
General Tenancy Business Support inflated to meet current needs	27
Planned Maintenance increase (see appendix 3)	20
Housing Maintenance Fund contribution decreased to fund other increases	(445)
Minor variances	19
TOTAL	0

Assumptions

Dwelling rent increase of 1.5%
 Void levels are based on current position
 Garage rents frozen at £10.71 per week
 Ground rents frozen at £275 per annum
 Planned Maintenance costs based on the 30 year plan
 Ten properties sold during 2020/21
 Fifteen properties sold during 2021/22
 Average of 36 social rent and 4 affordable rent properties void at any one time

HRA Rent Budget 2021/22

Description	Average rent (52 week basis) £	Average properties 2021/22	Annual rent total £	Void level	Annual rent total (less voids)	Budget (rounded)
Social rent (in use)	80.30	2,895	12,086,274	1.24%	11,935,953	11,935,950
Affordable rent properties	115.59	85	510,908	4.71%	486,865	486,870
Rent written off					(35,000)	(35,000)
Write-offs recovered					1,000	1,000
HO700 budget					12,388,818	12,388,820
Affordable rent surplus					(136,322)	(136,320)
TOTAL		2,980				

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Planned Maintenance

Account description	CY FY Budget	Movement	Proposed Budget
Septic Tank Emptying	5,000	0	5,000
Insulation	10,000	(5,000)	5,000
Asbestos Work	200,000	0	200,000
Legionella Testing	55,530	6,470	62,000
Electrical Remedials	45,000	10,000	55,000
Smoke Detectors	130,000	0	130,000
Gas Servicing	300,000	0	300,000
Lift Maintenance	1,000	0	1,000
Painting & Repairs	300,000	25,000	325,000
Legionella Works	30,000	0	30,000
Air Source Heat Pump Servicing	45,000	5,000	50,000
Carbon Monoxide Detectors	40,000	(17,500)	22,500
Door Entry Systems	5,000	0	5,000
Sanctuary Works - H.R.A Stock	5,000	0	5,000
Solid Fuel Cyclical Testing	9,500	(1,000)	8,500
Electrical Cyclical Testing	66,000	0	66,000
Solid Fuel Repairs	9,000	(1,000)	8,000
	1,256,030	21,970	1,278,000

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HRA Medium Term Financial Plan

Analysis by service

Code	Best Value Unit	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Income					
SHO01	Dwelling Rents Inc	(12,388,820)	(12,574,650)	(12,763,270)	(12,954,720)	(13,149,040)
SHO04	Non Dwelling Rents Inc	(561,840)	(570,270)	(578,820)	(587,500)	(596,310)
SHO07	Leaseholders' Ch For Serv	(23,810)	(24,290)	(24,770)	(25,270)	(25,770)
SHO08	Contributions Towards Exp	(29,220)	(29,800)	(30,400)	(31,010)	(31,630)
SHO10	H.R.A. Investment Income	(31,800)	(32,280)	(32,760)	(33,250)	(33,750)
SHO11	Misc. Income	(7,350)	(7,500)	(7,650)	(7,800)	(7,960)
	Services					
SHO13A	Repairs & Maintenance	3,663,270	3,736,540	3,811,270	3,887,490	3,965,240
SHO17A	Housing & Tenancy Services	1,676,640	1,710,170	1,744,380	1,779,260	1,814,850
	Accounting entries 'below the line'					
SHO29	Bad Debt Provision	150,000	120,000	96,000	76,800	61,440
SHO30	Share Of Corp And Dem	168,040	171,400	174,830	178,330	181,890
SHO32	H.R.A. Interest Payable	1,115,180	981,750	929,330	875,380	819,840
SHO34	H.R.A. Trf To/From Emr	1,627,910	1,833,130	1,950,720	2,064,430	2,175,200
SHO37	Capital Receipts Res Adj	(19,500)	(19,500)	(19,500)	(19,500)	(19,500)
SHO38	Major Repairs Allowance	2,260,000	2,260,000	2,260,000	2,260,000	2,260,000
SHO45	Renewable Energy Transactions	(89,000)	(90,780)	(92,600)	(94,450)	(96,340)
	TOTAL	(2,490,300)	(2,536,080)	(2,583,240)	(2,631,810)	(2,681,840)
Code	Best Value Unit	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
5000	Internal Recharges	1,526,080	1,571,860	1,619,020	1,667,590	1,717,620
6000	Capital Charges	964,220	964,220	964,220	964,220	964,220
		2,490,300	2,536,080	2,583,240	2,631,810	2,681,840
	GRAND TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0

Rent increase assumed 1.5%
 Non-dwelling rents assumed to grow at the same rate as dwelling rents
 Leaseholder income to rise at the same rate as costs
 Investment income is highly uncertain, but it is assumed it will grow at the same rate as dwelling rents
 Goods & services costs 2.0%
 Bad debt provision annual movement 20.0%

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HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP 10TH NOVEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMY AND REGENERATION

COMMUNITY LED HOUSING FUND GRANT POLICY AND PROJECT GROUP

Cabinet Members: Councillor Bob Evans and Councillor Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer: Claire Fry (Group Manager for Housing) and Tristan Peat, (Forward Planning Team Leader)

Reason for Report: The Homes PDG set up the Community Housing Fund Project Group in 2018 to consider requests made to the Council for financial support from the Community Housing Fund. There is a need to amend the membership of the Community Housing Fund Project Group to reflect that the Council's housing enabling role has been moved from the Housing Service to the Planning Service.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Cabinet agrees that Section 11.1 of the Community-Led Housing Fund Guidance and Criteria (Appendix 2), which provides the framework for the allocation of grants, is amended so that the Community Housing Fund Project Group membership includes the:

Cabinet Member for Housing, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration, the Group Manager - Housing Services, the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration, and the Housing Enabling and Policy Officer.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The Mid Devon Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 (January 2020) includes three strands. The use of local funds to support community groups and building more affordable and social rented properties in Mid Devon accords with two of these strands "Sustainable and prosperous communities" and "Sustainable participation".

Financial Implications: There are no wider financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report, beyond the Community-Led Housing Fund.

Budget and Policy Framework: The Council has a Community Led Housing Fund and the policy for managing this has been adopted and endorsed by the Council on the 27th June 2018.

Legal Implications: Grant recipients may be required to repay the grant should their use of the award fail to comply with the conditions set out by the Council.

Risk Assessment: Failure to have an efficient and effective process in place for administering the fund could result in adverse publicity for the Council.

Equality Impact Assessment: Community-led housing will help to support the needs of vulnerable people, including older people, and reduce inequality by helping to provide the right type of housing solutions to meet the needs of local communities.

Impact on Climate Change: There are no implications arising from the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2016 the Government announced a £60m fund to support community-led housing developments in areas where the impact of second homes is particularly acute. The fund being to enable local community groups deliver affordable housing units of

mixed tenure on sites which are likely to be of little interest to mainstream house-builders and which will thereby contribute to the national effort to boost housing supply.

- 1.2 The Council received a Community-Led Housing Fund grant of £131,359 in 2016/2017. This grant is ring-fenced for the delivery of Community-Led Housing in Mid Devon.
- 1.3 The Homes Policy Development Group considered a report on 22nd May 2018 (see **Appendices 1 and 2**) which sought to establish:
 - a 'Policy' for how the Community-Led Housing Fund grant will be used, and
 - A Project Group that is responsible for the governance of the Policy

The report's recommendations were the subject of decisions taken by the Cabinet at its meeting on 14th June 2018 (minute 28) and were adopted by the Council on 27th June 2018.

- 1.4 The Policy for the Council's Community Led Housing Fund sets out who is eligible to apply for the funding, what will be funded (i.e. set up costs for a community organisation, undertaking initial feasibility work, and gap funding towards project management costs and construction costs), how applications will be assessed and how funding will be awarded. It includes criteria and grant caps for each funding stage, which requires applicants to demonstrate Value for Money and to seek match funding from other sources to mitigate financial risks. Communities are also subject to providing a service level agreement (SLA) with the Council. It was intended a Community Housing Fund Project Group responsible for the Policy would meet on a monthly basis to discuss the progress of community groups and consider applications for funding.
- 1.5 At October 2020, £108,360 remains in the Community Led Housing Fund. Part of the original grant from Government has been used for the purpose of joint working with Wessex Community Housing to support Community Land Trusts over 4 years, which concludes in 2020/21. It is not known if there will be future grant funding by the Government which will be made available to local authorities to support community led housing schemes.
- 1.6 A funding request has been received from Aster Housing Association on behalf of the Chawleigh Community Trust for £15,000 towards development costs for proposed scheme of 10 social rented houses. This has been considered by the Community Housing Fund Project Group. The requirements of the Policy for the grant funding have been met and an agreement has been reached that the request is accepted.
- 1.7 With the exception of the recommendations set out in this report, it is proposed that the policy for how the Community-Led Housing Fund will be used will continue in its current form, and that any amendment that may be needed to this will be the subject of a further report to the Homes PDG, and approval sought as needed from the Cabinet and/or Council.

2.0 Community Housing Fund Project Group

- 2.1 There is a need to review the composition of the Community Housing Fund Project Group. This follows the Council's housing enabling role being moved from the Housing Service to the Planning Service and is necessary for the continued efficient governance of the Community-Led Housing Fund Grant Policy and the allocation of grant in response to requests received for funding.

2.2 Section 11.1 of the Community-Led Housing Fund Policy (Guidance and Criteria) (see **Appendix 2** to this report) sets out the membership of the Project Group:

- Cabinet Member for Housing
- Three Cabinet Members

And is supported by the following group after receiving recommendations from the

- Group Manager (Housing Services)
- Housing Options Manager
- S151 Officer or designated representative from finance

2.3 It is recommended that the membership of the Project Group is amended to comprise:

- Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration
- Cabinet Member for Housing

And is supported by the following group after receiving recommendations from the

- Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration
- Group Manager for Housing
- Housing Enabling and Policy Officer (post being established)

2.4 The revised membership will include Cabinet representation from both the Housing, and the Planning, Economy and Regeneration services, with an appropriate level of officer support necessary to manage the Council's Community Led Housing Fund in accordance with the policy's guidance and criteria for considering requests for grant support.

2.5 A new post of 'Housing Enabling and Policy Officer' has been agreed. This will take the lead role for housing enabling in Mid Devon, including but not limited to, achieving more affordable housing, supporting community housing groups, liaising with Registered Providers and other external partners, promoting custom and self-build homes, modern methods of construction and facilitating the delivery of sites and pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. The post is currently the subject of a job evaluation and it is intended that recruitment will take place in the autumn this year. The Forward Planning Team Leader is currently acting in a bridging role for housing enabling until the new post has been filled.

2.6 Given there are currently only a handful of community housing groups in Mid Devon it is proposed that the Project Group will, going forward:

- Meet again following a successful recruitment of the Housing Enabling and Policy Officer, and thereafter as necessary in relation to requests for grant funding, and
- Provides a report every 6 months to the Homes Policy Development Group to provide an update on what applications have been received to grant funding, what has been achieved as a result of the grant funding provided, and what funds remain.

3.0 Groups Consulted

3.1 The Community Housing Project Group and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration met on 23rd October 2020 to consider and inform the content of this report.

Contact for more Information: Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader
Telephone: 07967 179 669 tpeat@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report: Councillor Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Richard Chesterton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration

Appendix 1 - Community Housing Fund PDG Report 22.05.2018

Appendix 2 – Community-Led Housing Fund Policy (Guidance and Criteria)

Homes Policy Development Group Meeting 22nd May 2018

<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=953&Ver=4>

Cabinet Meeting 14th June 2018

<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=941&Ver=4>

Council Meeting 27th June 2018

<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=156&MId=997&Ver=4>

HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
22 MAY 2018

THE HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE – COMMUNITY LED HOUSING FUND GRANT POLICY

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Ray Stanley
Responsible Officer: Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing

Reason for Report: In 2016/2017 Mid Devon District Council was allocated £131,359 from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Community Housing Fund. The Council will use this ring-fenced funding to work in partnership with local communities to develop Community Led Housing across the District.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Cabinet recommends to Council that:

- 1) The Community Led Housing Fund Grant Policy is adopted and endorsed so that it can be used within the Council's District.**
- 2) That members support the framework for the allocation of grants as presented within the report.**
- 3) Should any disagreements occur then the final decision should be delegated to the Director of Operations in conjunction with the Cabinet Member.**

Relationship to Corporate Plan: MDDC Visions priority 1 & 2. The Council is committed to building more homes in the District and to facilitating the housing growth that Mid Devon needs, including affordable homes in rural parishes, by working with local communities to encourage them to support themselves and working with town and parish councils.

Community-led housing will increase the supply of housing across Mid Devon including affordable housing for rent and shared ownership. It will help to support economic growth and keep communities vibrant.

Community-led housing also has the potential to promote health, wellbeing and independence. Through this type of scheme there are also opportunities for communities to develop schemes to help local people (including older and vulnerable people) to retain their independence. It will also offer local people opportunities to gain knowledge and new skills relating to, for example, project management, housing development and consultations.

Financial Implications: The Community-Led Housing Fund grant of £131,359 is ring-fenced for delivery of Community Led Housing. The Government has advised that grant funding will be available for a further three years but the level of funding and how this will be allocated has yet to be confirmed. There is no assurance that the grant will come to local authorities in future years. The policy will therefore need to be reviewed before the end of the financial year (2019/20) to ensure that it is still relevant and appropriate.

The Community Led Housing Fund Allocation policy includes criteria and grant caps for each funding stage, which requires applicants to demonstrate Value for Money and to seek match funding from other sources to mitigate financial risks. Communities are also subject to providing a service level agreement (SLA) with the local authority.

Legal Implications: Grant recipients may be required to repay the grant should their use of the award fail to comply with the conditions set out by the Council.

Risk Assessment: Failure to have an efficient and effective process in place for administering the fund could result in adverse publicity for the Council.

Equality Impact Assessment: Community-led housing will help to support the needs of vulnerable people, including older people, and reduce inequality by helping to provide the right type of housing solutions to meet the needs of local communities.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2016, the Government announced a new annual £60 million fund to help almost 150 councils to tackle the problem of high levels of second homeownership in their communities. The monies were available to support the development of community-led housing.

South Hams	Devon	£1,881,307
West Dorset	Dorset	£1,365,432
East Devon	Devon	£1,210,418
Purbeck	Dorset	£910,456
North Devon	Devon	£667,869
Teignbridge	Devon	£581,303
West Somerset	Somerset	£574,760
Sedgemoor	Somerset	£485,174
Torridge	Devon	£448,434
Weymouth & Portland	Dorset	£430,315
Christchurch	Dorset	£417,229
South Somerset	Somerset	£263,222
West Devon	Devon	£247,620
North Dorset	Dorset	£238,057
East Dorset	Dorset	£158,034
Mid Devon	Devon	£131,359

- 1.2 The Community-Led Housing Fund offers local groups opportunities to lead on, and help them to deliver, affordable housing aimed at first-time buyers in response to the problem second homes can cause in reducing supply.
- 1.3 The funding will be targeted at the community-led housing sector and distributed to groups via local Councils. The rationale for this is that local authorities have the relevant knowledge to enable them to deliver the sort of housing needed in communities in their areas.
- 1.4 Allocating the funding to these housing organisations will place local communities in a position to identify what type of housing is most needed in each area. It will also offer an income stream to community organisations, in turn allowing them to reinvest in more housing or in other activities or services which will benefit their areas.
- 1.5 Local authorities will work closely with community-led housing groups and other stakeholders which is likely to include the Community Land Trusts network or the Home and Communities Agency, to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and support is available to ensure efficient delivery of new houses in subsequent years.
- 1.6 Community-led housing has many benefits. Planning applications from this sector are currently approved more often than other applications. Local concerns about building new homes can be allayed more easily because of local involvement from the start.
- 1.7 The groups can also be an important link between the community and local authorities, as they can increase credibility among residents and directly represent the needs of the community.
- 1.8 In 2016/2017 Mid Devon District Council was allocated half of the allocated funding of £131,359 from the DCLG Community Housing Fund. To receive the second tranche

of funding the Council had to explain how it would use the funds, to receive the remaining monies. The Council submitted its explanation and the remaining funds were awarded.

- 1.9 The Council will use this ring-fenced funding to work in partnership with local communities to develop Community Led Housing across the District. Further grant funding may be allocated over the next four years.
- 1.10 Implications on existing staffing capacity to secure, deliver and oversee the funds that are allocated to the Council will be monitored and, if insufficient, this will be reported as part of an overall monitoring report.
- 1.11 The Policy governance will be overseen by the Community Housing Fund Project Group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Housing. The group will comprise of Cabinet Member for Housing and three other Cabinet Members. The group will receive recommendations from Group Manager for Housing, Housing Options Manager and the S151 Officer or designated representative from finance. The Group will meet on a monthly basis to discuss the progress of community groups and consider applications for funding.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Council's Community-led Housing Fund Grant Policy which will set out the criteria for the allocation of this funding to communities and organisations involved in the delivery of Community Led Housing schemes across Mid Devon over the next four years.
- 2.2 The Council is using £3250 (per year, over 4 years) of the funding to continue the joint working with Wessex Community Housing. The Council already has a proven track record with Wessex Community Housing arising from the successful Community Land Trust project in Hemyock. This will enable Wessex Community Housing to provide additional community development support, to work with the Council and communities to deliver more developments with Community Land Trusts.
- 2.3 The Wessex Community Housing Project is also tasked to generate interest and lead a dialogue with other community groups across Mid Devon around Community-led Housing as an additional step towards delivering additional housing on housing development sites and rural exception sites across the District.
- 2.4 The remaining grant allocation will be used to offer support to communities seeking to progress a Community-Led Housing scheme. The fund will be used to support local communities to set up a community organisation, undertake initial feasibility work and to cover project management costs.
- 2.5 The Community-Led Housing Fund Allocation policy sets out who is eligible to apply for this funding, what will be funded and how applications will be assessed and funding awarded.
- 2.6 The Community-Led Housing Fund will be available to communities to allow them to succeed in building new homes in the community. The criteria which grant applications will be assessed will be stringent. It will require applicants to:
 - Demonstrate how the project meets the Council strategic objectives
 - Evidence that other avenues have been explored
 - Provide a business case for the CLT
 - Report to the Council on the progress of the development/project

- 2.7 The impact of the programme will be monitored and evaluated by officers in the Housing Options Team and a report will be presented to the Homes PDG as and when required.
- 2.8 Appendix A sets out the Guidance and Criteria to help communities apply for the grants together with the application forms.

Contact for more Information: Mike Parker, Housing Options Manager
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Circulation of the Report: Councillor Ray Stanley, Cabinet Member for Housing

Appendix A Community Led Housing Fund Guidance and Criteria – (2018-2020)

1. About Community-Led Housing

- 1.1 Community-led housing is intended to bring social and economic benefits to local communities through the provision of housing developed by members of the local community with support. The community must be integrally involved throughout the process in key decisions. It does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes itself, although it may choose to do so.

2. About the Grant

- 2.1 Mid Devon District Council was awarded £131,359.00 from a Government Fund aimed at helping local authorities to respond to high levels of second home ownership in their areas. Community-led housing includes all types of housing including homes for outright sale, rent and shared ownership
- 2.2 The Community Housing Fund will be available to communities looking to develop new housing and/or purchase, refurbish and bring back into effective use, empty properties. Any funding provided is used to benefit the local area and/or specific community on a clearly defined and legally protected way in perpetuity. Communities will be expected to work with Registered Providers as development partners. However, there may be situations where the community works with another development partner to deliver a community-led scheme.

3. Who Can Apply – Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 **Community Organisations:** These will be community groups based in communities involved in the development of a community-led housing scheme. Community groups will need to be constituted to receive direct funding. The community group could be an existing charitable trust or development trust or similar body. Examples of community-led housing organisations include Community Land Trusts; Cohousing schemes; housing cooperatives and other similar organisations.

Where a new community group is established to develop a scheme, then funding will be provided to help establish the group.

Communities also have access to a wider range of other grant funding sources, which can assist in the delivery of Community Led Housing

schemes. These grants are not available to Registered Providers or other public sector bodies. Support and advice will be provided to communities both through the Council and specialist advisors on these alternative sources of funding.

3.2 Community Organisations will need to:

- Be a legal entity, or be part of a legally constituted consortia agreement
- Be appropriately constituted (examples might include; a registered charity, community interest company or charitable incorporated organisation, not for profit company or Industrial and Provident Societies for the Benefit of the Community).
- Have stated community benefit objectives
- Be non-profit distributing; any surpluses must be reinvested to further its social aims/community benefits

3.3 Registered Providers: Funding will be provided to Registered Providers who are involved in the development of an identified community-led scheme. Funding for Registered Providers can be in the form of a grant. Funding from the Community Housing Fund for Registered Providers can be made available in addition to funding from the Housing and Communities Agency (HCA) Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP).

3.4 Registered Providers can be involved in a community-led housing scheme in a number of ways. These can range from acting as purely a development partner and providing a design and build service to a community through to leading on the development of the scheme and providing the on-going management of the housing. However, it is essential that whatever role a Registered Provider has in a community-led scheme that the community takes a long-term role in the ownership, management or stewardship of the homes, for it to be a genuine community-led housing scheme.

3.5 Other development partners: In most cases, communities will be expected to work with Registered Providers as development partners. However, there may be situations where the community works with another development partner to deliver a community-led scheme. The Council may provide direct funding to alternative development partners in certain circumstances.

(If you are applying for a Community Development / Set up Grant) Where no constituted body has yet been created, then the Council will accept applications from one of the following:

- The Parish or Town Council for that area;
- The appointed Community Support Organisation; or
- Another agency with strong links to the local community

4. What the grants are for

4.1 Community Development Work: Funding will be used to support community engagement work with local communities to enable them to set up a community organisation and to develop the organisation. Specific community capacity working could include:

- Set up costs for the group including legal structures and governance
- Advising the group on community-led housing models and the most appropriate models and approaches for their community/development
- Any training requirements
- Identifying other funding opportunities
- Assistance with funding applications and other support
- Longer term group and business development
- Any other specialist support

4.2 Initial Feasibility Work: Funding will be allocated to undertake initial feasibility work to identify the potential to develop a community-led housing scheme. Initial feasibility work could include:

- Feasibility studies
- Identifying and assessing potential sites and opportunities, costs and values
- Local Housing Needs Surveys
- Developing the initial project proposal
- Advice on early project planning/management and business plan development

4.3 Project management costs: Project management costs will cover any work undertaken on a specific site prior up to and including start on site of a scheme. This will include:

- All professional costs: Design and Architectural costs, Quantity Surveyor, site surveys and investigations etc.
- Planning fees and any specialist planning advice
- Legal costs

- Procurement costs
- Site Management costs
- Site acquisition
- Any abnormal costs: e.g. contamination, site clearance etc.

4.4 Other costs: The Council will consider use of the fund for specific one-off costs for a particular site, without which the scheme could not be developed or be viable, including gap funding.

4.5 Other organisations: Funding will be provided to other organisations to fund specific pieces of work. These can include funding to consultants for feasibility work, business planning, planning consultants, supporting housing needs surveys etc.

4.6 Items Which Will Not Qualify

The fund cannot be used for the following:

- Any development which does not meet the basic principles for a community-led housing scheme as set out previously
- Any organisation that does not meet the criteria listed previously
- Any development that has already commenced
- Any retrospective costs, which have already been incurred by the organisation

5. How much money can we apply for?

5.1 Amount of Funding to be Allocated

The Council currently has a sum of £131,359 available. The level of funding available in the future will be determined by the amount of grant allocated to the council by Central Government.

There are three grants available:

- Community Development / Set-Up Grant
- Feasibility Grant
- Development Grant

The grant funding available for each stage of a scheme is set out below. This is capped and it is expected that community organisations will also access other funding streams.

5.2 Community Development / Set-Up Grant

Grant funding of up to £3,000 per community (in addition to support from Wessex Community Housing Project) is available to help develop a group to the stage where it is constituted and to undertake initial community consultation. This funding is only available to groups with a clear community focus and an interest in providing housing which meets the needs of their local community.

This funding can support:

- Room hire for meetings and consultation events;
- Housing need survey materials;
- Training requirements;
- Identification of other funding opportunities;
- Fact finding visits to other community-led housing schemes; and
- Secretariat time to support the group;
- Advice on constituting a community-led housing body
- Administrative/legal costs required to set up a group

5.3 Stage 2: Feasibility Fund

Before accessing this fund, community groups will be expected to have been formed and constituted. They must also be able to demonstrate a good level of community support for the project and have clear evidence of the local housing needs that any proposed housing scheme is intended to meet.

In addition, potential site(s) will have been identified that may be suitable for a community housing scheme.

(If the organisation has accessed a Community Development / Set-Up Grant then) A statement of all setup grant expenditure will need to be prepared and 'signed off' by the Council prior to the submission of a (Feasibility grant) application.

Grant funding from £5,000 up to £15,000 per scheme (in addition to support from Wessex Community Housing Project) can be made available to support a feasibility appraisal and to develop a project plan. In exceptional circumstances requests for funding greater than the £15,000 limit may be considered if the applying community can demonstrate a clear rationale why additional funding is required, how it offers value for money and that the

funding cannot be secured by other means. At this stage, the type of work which funding could support could include:

- Feasibility study (this is an essential component of the application);
- Commissioning of a development agent to progress the scheme to a planning application;
- Identification and initial assessment of site/sites;
- Development of project plan, including a financial plan and identification of match funding;
- 'Pre application' planning advice;
- Scheme design including all relevant drawings appropriate for a planning application;
- Preparation of surveys and reports in advance of a formal planning application;
- Identification of any abnormal costs or site specific issues which would require further exploration; and
- Further community engagement.

To access this funding, groups are required to submit an application form (Annex A).

The funding can be used to fund work, reports and surveys that can progress a scheme all the way through to the stage prior to a full planning application. A date for the production of the feasibility study will be agreed with the applicant at the time the application is approved. It should be noted that at least 20% of all costs must be accessed from an alternative source to the Community Housing Fund.

The Council reserves the right to incorporate some of the development costs incurred at this stage into the total scheme costs identified at stage 3.

5.4 Stage 3: Development Fund

Grant up to £15,000 may be available either to top up public subsidy or provide gap funding for capital costs to contribute towards project management costs and construction costs.

Before accessing this fund community groups will be expected to have produced a project plan, have an identified site/sites and a clear understanding of the people (e.g. elderly/young adults etc.) who will benefit from the scheme.

Funding is only available to the following types of organisations:

Fully constituted community groups – the group can be an existing charitable organisation or similar body, social enterprise or set up specifically for this project.

Registered housing provider or non-registered housing association – as long as there is clear community involvement in the scheme (as set out in the policy statement)

6. How we assess applications - What we look for

6.1 Basic eligibility criteria

The applicant must be a legally constituted organisation (see above)

The scheme must clearly demonstrate that it meets local needs (evidence of recent Housing Needs Survey or equivalent)

The scheme must be community-led

For a scheme to be 'community-led' it will need to meet the following criteria:

- The community must be integrally involved throughout the process in key decisions. It does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes itself, although it may choose to do so;
- There will be a presumption in favour of community groups that demonstrate in their applications that they are taking a long-term, formal role in the ownership, management or stewardship of the homes; and
- Any funding provided is used to benefit the local area and/or specific community on a clearly defined and legally protected way in perpetuity

6.2 The applicant will also need to demonstrate:

- Strong governance arrangements by operating through open and accountable, co-operative processes, with strong performance and management systems
- Appropriate skills and capacity exist within the organisation, or available to the organisation to undertake the project
- Clear, realistic financial plans for the development of the housing scheme where applicable
- Clear, realistic financial plans for the future management of the housing scheme

- The scheme offers good value for money, in particular that the scheme is accessing other sources of funding and finance (see below)
- Community support for the proposals
- How the organisation will comply with any relevant legislation and statutory requirements

Assessment for a Development Grant will be subject to a more detailed appraisal process, which will include the following, on top of those already listed:

- Deliverability
- Allocations Policy
- How the scheme will be managed and maintained
- Robustness of the business model and financial viability

7. Value for money

7.1 Applications for Community Housing Fund

Applications for Community Housing Fund Stage 1 and 2 funding will need to demonstrate how the group intends to spend the money and provide a breakdown of costs.

Applications for Community Housing Fund Stage 3 funding will require the submission of a financial plan, outlining what revenue and capital support is required. The project plan should also outline what professional support is required to deliver the scheme and how this will be procured.

Community Housing Fund Project Plans will be expected to outline where match funding will be sourced from to make the scheme viable. The Community Housing Fund Group expects groups to demonstrate they have taken appropriate measures to reduce the amount requested from the Fund and will expect evidence that the applicant has considered the following alternative funding streams (where applicable):

Borrowing on rental income; this is capital funding borrowed over the long term, (typically 25 years), using projected rental income streams to service the debt

Sales receipts: this is capital funding secured from the proceeds of projected house sales

Homes England; this is grant made available from the HCA (soon to be renamed Homes England) in accordance with their Affordable Housing funding programmes

Land donations or use of existing community land; this is land offered at 'nil' or below market value

Local authority commuted sum fund; this is capital funding taken from the fund which accounts for financial contributions from developers in lieu of 'on-site' affordable housing

8.0 How to Apply

8.1 Requests for funding

Requests for Community Housing Fund Stage 1 and 2 funding should be sent to the Group Manager (Housing Services) using the appropriate application form (attached at Annex A).

Requests for Community Housing Fund stage 3 funding must be made through a completed project plan covering:

- the legal constitution of the group and the principal contacts
- evidence of community engagement
- a financial plan, identifying the sources of funding for the project
- identification of a site/sites
- a basic site designing indicating the number of types of housing to be delivered through the project
- an outline of who the new homes will be for and how that meets a local need
- what professional support is required to take the project forward and how these professionals will be appointed/procured
 - what role the community group will play once the homes are complete

9. Supporting Documents

9.1 Annex A must contain the supporting documents as detailed in section 8.1

10. How to Submit

10.1 Applications must be sent to the Group Manager (Housing Services) at Mid Devon District Council, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon, EX16

6PP. Applications must be supported by the relevant documentation as detail above.

11. What happens after you submit your application

- 11.1** Requests for **Community Development / Set-Up grant** will normally be considered by the Group Manager (Housing Services) within 10 working days of receipt of the completed application form (unless otherwise agreed) (see Annex A).

Requests for **Feasibility Grant** will normally be considered by the Community Housing Fund Project Group within 30 working days of receipt of the application form (see Annex A). Please note that this may generate further questions or requests for clarification prior to a written decision being sent out to the group to inform them whether they have been successful or not.

Request for a **Development Grant** will also be considered by the Community Housing Fund Project Group following receipt of a project plan. An initial check of the project plan will be undertaken within 10 working days by the Group Manager (Housing Services). Should it be deemed to require further detail, applicants will be notified accordingly and asked to resubmit. Subject to any additional questions or requests for clarification, the group will receive written notification of whether they have been successful or not.

The policy will be overseen by the Community Housing Fund Project Group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Housing that will comprise of:

- Cabinet Member for Housing
- Three Cabinet Members

The group will be supported by the following group after receiving recommendations from

- Group Manager (Housing Services)
- Housing Options Manager
- S151 Officer or designated representative from finance

The Group will meet on a monthly basis to discuss the progress of community groups and consider applications for funding.

11.2 Payment of Grant

11.3 Stage 1: Community development set-up grant

Grant payments will normally be paid following the agreement of the Community Housing Fund Project Group with receipt of grant claim form and invoices for works carried out; payment of grant will be paid after 30 days of being approved. However, it is recognised that some community groups may not yet be fully constituted or have very limited cash resources.

11.4 Stage 2: Feasibility fund

Grant payments will normally be paid on receipt of grant claim form and invoices for work carried out.

11.5 Stage 3: Development fund

Payments from the Development Fund will normally be made on a staged basis as follows:

- 50% to be paid on start on site of the scheme 50% to be paid on scheme completion
- The Council will consider alternative staged payments in certain cases where there may be cash flow issues. However, it is expected that applicants will have sufficient development finance in place to ensure that they are able to manage their cash flow throughout the duration of the project.
- Where the grant funding is being used to provide gap funding, then payment will normally be made to the applicant once that cost has been met by the applicant and upon receipt of evidence of payment of the cost by the applicant.
- There will be no funding available for cost overruns.

11.6 Grant Agreement

Grant recipients will be required to enter into a standard grant agreement with the Council, which will stipulate a number of requirements including:

11.7 Monitoring Arrangements: We will require grant recipients to provide regular monitoring information as per the grant agreement.

11.8 Use of Grant and details of works required: The grant agreement will set clear what the grant can be used for and details of the works required.

11.9 Withholding, suspending and repayment of grant: The grant agreement will also set out the circumstances in which grant may be withheld, suspended or repaid. This will include disposal of the properties within a certain timescale, use of grant for purposes other for which the grant has been awarded etc. This list is not exhaustive and there may be other examples the Council will use its discretion.

11.10 Monitoring and Clawback

Groups awarded Community Housing Fund Stage 1 funding will be monitored by the Wessex Community Housing Project, who will report back to the Community Housing Fund Project Group on a regular basis.

Groups awarded Community Housing Fund Stage 2 and Stage 3 funding will be expected to submit a brief update report at least once every two months. They will also be monitored by the Wessex Community Housing Project, who will report back to the Community Housing Fund Project Group.

The Council reserves the right to seek repayment of any grant awarded, should any homes provided through this programme be taken out of community ownership within 10 years of the completion of the scheme, unless written permission is given by the Group Manager (Housing Services).

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/SET-UP FUND**

PLEASE READ THE CRITERIA AND GUIDANCE NOTES BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE HOUSING OPTIONS MANAGER ON 01884 234906

Application for Community Development/Set Up Funds – Stage 1

Name of Existing/Proposed Organisation	
Contact Details/Name:	
Contact email:	
Contact Address:	
Contact Tel no(s):	
Position Held:	
Correspondence Address:	
Organisation Details: Type of existing/proposed organisation	

Organisation bank account? (Please provide bank account name, address, sort code & account number.)	Account Name:	Sort Code:	Account No:
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Are you an established organisation with legal documents to establish that you have legal authority? (For example a Parish Council, Community Land Trust) What is the legal form of the organisation?	
--	--

Scheme Details: Please provide details about your project? (eg What are you proposing to build – how many houses, type of tenure? Why are you seeking support from the Community Housing Fund? How will this help you with your next steps? What will the Housing Fund help you to do which you are not able to achieve otherwise? Is this within a Neighbourhood Plan area?)	
--	--

Funding requirements - Please set out the funding you need to progress this scheme to Stage 2 (Feasibility)	
--	--

Type of funding	Estimated Cost	Details (including name of service provider/consultant/contractor if known)

<p>Have you identified a site? Please provide information (eg condition of the site, current use, the address of the site)</p>	
---	--

<p>Have you carried out any consultation with the wider community about your proposals (not including members of your group)? What level of support or opposition have you received (for example Parish Council, local authority, other local voluntary or business groups.)? We understand that all schemes have their objectors, and detailing any opposition you have had to your proposals will not prejudice your application for support.</p>	
--	--

<p>Have you had any engagement or discussion with a Registered Provider/Housing Association about your proposals? What response have you had?</p>	
--	--

<p>Are you receiving specialist advice about this project (ie Wessex Community Housing Project)? Please provide their name & contact details.</p>	
--	--

Equalities

Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council has a legal duty to ensure that different groups are not disadvantaged from applying for or receiving our grants funding. We also want to ensure that people who benefit from our grants programme represents the makeup of the local population.

Please indicate which (if any) of the following groups will particularly benefit from your project and give details where you think this is relevant

- People with physical disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- Older people
- Unemployed people
- People who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
- People from a particular ethnic background
- Younger people
- Carers

Checklist

- Completed all sections of the application form []
- Provided Bank Account details []
- Provided details of the legal identity []
- Provided details of funding costs []

Declaration

The information you have provided will be used by the Council to assess and process your application and to enable us to contact you about your application. Your information will be held securely within the Council and only passed to others within the Council for the purposes of assessing this grant application. Information will be destroyed in line with the Council's Information Retention Policy.

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information in this application form is true and complete.

Signature _____

(This can be your group's chairman, treasurer, secretary or equivalent post)

Date _____

Print Name

Position held in group

Enclosures

- Copy of governing document
- Accounts/Bank statement

Return to:

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
PHOENIX HOUSE, PHOENIX LANE
TIVERTON, DEVON EX16 6PP

Certification	Signature:
I certify that this funding required is directly associated with the development of a community led housing scheme(s) and that the information contained within this application form is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and reliable.	Date:
	On behalf of:

If the certification has not been completed by a recognised signatory of the proposed community housing organisation then please indicate the organisation that person represents

Application for Development/ Feasibility fund – Stage 2/3

Name of Existing Organisation	
--------------------------------------	--

Contact Details/Name:	
------------------------------	--

Contact email:	
-----------------------	--

Contact Address:	
-------------------------	--

Organisation Details: Type of organisation: Date of incorporation: (please provide a copy of your constitution or other documentary evidence of your governance arrangements) <i>Please note that your organisation must normally have a minimum of 5 members (from different addresses in your community) and have either an open membership policy (or one which has restrictions that help to fulfil its overall aims and objectives)</i>	
---	--

Please provide a brief summary of the organisation's aims and objectives:	
--	--

Bank account: (Please provide bank account name, address, sort code & account number.)	Account Name:	Sort Code:	Account No:

Application for Development/ Feasibility fund – Stage 2 / 3

Declaration

The information you have provided will be used by the Council to assess and process your application and to enable us to contact you about your application. Your information will be held securely within the Council and only passed to others within the Council for the purposes of assessing this grant application. Information will be destroyed in line with the Council's Information Retention Policy.

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information in this application form is true and complete.

Signature _____

(This can be your group's chairman, treasurer, secretary or equivalent post)

Date _____

Print Name

Position held in group

Enclosures

- Copy of supporting documents

Return to:

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
PHOENIX HOUSE, PHOENIX LANE
TIVERTON, DEVON EX16 6PP

Certification I certify that this funding required is directly associated with the development of a community led housing scheme(s) and that the information contained within this application form is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and reliable.	Signature: Date: On behalf of:
---	---

If the certification has not been completed by a recognised signatory of the proposed community housing organisation then please indicate the organisation that person represents

ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Application for Community Development/Set Up Funds – Stage 1 / 2 / 3

CLT Details	
Contact Name	
Parish	
Grant Stage	
Grant Requested	

Evidence Support	Of	Yes / No	Documentation Supplied	
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Eligibility

	Yes	No	?	Comment(s)
Is the application form complete and all relevant information supplied?				
Is the organisation eligible to apply?				
Are the project objectives eligible for funding?				
Is there sufficient detailed breakdown of costs so we know what the funding will be spent on?				
Is there evidence of support from at least one local parish / town Council?				
Is the amount higher than the eligible costs?				
Does the scheme / project warrant additional funding?				
Has the project already received funding?				
Is the project able to proceed with funding?				

Supplementary Questions / Clarifications Needed:

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SCORING CHECK

Need	Comments <i>Please score from 1 to 5 1 being lowest – does not fulfil a local need 5 being highest – completely fulfils a local need</i>	Score
Is there a Housing Need in village/Parish?		
Is this back by the community/Parish?		
Is the organisation working with Wessex?		
Has a housing need survey been completed?		

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation	£	Comments
Fund in Full		
Fund in Part		
Fund with Conditions		
Defer		
Do not fund		

Comments/Notes

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HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP 10 NOVEMBER 2020

HOUSING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Bob Evans
Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services

Reason for Report and Recommendation: To provide an update to Members of the Policy Development Group on plans to deliver a shared policy framework bringing together policies owned and operated by the Building and Housing Services. The new arrangements relating to policy should ensure that it is more closely aligned to the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing and deliver a greater consistency in approach.

The reason for the recommendation is to ensure members are informed on these changes especially as they relate to an updated forward plan and can also be viewed in the context of wider service improvements.

Recommendation: Members note the proposals relating to the review of the housing policy framework

Financial Implications: The management and maintenance of homes on our estates is funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is ring-fenced. The main income into this account is derived from the rents paid by tenants.

Budget and Policy Framework: There are no direct budget implications of this report. This report does however set out proposals to fundamentally change how the both the Building and Housing Services elements of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) work together in a coordinated way to develop a new strategic and service delivery policy framework which is directly aligned to our external regulatory standards.

Presently, there are over thirty separate adopted policies directly relevant to the delivery of our HRA services (and some general fund housing needs services). These policies have been developed largely in isolation and have been adopted ad-hoc over a period of time. As a result, what has emerged is an overall HRA policy framework which lacks both coherence and clear alignment with core regulatory compliance standards. Furthermore, for tenants, the number of seemingly unrelated policies affecting their tenancy and property is challenging to fully understand and may also inhibit wider tenant engagement and involvement. Overall, the outcome is a present policy framework which is complex, time-consuming and increasingly difficult to deliver in an effective and efficient way.

Having a simplified policy framework centred on the five core elements of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing (four consumer standards and one economic (rent) standard) will address those challenges highlighted above and support greater transparency when it comes to compliance and performance monitoring. It will also enable members have new, focussed input into policy work going forward and in-turn provide greater assurance around service delivery.

Developing a more coherent and simplified policy framework is consistent with (but not dependant on) future proposed restructuring to create a combined HRA service. Any restructure is aimed at ensuring a sustainable HRA capable of delivering further service improvements, however the purpose of this report is not to present these wider changes in full at this stage and any restructure proposal will be subject to a separate business case and consultation process. Nonetheless, this may include provision for policy development resource to support the longer-term development of the policy framework proposals set out herein but will largely impact on the timeline for change rather than the principles of the change itself. However, the requirement to move forward with an updated policy framework is considered necessary at this stage and can be developed and delivered in isolation if need be.

Legal Implications: The regulatory framework for social housing contains specific requirements relating to the need for social landlords to deliver open and transparent policies which are available for stakeholders to view. There is also a statutory obligation in line with the provisions of the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which obliges the Council to have policy and procedures relating to the management of antisocial behaviour and related issues. Furthermore, the Housing Ombudsman Service which has responsibility for reviewing complaints relating to the landlord function usually requires sight of relevant policy when investigating complaints which have been referred to it.

Risk Assessment: A comprehensive and effective suite of policies relating to service delivery associated with the service helps to ensure statutory and regulatory compliance and delivers greater transparency. It empowers staff and enables them to understand what information they are required to gather to inform decision-making. It also sets out the boundaries with regard to discretion around decision-making. The Housing Ombudsman Service will always check that policy has been followed during an investigation and any failure on behalf of the Housing Service to apply policy in a fair and transparent way could result in a finding of maladministration and associated reputational damage.

The new policy framework will also be structured to directly link to coherent operational procedures as required providing a clear compliance thread and support to consistent service delivery. This will provide greater clarity to both officers and regulators and will involve both the migration of existing procedures and development of new procedures over time.

Equality Impact Assessment: A policy framework ensures that decision-making is open and transparent and that no one tenant or other stakeholder is treated any more or less fairly than any other.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Homes and the environment are both priorities for the Council. There is a pledge to increase customer engagement within the plan.

Impact on Climate Change: Decisions relating to the management and maintenance of the homes belonging to the Council have the ability to increase or to decrease carbon emissions to a large extent. Having agreed policy makes any such decisions more transparent and enables Members of the Council to influence the direction of travel against appropriate targets.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In recent years, the Building and Housing Services have developed a large number of policies which have subsequently been adopted by the Council. These policies are available to view on the housing pages of the Council's website and some have been reviewed since first adopted. A list of these policies is also shown in Annex 1.
- 1.2 Many of these policies now require updating in order to bring them into line with new legislation and/ or regulatory requirements.
- 1.3 A significant programme of service improvement is being commenced to bring those services responsible for management and maintenance of the Council housing stock more closely together.
- 1.4 It is proposed to create a "One Housing" service and the principles of this change are as follows:
- It would create a sustainable entity with responsibility for the landlord function
 - It would help to deliver regulatory compliance across the four consumer standards within the regulatory framework for social housing
 - The transition to the new service would deliver a single point of contact for tenants and other stakeholders with a common mission, shared goals and joined up service standards and performance metrics
 - The new structure would facilitate business transformation based on the outcome of process reviews and efficiencies; and customer experience and engagement
- 1.5 A shared policy framework is an important strand of this improvement work because it would deliver consistency across the services accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and address the current challenges set out above.
- 1.6 Furthermore, there are some policies which relate to an economic standard within the regulatory framework; the rent standard.
- 1.7 It should be noted that there are also a number of strategic housing strategies and policies which relate to the role of the Council as a housing authority.
- 2.0 Policy review and proposals**
- 2.1 In line with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard within the regulatory framework, tenants should be consulted on proposed changes to policy.
- 2.2 The review of existing policies has been halted by conflicting priorities; during the pandemic, the imperative has been to maintain existing services as much as possible. The agile approach and the need to redesign procedures at speed has impacted upon the time available to responsible officers and has, therefore, affected their ability to undertake policy reviews and associated consultation work.

- 2.3 Consequently, a new format is proposed which would reduce the overall work involved in reviewing each individual policy whilst at the same time delivering greater clarity for stakeholders.
- 2.4 As stated, it is proposed to more closely align the organisation of work across the HRA with the framework associated with the regulation of social housing. To achieve this, changes to the establishment are proposed as discussed above. There are four consumer standards and one economic standard within the framework and potentially each service function will sit within individual teams which are required to deliver the required outcomes and specific expectations of each of these standards. In turn, these can be allied to relevant dedicated policies and procedures.
- 2.5 In addition, the Council is a housing authority and with a number of strategic housing policies and strategies. Some of these functions associated with these are delivered by the Housing Options team. As a potential part of any restructuring proposals, there is scope to combine this team with the Private Sector Housing Standards function (Public Health and Regulatory Services) and responsibility for relevant strategy and policy would move with the team.
- 2.6 In order to deliver the aims of the new One Housing service, it is proposed to combine policies so that there are specific policies to reflect what is required in terms of service delivery outcomes as specified in each standard.
- 2.7 Annex 2 of this report sets out how the thematic and functional elements of the current policies can be incorporated into each new policy covering one of the consumer or economic regulatory standards (excluding those general fund Housing Needs functions as discussed in section 2.5). Each policy would set out the principles of the relevant standard and how these link to thematic annexes containing the operational detail by function. Over time, these annexes can be updated relatively easily and directly linked to new or amended procedures.
- 2.8 The policies would be reviewed on a rolling cycle with one policy as a minimum being reviewed annually in order to reduce the amount of work arising from this requirement, and the burdens on Members. More information is provided in section 3.4.
- 2.10 The wider restructuring business case required for the combined service proposal may include a new Housing Policy Officer to provide a dedicated resource to manage this work, undertaking necessary consultation as required. The Officer would be required as part of their role to keep abreast of good practice and also changes to legislative and regulatory requirements. If agreed within this business case this Officer would also be able to co-ordinate a review of the tenancy agreement, a large project in itself, which will be due shortly.
- 3.0 **Action Plan**
- 3.1 This takes into account the requirement to refresh the existing Tenant and Empowerment strategy in order to take forward new ways of engaging with tenants where face to face meetings must now be minimised; and is timely because the results of the recent Tenant Census have just been made available

to the Council. This will be a relatively short piece of work and existing projects are currently underway to deliver increased tenant engagement, which is a commitment within the Corporate Plan for 2020-2024. It is hoped that the development of this first of the new policies would be completed by mid-2021 and that it could be discussed during the June meeting of the Homes PDG.

- 3.2 When the development of the new policy relating to tenant engagement is almost finished, a review of policies designed to support performance in line with the Tenancy Standard could be started. As part of this project, there will need to be an evaluation of the use of flexible tenancies which have been in operation for some years. This will be a fairly large project and, being realistic, it is therefore likely that the review of the policies associated with the Tenancy Standard will last a year.
- 3.3 Thereafter, it is suggested that those existing policies associated with service delivery relating to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard are reviewed; followed by those associated with the Home Standard and then those associated with the Rent Standard.
- 3.4 In accordance with the above and taking into account a recent internal exercise which assessed current regulatory compliance and existing policy review dates, the following priorities and timeline are proposed:
 - i. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard Policy 2021/22
 - ii. Neighbourhood and Community Standard Policy 2021/22
 - iii. Homes Standards Policy 2022/23
 - iv. Tenancy Standards Policy 2022/23
 - v. Rent Standards Policy 2023/23 (or sooner if required)
- 3.5 Running simultaneously, there will be a review of those strategic documents in relation to the housing needs function which will be undertaken by officers working in the Public Health and Regulatory Service.
- 3.6 Overall, all these policies will link into (and take account of) the overarching corporate Housing Strategy 2021-25 currently under development.
- 4.0 **Recommendation**
- 4.1 That members note the proposed plan to deliver five core new policies which will amalgamate a large amount of existing policy and strategy.
- 4.2 As set out above, each core new policy will come before the PDG in turn for review with the required decision route of a recommendation that Cabinet recommend to Council each new policy is adopted.

Contact for more Information: Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services/Corporate Management Team
snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report:

Members of the Housing PDG
Cllr Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes
Leadership Team
Corporate Management Team and other Group/Interim Service Managers
Legal Services

List of Background Papers:

Regulatory framework for social housing
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-framework-requirements>

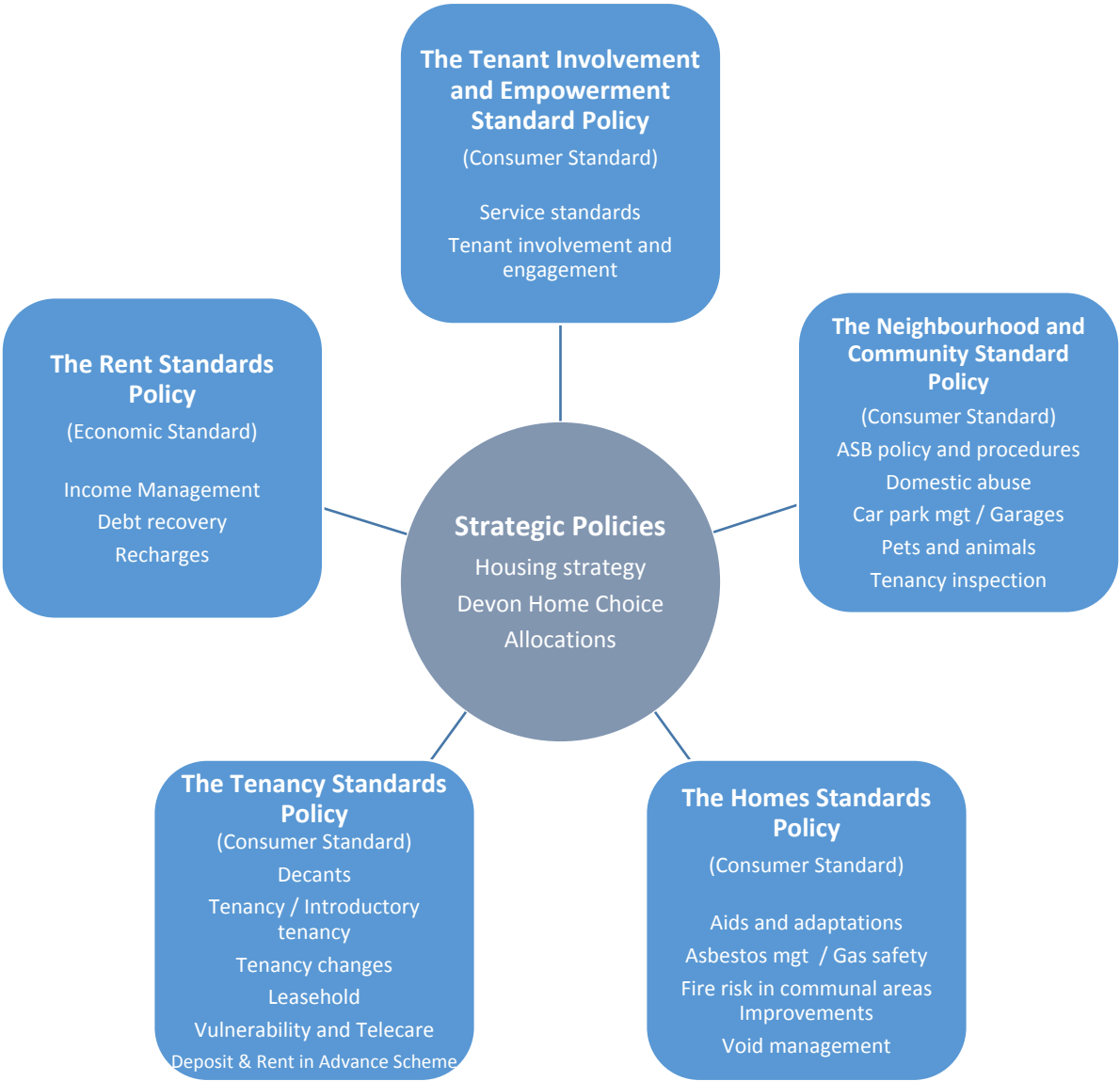
MDDC housing strategies and policies
<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/housing/council-housing/strategies-and-policies/>

Annex 1

Existing Housing Policies

- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Asbestos Management
- ASB Policy
- Car Parking Management Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Decant Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Fire Risk in Communal Areas Policy
- Garage Management Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Hoarding Policy
- Homeless Prevention & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025
- Improvements to Council Properties Policy
- Income Management Policy
- Introductory Tenancy Policy
- Leasehold Management Policy
- MDDC Housing Strategy 2015-2020
- Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Our Service Standards
- Pets and Animals Policy
- Recharges Policy
- Telecare Policy
- Tenancy Changes Policy
- Tenancy Inspection Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Tenancy Strategy
- Tenant Involvement Policy
- Tenant Involvement Strategy
- Void Management Policy
- Vulnerability Policy

One Housing Policies



HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

HOUSING SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Bob Evans
Responsible Officers: Mrs Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing Services /
Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and
Regulatory Services

Reason for Report and Recommendation: To provide an update to Members on enforcement and other activity undertaken by Officers in the Housing Service. Members are asked to comment on the format and reporting used in the report because changes have been made to the way in which the data is collected and presented.

Recommendation: Members are asked to note the report and to provide feedback on format and reporting in the new tables contained in the appendices.

Financial Implications: The activity of the Housing Service spans both General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is ring fenced and subject to specific financial controls.

Budget and Policy Framework: Policies agreed by the Homes Policy Development Group govern the work of the Housing Service. There are budgets set aside within the General Fund to finance work relating to homelessness and strategic rehousing. Additional funding to support work with rough sleepers has also been obtained in partnership with East Devon District Council for use this year. The HRA is funded in large part by rental income and therefore maintaining the revenue stream must be a key priority for the Housing Service.

Legal Implications: Tenancy management is funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The tenancy agreement defines the Council's relationship with tenants and sets out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. This takes account of legal and regulatory requirements. The Housing Act 1985, the Localism Act 2011 and the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 contain many provisions which must be taken into account by the Housing Service.

Service delivery funded by the General Fund encompasses the prevention and management of homelessness; and the administration of the housing register. There are many statutory obligations associated with these activities arising from provisions of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Risk Assessment: The landlord service has approximately 3,000 homes in management which represents a huge investment. Failure to provide an effective tenancy management service has the potential to result in failure to meet legal and statutory obligations including those relating to health and safety issues, tenancy fraud, and potential negative publicity in the event of, for example, a serious fire or anti-social behaviour leading to residents on an estate feeling stigmatised. Failure to collect rental income could impact the ability to fund necessary management and maintenance activities.

Failure to meet statutory obligations relating to homelessness could result in judicial review which could prove costly. Such an outcome also has the potential to impact the reputation of the Council in a negative way.

Equality Impact Assessment: There is a suite of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. There is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their service to meet the needs of the tenants and the Housing Service requests diversity data from tenants to enable compliance to be monitored.

The Council has a number of statutory obligations arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and therefore all those presenting as homeless to the Council must be assessed regardless of the section of society from which they come to see whether or not the duties apply. Failure to treat homelessness clients who are eligible fairly could result in judicial review.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Homes and the environment are a priority for the Council and this includes increasing the supply of affordable homes in the District and also supporting and growing active tenant engagement.

Impact on Climate Change: We recognise that the provision of sustainable communities is important. As part of our commitment to meeting the provisions of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard within the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, the Council offers a menu of involvement which provides opportunities for tenants to get involved in service delivery. We use social media to promote sustainability and publish information relating to a variety of topics including fuel efficiency, recycling and healthy living.

With regard to the homes in our management, our repairs and improvements strategies are informed by the need to reduce carbon emissions; and the need to reduce fuel poverty is also a key consideration.

Officers sometimes have to respond to emergencies such as those associated with the prevention and management of homelessness and also those arising from serious incidents of anti-social behaviour. In such cases, safeguarding concerns will take priority in order to minimise risk and it is accepted that the ability to manage such issues effectively may have an environmental impact which would not occur if work can be planned in advance and managed in a more co-ordinated way.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The rationale for this report is to show the range of work being undertaken across the Housing Service with regard to enforcement and safeguarding activity.
- 1.2 Since the first report presented at the previous meeting of the Homes PDG, Officers have re-run the data and re-structured the tables. This was to ensure that all relevant information has been captured.
- 1.3 Annex 1 shows a summary of enforcement and other related activity and Annex 2 shows a summary of safeguarding activity undertaken in connection with the

wellbeing of tenants, members of their households or anyone else, regardless of whether they live on our estates, where a concern has been identified.

2.0 Enforcement Activity

- 2.1 The Regulator for Social Housing operates the regulatory framework which contains a number of standards which set out the required outcomes and specific expectations associated with the performance of registered social landlords/housing providers (RPs).
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard contains provisions relating to the management of anti-social Behaviour and in line with these, RPs are expected to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood Officers in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Estates team are responsible for managing nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Some cases can be very complex and the work involved in the management of these can be ongoing for many months.
- 2.4 The report in Annex 1 shows the range of work associated with the management of anti-social behaviour under the heading: "Neighbourhood and Community Standard".
- 2.5 Members of the PDG will note that there was one injunction obtained during Quarter 2. This was an ex-parte -injunction, which means that the defendant was unaware of the action. Officers were able to demonstrate to the Court that the defendant had caused serious anti-social behaviour which included threatening and abusing staff. The proceedings took place in a virtual hearing via an electronic platform. There will be a further virtual hearing in due course and the purpose of this second hearing will be to provide the defendant with an opportunity to challenge the action taken by the Council.
- 2.6 Neighbourhood Officers in the HRA Income Team are responsible for maintaining the revenue stream. From the beginning of April 2020 until 21 September 2020, landlords were prohibited from commencing possession proceedings or evictions. The Government described this hiatus as a "pause" designed to mitigate the impact of lockdown and to aid sustainable tenancies.
- 2.7 Procedures relating to possession actions have changed in order to provide more protection for those tenants who may be experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic. Housing Officers are working with the Legal Service to understand the implications of this and to redesign standard letters and templates because, for the time-being, notice of possession proceedings should be of 6 months duration. Furthermore, there is to be another pause on possession action and evictions over the Christmas period from 11 December 2020 to 11 January 2021.
- 2.8 For reference, the Government has also advised that there should be no evictions in those local authority areas which are under local lockdown.

- 2.9 There has been very little enforcement activity undertaken since the start of the pandemic by the HRA Income Team. Instead, Officers modified their style in order to provide a more supportive response to those experiencing financial issues and a more collaborative approach was implemented. The aim was to ensure that those who were unable to pay their rent approached the Housing Service at an early stage in order to obtain advice and support as appropriate. Our Officers were able to signpost and refer those in need to other agencies which could help. In addition, they endeavour to create a payment culture by ensuring that any arrangements for repayment were realistic and achievable. The sending of letters to those in arrears has resumed but the purpose of this activity is to prompt a response from those people who may be in denial about the extent of their financial distress.
- 2.10 Members are likely to see an increase in enforcement activity relating to income management due to the need to protect the interests of the Council once the procedures relating to the service of notices have been amended to take account of the latest legal provisions.
- 2.11 The Housing Options team is responsible for managing temporary accommodation which is used by those who have presented as homeless. The Council has a number of statutory obligations to such people and this includes accommodating them whilst their circumstances are being investigated and assessed; and then, if a duty is owed, until such time as they can be rehoused.
- 2.12 During the pandemic, other individuals were accommodated as part of the initiative to minimise rough sleeping.
- 2.13 As shown in Annex 1, there was only one eviction from temporary accommodation during Quarter 2.
- 2.14 All Officers in the Housing and Building Services are required to escalate safeguarding issues, as appropriate, if there are any concerns about an individual, a member of their household or anyone else. This is in accordance with the corporate policy on safeguarding. Safeguarding issues can arise for many reasons and these may be associated with relationship breakdown, mental or other health issues, neglect and so on.
- 2.15 The HRA Estates team is the main point of contact for other agencies in relation to any safeguarding issues relating to tenants or anyone else, which have been escalated due to concern relating to risk of harm. The Neighbourhood Officers in that team will attend Team Around the Family (TAF) and other relevant meetings, as appropriate, on behalf of the Housing Service.
- 2.16 Members are asked to note the significant number of cases which have been referred to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment meeting (the MARAC) during the first two quarters of this year. Our Officers are able to participate in virtual meetings where cases are discussed in detail and where appropriate decisions are made on the basis of information provided.
- 2.17 Activity relevant to safeguarding is shown in Annex 2

3.0 The New Report Template

- 3.1 Members will note that the format of the table associated with this report has changed since the last meeting. This new template is intended to be the final one going forward. The approach to data collection has been reviewed and amended to ensure that all relevant information is captured and the table has been re-structured. Members are asked to feedback on whether or not this new arrangement of the information is satisfactory.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the report and to provide feedback on format and reporting in the new table contained in the appendices.

Contact for more Information: Mrs Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing Services, telephone: 01884 255255, email: cfry@middevon.gov.uk or Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services/Corporate Management Team email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report:

Members of the Housing PDG
Cllr Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes
Leadership Team
Corporate Management Team and other Group/Interim Service Managers
Legal Services

List of Background Papers:

The Regulatory framework for social housing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-framework-requirements>

Annex 1

Service Delivery – Enforcement Activities

Neighbourhood & Community Standard – Housing Revenue Account – Estates Team						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Fraud cases opened	2	0			2	No new cases reported
Fraud cases referred to an external investigator	1	1			2	
Acceptable Behaviour Agreements signed	0	2			2	
Good Neighbourhood Agreements signed	3	0			3	No new cases reported
Community Protection Notice warnings issued	1	1			2	
Community Protection Notices issued	0	0			0	
Possession Actions commenced on grounds of ASB	3	0			3	
Closure Orders – obtained	4	0			4	
Injunctions sought	0	1			1	
Evictions on grounds of anti-social behaviour/ other tenancy breach	0	0			0	

Income Recovery – Housing Revenue Account – Income Team						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Notice of Seeking possession served	0	0			0	Due to the pandemic we have not commenced with service of Notices
Judgement obtained	0	0			0	
Warrants issued	2	0			2	Warrants issued are pending an eviction date due to the pause on evictions during the pandemic
Evictions on grounds of rent arrears	0	0			0	

Management of Temporary Accommodation – General Fund – Housing Options team						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Evictions from temporary accommodation	6	1			7	

Annex 2

Service Delivery – Safeguarding Activities

Neighbourhood & Community Standard – Housing Revenue Account						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Domestic abuse cases opened	10	0			10	No new cases reported
Domestic abuse cases referred to Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	5	9			14	All cases relate to MDDC tenants but referred by other agencies
Safeguarding referrals made (to all agencies)	4	9			13	Various referrals made

HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP 10 NOVEMBER 2020

TENANT CENSUS

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Bob Evans
Responsible Officer: Mrs Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing Services /
Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and
Regulatory Services

Reason for Report and Recommendations: To update Members of the Homes Policy Development Group on feedback from the tenant census which was recently undertaken in line with the specific expectations of the regulatory framework. The results of the survey will inform the direction of travel with regard to the future review of the strategy and policy relating to tenant involvement; and also proposals relating to internal changes to the structure of the landlord service.

Recommendation: Members are asked to comment upon and to note the report

Financial Implications: The activity of the Housing Service in its role as a landlord is accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is ring fenced and subject to specific financial controls.

Budget and Policy Framework: Policies agreed by the Homes Policy Development Group govern the work of the Housing Service. The Council has adopted a tenant involvement strategy and also a tenant involvement policy.

Legal Implications: The tenancy agreement defines the Council's relationship with tenants and sets out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. This takes account of legal and regulatory requirements. The Housing Act 1985 contains provisions relating to consultation with tenants; and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard contains a number of required outcomes and specific expectations which registered providers of social housing (RPs) are expected to meet. One specific expectation is that RPs shall consult tenants at least once every 3 years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

Risk Assessment: The landlord service has approximately 3,000 homes in management which represents a huge investment. RPs are expected to involve tenants in decision-making and scrutiny activity in line with the regulatory framework and failure to do so could be addressed by the Regulator for Social Housing. During the pandemic, face to face contact with tenants must be avoided and therefore there must be inevitable changes to the strategy of the Housing Service as it relates to tenant engagement in order to mitigate the risk of Covi-19 infection.

Equality Impact Assessment: There is a suite of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. The strategy and policy relating to tenant involvement were originally drafted to take account of equalities issues. As part of our commitment to meeting the provisions of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard, the Council offers a menu of involvement which provides opportunities for tenants to get involved in service delivery. RPs are also supposed to tailor their service to meet the needs of the tenants

and the Housing Service requests diversity data from tenants to enable compliance to be monitored.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Homes and the environment are a priority for the Council and this includes supporting and growing active tenant engagement.

Impact on Climate Change: We recognise that the provision of sustainable communities is important. We offer tenants opportunities to get involved and to raise issues of concern and we also use social media to promote sustainability and to publish information relating to a variety of topics including fuel efficiency, recycling and healthy living. In recent months, engagement with our social media accounts has grown and the MDDC Housing Facebook page is used to promote tenant engagement, too. The use of this medium reduces the use of paper. A tenant focus group also receives email updates periodically.

With regard to the homes in our management, our repairs and improvements strategies are informed by the need to reduce carbon emissions; and the need to reduce fuel poverty is also a key consideration.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The regulatory framework for social housing operated by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH), contains four consumer standards, and one of these is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. The provisions of the regulatory framework are applicable to all aspects of the work of the landlord service. In line with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard, there is a specific expectation that registered providers of social housing (RPs) will consult with tenants at least once every three years. This consultation is to focus on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.
- 1.2 Leaseholders were also surveyed and, for the purposes of this report, the word: "tenant" should be taken to include both tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.3 The Housing Service procured the use of a contractor to undertake a survey of all tenants. Given the fact that all tenants were to be asked to complete a questionnaire, it was agreed that it was reasonable to call this project a tenant census. A third party was engaged to run the project, in line with good practice, in order to provide assurance because it was important to ensure that the collection of the data and the subsequent analysis of it was open and transparent.

2.0 Methodology Associated with the Collection of Data

- 2.1 The tenant survey was undertaken during the summer of 2020. The aim of the survey was to give tenants an opportunity to provide feedback on satisfaction with services and to identify future priorities.
- 2.2 All tenants received a postal census survey and to encourage take up, there were email invitations to those for whom the Housing Service held email addresses. There was an online version of the census available to all in order to increase the response rate and accessibility.

- 2.3 The Housing Service subscribes to HouseMark which is an organisation jointly owned by the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation. HouseMark provides a benchmarking service which is based on the collection of relevant data from RPs. The organisation undertakes data analysis and provides insight which can be used to identify good performance and best practice and therefore used to inform the service improvements.
- 2.4 HouseMark has a product known as STAR which is used to standardise customer satisfaction research. The questionnaire used in the tenant census was designed in accordance with the STAR guidance and included a selection of STAR questions.
- 2.5 Work on the tenant census was delayed by the pandemic; it had been hoped that the survey would be dispatched at the beginning of this financial year in April 2020. This project had been originally been discussed with tenant representatives who were involved in the Tenant Together group, which is no longer in operation. These representatives had identified areas of specific interest which they felt should be covered in the questionnaire. The additional questions asked were informed by this consultation and engagement.
- 2.6 The questionnaire used contained only a limited number of questions. This was in line with good practice. The aim was to minimise the commitment needed in terms of time from those responding which, it was hoped, would encourage as many households as possible to return a completed survey.
- 2.7 Initially, all those households which had previously provided the Council with an email address were sent an email invitation to participate in the census using a unique login.
- 2.8 Subsequently, a postal questionnaire was dispatched to each household. This was sent with a covering note from our contractor together with a stamped addressed envelope to aid the return of the completed survey form.
- 2.9 Tenants were also encouraged to complete the survey online using a web-link and a unique login, and relevant information was included in the covering letter. The use of the unique login enabled the results to be reviewed and checked to prevent any multiple responses.
- 2.10 A further reminder was sent to those who had failed to respond in line with the HouseMark guidelines.

3.0 Survey Responses

- 3.1 In total, 1276 responses were received which is a 42% response rate. Our contractor advised that this was good when compared to other similar surveys which they had coordinated.
- 3.2 The tenants most likely to respond were those who fell into the older age groups. In our survey, 63% of respondents were aged 65 or more. This corresponds with other research undertaken by RPs. Those living in bungalows were more like to respond, which was not unexpected given the high response rate amongst older people, with 53% of those who returned a survey living in such a property.

- 3.3 The majority of responses were sent using the postal system, although 9% of the surveys were completed online. 34% of those aged 18-34 who responded did so online, which made up the largest group of people who went online to complete the census survey form.
- 3.4 The results of the tenant census show that the majority of tenants find that the home and services provided by the Housing Service in its landlord role generally meet their needs. This was evidenced by the high levels of satisfaction, as demonstrated by responses to questions in the survey:
- 90% are satisfied with the value for money of their rent
 - 88% are satisfied that Mid Devon provides a home that is safe and secure
 - 87% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
 - 87% of residents are satisfied with overall landlord service
 - 85% are satisfied with the quality of homes
 - 84% are satisfied with their last repair
 - 81% are satisfied that Mid Devon is easy to deal with
 - 75% are satisfied with the way Mid Devon deals with improvement works
 - 67% are satisfied that Mid Devon gives the opportunity to make views known
 - 65% are satisfied with the Value for Money from their Service Charge
 - 64% are satisfied that Mid Devon listens to resident's views and acts upon them

4.0 Identifying Service Priorities

- 4.1 Tenants were also asked to identify which services should be given priority going forward and the outcomes arising from this part of the survey is similar to what would be expected, given what other landlords have reported.
- 4.2 77% of those who responded identified repairs as a top priority and 63% said that home quality was a key priority for them.
- 4.3 The other priorities identified were only important to 33% of those who responded with the following being specified (the percentage of respondents who identified each is shown in brackets):
- Neighbourhood as a place to live (33%)
 - Value for money for rent (and service charges) (33%)
 - Dealing with anti-social behaviour (30%)
 - Listening to resident's view and acting upon them (23%)
 - Keeping residents informed (22%)
 - Support and advice on claiming welfare benefits and paying rent (14%)
- 4.4 The contractor was able to provide an analysis of the findings which showed which cohorts of tenants had identified which priorities; this was broken down into dwelling type and age and this analysis will inform the work relating to our review of our approach to tenant engagement. Members will recall that increasing this is a corporate priority. Information was also collected on income

source and there has been some analysis to understand the results in light of this.

- 4.5 The contractor also requested information relating to the diversity of those who responded. Factors such as the profile of the household, respondent age, illness and other factors need to be analysed alongside the responses received to the other questions in order to identify any trends which may cause concern. If any such trends are detected, they can be further investigated and an action plans agreed to reduce the negative impact experienced by any particular group of tenants.

5.0 Benchmarking the Results of the Tenant Census

- 5.1 The tenant census included six HouseMark questions. Comparing the responses from these with those of other housing providers can help to identify any areas of improvement required.
- 5.2 When reviewing the comparison data, it should be noted that the characteristics of each group of tenants surveyed may not be an exact match and that no one group is likely to have the same feelings regarding satisfaction as any other.
- 5.3 The HouseMark data used for comparative purposes in this case was derived from the responses to surveys undertaken by all social housing landlords which submitted data to HouseMark in 2016 to 2017. The results included below do not include leaseholder results.
- 5.4 It is reassuring to note that in most areas, the Housing Service performs well in comparison with other housing organisations with the following results when compared to the responses from all landlords who reported results for surveys involving their tenants living in homes designed for both general needs and older people.
- 5.5 The results below show the outcome of the tenant census and the quartile (Q) position:
- Satisfaction with value for money for rent 90.86% (Q1)
 - Overall satisfaction with services provided by landlord 87.75% (Q2)
 - Satisfaction with area as a place to live 86.75% (Q2)
 - Satisfaction with overall quality of home 85.74% (Q2)
 - Satisfaction with service charge value for money 65.53% (Q3)
 - Satisfaction with taking listening to view and acting upon them 64.61% (Q3)
- 5.6 It should be noted that results which equate to a quartile one position are good.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 Taking on board the pledge contained within the Corporate Plan to “Support and grow active tenant engagement”, one of the first projects to be undertaken to deliver this will be to analyse the results of the tenant census (to be completed by the end of November 2020). The following milestones have been identified within this project:

- Identify trends
- Discuss key priorities with Cabinet Member, Building Services and tenant focus group
- Identify budget for any potential service improvements
- Formulate an action plan

6.2 There will be further updates in due course on progress with regard to this project. In addition, there will be updates on how the results of the tenant census will be used to inform a refresh of our approach to tenant engagement in light of low interest from the wider tenant community. The need to move away from face to face interaction during the pandemic is also a key concern.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 Members are asked to comment upon and to note the report.

Contact for more Information: Mrs Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing Services, telephone: 01884 255255, email: cfry@middevon.gov.uk or Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services/Corporate Management Team email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report:

Members of the Housing PDG
Cllr Bob Evans, Cabinet Member for Homes
Leadership Team
Corporate Management Team and other Group/Interim Service Managers
Legal Services

List of Background Papers:

The Regulatory framework for social housing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-framework-requirements>