

Homes Policy Development Group

Tuesday, 10 September 2024 at 2.15 pm
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next meeting
Tuesday, 19 November 2024 at 2.15 pm

Please Note: This meeting will take place at Phoenix House and members of the public and press are able to attend via Teams. If you are intending to attend in person please contact the committee clerk in advance, in order that numbers of people can be appropriately managed in physical meeting rooms.

The meeting will be hybrid and an audio recording made and published on the website after the meeting.

[To join the meeting online, click here](#)

Meeting ID: 355 630 006 149

Passcode: 7fbh2x

Membership

C Adcock
J Cairney
A Glover
F W Letch
N Letch
S Robinson (Chair)
H Tuffin
C Connor

A G E N D A

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 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 3 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 4 **Minutes** (*Pages 7 - 18*)
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 11 June 2024.
- 5 **Chairman's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 6 **Medium Term Financial Plan - General Fund (GF)** (*Pages 19 - 48*)
To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covers the period 2025/26 to 2028/29 and takes account of the Council's key strategies (i.e. the Corporate Plan, Business Plans, Treasury Management Plan, Asset Management Plan, Work Force Plan and Capital Strategy) and demonstrates it has the financial resources to deliver the Corporate Plan. This models potential changes in funding levels, new initiatives, unavoidable costs and proposed service savings.
- 7 **Performance Dashboard Q1** (*Pages 49 - 50*)
To receive the quarter 1 Performance Dashboard from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager.
- 8 **Review of Mid Devon Housing Hoarding Policy** (*Pages 51 - 74*)
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health setting out Mid Devon Housing's (MDH) methodology in supporting vulnerable adults who hoard and self-neglect using a multi-agency, person centred approach that also addresses health and safety risks.
- 9 **Mid Devon Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy (New)** (*Pages 75 - 100*)
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health presenting a single, new policy document providing clarity for tenants, the RSH and MDH more widely as to what our repairs service will provide and how it meets the Standard requirements.

- 10 **Review of Mid Devon Housing Asbestos Management Plan** (*Pages 101 - 142*)
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health. Mid Devon Housing (MDH) has a legal requirement to maintain health and safety and have an up to date Asbestos Management Plan. Recent changes to statutory consumer regulation standards produced the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) impose reporting and other changes which require the plan to updated.
- 11 **Mid Devon Housing Service Delivery Report for quarter 1 2024-2025** (*Pages 143 - 162*)
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health. This report is presented in support of an ongoing commitment to provide a quarterly update to Members on activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing (MDH), including some relating to enforcement.
- 12 **Downsizing Working Group Verbal Update**
To receive a verbal update on the work of the Downsizing Working Group so far.
- 13 **Tenure Reform & Tenancy Agreement Project Plan - verbal update**
To receive a verbal update from the Head of Housing and Health on the Tenure Reform & Tenancy Agreement Project Plan.
- 14 **Devon Housing Commission Report**
To receive a summary of the key recommendations within the recent Devon Housing Commission Report from the Head of Housing and Health.
- 15 **Identification of items for the next meeting**
Members are asked to note that the following items are identified in the work programme for the next meeting, however, please note that some of these items may be brought before the PDG at a subsequent meeting:
- Housing Initiatives Briefing
 - Draft Budget 22/26
 - Performance Dashboard for quarter 2
 - Tenancy Management Policy
 - Tenant Compensation Policy
 - Housing Strategy
 - Service Standards
 - Tenancy Strategy
 - Tenant Involvement Strategy
 - HRA Asset Management Strategy
 - Variation to Standard Tenancy Agreement

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

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

From 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The Council will enable all people to continue to participate in meetings via Teams.

If the Council experience technology difficulties at a committee meeting the Chairman may make the decision to continue the meeting 'in-person' only to conclude the business on the agenda.

1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at Committee@middevon.gov.uk

They can also be accessed via the council's website [Click Here](#)

Printed agendas can also be viewed in reception at the Council offices at Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, EX16 6PP.

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership.

The Code of Conduct can be [viewed here](#):

3. Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. Minutes of meetings are not verbatim.

4. Public Question Time

Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District wishing to raise a question and/or statement under public question time are asked to provide their written questions to the Democratic Services team by 5pm three clear working days before the meeting to ensure that a response can be provided at the meeting. You will be invited to ask your question and or statement at the meeting and will receive the answer prior to, or as part of, the debate on that item. Alternatively, if you are content to receive an answer after the item has been debated, you can register to speak by emailing your full name to Committee@middevon.gov.uk by no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting. You will be invited to speak at the meeting and will receive a written response within 10 clear working days following the meeting.

Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

For those joining the meeting virtually:

- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Switch off your camera if you are not speaking.
- Speak clearly (if you are not using camera then please state your name)
- Switch off your camera and microphone after you have spoken.
- There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called "turn on live captions" which provides subtitles on the screen.

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

When considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act. If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed. They will be invited to return as soon as the meeting returns to open session.

7. Recording of meetings

All media, including radio and TV journalists, and members of the public may attend Council, Cabinet, PDG and Committee meetings (apart from items Media and Social Media Policy - 2023 page 22 where the public is excluded) you can view our Media and Social Media Policy [here](#). They may record, film or use social media before, during or after the meeting, so long as this does not distract from or interfere unduly with the smooth running of the meeting. Anyone proposing to film during the meeting is requested to make this known to the Chairman in advance. The Council also makes audio recordings of meetings which are published on our website [Browse Meetings, 2024 - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](#).

8. Fire Drill Procedure

If you hear the fire alarm you should leave the building by the marked fire exits, follow the direction signs and assemble at the master point outside the entrance. Do not use the lifts or the main staircase. You must wait there until directed otherwise by a senior officer. If anybody present is likely to need assistance in exiting the building in the event of an emergency, please ensure you have let a member of Democratic Services know before the meeting begins and arrangements will be made should an emergency occur.

9. WIFI

An open, publicly available Wi-Fi network is normally available for meetings held in the Phoenix Chambers at Phoenix House.

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 11 June 2024 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

S Robinson (Chairman)
C Adcock (Vice Chairman), J Cairney, C Connor, A Glover,
F W Letch, N Letch and H Tuffin

Also Present

Councillors

D Broom, S Clist and J Lock

Present

Officers

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Richard Marsh (Director of Place & Economy), Simon Newcombe (Head of Housing & Health), Tanya Wenham (Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options), Sam Barnett (Housing Initiatives Officer), Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Present Virtually

J Buczkowski and L Knight

Officers

Present Virtually

Dr Stephen Carr and C Oliphant

1 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Cllr S Robinson be elected Chairman of the Homes Policy Development Group for the municipal year 2024/2025.

2 Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Cllr C Adcock be elected Vice Chairman of the Homes Policy Development Group for the municipal year 2024/2025.

3 Start time of Meetings

It was **AGREED** that the start time for meetings for the remainder of the municipal year continue to be at 2.15pm on Tuesday afternoons.

4 Apologies and Substitute Members

There were no apologies for absence.

5 **Public Question Time**

There were no members of the public present and none had registered to ask a question in advance.

6 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**

No interests were declared under this item.

7 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2024 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

8 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman had the following announcements to make:

- She thanked the Group for electing her as Chairman.
- She hoped that the Homes Policy Development Group would be proactive in recommending Homes policies in the forthcoming year.
- The Members of the Homes PDG were engaged and enthusiastic and she hoped that Members and officers would be able to trust each other in the development of ideas and policy going forwards so that current and future tenants could be appropriately supported to best effect.

9 **Draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 (00:09:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Chief Executive presenting the draft Corporate Plan for 2024-2028 and inviting feedback before recommending the Corporate Plan back to Cabinet.

The contents of the report were outlined by the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager and discussion took place regarding:

- What name will the new Corporate Plan would be given? This was still to be decided by the Cabinet. A title was not a requirement and the Cabinet may simply choose to leave it as the 'Corporate Plan 2024-2028'.
- This was 'the' key document for the Council providing a summary of its strategic objectives and ambitions. Detailed reports would provide regular analysis of performance against each of the objectives providing Members with regular opportunities to assess whether the Corporate Plan was achieving its aims.
- All PDG's were being asked to provide feedback so that the new Corporate Plan was in the best state it could be before being approved by full Council.
- There was a strong focus in the Homes section of the Corporate Plan on maintenance and the safety of properties, these were key issues for tenants.
- A performance measure related to waiting lists and homelessness pressures was suggested. These were key areas that needed regular monitoring.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the draft Corporate Plan for 2024 – 2028 be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr A Glover and seconded by Cllr C Connor)

Note: * Report previously circulated.

Reason for the decision

Setting out the Council's aims and objectives through a Corporate Plan helps the Council demonstrate its performance in relation to Value for Money considerations.

10 **Performance Dashboard (00:25:00)**

The Group received, and **NOTED**, information * showing performance data for quarter 4 Mid Devon Housing under both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account areas.

This included the following summary in relation to the red and amber RAG ratings:

- Private Sector housing service requests response rate was slightly behind target at 95%, though an improving trend was noted.
- Temporary accommodation costs was showing an overspend. It was explained that this is offset by additional homelessness support and Homes for Ukraine grant.
- Complaints responded to within the complaints handling code timescales was underperforming, but performance had increased steadily throughout the year but would be discussed in detail later on in the agenda.
- Mid Devon Homes delivery of social housing was behind target. It was highlighted that new properties are about to become part of the housing stock, and recent planning approvals ensure a pipeline for the future.
- Market delivery of affordable homes was behind target.
- For two indicators relating to capital projects underperformance was noted. It was explained that this relates to delay in seeking planning permission and starting works on the planned development programme. Budget has been carried forward.
- Any changes to performance dashboard given work on a new Corporate Plan would be reflected in the performance data for quarter 1 2024/2025.

Consideration was given to the following:

- The direction of travel for the delivery of new homes was seen as positive.
- The Performance Dashboards were felt to be a useful tool by officers especially as they became more developed and contained more data for analysis.
- Concern was expressed regarding temporary accommodation costs. However, it was explained that these were high in quarter 4 as a result of recharges to the Housing Revenue Account.
- Some targets had gone from red to green. The reason for this was explained as being due to the fact that performance against an annual target was sometimes not known until the end of the financial year.

Note: * Performance Dashboard previously circulated.

11 **Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) update and approach to allocating homes briefing (00:40:00)**

The Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options provided the Group with a briefing and presentation regarding the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

The following summary information was provided in relation to:

- Homes for Ukraine update
- An overview of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)
- MDDC approach
- Project Delivery
- Allocations process and support
- Case study
- LAHF - Round 3

Discussion took place regarding:

- It was confirmed that the houses referred to in the presentation were purchased by and held within the General Fund. They sat outside of the HRA. Consequently, it was also confirmed that they were not eligible for 'Right to Buy' and will be managed under accommodation licences not secure tenures.
- The LAHF was a funding opportunity made available to local authorities to draw down if they expressed an interest and could meet the grant funding terms. The Cabinet had felt that this was the right thing to do, one reason being it would help to reduce temporary accommodation costs.
- Team Devon had agreed that some of the money from wider Homes for Ukraine funding could be used to fund each new 'guest' meaning less needed to come out of the General Fund.
- Due to the rural nature of Mid Devon and it not being as 'diverse' as some other communities some 'guests' and their families had found it difficult to integrate especially if there were not other people of the same faith in the community in which they lived.

The Group thanked the officers for the interesting and informative presentation.

12 **Income Management Policy (01:05:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Housing and Health setting out the principles and the overall approach that Mid Devon Housing takes to collecting rent, service charges and other payments, prevent arrears, manage arrears and ensure that effective and appropriate action is taken to sustain tenancies and maximise income / reduce debt.

The policy was in need of updating and the following summary was provided:

- Officers worked proactively with tenants experiencing financial difficulty to prevent debt becoming bigger where this could be achieved. However, many were experiencing the effects of the cost of living crisis and housing rent increases.

- Despite this the rent collection rate was 98% which was an extremely positive result given the current economic position.
- It had been possible to achieve this position with only 7 evictions overall.
- It was a key focus of the service to sustain people within their tenancies for as long as possible.

Discussion took place regarding:

- It was confirmed that when tenants contact MDH to express their dissatisfaction with something in the income management process then MDH would always have informal discussion to see if things could be put right within quickly, however any complaint was still registered within 5-days so it could be actioned properly.
- The debt recovery process has several stages each with its own timeline, however there was flexibility within the policy approach so MDH can pause at any stage if there was positive engagement from the tenant. As such, each case was dealt with on a case by case basis and in reality has its own timeframe.
- The assistance of local Ward Members was encouraged if it could be found to resolve a particular issue.
- Eviction was an absolute last resort and it was a difficult balancing act weighing up the needs of the HRA in terms of people paying rent versus creating a new homelessness pressure.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the updated Income Management Policy and Equality Impact Assessment contained in annexes A and B respectively be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr A Glover and seconded by Cllr H Tuffin)

Reason for the Decision

Rent collected was paid into the Housing Revenue Account for dwellings and garages/garage ground rent plots (GGRP) and car parking spaces. It was therefore important to maintain the revenue stream. However, as Council housing is designed to help those in housing need, there were many vulnerable people on low incomes living in Council properties. As a result of this consideration must be given to individual circumstances when making decisions about tenancy enforcement action.

The MDH tenancy agreement contained a clause which stated that tenants were responsible for paying their rent and other charges on time. Rent was due on a Monday. The Housing Service offers tenants many different methods of payment and also accepted payments on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis as long as rent was paid regularly.

Having a clearly defined policy ensures consistency of approach and ensures that no tenant or resident was treated any more fairly or unfairly than any other.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

13 **Amendments to Mid Devon Housing (MDH) Home Safety Policy 01:17:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Housing and Health outlining some amendments needed to the Mid Devon Housing Home Safety Policy.

Minor changes were essentially due to changes in the legislation, fire risk and changes to job titles and were listed at sections 1.6, 1.10 and 1.15.

A brief discussion took place with regard to:

- Bioethanol heaters were particularly hazardous and generally not insulated very well creating a fire risk.
- It was confirmed that paraffin heaters were already considered within the policy.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the amended Home Safety Policy be amended as set out in the report.

(Proposed by Cllr F Letch and seconded by Cllr J Cairney)

Reason for the decision

The policy ensured that MDH fully complied with its statutory obligations and that the safety of its residents was safeguarded.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

14 **Delegated Decisions for Mid Devon Housing (MDH) policies with minor amendments (01:25:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Housing and Health summarising the need for delegated authority to be given to himself in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services to make minor changes to current and new housing policies.

It was explained that updates would be quite minor whereas at the moment every single policy had to be brought before the Policy Development Group. Going forwards the Group would need to focus on significant policy updates only.

The Chairman stated that the Homes PDG had a very hardworking membership who wanted to be proactive and helpful in the best way possible.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- a) The Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to current MDH Policies as listed in Annex A in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services) as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.
- b) The Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to new MDH Policies as listed in Annex A or developed in due course following first adoption, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for

Housing & Property Services) as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.
(Proposed by Cllr C Adcock and seconded by Cllr A Glover)

Reason for the decision

MDH must ensure that its published policies are up to date and compliant to current legislation. This included the ability to swiftly make changes as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.

Delays to implementing legally required changes posed a risk to the Council.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

15 **Final Report of the Tenure Reform Working Group (01:29:00)**

The Group were presented with a report * from the Head of Housing and Health. The Homes PDG had tasked the Tenure Reform Working Group to investigate the continued use of Flexible Tenancies for all properties and whether this type of tenure was beneficial for Mid Devon Housing (MDH) and tenants. The Working Group were asked to consider whether a change to the current tenure offerings required updating and if so what types of tenure should be offered to tenants in the future.

The Chairman of the Working Group provided a summary of their work and presented their findings:

- The Working Group had given thorough thought and spent a lot of time undertaking the instructions of the PDG.
- They had spoken to tenants to find out what they thought about Flexible Tenancies.
- They had also looked into using more blended approaches.
- They had concluded that there was quite an administrative burden to operating Flexible Tenancies requiring significant officer resource and costs to the Council.
- Flexible Tenancies had been introduced in 2013 before the Grenfell disaster and many local authorities were now moving away from them.
- Tenants had commented that they found the tenancy review process very stressful, particularly those tenants who were vulnerable.
- There was also evidence that due to the sometimes temporary nature of the tenancy not as much care was sometimes taken of the properties.

RECOMMENDED to that Cabinet that:

- a) The use of flexible tenancies be halted.
- b) All current flexible tenancies are moved to secure tenancies.

(Proposed by Cllr C Connor and seconded by Cllr J Cairney)

It was also **AGREED** that a Working Group be established to look at ways in which Mid Devon Housing could incentivise tenants to downsize to smaller homes when required.

The Working Group would comprise of the following Members: Cllr C Connor, Cllr A Glover and Cllr H Tuffin.

Reason for the decision

It was good practice to review tenancy agreements on a regular basis to take account of changes to legislation, regulatory requirements, policy and good practice. Registered Providers also needed to ensure that those responsible for housing management could rely on a robust tenancy agreement which could be used in support of efficient and effective management of tenancies and the housing stock.

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated.

(ii) Cllr N Letch requested that her vote against the recommendations to the Cabinet be recorded.

16 **Mid Devon Housing (MDH) Tenure Review and Associated Review of Tenancy Conditions: Project Plan (01:39:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Housing and Health seeking approval to update the project plan relating to a review of the standard MDH tenancy agreement.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- Approval was sought to update the project plan relating to a review of the standard MDH tenancy agreement. The project plan also related to the various forms of tenure currently in use at MDH. In addition, the project encompassed a review of the tenancy management policy which required updating, and which would have to be amended accordingly should tenure reform be agreed. The report contained a recommendation that the project plan be extended to facilitate detailed consultation with tenants, and other stakeholders, in line with legislative and regulatory requirements, and good practice.
- The project plan and its timeline had been dependent on the work of the PDG Tenure Reform Working Group including the production of its final report as set out at this meeting. Due to the Member Working Group meeting once more than originally planned, the report from the Working Group to the PDG on this project was delayed from the March meeting to this one. More time was therefore now needed to enable appropriate consultation with other stakeholders, including tenants, to take place and the project plan has been amended accordingly.

The Chairman requested that an update be provided to the next meeting in September.

It was **AGREED** that the tenure review project plan be amended as set out in the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

17 Mid Devon Housing Service Delivery Report for Q4 and Outturn for 2023/2024 (01:42:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Housing and Health providing a quarterly update to Members on activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing (MDH) including some relating to enforcement.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The report presented a full set of performance and Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) data.
- For the first time it also presented the outcome of the TSM perception surveys.
- Overall there had been a very strong performance in the MDH area.
- Performance was at or above target on repairs.
- Debt levels were very low.
- Voids remained under pressure due to high turnover and high damage levels, however 97% of properties in the housing stock were occupied at any one time.
- There was a sufficient number of respondees to the TSM perception surveys to meet the requirements of the Regulator and were enough to be representative.
- Importantly, at the moment, there was nothing to compare this data to as the Regulator had not published any national bench marking.
- Mid Devon was the first local authority in Devon to put their full TSM data into the public domain.
- Reference was made to the statistical data within the report but it was explained that this data needed unpicking. It certainly suggested some areas for improvement and officers would be working up a plan for the future.
- The Regulator would be placing a lot of emphasis on TSM's going forwards, the sector was consumer driven with all data and outcomes being inspected.

Consideration was given to:

- The importance of early intervention to ensure tenants stayed in their properties as long as possible despite financial difficulties.
- What would happen with a possible change in Government at the next General Election? It was explained that many recent changes to the housing sector were now on the statute book and unlikely to be reversed. The Regulatory framework was likely to remain part of the housing landscape going forwards. This was not something to be feared but to be embraced.
- More proactive work would be undertaken to ascertain why it was some tenants did not feel safe in their homes.
- There was a huge challenge over the interpretation of the responses as the questions were prescribed by the Regulator. It was felt that everybody interpreted questions differently. This would be a work in progress.
- The monthly officer meetings and whether Members had a role to play in them? It was considered that this was a safe place for officers to discuss issues in their areas alone and that much of this was operational in any case.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

18 Mid Devon Housing Complaints Handling Report 2023-24 (02:15:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Housing and Health setting out how complaints were handled during 2023 – 2024 and other pertinent information in relation to this.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The Government and Regulator wanted to know how well each Registered Provider was doing and so was proactively encouraging complaints to come forward. The key things to remember were that complaints were genuinely an opportunity to learn and improve and were often the only way to facilitate this learning process.
- Data showed that more complaints were dealt with now at the first stage of reporting and over 50% of complaints were not upheld. Fewer complaints were going through to stage two.
- Some complaints were frivolous and / or non-valid.
- To put it into context, 93% of tenants did not complain, so we were only talking about 7% of tenants overall who had made a complaint.
- The challenge was to determine what could be done better and what was not working.
- Better communications would be key moving forwards.
- Some areas received no complaints such as disabled adaptations and emergency repairs.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Where possible, references to 'quickly' within the report needed to specify defined timescales.
- The need for people to be able to engage with the Council in as many different ways as possible so as to improve communication.
- Ward members had a role to play.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

19 Work Programme for 2024/2025 (02:35:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the current work programme for the Homes Policy Development Group for 2024 / 2025.

Members were asked to consider whether there were other areas that they wanted to focus on in addition to those already listed in the work programme.

The following was discussed and **AGREED**:

- There would be a new policy coming forwards in March 2025 to better support tenants in relation to Safeguarding matters
- The Asset Management Strategy would be coming forward at some stage in the near future and could consider issues such as renewable energy as a part of that. It would need to have a relevance to the Homes PDG however as this sort of discussion may be better placed in another PDG.

- As a result of the Safer Tenants Bill and the outcomes of the TSM's there would be a good deal of work to be done and a role for the PDG to play in making tenants feel safer in their homes.
- Whether it was possible to look at how different types of property were allocated.
- An update was requested from the new Working Group looking at ways to incentivise tenants to downsize to smaller properties for the next meeting.

Note: * Work Programme previously circulated.

20 **Identification of items for the next meeting**

No additional items were identified for the next meeting other than those already listed in the work programme and the items discussed under the previous agenda item.

(The meeting ended at 5.02 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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Report for: Homes Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting:	10 September 2024
Subject:	Medium Term Financial Plan – General Fund (GF)
Cabinet Member:	James Buczkowski – Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Exempt:	N/a
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Sensitivity Analysis Appendix 2 – MTFP Summary Position Appendix 3 – Emerging Budget Pressures Appendix 4a – Homes PDG Savings Options Appendix 4b – All Savings Options

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To present to Member's the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covers the period 2025/26 to 2028/29 and takes account of the Council's key strategies (i.e. the Corporate Plan, Business Plans, Treasury Management Plan, Asset Management Plan, Work Force Plan and Capital Strategy) and demonstrates it has the financial resources to deliver the Corporate Plan. This models potential changes in funding levels, new initiatives, unavoidable costs and proposed service savings.

Recommendation(s):

That Members of the Policy Development Group:

- 1. Note the updated MTFP for the General Fund covering the years 2025/26 to 2028/29;**
- 2. Consider the principles and endorse the approach to balancing the General Fund Revenue Budget outlined in paragraph 6.2;**
- 3. Note the emerging budget pressures included within Appendix 3;**

4. **Consider and recommend to Cabinet the Round 1 Budget Proposals as set out in Appendix 4a, and where further savings should be sought and to what level.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction and purpose of the Medium Term Financial Plan

- 1.1 The main purpose of the MTFP is to show how the Council will strategically manage its finances in order to support the delivery of the priorities detailed in the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028 and future years beyond that plan.
- 1.2 The MTFP links the financial requirements, constraints and objectives included in all the key planning documents of the Council (i.e. Asset Management Plan, Treasury Management Strategy, Work Force Plan, and Business Plans) which culminate in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.3 The MTFP has been a key corporate requirement for a number of years and is an essential part of the budget setting process. It provides a financial model which forecasts the cost of providing Council services over a future rolling five year period, together with an estimate of the financial resources that will be available. Note a new year 5 covering 2029/30 is currently being modelled. This model provides an early warning mechanism if there is a significant budget gap between estimated costs and available resources.
- 1.4 The MTFP helps strategically plan the budget setting process, but of equal importance, gives Management and Members an overview of future budget gaps so strategic decisions can be made over levels of future spending, Council Tax levels, policies for fees and charges, asset investment or disposal, etc.
- 1.5 In addition to considering the General Fund financial position, the MTFP also reviews the affordability of the Council's Capital Programme over the same five year period. It forecasts required capital projects (in the main focusing on essential asset replacement and health and safety items) matched against potential capital receipts and grant funding. Note however, at this time, the financing requirement included reflects the 2024/25 Capital MTFP as it is currently being refreshed. The update will be brought back to Cabinet later in the budget cycle.
- 1.6 In addition to these two key areas of Council expenditure, the Council also prepares an MTFP for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This also shows a five year programme and outlines the key issues affecting the HRA costs and income streams from April 2025 onwards. Once again, the 2025/26 – 2028/29 HRA MTFP is currently being refreshed as there are significant implications arising from the Capital Programme. The update will be brought back to Cabinet later in the budget cycle.

1.7 Therefore this report focuses solely on the General Fund Account.

2.0 Framework for the Medium Term Financial Plan

- 2.1 The starting base for the MTFP is the 2024/25 approved budget, which is then adjusted for any supplementary estimates approved by the Council or any significant budget variances identified in the monthly budget monitoring report to the Cabinet.
- 2.2 This base then has to be adjusted for unavoidable costs, such as, pay increases, inflation, service pressures associated with new legislation, a growing residential or business property base or improving performance, etc. The MTFP will also consider forecasts for investment receipts and income from fees and charges.
- 2.3 Finally the MTFP considers and makes assumptions regarding future levels of funding, in particular Council Tax including the potential growth in tax base, Business Rates again including any movement in the baseline as well as changes in the reliefs, multipliers and overall retention levels. Forecasts are also made for the likely level of future Central Government funding.
- 2.4 The MTFP models an overall aggregated position for the Council based on a range of assumptions. This then predicts an overall budget position, which can highlight a potential budget gap and then propose remedial action which can be taken to resolve it. Clearly, these assumptions can be challenged. They will vary due to changes in the local, national and international economic position and of course, the ongoing consequences of the Cost Of Living Crisis will have implications, not only for the current year, but also for the years to come.
- 2.5 The development of a five year financial model is based on a number of assumptions and perceived risks. These become more difficult to predict the further into the future you consider. In general terms a prudent/reasonable approach has been taken regarding forecasts, professional accounting guidance has been followed and external technical opinion has been sought where necessary. As a consequence, **Appendix 1** illustrates possible risks within the plan and the potential financial sensitivity to changes in the assumptions.
- 2.6 The following underlying principles have been adopted as a base assumption during the life of the MTFP:

2.6.1 Principle 1 – General Fund Reserves

- Each year the Council will target a balanced revenue budget without the use of General Fund reserve balances. The level of predicted deficits over the period of this plan may ultimately require the application of reserves to a degree to achieve the mandatory balance. However, this option is not reflected in the numbers presented and must only be considered as a last resort;
- The Council faces considerable financial risks that can have a potentially significant and immediate impact on its finances. The MTFP will attempt to ensure that the General Fund Reserve balance does not fall below the current minimum agreed level (£2m).

2.6.2 Principle 2 – Optimise Income Generation

- Council Tax funds the largest share of the Council's budget. Annual increases will be kept within Government set guidelines. In reality this now gives the Council very little scope to significantly increase Council Tax income as the recent nationally prescribed referendum rate has been limited to a maximum of 2% or £5. This plan assumes that this rate will remain unaltered throughout the five year cycle;
- The Council will continue to look at opportunities to generate additional sustainable income. This could be through reviews of existing Fees and Charges or through new charges for discretionary services. Such charges should be set at levels that are appropriate and proportionate to the costs of the service they are delivering and the market within which they operate. The Council will continue to explore new commercial opportunities (as a 'business as usual' model is clearly no longer deliverable).

2.6.3 Principle 3 – Allocation of Revenue Resources

- Resources will be directed to high priority and statutory services and hence away from low priority services, which will likely result in less investment in discretionary areas. With the exception of spend to save projects on lower priority services that can either cut future costs or increase revenue to enable cross subsidisation of higher priority services;
- It will seek to deliver further efficiency in its service delivery models and secure procurement savings in its new contractual arrangements which will then be factored into future spending plans. Note that opportunities to improve efficiency reduce over time and now only deliver benefits at the margins. Similarly, effective procurement does not always deliver savings as it is dependent upon market conditions at that time.

2.6.4 Principle 4 – Allocation of Capital Resources

- The Council will continue to prioritise schemes, for instance to generate income, to meet corporate objectives and to enhance its asset base;
- The Council will continue to ensure it provides Value for Money through the efficient and effective use of its assets. The Council will look to dispose of surplus assets in order to maximise capital receipts and reduce ongoing revenue maintenance costs associated with holding the asset. Careful consideration will also need to be used to ensure the maximum market value is achieved when disposing of assets;
- Prudential borrowing will only be made during the life of the MTFP after the production of a fully costed business case that demonstrates how the investment meets the Council's policy objectives, has exhausted all other external funding routes and delivers measurable improvement within a reasonable payback period;
- The Council will keep its internal borrowing under review and when appropriate will consider the potential to fix rates in the medium to long term to manage the risk and potential financial impact of interest rate increases. Consideration will also be given to whether the most appropriate funding mechanism is to fully utilise cash balances and undertake short-term borrowing to meet cash flow requirements. The Council continues to consult specialist advice to keep this under review.

2.7 These are all underpinned by a culture of Budget Ownership across all services.

3.0 Background to the Medium Term Financial Plan

3.1 Members should be aware that this MTFP has been developed against a backdrop of:

- Austerity – an aggregate cut in Central Government Grant of c£5m during the austerity measures put in place since 2010/11 and been replaced with lower levels of more volatile funding sources e.g. Service Grant / Funding Guarantees, Business Rates and numerous one-off grants;
- Covid-19 – service income through fees and charges in some areas has only just recovered to pre-covid-19 levels, i.e. Leisure and Car Parking;
- The invasion of Ukraine significantly impacted the availability and therefore price of energy and fuel, leading to A Cost of Living Crisis not seen since the early 1980's. It has required the reallocation of Council resources into supporting the Government Homes for Ukraine scheme for example;
- Nationally, the cost of the Pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis has been significant, with the government's latest gross debt being £2,721bn (101.3%

of GDP) with the net borrowing £40.8bn¹. This indicates that austerity measures are likely to continue;

- Political change at a national level leading to uncertainty and emergency policy decisions;
- High interest rates and high inflation which are now expected to reduce at a slower rate.

Yet the Council continues to deliver a wide range of well performing services.

- 3.2 There are still some fundamental 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 are covered in Section 7 of this report.

4.0 Current In-Year Monitoring Position and associated actions taken

- 4.1 As outlined above, the MTFP takes into consideration the current financial position against the 2024/25 base budget. The Qtr. 1 forecast indicated an under spend of £350k on the General Fund, indicating that services are managing their budgets well and further savings could be captured.

- 4.2 The initial 2024/25 pay offer has been tabled and is being considered by the unions. Currently, the tabled pay offer should not add material pressure to the 2024/25 in-year position. However, with a new Government keen to resolve outstanding public sector pay disputes, discussions continue nationally. Given the delays in agreeing the 2024/25 pay award, it is difficult to project what the 2025/26 pay award might be, particularly in the current economic circumstances which is extending over a longer period than first envisaged and the appetite for industrial action across many sectors. Therefore, the assumed pay award has been increased to circa 3% across the MTFP timeframe – adding a pressure of circa £500k per annum to the budget.

- 4.3 Many services are experiencing high staff turnover and sickness levels requiring additional temporary staff being employed to keep key services such as waste collection operational. To mitigate this pressure we continue to examine all vacancies as and when they occur. Where a role is required to maintain key service provision, for example a lifeguard or waste operative, these positions will be filled. However, where other posts become vacant, recruiting is being delayed / postponed to free up budget. Inevitably, this does impact on the quality and speed of service delivery, and this is mitigated as far as possible.

- 4.4 The significant increases in energy charges have also had an impact on the Council's finances. The Cabinet agreed to extend the current provider (Laser) and increase the proportion of Electricity purchased from 100% renewable sources. It is currently too early to receive the new energy prices due to cover

¹ [UK government debt and deficit - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

the year beginning 1 October 2024, therefore the forecast remains as previously projected, although the energy cap has reduced since that forecast, potentially leading to a saving for the Council from the assumed circa £400k pressure. To mitigate this, the Council has invested in options to reduce energy consumption, for example switching from Gas to renewable energies using ground and heat source pumps and increasing the volume of LED lighting at two of our leisure centres. Further options include lowering the heating temperature of our buildings and swimming pools and isolating areas of buildings where heating can be switched off.

- 4.5 In summary, the forecast shortfall for 2025/26 can be attributed to the assumed inflationary uplift driven by the Cost of Living Crisis and a lower draw on reserves. The sum of these pressures has added c.£1.2m to our cost base.
- 4.6 Other mitigations include additional income from fees and charges. For example, we are able to charge for services, for example the Green Waste service, Planning and Car Parking. Some services are experiencing greater take up, i.e. Leisure and Car Parking or increasing recycle prices, however, some are also seeing the impact of the economic conditions, with Qtr. 1 forecasting a drop in income from Planning and Building Control.
- 4.7 Therefore, all options to limit costs where possible, including vacancy management processes and a review of fees and charges are being considered.

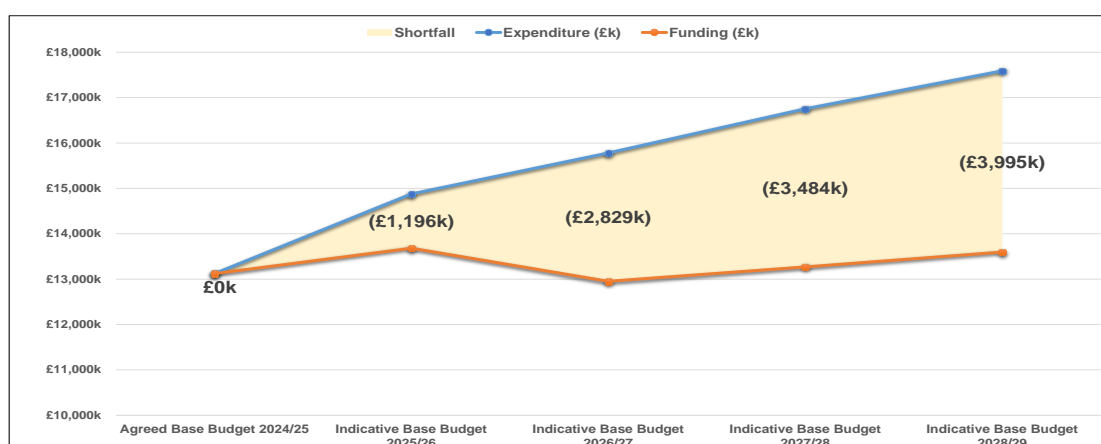
5.0 Summary of the Medium Term Financial Plan

- 5.1 Table 1 and the associated graph shown below, gives a summary position for the MTFP with greater detailed information is shown in **Appendix 2**. This shows an overall deficit of £3,995k over the life of the plan, equivalent to approximately 25% of the current Net Service Cost.

Table 1 – MTFP General Fund Summary

2024/25		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
£000		£000	£000	£000	£000
13,123	Expenditure	14,878	15,782	16,754	17,591
(13,123)	Funding	(13,682)	(12,952)	(13,270)	(13,596)
0	Annual Shortfall	1,196	1,633	655	511
0	Cumulative Shortfall	1,196	2,829	3,484	3,995

Graph 1 – MTFP General Fund Cumulative Budget Gap 2024/25 to 2028/29



5.2 Due to the cumulative nature of this plan, if the Council balances its revenue spend to its available funding, each subsequent year will only then need to find the difference (the annual shortfall). However, if no remedial action is taken to reduce the overall level of spend, the MTFP predicts an estimated cumulative shortfall on the General Fund budget of £3,995k. At present the General Fund reserve of £2,025k (plus/minus any in-year movement would be sufficient to absorb the 2025/26 deficit).

5.3 The majority of this cumulative deficit impacts during years one and two largely due to the Cost of Living Crisis and the assumed reductions in funding across Business Rates and Government Grants after years of delays.

5.4 This is clearly a challenge built upon a number of assumptions, caveats, decisions based upon external advice and the most up to date information available at this time. Clearly, any major variations in these assumptions would require a fundamental review of the Council’s MTFP and would be reported back to Cabinet and the wider Membership as soon as practical, coupled with proposed courses of action that could be implemented.

5.5 The Council has a legal requirement to set a balance budget and needs to ensure its overall costs are affordable i.e. they can be funded through income and planned short-term use of reserves. Members therefore need to take the necessary decisions and actions to manage net spending within affordable limits.

6.0 Approach to closing the Budget Gap

6.1 Many of the issues, assumptions and sensitivity of items included within the MTFP are complex, often inter-related and will undoubtedly be subject to variation and ultimately fundamental review depending on the levels of future funding reductions. However, strategic decisions have been ongoing to reduce the current and future operational costs.

6.2 In order to reduce the forecast deficit the Council will strive to constantly manage its costs and revenues by:

- Ensure fees/charges are revisited regularly and that the Council are charging appropriately for all items possible;
- A continued reduction of discretionary service and employee costs – which may incur short term upfront costs;
- Continue and expand partnership working where practical;
- Investigation of spend to save projects;
- Review the current and future property asset requirements;
- Maximise procurement efficiencies;
- Explore new commercial opportunities;
- Examine different ways of delivering services to reduce costs;
- Continued benchmarking and learning from best practice;
- Consideration of growing the residential and commercial property base to align delivery with Government funding priorities.

6.3 Part of that saving could come from increasing income from Service Fees and Charges. Following a full review last year, many services now have delegated authority to increase fees in line with inflation. The working assumption is that this will be done.

6.4 During the summer, Leadership Team and services have been reviewing a range of budget options that could be considered in order to help mitigate that remaining budget shortfall across this MTFP, with a particular focus on 2025/26. Indicative areas where possible budget savings could be found will form the basis of the discussions with the Policy Development Groups (PDG's). In addition the PDG's will be asked to identify further options to resolve the immediate budget gap for 2025/26 and future years.

6.5 In putting forward the options, officers have applied a risk level to them based upon Red, Amber, Green as follows:

- Red** – indicates the saving could be taken, but there are higher risks/ implications associated with it and therefore officers would not recommend it;
- Amber** – indicates the saving could be taken, but there are risks and implications associated that members need to be aware of / accept;
- Green** – indicates a saving that is recommended by officers.

6.6 Based on only accepting the Green and Amber budget options, the overall 2025/26 position is forecast to move as set out below:

Initial forecast Shortfall		£1,196k
Emerging Budget Pressures	Appendix 3	+ £725k
Budget Options Identified:		
Cabinet	Appendix 4b	(£757k)

Economy & Assets PDG	Appendix 4b	(£172k)
Community, People and Equalities PDG	Appendix 4b	0
Homes	Appendix 4b	(£129k)
Planning, Environment & Sustainability PDG	Appendix 4a	(£39k)
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG	Appendix 4b	(£434k)
Revised forecast Shortfall		£390k

6.7 Clearly there remains a significant budget shortfall in 2025/26. Therefore, all possible options to increase income or reduce costs must be considered. Options will be brought forward for consideration over the next few months in the run in to setting the 2025/26 budget in February 2025. The above plans will require all service areas to play an active role in securing future savings and the Council will also continue to consult with all of its major stakeholders, especially the tax payers, to ensure all future budgetary decisions accord with their priorities.

6.8 Members will appreciate that all budget options will require political support and therefore if some suggestions are deemed to be unacceptable then other savings will need to be proposed. Members should indicate where these alternatives should be sought.

7.0 Risk, Opportunities and Uncertainty

7.1 The level of uncertainty in funding and external pressures as outlined below makes forecasting difficult and with it a need to highlight risks and the need to push for further efficiencies within services. Ongoing risks and uncertainty for the budget at this stage include:

7.1.1 **New Government** – following the July General Election and the change in Government, a number of announcements have been made in areas such as Housing Targets, further increases to Planning Fees and possible multi-year Funding Settlements. However, announcements have also been made to “fix the broken NHS” and continue spending levels on defence and tackling unemployment, all of which draw on very limited public funding. Therefore, it is not expected that Local Government will see significant changes, and importantly increases, in funding.

7.1.2 **Future Local Government Funding** – the Council awaits to hear the level of funding it will receive in 2025/26 and future years. Although some ambiguous messages have been given by government, these then need to be translated into individual Council funding. These will be dependent upon the Governments views on the long term funding requirement and allocation mechanism. Therefore, it is critical that we continue to lobby for the Fair Funding Review and holistic review of Business Rates to be completed fully as soon as possible, along with the implementation of any replacement of the New Homes Bonus Scheme.

Delays in additional funding opportunities – consultation and announcements with regard to major income opportunities e.g. Extended Producer Responsibilities and move to increase Planning Fees towards a breakeven revenue position have, as yet, not been implemented.

- 7.1.3 **Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS)** – the Council await the Provisional Settlement expected to be announced in December, covering 2025/26. The previous multi-year settlement expired in 2019/20 and for the last five years has simply been rolled forwards as the sector awaits the outcomes of the much delayed Fair Funding Review. We continue to lobby for multi-year settlements that offer some certainty over the level of grants and therefore enable more meaningful planning.
- 7.1.4 **Cost of Living Crisis / Inflation** – As highlighted previously in this report, the Cost of Living Crisis has had a significant impact upon the Council's finances, although this is beginning to reduce.
- 7.1.5 To combat high inflation, the Bank of England Base Rate is increased to reduce spending levels. Whilst this provides a greater return on our investments, this has a significant impact on the interest rates the Council is able to borrow at. With the significant growth in the Capital Programme primarily to deliver additional homes across the district, additional borrowing will be required. Although inflation has reduced back to near the Government's 2% target, interest rates are only just beginning to fall and this is likely to reduce / slow the deliverability of such projects.
- 7.1.6 **Council Tax** – The MTFP is based on the assumption of a maximum 2% increase on a Band D property each year. This may of course not be possible due to Central Government restrictions. This is only likely to be known on an annual basis as each Settlement is announced. Lobbying continues to remove, or relax, the referendum limit
- 7.1.7 **Council Tax Base** – This MTFP must consider the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on collection rates. Recovery can be estimated back to the normal 98% over the MTFP.
- 7.1.8 **100% Business Rates Retention / Revaluation** – Government had committed to devolve 100% of Business Rates to Local Government in 2015 but this was later reduced to 75% before being abandoned in 2021. As with the fair funding Review, any proposed changes have been significantly delayed, with no changes to be brought in before 2025/26. A full or partial reset of this baseline will divert resources away from Mid Devon. The sector also awaits what transitional measures will be included to smooth this detrimental impact.

7.1.9 **Levelling Up Fund** – The future long term growth relies on the large scale infrastructure projects such as J28, Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension and Culm Garden Village. The Council has to date been unsuccessful in its bids for substantial funding to support the Cullompton HIF Project. As such, the project is delayed and alternative funding sources are being sought. Should a bid be successful, plans to deliver the major infrastructure project will continue. All the while, the costs continue to rise due to the economic climate. Similarly, plans to reopen Cullompton train station are dependent upon government support, and we await formal clarity from the new Government on their direction of travel.

7.1.10 **Homes for Ukraine Scheme** – Part of the national support to the Ukraine is to offer safe housing for those escaping the conflict. Funding measures have already been reduced to support the scheme. Once the scheme ends it is not clear whether there will be options to relocate families to other hosts or to private landlords. Therefore there is a risk that some of those initially covered by the scheme could present as homeless and require the Council to house them. Less, if any, associated funding will be available to cover those additional costs.

7.1.11 **Net Zero Commitments** – The council needs to reflect on the availability of resources or the reprioritisation required to deliver this ambition. Currently the only government assistance is linked to one off bids to deliver specific schemes. We await any national announcements from Government on how this will be funded / prioritised in the future.

7.2 All of the above items highlight once again just how difficult it is to forecast ahead with any degree of accuracy. Nevertheless, the MTFP helps us examine the likely trends to assist in setting realistic capital and revenue budgets going forward.

8.0 Balances and Reserves

8.1 The Council should look to match on-going spending plans to available in-year resources. However, it currently holds an uncommitted General Fund Reserve with a balance of £2,025k, which is above the current balance of £2m set by Full Council. However, this will be impacted by the outturn position of 2024/25 which is currently forecasting an underspend and therefore an increase in general reserves of £350k.

8.2 The Council holds this reserve for a number of reasons. Firstly to deal with any short term cash flow or funding issues. Secondly to provide a contingency for exceptional one-off acts (i.e. flooding, fire, terrorism, business rate failure, etc.) and, thirdly to provide a buffer for known circumstances whose final affect is unknown (i.e. changes in legislation or major funding changes). Clearly, the more uncertainty that exists, the higher the balance required to mitigate this risk. This level of minimum reserves is assessed annually to ensure it is adequate.

- 8.3 As stated above, this plan does not include any utilisation of these reserves. However, with the scale of the deficit, it is conceivable that some utilisation could be necessary. If so, this should be on the basis that the reserve is replenished by the end of the MTFP period.
- 8.4 The Council also holds Earmarked Reserves which have been set aside for a specific purpose, such as sinking funds for asset replacement. Although these reserves are ring-fenced and not available to support the budget generally, a review of all Earmarked Reserves is undertaken annually and any identification of funding no longer required to be earmarked can be released and could be used to support the budget. As these funds are one-off, they should not be used to support ongoing expenditure and therefore only delay the requirement for the identification and implementation of a sustainable saving.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The MTFP will continue to be updated to ensure it is a live document. It is subject to amendment and review by Leadership Team and Members and will provide a clear guide prior to commencing the annual budget setting process in future years.
- 9.2 Like all councils, Mid Devon is facing an ongoing and very challenging financial future. The Corporate Plan aligns to available financial resources so that the District can be best placed to maximise cost effective delivery of its services that are valued by its residents.
- 9.3 It should also be noted that Management will continue to play a pro-active role in both reducing ongoing service costs and exploring new possibilities to raise additional income.
- 9.4 Having a realistic financial plan for the next five years will enable the Council to ensure it is allocating its limited financial resources to its key priorities. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's goals/objectives over a four year period and must clearly be matched by the financial resources that are available. The previous Government's move from a relatively fixed core funding system to more of a '*payment by results*' process has introduced a lot more uncertainty and volatility for the future of the Council's funding streams, which makes medium term financial planning an even more challenging process. We await the funding approach of the new Government.
- 9.5 Like any strategic plan, the MTFP has been compiled based upon all available information at a fixed point in time. Clearly, as time moves on assumptions will change, Central Government will set new targets, bring in new legislation and adjust funding levels. The Council is aware that the Fair Funding Review may, in time, bring significant changes in its core funding including a full or partial Baseline reset in Business Rates. Residents' expectations will change, Member priorities will alter and therefore any plans must be flexible enough to cope with

major changes. It is not only prudent but imperative that the Council seeks to maintain its reserve levels to the fullest extent possible. Moving forward Members will be provided with regular updates on the financial impact of any variation to what has been previously assumed.

Financial Implications

By undertaking regular reviews of the MTFP the Council can ensure that its Corporate Plan priorities are affordable. The implications of the budget gap are set out within the paper. Many areas require greater clarity, particularly around national funding and possible changes to Government Policy. Therefore a number of key assumptions underpin the reported position, which will be refined as greater clarity is received through the budget setting process.

Legal Implications

None directly arising from this report, although 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

The MTFP makes a number of financial assumptions based on a sensible/prudent approach, taking account of the most up to date professional advice that is available. However, many of these assumptions are open to challenge and due to this fact **Appendix 1** of this report shows the financial effect on key items in the plan if assumptions were to change (this is referred to as sensitivity analysis).

Impact on Climate Change

The allocation of resources will impact upon the Council's ability to implement/fund new activities linked to climate change, as the MTFP sets the broad budgetary framework for the Council over the coming years. However, some provision has already been included in the base budget and further evaluation/consideration will be made as the draft budget passes through the PDGs over the next few months. Significant investment is currently forecast within the Capital Programme, however this will be dependent upon full options appraisals and levels of Grant funding available.

Equalities Impact Assessment

No implications arising from this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the financial resources available to deliver the Council's ongoing Corporate Plan priorities.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 21 August 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 21 August 2024

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 21 August 2024

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 21 August 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Email: ajarrett@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234242

Background papers:

- 2024/25 Budget
- 2024/25 Qtr. 1 Budget Monitor

Key Assumptions used in Medium Term Financial Plan

A number of assumptions have been made in formulating the strategy. Clearly some of these are harder to predict than others and in addition the magnitude of the “error” of prediction may be greater in certain specific areas. Detailed below are the main assumptions made and importantly an analysis of the sensitivity to variance.

As previously mentioned, many of the assumptions could be subject to challenge and may well alter during the life of the MTFP. Therefore, it is important to show the magnitude (or sensitivity) in financial terms of minor alterations to assumptions made.

Inflation

Future inflation is of course an unknown quantity. It has been at a generational high in recent times peaking at over 10%, but has now fallen back close to the Government’s 2% target. It is critical to use as realistic assumptions as possible.

The level of inflation assumed in this plan is therefore high and it could come to pass that the actual inflation figures are higher, having a significant impact on our medium term projections. The sensitivity analysis below provides some context for the scale of any variation from the forecast.

The forecast inflationary increases across this MTFP period are (applicable to both General Fund and HRA – as appropriate):

	2025/26 %	2026/27 %	2027/28 %	2028/29 %
Staffing*	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Pension Back Funding	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Business Rates on Council Properties	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Computer Software	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Gas#	25.00%	12.50%	6.25%	6.25%
Electric#	16.75%	8.38%	4.19%	4.19%
Water	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Members Allowances*	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Insurance	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Fuel-	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Leisure Fees and Charges	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Support Service Recharge to HRA	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

A change in the inflation factors causes the following movements:

	2024/25 Budget £000	Inflation Assumption %	2025/26 Forecast Financial Impact £000	(+/-) 1% Change £000
Staffing*	16,663	3.00%	500	166
Pension Back Funding	590	3.00%	24	N/A
NDR on Council Properties	729	2.00%	15	8
Computer Software	1,031	5.00%	52	10
Gas#	107	25.00%	27	5
Electric#	862	16.75%	144	9
Water	178	2.00%	4	2

Members Allowances*	343	3.00%	10	3
Insurance	309	3.00%	9	3
Fuel	522	5.00%	26	5
Leisure Fees and Charges	(3,419)	2.00%	(68)	(34)
Support Service Recharge to HRA	(1,945)	3.00%	(58)	(19)
TOTAL	15,970		1,046	148

* Recent pay offers, including the current 2024/25 offer, have been a flat cash uplift as opposed to a percentage. However for the purposes of the MTFP, a percentage is applied which on average broadly equates to what we anticipate any pay offer to be.

The increase in energy budgets reflects the increase in prices from October 2023. Prices will be available shortly as all energy is purchased in advance of need.

Localised Tax Funding

Internal estimates have used to project the levels of Council Tax and Business Rates income over the five year period.

The Council Tax taxbase forecasts growth in line with the Local Plan. This equates to approximately 350 homes and contributes approximately £80k per annum. A prudent collection rate of 98% is expected, having recovered from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The assumed annual increase in the Band D charge is in line with the Governments recent referendum limits at 2%. Each 1% increase in Council Tax generates approximately £70k. It should be noted that extra housing also affects the Council's cost base too, i.e. waste collection, street cleaning etc.

The overall Business Rates scheme is likely to be reviewed and altered by the new Government. Currently there is little on how or when this might happen. The key Business Rates assumptions are:

- that the expected Baseline Reset continues be delayed. The Baseline Reset will update the baseline year(s) used in the Settlement funding model and therefore a degree of local growth will be lost depending on the method of the reset applied. The assumption is that the reset will remove approximately half of the growth in the retained income since the introduction of the baseline in 2013/14, which equates to approximately £500k. This is currently included within 2026/27 but there is no clarity on this date. No expectation of transitional support or use of the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve is currently assumed, but is available and could well happen;
- the estimate is for a minimal growth in the overall Rateable Value and the national multiplier in 2025/26, which is normally linked to CPI inflation. Growth in future years is based upon a 2% increase. Anything above this will benefit the Council.
- The next revaluation is introduced in 2026/27 – the assumption is that this is cost neutral for the Council, but this could increase or decrease retained income.

A 1% variation within these assumptions is very difficult to calculate as each could impact onto the other. For example, a significant increase in the annual multiplier, or the rateable value arising from the Revaluation could potentially force a business to close, which would consequently reduce our retained income. Therefore, an overall movement of 1% in our retained income equates to approximately £43k.

Government Funding

Most forms of Government funding is included within the Local Government Financial Settlement provided by the (renamed) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Given there is a new Government, little is known about possible changes or timing of the funding settlement.

However, at an individual local authority level, there can still be movement depending on the way funding is allocated – i.e. at a sector level the funding could be the same, but if more funding is directed towards Social Care for example, as a lower tier authority, this will negatively impact our funding. For 2025/26, the current assumption is for a cash freeze.

It is very difficult to predict whether the current grants will continue, and if so at what value. It is also difficult to envisage a reduction in funding in the current economic climate. The current sum of these four grants is £1,732k. Therefore a movement of +/- 10% would equate to £173k.

We await the Provisional Settlement (usually in December) and the Final Settlement (usually in the following February) for the definitive figures to use in our final budget calculations.

Interest – Investment Returns and Financing Costs

To combat inflation, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee move interest rates to encourage/discourage spending. With inflation being at a 40-year high, interest rates have been increasing rapidly, starting at a historic low of 0.1% up to December 2021 to the peak of 5.25% (August 2023). The first reduction following the reduction in inflation back to nearer the Government's 2% target occurred in August 2024, with further movements are expected during the remainder of 2024 and 2025.

The largest impact of movements in interest rates will be on the cost of financing external (PWLB) debt. Given the increase in the Capital Programme in the last couple of years and the ambitious plans for the development of more social housing, external borrowing is likely to be required. Wherever possible, the continuation of internal borrowing will be undertaken. However it's unlikely there is sufficient capacity to meet the full demand of the full programme.

Forecasts for interest rate increases are difficult to predict as they will adjust to the current circumstances. Current expectation is that inflation is not easing as quickly as projected and therefore interest rates will not fall back as quickly. It is also likely that the economy will fall into recession.

At present, we are expecting PWLB rates will increase to broadly the below levels:

Link Group Interest Rate View	28.05.24											
	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.30	4.90	4.40	3.90	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.10	3.10	3.20
12 month ave earnings	5.10	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.20	3.30	3.40
5 yr PWLB	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.80
10 yr PWLB	5.00	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.90
25 yr PWLB	5.30	5.20	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.30	4.30
50 yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.60	4.50	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10

A 0.25% movement in interest rates equates to £3,500 – £4,500 per annum¹ additional interest earned/cost for every £1m lent/borrowed.

Risk

All of the assumptions made in the MTFP have been examined for risk and estimates of expenditure and income have been made on a prudent/most likely occurrence. This has been based on previous experience, evidence in the current financial year, consultation with specialist advisers and taking account of all known market factors at the time of finalising the plan.

¹ Depending on the initial interest rate

The Table below gives an overall summary of the Council's General Fund MTFP position (which includes a wide range of assumptions).

MTFP General Fund Summary

2024/25 £'000		Notes	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
15,815	Net Direct Cost of Services		16,477	17,309	17,997	18,612
(1,957)	Net recharge to HRA		(2,015)	(2,076)	(2,137)	(2,201)
813	Provision for Repayment of Borrowing	1	872	968	1,093	1,138
14,670	Net Service Costs		15,334	16,202	16,953	17,548
(1,059)	Net Interest Costs/(Receipts)	2	(629)	(680)	(633)	(628)
352	Finance Lease Interest Payable		352	352	352	352
(841)	Net Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	3	(178)	(92)	83	319
13,123			14,878	15,782	16,754	17,591
	Funded By:					
(4,422)	Retained Business Rates	4	(4,610)	(4,200)	(4,282)	(4,366)
(105)	Revenue Support Grant	5	(105)	(52)	(52)	(52)
(634)	Rural Services Delivery Grant	5	(634)	(634)	(634)	(634)
(414)	New Homes Bonus	5	(414)	(207)	(207)	(207)
(14)	2024/25 Services Grant	5	(14)	(7)	(7)	(7)
(566)	2024/25 Funding Guarantee	5	(566)	(283)	(283)	(283)
(6,968)	Council Tax–MDDC	6	(7,340)	(7,569)	(7,805)	(8,047)
(13,123)	Total Funding		(13,682)	(12,952)	(13,270)	(13,596)
0	Annual Gap – Increase/(Decrease) In-year		1,196	1,633	655	511
0	Cumulative Gap		1,196	2,829	3,484	3,995

Notes:

1. The Provision for repayment of borrowing incorporates the financial implications of the current Capital Programme.
2. The reduction in Net Interest Costs / (Receipts) reflects the assumption that interest rates reduce and balances held reduce as they are used to fund the capital programme.
3. Net Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves reflects planned contributions to, or drawdowns from reserves. This is likely to change significantly during this budget process.
4. The Retained Business Rates increase is assumed to be a 2% increase. However income drops in 2026/27 to reflect the potential changes the Government might implement to the Business Rates Retention Scheme. These include Re-Baselining and Resource Equalisation. No use of the Smoothing Reserve has been factored in (currently £801k but dependent upon annual collection surplus/deficit).
5. The current assumption is for a cash freeze in grants for 2025/26. However in 2026/27, it is assumed that the long awaited implications for grant funding arising from the Fair Funding Review are implemented, i.e. those announced as one off / ceasing will have stopped. However, there is an expectation that these are replaced, at least in part, but forecasting that is impossible. For simplicity, all except the Rural Services Grant are assumed to half, but it is hoped that this is the prudent / worst case forecast.
6. Council Tax income is forecast assuming Band D charge increases in line with recent referendum limits and an increase in the taxbase in line with the local plan requirements (c350 properties per annum) and a return to normal (98%) collection rate over the life of the MTFP.

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Emerging Budget Pressures

(xk) = Saving, +£k = Pressure

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
						(£k)	(£k)	(£k)
1	Cabinet	ICT	Lisa Lewis	IT700	Increased resources to tackle Cyber Security	£50		
2	Cabinet	ICT	Lisa Lewis	IT700	Possible increase resources to fully implement CRM / Transformation and gain maximum benefit (one off)		£125	
3	Cabinet	ICT	Lisa Lewis	IT900	Increased costs of payment card security solution		£30	
4	Cabinet	All Services	All CMT	All	Develop a plan to increase the cohort of Apprentices, considering static placements, rotating around service areas, and a graduate trainee programme		£150	
5	Cabinet	Property	Paul Deal	PS codes	Increase provision to sinking funds		£100	
6	Cabinet	Finance Leasing costs	Paul Deal	All	Likely increase in financing lease charges due to increase in numbers of vehicles leased	£50		
7	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS950	Increase budget within Climate Change - planned for consultancy, funding bid completion, grant schemes or increased officer time			£100
8	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH373	Additional 1.2 FTE to support homelessness		£50	
9	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Creation of a new Sinking Fund to maintain the 11 new temporary accommodation houses	£20		
10	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning (Development)	Angharad Williams	PR200	Reduction in Planning Income		£150	
11	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning Enforcement	Angharad Williams	PR110	Increase the resource for Planning Enforcement			£100
Emergin Budget Pressures - Sub Total						£120	£605	£200
								£925

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Round 1 - Initial Savings Options

(xk) = Saving, +£k = Pressure

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description	2025/26		
						Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
32	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Reduced B&B costs following the purchase of 11 houses for temporary accommodation Potential further reduction in B&B costs through investment in additional temporary accommodation. (match funding to LAHF3).		(£75)	
33	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Proposal to include assumed grant allocation for Domestic Abuse - as received in recent years		(£34)	
34	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Increased income from recent houses purchased for temporary accommodation	(£20)		

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Round 1 - Initial Savings Options

(xk) = Saving, +£k = Pressure

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	2025/26		
						Low Risk (£k)	Medium Risk (£k)	High Risk (£k)
1	Cabinet	Finance	Paul Deal	FP100	Saving delivered through revised staffing structure	(£20)		
2	Cabinet	Finance	Paul Deal	FP200	Reduction in internal audit	(£15)		
3	Cabinet	People Services	James Hamblin / Matthew Page	HR100	Capturing benefits from CRM system to achieve efficiency saving.		(£27)	
4	Cabinet	People Services	James Hamblin / Matthew Page	HR100	We obtain legal insights from seminars and other online means	(£3)		
5	Cabinet	People Services	James Hamblin / Matthew Page	HR100	Centralise Training budgets and capture underspend		(£5)	
6	Cabinet	Corporate Performance	Dr Stephen Carr	CM205	Remove the support and maintenance for the SPAR software	(£3)		
7	Cabinet	Revenues & Benefits	Dean Emery / Fiona Keyes	RB100	Review staffing structure as more more benefits claimants more to Universal Credit.			(£30)
8	Cabinet	Communications	Lisa Lewis	IT200	Let's Talk MidDevon - reduction in engagement activity opportunities digitally		(£11)	
9	Cabinet	ICT	Lisa Lewis	IT500	Remove MBPM - old CRM	(£7)		
10	Cabinet	Elections	Jackie Murphy	LD100 LD200 LD201	Maximise the recharges included within the recovery of external election costs from Government	(£5)		
11	Cabinet	Elections	Jackie Murphy	LD100 LD200 LD201	Increase the use of temporary staff and reduce the permanent staffing	(£5)		
12	Cabinet	Elections	Jackie Murphy	LD100 LD200 LD201	Reduce postage costs through increased electronic communications		(£1)	
13	Cabinet	Finance	Paul Deal	IE290	Possible increase in investment returns while rates are higher (based on ave 3.5% return on £20m ave investment, less 40% to HRA) - one off		(£100)	
14	Cabinet	All Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	Account code 3404	10% saving estimation on both fuel spend/savings	(£50)		
15	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	Account codes 2301 / 2304	Saving estimation on Utilities spend, following reduction in prices and price cap		(£150)	
16	Cabinet	All Services	Workforce Review Group and CMT	All	Vacancy Saving from Workforce Review Group delivered through delayed recruitment and robust challenge	(£50)		
17	Cabinet	All Services	Workforce Review Group and CMT	All	Reduced Sickness levels across the council increase productivity and reduced agency requirement		(£20)	
18	Cabinet	Capital Financing	Paul Deal	All	Likely reduction in capital financing charge due to level of slippage in 2023/24 Capital Programme	(£50)		
19	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Potential to free up Earmarked Reserves through reprioritisation of funds		(£100)	
20	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Potential further increase in Council Tax income above current assumptions (e.g. a combination of further increase Band D charge, additional growth in Taxbase and improvement in collection rate)		(£50)	

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	2025/26		
						Low Risk (£k)	Medium Risk (£k)	High Risk (£k)
21	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Potential further increase in Business Rates income above current assumptions (e.g. a combination of additional growth in Taxbase and improvement in collection rate)		(£50)	
22	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Potential increase in Grant Funding income above current cash frozen assumptions (2% increase = £35k)		(£35)	
23	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS810	Lease more space commercially within Phoenix House (including recharges). Clarity required on requirements for PH, flexibility in changing accommodation, hybrid working etc			(£50)
24	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS980	Capturing benefits from CRM system to achieve efficiency saving. (previously offered in 2024/25 but this will be delivered through vacancy management).			(£30)
25	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS200	An assumption that either a financial contribution or transfer of assets is secured with some or all of the major Town and Parish Councils.		(£60)	
26	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS992	Refresh out of date leases - dependent upon market conditions at the time			(£10)
27	Economy & Assets	Property	Paul Deal	PS810	Use PH or leisure centres for pick-up points for Amazon, etc.			(£5)
28	Economy & Assets	Car Parking	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	CP520 / CP540	Pay & Display - recommended fee increase plus inclusion of growth	(£30)		
29	Economy & Assets	Car Parking	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	CP520 / CP540	Permits - recommended fee increase plus inclusion of growth	(£10)		
30	Economy & Assets	Car Parking	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	CP530	Introduce notional charge to most utilised Amenity Car Parks	(£10)		
31	Economy & Assets	Economic Development	Zoe Lentell / Adrian Welsh	PR400	Restructure staffing resources OR seek cost contribution from Towns / Parishes		(£62)	(£50)
32	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Reduced B&B costs following the purchase of 11 houses for temporary accommodation Potential further reduction in B&B costs through investment in additional temporary accommodation. (match funding to LAHF3).		(£75)	
33	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Proposal to include assumed grant allocation for Domestic Abuse - as received in recent years		(£34)	
34	Homes	Housing	Simon Newcombe	PH320	Increased income from recent houses purchased for temporary accommodation	(£20)		
35	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning (Development)	Angharad Williams	PR200	Additional Pre-App Planning Income			(£40)
36	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning (Development)	Angharad Williams	PR200	Cease advertising within local newspapers, online only	(£10)		
37	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning (Development)	Angharad Williams	PR200	Additional income generated from Planning Engagement in EUE proposals.			(£10)
38	Planning, Environment & Sustainability	Planning (Forward Planning)	Tristan Peat	PR600	Review service costs/delivery		(£29)	
39	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Customer Services	Lisa Lewis	CS932	Close reception to walk-ins - would still need a solution to building access			(£25)
40	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Customer Services	Lisa Lewis	CS932	Restructure staffing resources			(£25)

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	2025/26		
						Low Risk (£k)	Medium Risk (£k)	High Risk (£k)
41	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS700	Projection on Garden Waste Income from residents - recommended fee increase plus inclusion of growth in subscriptions	(£50)		
42	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS710	Projection re Trade Waste - recommended fee increase plus inclusion of growth in subscriptions	(£38)		
43	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS725	Projection of recycle income - volatile area in terms of selling prices		(£100)	
44	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS700	Recover set up costs from new housing developments			(£20)
45	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS710	Price increase in waste disposal charges	£100		
46	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS725	Price increase in recycling credits	(£100)		
47	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS725	Review Management Structure		(£25)	
48	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS700	Shared Savings - Assumes current agreement ceases on 2025/26 to be replaced by EPR - see below.		(£120)	
49	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS770	Increased rental charges from increased footprint at Carlu Close to future proof service for next 15-20 years. Potential release on one area once new operational layout implemented.	£53		
50	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Leisure Services	Dean Emery	RS140 / RS150 / RS160	Review staffing Structure		(£83)	
51	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Leisure Services	Dean Emery	RS140 / RS150 / RS160	Reduce overtime by minimum target		(£25)	
52	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Leisure Services	Dean Emery	RS140 / RS150 / RS160	Recognise growth in income - over and above assumed inflationary increase	(£34)		
53	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Leisure Services	Dean Emery	RS140 / RS150	Change from Chlorine to Salt solution	(£12)		
54	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	Leisure Services	Dean Emery	RS140 / RS150 / RS160	Potential income from advertising on Apps			(£10)

Initial Savings Options - Sub Total

(£369)	(£1,162)	(£305)
(£1,836)		

Ideas that need more consideration to identify possible financial benefit

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	2025/26		
						Low Risk (£k)	Medium Risk (£k)	High Risk (£k)
55	Cabinet	Property	Paul Deal	PS160	Potential reduction in project maintenance spend - high risk as dependent upon condition survey results and requirements			??
56	Cabinet	Customer Services	Lisa Lewis	CS932	Reduce Contact Centre hours to match open hours e.g. 09:00 - 14:00			??

Ref	Cabinet / PDG	Service	Budget Holder	Cost Centre	BRIEF Saving Description (including risks of delivery)	2025/26		
						Low Risk (£k)	Medium Risk (£k)	High Risk (£k)
57	Cabinet	Revenues & Benefits	Dean Emery	IT500	Investment in GovTech/CRM and migration from NEC portal for self-serve and automation into back office		??	
58	Cabinet	Waste Services	Darren Beer / Matthew Page	WS700	EPR is due to go live for 2025-26. Value assumed equal and opposite to loss of Waste Shared Saving	??		
59	Cabinet	Economic Development	Adrian Welsh	PR992	Maximise the use of S106 within economic development projects		??	
60	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Potentially sell services, or provide training to other organisations			??
61	Cabinet	Democratic Services	Laura Woon	LD300	Cease printing committee papers and fully utilise Mod.Gov		??	
62	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Improved procurement could save money across all service areas		??	
63	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Possible reduction in pension contributions in 2026/27 based on current fund valuation		??	
64	Cabinet	All Services	Paul Deal	All	Policy on printing [default email for services - statutory excluded if necessary) - costings/savings TBC		??	
Ideas that need further work - Sub Total						£0	£0	£0

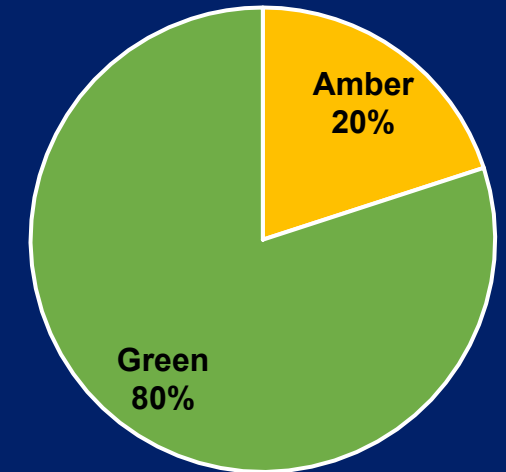
Homes PDG Performance Dashboard (General Fund) – Quarter 1 2024/25

Performance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
Providing support to those experiencing homelessness	100%	100 %	G
Applicants on the Devon Home Choice waiting list (Band A-C)	470	N/A	
Households in Hotels (Current)	13	N/A	
Households placed in interim or temporary accommodation this quarter	62	N/A	
Home Improvement Loans sanctioned (YTD)	6	10	G
Private rented sector improvements (YTD)	2	10	A
Private sector housing service requests response rate (Av. YTD)	95 %	95 %	G
Unoccupied and unfurnished empty homes (Current)	534	N/A	

Finance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
Homes PDG – Outturn	£402k	£402k	G
Spend on external interim and temporary accommodation (Q1)	£50,344	N/A	

Corporate Risk	Risk Rating (Trajectory)
Homes for Ukraine Scheme	4 (decreasing)

Overall Performance Q1



In Focus

Devon Homes Choice waiting list: Historic and Quarter 1 data is presented below:

	2022/23	2023/24	Q1 2024/25
Band A		1	1
Band B	155	154	162
Band C	299	310	307
Band D	406	451	494
Band E	811	822	856
Total	1671	1738	1820

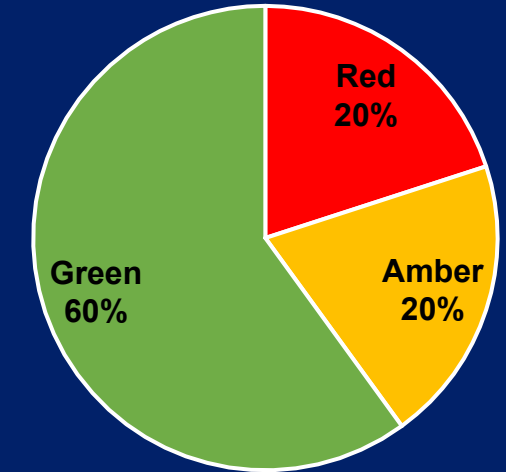
Homes PDG Performance Dashboard (HRA) – Quarter 1 2024/25

Performance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
MDH Satisfaction that the home is safe (TSM – TP05)	N/A	70 %	
MDH Delivery of new Social Housing (YTD)	44	100	G
New MDH net-zero MMC properties (YTD)	0	50	R
Tenant satisfaction with the overall repairs service (TSM – TP02)	N/A	70 %	
Market delivery of new affordable homes (YTD)	N/A	94	
MDH Overall tenant satisfaction (TSM - TP01)	N/A	TBD	
MDH Complaints responded to within Complaints Handling Code timescales (TSM-CH02; Average YTD)	95 %	100 %	A
MDH Antisocial behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord (TSM – NM01; YTD)	1.35	TBD	
MDH Housing stock occupancy rate (YTD)	97.1 %	97 %	G
MDH Routine repairs completed on time (Average YTD)	98 %	95 %	G
MDH specific tenant engagement events (YTD)	40	100	G

Finance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
HRA – Outturn	(£118k)	£0	G
HRA – Tenant Income (Outturn)	(£16,641k)	(£14,641k)	G
HRA – Capital Outturn	£12,594k	£15,447k	A
HRA – Capital Slippage % of development projects (Current)	45 %	0 %	R

Corporate Risk	Risk Rating (Trajectory)
Housing Crisis	12 (no change)

Overall Performance Q1



In Focus

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs): There are three on the dashboard for which data is available annually. Whilst Q1 data cannot be reported, the 2023/24 data was:

- MDH Satisfaction that the home is safe (TP05): 71.6%
- MDH Overall tenant satisfaction (TP01): 62.4%
- Tenant satisfaction with the overall repairs service (TP02): 63.8%

The TP02 result was based on a single autumn/winter survey when the repairs service is under most pressure. MDH are moving to multiple surveys in year to get more representative data.



Report for: Homes Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting: 10 September 2024

Subject: **REVIEW OF MID DEVON HOUSING HOARDING POLICY**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Simon Clist Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader

Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health

Exempt: None

which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Wards Affected: All

Enclosures: Annex A – Hoarding Policy
Annex B – Hoarding Policy Equality Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

A hoarding disorder is where someone acquires an excessive number of items and stores them in a chaotic manner, usually resulting in unmanageable amounts of clutter. The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to protect individuals from self-neglect, it also requires housing providers to ensure the health and safety of tenants, their neighbours and staff. There are additional requirements set out on in several statutory consumer standards published by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) where addressing where hoarding/tenant wellbeing alongside ensuring safe and well-maintained houses outcome must be met.

This Policy sets out Mid Devon Housing (MDH) methodology in supporting vulnerable adults who hoard and self-neglect using a multi-agency, person centred approach that also addresses health and safety risks.

Recommendation:

That the PDG recommends that Cabinet adopt the updated MDH Hoarding Policy and Equality Impact Assessment contained in Annexes A and B respectively

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In addition to Care Act 2014 responsibilities, the RSH Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes. Furthermore, the RSH Safety and Quality Standard sets out that providing safe and well-maintained homes is a fundamental responsibility of all registered providers.
- 1.2 As part of ensuring the wider safety of tenants in the design and delivery of landlord services, registered providers should have an effective approach to proactively identifying the risks to tenants' safety and eliminating or mitigating those risks.
- 1.3 The RSH requires registered providers to use a co-regulatory approach and they regard councillors as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and comply with all regulatory requirements. Consequently, it is important that councillors scrutinise and approve the relevant policy approaches adopted by MDH. More information on co-regulation is set out in section 3.5 below.
- 1.4 Hoarding cases are complex due to the way hoarding impacts on different aspects of an adult's life: their home, their social connections, physical and mental health and environment. Adults who hoard and self-neglect therefore require the support and services of different agencies and council partners over the course of the intervention period.

2 Review of the Hoarding Policy

- 2.1 The Hoarding Policy was last reviewed in 2019 and since that time the Regulatory Framework has changed with increased emphasis on tenancy sustainment and an expectation that registered providers will provide support directly to tenants to help them maintain their tenancy or licence.
- 2.2 The revised policy does not refer to lifestyle choices or lack of education but focuses on the support that can be provided to tenants, including signposting if required.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood Officers will agree action plans with tenants when a report of hoarding or clutter has been reported to them which should be realistic,

proportionate and tailored to individual tenant, taking into account the following factors:

- The tenant's mental or physical condition and their ability to carry out the work;
 - The severity of the condition of the tenant's property;
 - The risk of serious harm or accident as a result of the condition of the property;
 - Resources of support agencies involved with the tenant;
 - Referrals to agencies to support the tenant.
- 2.4 The revised policy defines the process which is to be adopted based on the 'clutter scale'. The 'clutter scale' is key to the hoarding process as it identifies the severity of the hoarding activity. Monitoring and regular visits should take place based on the clutter scale rating to review the progress of the action plan. The action plan should be confirmed in writing to the tenant:
- Clutter Scales 1, 2 or 3 do not normally require intervention from MDH but could be monitored to ensure that the situation does not escalate
 - Clutter Scales 4 and above will receive regular visits which is dependent on the severity of the hoard, the engagement of the tenant and their support network. Neighbourhood Officers will decide the frequency of the visits.
- 2.5 The revised policy provides additional details of multi-agency approaches and solutions. It is recognised that it may be necessary to involve a range of agencies to play a part in trying to reduce hoarding issues and ultimately to improve the quality of life for the tenant and their household.
- 2.6 There will be instances where a tenant will not engage with the process but the policy details that enforcement action should only be considered where it is necessary in the circumstances of the case. Where there is a high risk of fire or other health and safety issues, enforcement action may begin earlier, but we will continue to try and work with the tenant during this period of the time.

3 Consultation and Co-Regulation

- 3.1 Tenants were invited to comment on the draft policy between 22nd July 2024 and 22nd August 2024.
- 3.2 Members of the Homes PDG were invited to comment on the draft policy between 22nd July 2024 & 22nd August 2024.
- 3.3 Partner Agencies such as the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and MDDC Public Health and Environmental Health Services Teams were also invited to comment on the draft policy. Confirmation that the MDDC Healthy Homes Grant was not available to Council tenants was added as a result of this consultation.

- 3.4 Despite a limited response to consultation from tenants, it is important that tenants are fully aware of the updated policy. To this end, should the policy be adopted, MDH will proactively signpost the policy on our webpages/Facebook pages and in the next tenant newsletter. Where relevant, particularly in relation to queries, service requests or complaints we will also ensure specific tenants or other stakeholders are also aware of the updated policy as required.
- 3.5 Under housing legislation including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the RSH take co-regulatory approach. In the context of a local authority registered provider such as MDH this means:
- councillors are regarded as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and that providers comply with all regulatory requirements
 - providers must support tenants to shape and scrutinise service delivery and to hold officers and councillors to account

This is important context in the determination and adoption of new or updated policy and monitoring of policy compliance and performance.

4 Historic Performance

- 4.1 The eviction of tenants who hoard is extremely rare. The last eviction due to hoarding was in 2016. Conversely, the service continues to work with several significant hoarding cases every year where historic and new policy approaches will continue support resolutions and sustained tenancies where safety and tenant wellbeing issues are addressed.

5 Safeguarding and Vulnerable Tenants

- 5.1 The policy sets out to involve the individual in all aspects of decision-making in order to achieve the best outcome to improve their health, wellbeing and environment. A person-centred approach is vital to encourage the individual to engage with services and consent to support or interventions.
- 5.2 An adult who hoards/self-neglects may have a complex range of needs and require support from a number of services. Hoarding impacts several areas of an individual's life; their home, their social connections, physical and mental wellbeing, and their environment. An effective approach to getting the best outcome for the individual is to adopt a multi-agency approach, whereby agencies work together and consult with one another to agree actions in the best interests of the individual.

6 Policy Review

- 6.1 MDH will review this Policy every 5-years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. However, the Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.

6.2 Where material or significant amendments are required the policy will receive a full review and will be brought back to the Homes PDG and Cabinet for consideration. Full tenant consultation will also take place.

7 Recommendation

7.1 In accordance with the above, the following recommendation is made:

- That the PDG recommends that Cabinet adopt the updated MDH Hoarding Policy and Equality Impact Assessment contained in Annexes A and B respectively

Financial Implications

Housing management officers are sometimes required to manage cases involving properties that are either cluttered or which are being used to hoard large amounts of possessions, including animals. This can lead to damage to the property. This may also result in rodent or insect infestations, blocked drains and other problems that may also affect neighbouring properties. Rechargeable repairs costs can be inflated if there is damage which can prove at times difficult to recover.

Legal Implications

A multi-agency approach and the sharing of information are fundamental to the successful implementation of this policy. Such information sharing must be undertaken in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations.

Risk Assessment

Hoarding may have serious implications which impact upon health and safety and for this reason the risk it poses is regularly reviewed as part of the risk management framework. Failure to provide MDH staff with policies to use in the course of their day to day activities could result in a less consistent and effective service.

Impact on Climate Change

The Policy has no direct impact on climate change.

Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy. National research and professional accounts suggest that elderly people are more likely to be experiencing a hoarding disorder due to frailty, social isolation and the nature of the disorder which tends to escalate over time. The policy will meet its obligations under the Equalities Act; it will not discriminate against any particular group and each individual will be treated fairly and without discrimination.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report in Annex B.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Homes are a priority for the Council and in the context this policy this includes supporting the delivery of several key objectives including ensuring our tenants feel safe, secure and happy in our homes.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 29 August 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 29 August 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 22 August 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 22 August 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

Current MDH Hoarding Policy: [Hoarding Policy \(middevon.gov.uk\)](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/hoarding-policy)

[Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards – Summary Code of Practice](#)



Hoarding Policy

This Policy was produced in 2024 and is version 3.00

This Policy was adopted by Cabinet on xxxx

MDH will review this Policy every 5-years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. However the Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.

1	Introduction	3
2	Aims and Objectives.....	4
3	Regulatory Framework and Context	4
4	Tenancy Management	5
5	Action Plans.....	6
6	Multi Agency Working.....	7
7	Tenancy Enforcement	7
8	Additional Support.....	8
9	Complaints	9
10	Equality Impact Assessments	10

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy outlines Mid Devon Housing's (MDH), approach to identifying and dealing with issues of hoarding and clutter in MDH properties.
- 1.2 People will often collect items at some point throughout their life, however, there is a percentage of people for whom collecting becomes an unmanageable pattern of behaviour.
- 1.3 Hoarding is a recognised mental health problem.
- 1.4 Definition of Hoarding Disorder
- 1.5 Hoarding disorder was added to the ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases – 11th Revision) in 2018. The 11th edition of the ICD states that “hoarding disorder is characterised by accumulation of possessions due to excessive acquisition of or difficulty discarding possessions, regardless of their actual value”.
- 1.6 People who hoard may also self-neglect as they are unable to access facilities but it is recognised that self-neglect is not a concern for all those that hoard. People who hoard experience distress or difficulty living in their environment because of the following:
 - Acquiring possessions
 - Restricted use of living spaces because they are so full of objects
 - Getting rid of possessions causes distress or is simply not possible, even when they no longer seem to be needed, are no longer useful or are causing real problems because of taking up too much space
- 1.7 Failure to identify and address hoarding carries a number of risks:
 - An increased risk of fire in the property and the possibility of the fire spreading to neighbouring properties
 - Fire and Rescue services can be impeded by the amount of items kept in the property
 - An increased risk of accident or harm to the tenant or household members
 - Difficulty for Housing Officers to carry out inspections or complete safety checks
 - An increased risk of repairs in the property including damp and mould issues
 - An increase in management costs due to household clearance and any repairs to the property
 - An increased risk of vermin infestation, both in the property and to adjoining properties

- 1.8 For the reasons set out above, preventative measures must be put in place to reduce the health and safety risks to the tenant and others, as well as reduce neglect and/or damage to the property. Where MDH is not successful in working with the tenant to encourage and adopt changes in behaviour, MDH will take appropriate enforcement actions in connection with any breaches of the tenancy agreement.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The aim of the Policy is to set out the approach to hoarding by MDH tenants and has the following objectives:

- To take action to stop hoarding as quickly and effectively as possible.
- To take a balanced approach using a combination of measures including support, prevention, early intervention, and enforcement.
- To provide a pro-active approach in the management of casework.
- To treat those who hoard and those affected by hoarding with tact and sensitivity.

- 2.2 The objective of the Policy is to provide clear guidance to Officers and tenants on the steps and process to be taken when cases of hoarding have been identified.

3 Regulatory Framework and Context

- 3.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has impacted the regulatory framework for social housing and introduced a new proactive, consumer regulation regime focussed on meeting the needs of tenants. One aim of the legislation and regime is to ensure that providers of social housing, such as the Council, keep its properties and estates safe and clean.

- 3.2 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) adopts a co-regulatory approach and regards councillors as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and that providers comply with all regulatory requirements.

- 3.3 As part of ensuring the wider safety of tenants in the design and delivery of landlord services, registered providers should have an effective approach to proactively identifying the risks to tenants' safety and eliminating or mitigating those risks.

- 3.4 As part of the new consumer regulation regime, from April 2023, the RSH introduced a series of 22 mandatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) creating a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services. These measure include those applicable directly to building safety as well as those based on tenant perception surveys setting out tenants views on performance which will include responsible neighbourhood management.

3.5 The TSMs considered under the Hoarding Policy include:

- TP01 - Overall satisfaction
- TP08 - Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect
- TP09 - Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints
- TP11 - Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods

3.6 The following Policies are related to this Policy:

- MDH Anti-social Behaviour Policy & Procedures
- MDH Tenancy Management Policy
- Corporate Health and Safety Policy
- MDH Vulnerability Policy
- Corporate Housing Assistance Policy

4 Tenancy Management

4.1 MDH has operational staff that visit tenants and their households, at home. Officers are required to identify any issues that arise when properties are cluttered or are being used to hoard large amounts of possessions or animals and report them to the relevant Neighbourhood Officer.

4.2 In extreme cases, piles of clutter can become a health and safety risk and can result in trips, slips and falls. If the home is difficult to clean, living conditions can be unhygienic and can lead to rodent or insect infestations, blocked drains and other problems that may also affect neighbouring properties. Officers will identify any risks to the tenant, their household, visitors or neighbouring properties and take appropriate action in accordance with the severity of the risk.

4.3 Issues with hoarding/clutter can generate complaints of anti-social behaviour. These will be dealt with in line with MDH's Anti-social Behaviour Policy and Procedures. Complaints may include those relating to untidy gardens, unwelcome odours from the property or infestation of vermin.

4.4 MDH is likely to become aware of hoarding/clutter issues:-

- During routine planned maintenance works due to the property (gas/electrical checks or property upgrades)
- When complaints of anti-social behaviour are received; for example, those concerning the presence of vermin or clutter in outside spaces

- When reports of welfare concerns from family members or neighbours are received
- During Tenancy Home Checks
- When receiving reports from other agencies involved with the tenant

4.5 When an issue has been identified the Neighbourhood Officer will regularly visit the property and will put together an action plan and risk assessment to work with the tenant to reduce the hoarding issues and to address any health and safety concerns. We understand that it may be a slow process in reducing belongings or items from the property.

5 Action Plans

5.1 Neighbourhood Officers will agree action plans with tenants which should be realistic, proportionate and tailored to the individual tenant, taking into account the following factors:

- The tenant's mental or physical condition and their ability to carry out the work;
- The severity of the condition of the tenant's property;
- The risk of serious harm or accident as a result of the condition of the property;
- Resources of support agencies involved with the tenant;
- Referrals to agencies to support the tenant.

5.2 Action plans will contain an initial risk assessment but this may be altered as the hoard is addressed.

5.3 Action plans should be agreed with the tenant wherever possible. If a tenant will not engage with an action plan MDH may use legal action e.g. obtaining an injunction, demotion of the tenancy or possession of the property.

5.4 The 'clutter scale' is key to the hoarding process as it measures the severity of the hoarding and its impact on a person's life. Monitoring and regular visits should take place based on the clutter scale to review the progress of the action plan. The action plan should be confirmed in writing to the tenant:

- Clutter Scales 1, 2 or 3 do not normally require intervention from MDH but could be monitored to ensure that the situation does not escalate.
- Clutter Scales 4 and above will receive regular visits which is dependent on the severity of the hoard, the engagement of the tenant and their support network. Neighbourhood Officers will decide the frequency of the visits.

6 Multi Agency Working

- 6.1 It is recognised that it may be necessary to involve a range of agencies to play a part in trying to reduce hoarding issues and ultimately to improve the quality of life for the tenant and their household.
- 6.2 MDH will work with a range of agencies such as Social Services, Community Mental Health Teams, the Fire Service, Environmental Service and family members. It is worth noting that the limited capacity of some of these services may impact on our ability to meet our on timescales.
- 6.3 Where family and friends are already involved, and willing to co-operate, we encourage their assistance, however in doing this we will always comply with data protection principles. Our priority is to engage with the tenant wherever possible.
- 6.4 Where the tenant is already engaging with a support service, we will try to work alongside this existing arrangement. This is important where the hoarder already has an established relationship as hoarders can at times be mistrustful of new services.
- 6.5 Where the support is offered but refused, it is important that this is noted as this may be required as evidence later if legal action is required.
- 6.6 A referral should be made to the Fire Service where it is believed that a tenant could be vulnerable to fire and ask that a fire safety visit is made.
- 6.7 Where there is a concern about the tenant's wellbeing, the Neighbourhood Officer will encourage the tenant to speak to their GP.
- 6.8 The Neighbourhood Officer can refer the tenant to Care Direct or Adult Social Care if necessary and there are safeguarding concerns. This generally requires consent of the person being referred, unless they lack the capacity to consent, or there is an overriding duty of care.

7 Tenancy Enforcement

- 7.1 Enforcement action should only be considered where it is necessary in the circumstances of the case. Where there is a high risk of fire, enforcement action may begin earlier, but we will continue to try and work with the tenant during this period of the time.
- 7.2 Enforcement action may include:
 - Applying for an injunction
 - Taking possession proceedings

- Applying for a Closure Order
- Demotion of the tenancy

7.3 If a possession order is obtained at Court it may say that possession is not to be enforced providing that the tenant complied with certain conditions within a given time frame, for example allowing MDH access to the property or improve the condition of the property. If the tenant does not comply with the conditions in accordance with the order, MDH may then seek to enforce the order and apply to Court for a warrant of possession.

8 Additional Support

8.1 If you need help or are concerned for someone's safety and wellbeing please use the following contact details for key services and organisations that may be able to help.

- [Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership.](#)
- [The Hoarding Ice-Breaker Form](#) empowers people whose health, wellbeing or safety has been adversely affected by hoarding to start a conversation with a medical professional
- [Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service](#) offer free home safety visits and can often install free smoke alarms and specialist equipment to help residents keep safe in their own homes
- [Hoarding disorder - NHS.](#)
- [Hoarding UK](#) provides information, support for hoarders and agencies, including local support groups.
- [Help for Hoarders](#) provides information, support and advice for hoarders and their families, including online support forums
- Mid Devon Environmental Health Services, [please contact us](#) or call 01884 255255
- [The Association of Professional De-clutterers & Organisers \(UK\)](#) are a professional network of those in the de-cluttering and organising industry.
- [Change your Space - Organising and Decluttering in Devon & Somerset](#)
- [Your Sorted Nest](#)

- 8.2 Mid Devon District Council's Healthy Homes is not available to MDH Housing Tenants. Please refer to [Housing Assistance Policy 2022-2025](#). Public Health may investigate filthy and verminous properties with a view to taking enforcement action if needed.

9 Complaints

- 9.1 MDH tries to get things right the first time and when it does, it would love people to let it know. It's great for MDH to receive positive comments or feedback, so if people wish to complement MDH staff for doing a great job, the Council would love to hear from them.

- 9.2 If things do go wrong the Council is committed to:

- Dealing with complaints and comments quickly and effectively; and
- Using complaints, comments and compliments to review and improve its services

- 9.3 When tenants contact MDH to tell it they are dissatisfied with the service provided, the Council will offer them the choice to have an informal conversation to see if things can be put right quickly, without the need for a formal investigation.

- 9.4 The Housing Ombudsman Service advise that a complaint must be defined as:

'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents'.

- 9.5 Where a tenant considers that the Council has given a poor service or has got something wrong, they may tell a member of staff in the first instance. This does not need to be treated as a formal complaint (unless the complainant asks the Council to do so) and may be resolved 'there and then' by way of an apology or plan of action. Any comments provided will be used to take appropriate action, or give information.

- 9.6 If a tenant does not want to do this or is unhappy with the response, they may make a formal complaint, which can escalate from stage 1 or stage 2 if they are still not satisfied with the response. Having been through stages 1 and 2 and if they are still not satisfied, the tenant may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

- 9.7 MDH's complaints procedure is detailed on Mid Devon District Council website: [Feedback and Complaints](#)

10 Equality Impact Assessments

- 10.1 MDH completes an equality impact assessment each time it develops or reviews a policy, procedure or service. The assessment is to help make sure decision making is fair and does not present any barriers or disadvantage to customers from any protected group (including disability) under the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Impact Assessment

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment process:

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010). Assessments should consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of potential impact.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy/ decision') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised. An EIA is not required for a decision in relation to an individual.

Screening is a short exercise to determine whether a policy/ decision is relevant to equalities, and if so, whether a full EIA should be conducted.

Section 1: Equality Impact Assessment Screening

Title and description of the policy/ decision:	MDH Hoarding Policy		
Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment:	MDH Policy Officer		
Council service:	Mid Devon Housing		
Date of assessment:			
What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?			
<p>The aim of the Policy is to set out our approach to hoarding by our tenants and has the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take action to stop hoarding as quickly and effectively as possible. • To take a balanced approach using a combination of measures including support, prevention, early intervention, and enforcement. • To provide a pro-active approach in the management of casework. • To treat those who hoard and those affected by hoarding with tact and sensitivity. <p>The objective of the Policy is to provide clear guidance to Officers and Tenants on the steps and process to be taken when cases of hoarding have been identified.</p>			
Who may be affected by the policy/ decision?	MDH Tenants		
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise	<p>Consultation exercise was undertaken between 22 July – 22 August 2024 which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants • Members of the Homes PDG • Strategic Partners 		
Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision?	MDH reviews its practices as lessons learned when dealing with complaints raised by tenants		
To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant:			
	Yes	No	Details
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Having a clearly defined policy ensures consistency of approach and ensures that no tenant or resident is treated more fairly or unfairly than any other.
2. Advance equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Foster good relations between different groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Which of the protected characteristics is the policy/ decision relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive, negative, or neutral)

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Comments
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy/ maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage and Civil partnership*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

*Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Decision by Corporate Manager to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes/ No

If the answer is “Yes”, please continue to the Section 2 and complete the Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here.

The policy will eliminate unlawful discrimination and is neutral impact against the specified protected characteristics.

MDH has a collection of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. These are currently being reviewed with the aim of aligning them more closely with the Regulatory Standards.

Furthermore, there is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their services to meet the needs of tenants. MDH collects data on the diversity of tenants and endeavours to tailor services to meet the needs of all tenants and to enable compliance to be monitored.

Where a tenant is considered vulnerable MDH will collaborate closely with them to avoid possession action where possible, and each case will be referred to the Neighbourhood Team Leader Income and/or other support services before any eviction order is sought.

National research and professional accounts suggest that elderly people are more likely to be experiencing a hoarding disorder due to frailty, social isolation and the nature of the disorder which tends to escalate over time. The policy will meet its obligations under the Equalities Act; it will not discriminate against any particular group and each individual will be treated fairly and without discrimination.

EIA Screening Complete

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Evidence and Consultation
<p>What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy/ decision? E.g. consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Please identify any gaps in the available information that might make it difficult to form an opinion about the effect of the policy on different groups.</p>

Please complete this table for all the Protected Characteristics. If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be justified or where possible mitigated either to reduce or remove them. (Please add rows where needed)

Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified	Mitigation required (action) or Justification	Lead Officer and target completion date	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Sex			
Age			
Disability			
Religion or Belief			
Race			
Sexual Orientation			
Gender Reassignment			

Pregnancy/ maternity			
Marriage and Civil partnership (Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination)			

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy/ decision and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality:

Please state where the EIA will be published (e.g. on the Mid Devon District Council website):

MDH Website

=====

Equality Impact Assessment Sign off

For completion by Corporate Manager

Are you prepared to agree and sign off the EIA?

Yes **No**

If "No", provide details of why and next steps:

Name: Simon Newcombe

Job Title: Head of Housing and Health

Date: 22 August 2024

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Report for: Homes Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting: 10 September 2024

Subject: **MID DEVON HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Simon Clist Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader

Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health

Exempt: None

which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Wards Affected: All

Enclosures: Annex A – MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy
Annex B – MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy
Equality Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

Under the Regulator of Social Housing’s (RSH) statutory Safety and Quality Standard Registered Providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

Registered Providers are expected to have in place and comply with effective policies, procedures and processes in relation to repairs, maintenance and planned improvements that take into account tenants’ views and diverse needs. With a clearer, updated standard in place Mid Devon Housing (MDH) have taken the opportunity to bring together a several repairs and maintenance approaches into a single, new policy

document. This aims to provide clarity for tenants, the RSH and MDH more widely as to what our repairs service will provide and how it meets the Standard requirements.

Recommendation:

That the PDG recommends to Cabinet that it recommends to Council that the MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Equality Impact Assessment be adopted.

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 MDH is committed to ensure tenants' homes are well maintained by an efficient and effective repairs and maintenance service.
- 1.2 The MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy serves to define, in broad terms, the principles that guide the repair and maintenance activities and the service standards that shall be implemented.
- 1.3 There are a range of legislative and regulatory responsibilities guiding the delivery of the Council's repairs and maintenance service which are referenced in the policy.
- 1.4 Whilst a tenant repairs handbook exists, there is no current existing similar policy and greater clarity is required as set out in the report summary.

2 RSH Consumer Standards

- 2.1 The RSH introduced new consumer standards in April 2024. One of these standards is the Safety and Quality Standard sets out the following requirements specifically relating to repairs and maintenance:
 - a) Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.
 - b) Registered providers must enable repairs and maintenance issues to be reported easily.
 - c) Registered providers must set timescales for the completion of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements, clearly communicate them to tenants and take appropriate steps to deliver to them.
 - d) Registered providers must keep tenants informed about repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to their homes with clear and timely communication.
 - e) Registered providers must understand and fulfil their maintenance responsibilities in respect of communal areas

- f) Registered providers must ensure that the delivery of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to homes and communal areas is informed by the needs of tenants and provides value for money.
- 2.2 The adoption of a formal Repairs and Maintenance Policy provides a key framework and reference point to demonstrate how we will achieve those points above.
- 3 Performance Monitoring**
- 3.1 The activities covered under the Repairs and Maintenance Policy will be subject to performance monitoring on a continuous basis and discussed with contractors as part of the regular operational and core group meetings.
- 3.2 Key areas for monitoring will be:
- Works completed on time
 - Works overdue
 - Works completed first time fix
 - Average repair and void time
 - Quality of work completed
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Appointments kept
 - Budgetary and expenditure control
- 3.3 The service quarterly performance monitoring report already provides tenants and members with key information on overarching repairs performance with the following indicators:
- Emergency repairs completed on time % (Target 100%)
 - Urgent repairs completed on time % (Target 95%)
 - Routine repairs completed on time % (Target 95%)
 - Repairs completed first visit % (Target 95%)
- 3.4 Feedback from our tenants on the quality of the service they receive is important in helping us to evaluate and improve the service. Customer satisfaction surveys will be carried out following the completion of a repair, as well as larger scale periodic perception surveys. Feedback from these surveys will be used to gauge overall tenant experience and help shape future service improvements.
- 4 Consultation and Co-Regulation**
- 4.1 Tenants were invited to comment on the draft policy between 01 and 31 July 2024.
- 4.2 Members of the Homes PDG were invited to comment on the draft policy between 01 and 31 July 2024.
- 4.3 No comments or concerns were raised by tenants or members.

- 4.4 Despite a lack of response to consultation, it is important that tenants are fully aware of the updated policy. To this end, should the policy be adopted, MDH will proactively signpost the policy on our webpages/Facebook pages and in the next tenant newsletter. Where relevant, particularly in relation to queries, service requests or complaints we will also ensure specific tenants or other stakeholders are also aware of the updated policy as required.
- 4.5 Under housing legislation including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the RSH take co-regulatory approach. In the context of a local authority registered provider such as MDH this means:
- councillors are regarded as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and that providers comply with all regulatory requirements
 - providers must support tenants to shape and scrutinise service delivery and to hold officers and councillors to account

This is important context in the determination and adoption of new policy and monitoring of policy compliance and performance.

5 Safeguarding and Vulnerable Tenants

- 5.1 MDH records details of all vulnerable tenants to enable us to support their needs. This includes making reasonable adjustments in dealing with vulnerable tenants so that they are comfortable when we interact with them.
- 5.2 When repairs or maintenance are required MDH ensures that the tenant is communicated to by their preferred channel and that they understand the importance of allowing access to their home to complete the check.
- 5.3 Whilst officers and contractors attend homes to specifically carry out repairs or maintenance they will check any tenants observed who appear vulnerable or if there are safeguarding concerns which will be reported to the Neighbourhood Officer. The Neighbourhood Officer will then contact the tenant to establish if they need additional support to be able to sustain their tenancies.

6 Policy Review

- 6.1 MDH will review this Policy every 5-years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. However, the Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.
- 6.2 Where material or significant amendments are required the policy will receive a full review and will be brought back to the Homes PDG and Cabinet for consideration. Full tenant consultation will also take place.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 In accordance with the above, the following recommendation is made:

- That the PDG recommends to Cabinet that it recommends to Council that the MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Equality Impact Assessment be adopted.

Financial Implications

This report on its own does not give rise to any financial implication but implementation of the activities set out in the policy will have cost implications.

However, these will either be met from existing resources and funding or require separate business cases and appropriate approval to progress.

The Council's HRA revenue and capital budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-28 supports the activities required to maintain the Council's housing stock.

Legal Implications

The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, the Decent Homes Standard, the Defective Premises Act and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) alongside the RSH Safety and Quality Standard 2024 to ensure that properties are maintained, meet the Decent Homes Standard and that, where appropriate, properties are assessed and steps taken with a view to avoiding or minimising the risk of responsive repairs.

Risk Assessment

Failure to have a Repairs and Maintenance policy in place would put the Council in breach of the regulatory framework. Failure to have adequate arrangements in place for Repairs and Maintenance could result in the Council failing to meet its statutory and contractual obligations.

Impact on Climate Change

The Policy has no direct impact on Climate Change

Equalities Impact Assessment

MDH collects data on the diversity of tenants and endeavours to tailor services to meet the needs of all tenants. Our housing estates must be accessible to those with disabilities and we have in place a regular schedule of inspections to ensure that all safety issues are identified and rectified as soon as possible. Information provided by MDH is available in alternative formats, upon request, in order to ensure that all those living on our estates understand the rights and responsibilities of the Council as a landlord, and tenants and other residents, individually.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report in Annex B.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Homes are a priority for the Council and in the context this policy this includes supporting the delivery of several key objectives; investing in our homes, monitoring tenant satisfaction and ensuring our tenants feel safe, secure and happy in our homes.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 29 August 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 29 August 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 16 August 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 22 August 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health
Email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

[Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards – Summary Code of Practice](#)



Repairs and Maintenance Policy

2024

This policy was produced in 2024 and is version 1.00

This policy was adopted by Council on xxxx

Review Frequency: MDH will review this Policy every 5-years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. However the Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.

1	Introduction	3
2	Aims and Objectives.....	3
3	Regulatory Framework and Context	3
4	Related Legislation and Relevant Policies.....	4
5	Responsibility for Repairs.....	5
6	Responsive Repairs	7
7	Response Times	7
8	Exclusions.....	8
9	Tenant’s Right to Repair.....	9
10	Planned and Cyclical Maintenance	9
11	Stock Condition	9
12	MDH’s Standards	10
13	Complaints	11
14	Equality Impact Assessments.....	12

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out MDH's Repairs & Maintenance Policy.
- 1.2 MDH recognises that the efficient and effective repair and maintenance of its housing stock is an important service to tenants and leaseholders and an essential part of a much wider asset management function.
- 1.3 The overall aim of this Policy is to set a framework enabling the delivery of an effective maintenance service which fulfils MDH's statutory obligations, protects council assets, and offers value for money.
- 1.4 This policy applies to the housing stock of MDH which are dwellings let to tenants under secure, introductory, flexible secure and demoted tenancies. Where the term "Tenancy" or Tenancy Agreement is used in this policy it means one of these tenancies

2 Aims and Objectives

Aim

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that MDH's repairs and maintenance service meet all of its legal and contractual obligations as a landlord and also to explain the tenant's responsibilities

Objective

- 2.2 The objective is to clarify what tenants can expect of MDH in relation to servicing, repairs and planned works.

3 Regulatory Framework and Context

- 3.1 Under the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard Registered Providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.
- 3.2 The Regulator of Social Housing regard councillors as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and that providers comply with all regulatory requirements.
- 3.3 As part of the new consumer regulation regime, from April 2023, the RSH introduced a series of 22 mandatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) creating a new system for assessing how social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services.

3.4 The TSM's associated with this Policy are:

- TP02 – Satisfaction with repairs
- TP03 – Satisfaction with time to complete most recent repair
- TP04 – Satisfaction that the home is well maintained
- TP05 – Satisfaction that the home is safe
- RP02 – Repairs completed within target timescale

4 Related Legislation and Relevant Policies

4.1 Legislation:

- Social Housing Regulator Economic and consumer standards
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (HFHHA 2018)
- Housing Acts 1985,1988,1996,1998 and 2004
- The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations SI. 1994 No 133
- The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) regulations 1994, SI 1994 No 613
- The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Development Act 1993
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 – Section 11
- Defective Premises Act 1972 - Section 4
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Part III
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Equalities Act 2010
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Housing Health & Safety Rating System

4.2 Related Policies:

- Tenancy Agreement and Tenant's Handbook
- MDH Recharges Policy
- MDH Decant Policy
- MDH Voids Management Policy and Lettable Standard
- MDH Tenant Compensation Policy
- MDH Homes Safety Policy
- MDH Aids and Adaptations Policy
- MDDC Complaints and Feedback Policy

5 Responsibility for Repairs

- 5.1 Tenant Responsibilities - The tenant is responsible for reporting repairs to MDH and must allow access to their home for the repair work and associated inspections to be carried out. The tenant is responsible for:
- a) Minor repairs and decorating inside the Property.
 - b) Repairing or renewing any improvements that the tenant has carried out, including associated items. Unless the work is in the nature of minor repairs the tenant must ask MDH for consent in writing to carry out any such works
 - c) The Tenant's responsibilities are as set out in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenants' Handbook.
- 5.2 The tenant is responsible for allowing access for essential maintenance visits and surveys to support the repairs team. These include the annual gas or heating check, electrical installation condition check, stock condition survey to undertake an assessment of the property's key components so that future works can be programmed and asbestos surveys to ensure that MDH can work safely in a tenant's home. Tenants may be recharged if they unreasonably refuse or fail to allow access when suitable notice has been given for a statutory visit. Please refer to the [MDH Recharges](#) Policy for further details.
- 5.3 MDH's obligations are to:
- a) Keep in repair the structure and exterior of the Property. This includes the drains, external pipes, gutters and external windows.
 - b) Keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the Property for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation. This includes the basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences.
 - c) Keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the Property for space heating and heating water
- (Further details are set out in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenants' Handbook.)
- 5.4 The obligation to repair carries with it an obligation on MDH to make good or redecorate any damage caused in the course of the repair.
- 5.5 MDH must carry out repairs within a reasonable period of time once it has been notified of the problem. There is no statutory definition of reasonable time. Relevant factors might include:
- The extent of the disrepair
 - Availability of replacement parts
 - Whether the tenant is living in the property

- 5.6 Any temporary measures MDH has put in place might affect what is considered a reasonable time to complete repairs. For example, a temporary door to replace one that was broken, or space heaters where a boiler is not working.
- 5.7 MDH must carry out the repairs at its own cost and is not permitted to charge the tenant for the cost of the repairs or to recover the costs through a service charge.
- 5.8 MDH is not obliged to carry out any works or repairs that are needed due to the tenant not using the property in a tenant-like manner.
- 5.9 MDH is not obliged to keep in repair or maintain anything that the tenant is entitled to remove.
- 5.10 MDH must also ensure that the Property:
- a) Is fit for human habitation at the time the tenancy is granted or created or, if later, at the beginning of the term of the tenancy.
 - b) Will remain fit for human habitation during the term of the tenancy.
- 5.11 MDH fulfils its repairing responsibilities through a combination of the following type of repairs:
- Responsive Repairs
 - Planned improvements.
 - Cyclical maintenance, which includes decorating and servicing and inspection of gas and electrical installations.
 - Re-chargeable repairs
 - Repairs to Empty (Void) Properties
 - The Right to Repair
 - Adaptations
- 5.12 Responsive repairs will normally replace fixtures and fittings supplied by MDH on a like for like or improved basis or, where this is not possible, MDH will aim to provide the tenant with choices in relation to the replacement. In some cases, for example where stock is obsolete the closest match may vary greatly.

- 5.13 If a component cannot be fully repaired, MDH may make a temporary repair and arrange for a full planned replacement to follow on and this will be discussed with the tenants. MDH will ensure the substantive repairs are carried out within a reasonable period of time.

6 Responsive Repairs

- 6.1 When a tenant reports a repair MDH will:

- Check whether the repair is MDH's responsibility
- If necessary, arrange for a member of staff to visit the home to look at what needs to be done
- For most repairs except emergencies MDH will make a morning (8am to 1pm) or afternoon (1pm to 4.30pm) appointment for a specific date
- If tenants contact MDH by telephone MDH will generate a unique job number which they can use if they need to contact MDH about the repair again, although tenants can enquire about any job by providing their address and a brief description.
- MDH will contact tenants by their preferred method to arrange and confirm appointment details including telephone, email, text message or by post
- MDH may increase the priority of repairs for older tenants, those with disabilities or vulnerabilities but this will be considered on an individual basis

- 6.2 When work is scheduled to be completed MDH will:

- Tell the tenant if they need to move or protect furniture, or if any floor covering needs to be removed.
- Not work in a home where the only person (s) at home is under 16 years old
- Request that pets and animals are placed in a separate room
- Request that tenants provide a smoke-free environment for MDH's repair workers

7 Response Times

- 7.1 When a repair is reported MDH will discuss the nature of the repair and tell the tenant what response time category it has been placed in. The response time are measured from the date that the repair is reported.

- 7.2 Emergency repairs - MDH will respond within 4 hours or 1 working day, depending on the urgency. For repairs to remove immediate danger to people, avoid flooding or major damage to the property, make the property secure, or restore total loss of heating in winter (31st Oct-1st May)MDH will complete the repair at the time, if possible . If this is not possible, MDH will make the situation safe and carry out any follow up work as an urgent or routine repair. Examples could include: Gas leaks. Serious internal water leak. Loss of water supply to all parts of the home. Dangerous electrics (electric shock, bare wires) and unsafe electrical sockets or fittings, total loss of electricity supply, blocked drain (when backing up into property), blocked toilet or toilet not flushing (when no other toilet in the home), blocked flue to open fire or boiler, leaking roof (temporary repair), door or window insecure, loss of room or water heating (total or partial) between 31st October and 1st May.

- 7.3 Urgent Repairs will be undertaken within 3 working days for Partial loss of electrical supply, blocked bath, basin or sink, blocked toilet when another toilet in the home can be used), broken or rotten wood floors or stairs, loss of room or water heating (total or partial) between 30th April & 1st November, faulty communal door, stiff or seized tap or valve, broken or loose balustrade or handrail.
- 7.4 Other urgent repairs will be completed within 7 working days for such repairs as work to restore full or partial failure of sanitation, water or electrical supply or heating systems. Also for urgent work to prevent immediate damage to the property, to overcome serious inconvenience to the household or where there is possible health, safety or security risk. Examples could include: Faulty extractor fan in kitchen or bathroom (where there is no openable window), rain coming through the roof, door entry phone not working.
- 7.5 For Routine repairs which are not emergency or urgent - MDH will complete the repair within 35 working days. This is for work where the fault or failure does not cause inconvenience or present a danger to occupants or the public. MDH may extend the timescale for certain repairs, for example if materials or parts need to be ordered.
- 7.6 Repairs and component replacements to external and non-habitable parts of the home, such as coal stores, external WCs, garden WCs, porches, external stores and outhouses will not normally fit within emergency to routine repair timescales, unless there is an imminent risk to health or life. Works will normally be carried out as major, planned or batched planned works. Although such areas may be treated by tenants as part of the home, they are not designed with the same level of protection from damp or weather as the main parts of the home, and are only suitable for storage of non-perishable items.
- 7.7 Planned work. MDH will put certain non-urgent work into 'packages' of work that can be carried out all together in an area. This is more efficient and costs less. This will only be done if the work can be completed in this way within a reasonable time otherwise the works will have to be carried out as responsive repairs and not as planned work
- 7.8 If a repair worker does not come within the response time or keep to a specific morning or afternoon appointment agreed with the tenant MDH ask that tenant contact us immediately. In certain circumstances MDH will make a payment to the tenant for the inconvenience.

8 Exclusions

- 8.1 Misuse / damage – where repairs are required due misuse or damage, tenants may be responsible for arranging for or paying for repairs. In extreme cases, possession may be sought for breach of tenancy agreement.

9 Tenant's Right to Repair

- 9.1 The Right to Repair is part of the Citizen's Charter Scheme. It gives tenants the right to have certain repairs done within set time limits. These are referred to as Qualifying Repairs that could affect the health, safety and security of tenants.
- 9.2 MDH will inform tenants if their repair is a Qualifying Repair.
- 9.3 If MDH do not complete a Qualifying Repair within the time allowed, the tenant has the right to tell MDH to get another contractor to complete the works. If they fail to complete the work within the timeframe tenants may be entitled to compensation.

10 Planned and Cyclical Maintenance

- 10.1 Planned maintenance includes all planned improvement works and planned repairs to the housing stock.
- 10.2 MDH gathers and uses information relating to each property to plan and develop its planned maintenance programmes. Typically, this will include:
 - Information from a periodic stock condition survey
 - Condition of property elements & components
 - Expected component and material lifecycles
 - Information about asbestos present in the property
 - Information about the energy performance of properties
 - Information from the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
 - Repair history
- 10.3 In developing its annual planned maintenance programme, MDH will consider the current condition of the property and assess this against the component lifecycle and the decency standards as defined by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. Consideration will also be given to the impact on other maintenance work streams.
- 10.4 Cyclical maintenance are works that are undertaken at defined time intervals as routine preventative maintenance. The works are undertaken on regular planned cycles for servicing, inspection and testing of equipment, often as required by statute or regulations or to maintain the generation condition of the stock, and particularly the electrical and mechanical installations within the stock. Further detail is contained within the [MDH Homes Safety Policy](#).

11 Stock Condition

- 11.1 MDH holds data on the condition of all the housing stock which informs the timeframes for planned and cyclical maintenance programmes

11.2 Information used to determine the condition of individual properties includes:

- Physical inspections of properties
- Information provided by Officers and Contractors
- Reports received during routine maintenance checks
- Cloned data

12 MDH's Standards

12.1 MDH will respond to repair problems in an efficient and helpful way. Most repairs are carried out by MDH own repair workers but MDH sometimes use specialist contractors. If this happens MDH will tell tenants the name of the contractor.

12.2 MDH's staff will:

- Answer calls promptly
- Be polite, honest and helpful

12.3 Anyone working in tenant's homes will follow certain rules of behaviour:

- Treat tenant's and their household with respect and always behave in a professional way
- Consider any tenant vulnerabilities and make reasonable adjustments if required
- Introduce themselves and show photo identification before entering
- Explain what they are going to do and discuss how this will affect the tenant or their household
- Protect belonging from damage, dust and paint
- Make sure materials and tools do not cause a danger to anyone
- Keep tenants informed about how the work is progressing
- Clear rubbish from the home at the end of each working day
- Make sure electricity, gas and water are connected at the end of the day
- Be dressed appropriately for the type of work they do

12.4 MDH will carry out regular checks to make sure MDH provide a good standard of service by selecting a number of completed repairs on a random basis. MDH will also contact tenants by telephone, text, email or letter to find out what they thought about the service. MDH will inspect completed jobs at random for the standard of workmanship either by telephoning the tenant or visiting the home to look at the repair.

13 Complaints

13.1 We will try to get things right the first time and when we do, we would love people to let us know. It's great for us to receive positive comments or feedback, so if people wish to complement our staff for doing a great job, we would love to hear from them.

13.2 If things do go wrong the Council is committed to:

- Dealing with complaints and comments quickly and effectively; and
- Using complaints, comments and compliments to review and improve our services

13.3 When tenants contact us to tell us they are dissatisfied with the service we have provided, we will offer them the choice to have an informal conversation to see if we can put things right quickly, without the need for a formal investigation.

13.4 The Housing Ombudsman Service advise that a complaint must be defined as:

'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents'.

13.5 Where a tenant considers that the council has given a poor service or has got something wrong, they may tell a member of staff in the first instance. This does not need to be treated as a formal complaint (unless the complainant asks us to do so) and may be resolved 'there and then' by way of an apology or plan of action. Any comments provided will be used to take appropriate action, or give information.

13.6 If a tenant does not want to do this or is unhappy with the response, they may make a formal complaint, which can escalate from stage 1 or stage 2 if they are still not satisfied with the response. Having been through stages 1 and 2 and they are still not satisfied, the tenant may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

13.7 MDH's complaints procedure is detailed on Mid Devon District Council website: [Feedback and Complaints](#)

14 Equality Impact Assessments

- 14.1 MDH complete an equality impact assessment each time we develop or review a policy, procedure or service. The assessment is to help us make sure our decision making is fair and does not present any barriers or disadvantage to customers from any protected group (including disability) under the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Impact Assessment

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment process:

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010). Assessments should consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of potential impact.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy/ decision') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised. An EIA is not required for a decision in relation to an individual.

Screening is a short exercise to determine whether a policy/ decision is relevant to equalities, and if so, whether a full EIA should be conducted.

Section 1: Equality Impact Assessment Screening

Title and description of the policy/ decision:	MDH Repairs and Maintenance Policy		
Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment:	Policy Officer		
Council service:	Housing		
Date of assessment:	01.08.2024		
What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?			
<p>The aim of this policy is to ensure that MDH's repairs and maintenance service meet all of our landlord obligations with regard to legal and contractual requirements and to explain tenant responsibilities in relation to the Tenancy Agreement.</p> <p>The objective is to clarify what tenants can expect of MDH in relation to servicing, repairs and planned works.</p>			
Who may be affected by the policy/ decision?	All MDH Tenants		
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise	Consultation exercise was undertaken between—which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants • Members of the Homes PDG 		
Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision?	MDH reviews its practices as lessons learned when dealing with complaints raised by tenants		
To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant:			
	Yes	No	Details
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Policy does not discriminate against those who are older, have a disability or are vulnerable
2. Advance equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Foster good relations between different groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Which of the protected characteristics is the policy/ decision relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive, negative, or neutral)

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Comments
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We may increase the priority of repairs for older tenants, those with disabilities or vulnerabilities but this will be

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Comments
				considered on an individual basis
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We may increase the priority of repairs for older tenants, those with disabilities or vulnerabilities but this will be considered on an individual basis
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy/ maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage and Civil partnership*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

*Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Decision by Corporate Manager to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes/ No

If the answer is “Yes”, please continue to the Section 2 and complete the Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here.

EIA Screening Complete

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Evidence and Consultation

What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy/ decision? E.g. consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Please identify any gaps in the available information that might make it difficult to form an opinion about the effect of the policy on different groups.

MDH has a collection of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. These are currently being reviewed with the aim of aligning them more closely with the Regulatory Standards.

Furthermore, there is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their services to meet the needs of tenants. MDH collects data on the diversity of tenants and endeavours to tailor services to meet the needs of all tenants and to enable compliance to be monitored.

MDH records details of all vulnerable tenants in able to support their needs. This includes making reasonable adjustments in dealing with vulnerable tenants so that they are comfortable when we interact with them.

When repairs or maintenance are required MDH ensures that the tenant is communicated to by their preferred channel and that they understand the importance of allowing access to their home to complete the check.

Whilst officers and contractors attend homes to specifically carry out repairs or maintenance they will check any tenants observed who appear vulnerable or if there are safeguarding concerns which will be reported to the Neighbourhood Officer. The Neighbourhood Officer will then contact the tenant to establish if they need additional support to be able to sustain their tenancies.

Please complete this table for all the Protected Characteristics. If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be justified or where possible mitigated either to reduce or remove them. (Please add rows where needed)

Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified	Mitigation required (action) or Justification	Lead Officer and target completion date	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Sex			
No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Age			
Older tenants may be adversely affected when a repairs is required as they may not be able to use alternative facilities	We may increase the priority of repairs for older tenants, those with disabilities or vulnerabilities but this will be considered on an individual basis	Repairs and Maintenance Manager	That target time for completion of repairs take into consideration the age &/or vulnerability of the tenant
Disability			
As above			
Religion or Belief			
No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Race			
No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Sexual Orientation			

No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Gender Reassignment			
No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Pregnancy/ maternity			
No Impacts/Issues or opportunities identified			
Marriage and Civil partnership (Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination)			
Not Applicable			

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy/ decision and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality:

MDH will review this Policy every 10 years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. However the Head of Housing and Health is given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations. There were no mitigating actions to be taken to promote equality.

Please state where the EIA will be published (e.g. on the Mid Devon District Council website):

Mid Devon Housing Website

=====

Equality Impact Assessment Sign off

For completion by Corporate Manager

Are you prepared to agree and sign off the EIA?

Yes **No**

If "No", provide details of why and next steps:

Name: Simon Newcombe

Job Title: Head of Housing and Health

Date: 21 August 2024

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Report for: Homes Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting: 10 September 2024

Subject: **REVIEW OF MID DEVON HOUSING ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Simon Clist Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader

Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health

Exempt: None

which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Wards Affected: All

Enclosures: Annex A – Asbestos Management Plan

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

Mid Devon Housing (MDH) has a legal requirement to maintain health and safety and have an up to date Asbestos Management Plan. Recent changes to statutory consumer regulation standards produced the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) impose reporting and other changes which require the plan to updated.

Recommendation:

That the PDG recommends to Cabinet that the updated MDH Asbestos Management Plan be adopted

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

1.1 Mid Devon Housing (MDH) has a legal duty to manage the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) within its housing stock. This duty is placed on it by the

Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 as well as the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 (CDM) and The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

- 1.2 Furthermore, the statutory RSH Safety and Quality Standard published under the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 sets out an overarching duty where providing safe and well-maintained homes is a fundamental responsibility of all registered providers. This legislation also introduced a suite of new, mandatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) with 12 performance data metrics including:
 - BS03: Asbestos Safety Checks
- 1.3 Under the BS03 TSM, there is a new statutory definition and a prescribed calculation method for asbestos surveys/inspections and further requirements as set out in the TSM Technical Requirements document as published by the RSH in April 2023 (updated April 2024) – see background papers for a link to this document.
- 1.4 Section 10 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 also requires registered providers of social housing such as MDH to appoint an executive level employee to hold an overarching duty regarding the safety of their properties and tenants.
- 1.5 This person must be notified to both the Regulator of Social Housing and our tenants by June 2024 (completed). The duty is specific to MDH properties only (i.e. does not cover general fund buildings and assets) and covers all health and safety risks, for example – fire, gas, electrical, asbestos and legionella safety alongside all other category one hazards defined under the government’s Housing Health and Safety Rating System. This person will further appoint technically competent, responsible persons to ensure appropriate assessments and appropriate practice is put in place day to day.
- 1.6 This requirement came into force on 1 April 2024 and whilst the general provision is reflected in current Asbestos Management Plan, the duty holder should be set out clearly within the Plan once appointed internally. This appointment has now been confirmed and forms part of the key accountabilities of the Head of Housing and Health.
- 1.7 These changes requirement to update the Asbestos Management Plan to ensure there full alignment across our asbestos reporting and appointed persons accountabilities. This alignment is addressed in the updated Asbestos Management Plan attached in Annex A.
- 1.8 Under housing legislation including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the RSH take co-regulatory approach. In the context of a local authority registered provider such as MDH this means:

- councillors are regarded as responsible for ensuring that providers' businesses are managed effectively and that providers comply with all regulatory requirements
- providers must support tenants to shape and scrutinise service delivery and to hold officers and councillors to account

This is important context in the determination and adoption of new or updated policy or plans and monitoring of compliance and performance.

2 Consultation and Review

- 2.1 As an internal, building safety management plan setting out how legal requirements on the management of asbestos will be met there is no requirement for tenant consultation. Nonetheless, having an up to date Asbestos Management Plan provides assurance to tenants and members (through co-regulation) that we are meeting our legal duties and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants in our properties.
- 2.2 The Plan will be kept under continuous review against legislative requirements and statutory best practice to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The Head of Housing and Health also holds delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Plan as required by legislative changes, formal guidance or local operational considerations.
- 2.3 Where material or significant amendments are required the plan will receive a full review and will be brought back to the Homes PDG and Cabinet for consideration.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 In accordance with the above, the following recommendation is made:
- That the PDG recommends to Cabinet that the updated MDH Asbestos Management Plan be adopted

Financial Implications

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for the works contained within the plan is up to £170,000.00 per annum. These works will result a greater level of Health and Safety by providing a higher level of understanding relating to where ASMs are and a lower cost in the coming years as measures are taken to remove the ACMs in the most cost effective way.

Legal Implications

As a registered provider (RP) of social housing, the Council is obliged to take account of the standards contained within the revised regulatory framework which is administered by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) as well as The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 (CDM), The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). This places a duty on

MDH to manage the ACMs within its housing stock and the duty when working with asbestos.

There are further overarching legal responsibilities under the new consumer regulation regime regulated by the RSH as set out in the main body of the report.

Risk Assessment

The principal risk is failing to limit costs due to additional works and delivery of the programme within the plan. The performance of the plan will be monitored monthly and corrective action will be taken where performance falls below Key Performance Indicator

Impact on Climate Change

The environmental impact has been considered as a part of the developing the plan.

Equalities Impact Assessment

All staff have received Equality and Diversity awareness training.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

To contribute towards meeting our obligations relating to Health and Safety and by contributing to the Decent Homes Standard.

Homes are a priority for the Council and in the context this Plan this includes supporting the delivery of several key objectives including ensuring our tenants feel safe, secure and happy in our homes.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 29 August 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 29 August 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 21 August 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 22 August 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Mike Lowman, Operations Lead for Building Services or Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Email: mlowman@middevon.gov.uk / snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

[TSM Technical Requirements \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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Mid Devon Housing

Building Services

Asbestos Management Plan – DRAFT

August 2024

CONTENTS

1.0	General Policy Statements for Asbestos	3
2.0	Introduction	4
3.0	Responsibilities	4
4.0	Management of Asbestos within Mid Devon Housing's stock	8
4.1	Identify	8
4.2	Record	8
4.3	Assess and Plan	9
4.4	Act	10
4.5	Review	11
5.0	Training	11
6.0	Fly Tipped Waste	12

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Decision Flow Chart	13
Appendix 2	Contingency Plan – Procedures to be followed in the event of unexpected exposure to suspected asbestos fibres	14
Appendix 3	Corporate Asbestos Management Policy	15
Appendix 4	Your guide to help you deal with Asbestos in your home	30
Appendix 5	Action Plan	32
Appendix 6	Asbestos Management Plan relating to non domestic locations	36

1.0 General Policy Statement for Asbestos

- 1.1 Mid Devon Housing (MDH) has a legal duty to manage the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) within its housing stock. This duty is placed on it by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 as well as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 (CDM), The Reporting of Injuries, Diseased and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- 1.2 There are two duties
 - The duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises
 - The duty when working with asbestos
- 1.3 In accordance with section 10 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, as a Registered Provider of social housing, MDH must also designate an individual to monitor the provider's compliance with all health and safety requirements and assess risks of failure to comply with these. This relates to the wellbeing of our tenants, which will include ensuring that there are effective Asbestos management arrangements in place. This designated person is referred to as the Health and Safety Lead and for MDH is the Head of Housing and Health.
- 1.4 Furthermore, as a Registered Provider, MDH must meet the requirements of the statutory Consumer Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing. This includes the Safety and Quality Standard, which requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes for their tenants. MDH has an overarching Homes Safety Policy which demonstrates how we will meet these wider, related requirements. A copy of the policy is available on the MDH website at <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/mid-devon-housing/help-and-support/procedures-policies-and-strategies>
- 1.5 This management plan details the approach MDH takes when working with asbestos in its housing stock. Also MDH will do everything reasonably practicable to manage the risk and prevent harm to all persons caused by the release of asbestos fibres from the ACMs contained within its properties.
- 1.6 This management plan is not prepared in relation to the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic properties as set out in Regulation 4 of the 2012 Regulations.
- 1.7 The duty to manage the asbestos in common parts of multi-occupancy domestic premises, like purpose built flats also falls on MDH. This is dealt with as a generic approach within Appendix 6
- 1.8 MDH's long-term aim is to safely manage the ACMs within the properties it is responsible for, while also managing its available budgets.

2.0 Introduction:

- 2.1 This Management Plan details the approach that MDH is taking for the day to day management of ACMs within its stock and is based on the template that is available from the Health and Safety Executive's website.
www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/duty/asbestos-management-plan.htm
- 2.2 This Management Plan is to be read in conjunction with Mid Devon District Council's Asbestos Policy

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 The Head of Housing and Health (The Duty holder) will:

- a) Will ensure that there are sufficient resources available for the implementation of this plan.
- b) Will delegate responsibility for the implementation of this plan to the Managers
- c) Will review the provisions and resources required for the efficient operation of this plan every year.
- d) Act immediately if the requirements of this plan are not met or if there is a fundamental change in any circumstances or assessment associated with this plan.

3.2 The Operations Lead for Mid Devon Housing (The Appointed Person) will:

- a) Ensure that there are sufficient resources available for the implementation of this plan.
- b) Ensure that the requirements of this plan are implemented
- c) Ensure that risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place
- d) Ensure that employees are competent and receive the necessary training, information and supervision whilst performing any tasks in regards to this plan.
- e) Maintain the training matrix for employees
- f) Communicate this plan to all employees and raise awareness of the risks associated with asbestos to employees, contractors and tenants.

3.3 The Planned Maintenance Manager (Deputy Appointed Person) will:

- a) Be suitably trained
- b) Ensure that the requirements of this plan are implemented
- c) Ensure that the Asset Database is updated
- d) Store the digital asbestos surveys and update reports on a shared folder
- e) Establish contracts for surveys, and management works with licensed and unlicensed asbestos removal contractors
- f) Carry out competency checks of surveying and works contractors
- g) Review and update the asbestos register

- h) Be responsible for monitoring the ongoing condition of the Asbestos Containing Materials via a specialist officer.
- i) Review the Asbestos Management Plan annually and develop the Action Plan
- j) Provide details of the asbestos register and site plans to the emergency services when requested.
- k) Implement resilience testing for planned and unplanned work and accidental disturbance of an ACM

3.4 The Maintenance Supervisor (Cyclical) Building Maintenance will:

- a) Maintain the asbestos database and register, and produce programmes relating to the annual inspections and works where appropriate
- b) Maintain the shared folder for the digital asbestos register and update reports. R:\ASBESTOS INFORMATION
- c) Review and update the asbestos register
- d) Provide details of the asbestos register and site plans to the emergency services when requested.
- e) Communicate the location of the asbestos register on a regular basis

3.5 Surveyors/Supervisors/Technical Support and Repairs Manager will:

- a) Ensure that a risk assessment and safe systems of work are in place for the asbestos management works within their responsibility.
- b) Arrange surveys for the works they manage and ensure that this information is entered onto the asset database.
- c) Check that contractors and employees they manage have the skill, knowledge, experience and training required for the work.
- d) Provide employees and Contractors with a copy of the asbestos register and/or the asbestos survey report of the properties affected by the works.
- e) Issue permits to work and provide inductions
- f) Where they have direct line management responsibility, provide a risk assessment detailing suitable control equipment and procedures
- g) Provide details on what must be done if an ACM is unexpectedly disturbed. Appendix 2
- h) Store any statement of cleanliness/reoccupation certificate and waste consignment note for the work they are managing on the shared folder with the file R:\ASBESTOS INFORMATION
- i) Arrange for adequate training for employees

3.6 Employees will:

- a) Comply with this asbestos management plan and notify their Supervisor / Manager of any issue concerning them relating to asbestos and ACMs.
- b) Undertake any asbestos awareness and task specific training relating to their work.
- c) Ensure that they have a copy of the survey information, a risk assessment and method statement for the work they are undertaking.

- d) Ensure they have the correct personal protective equipment, other suitable equipment and have been trained to carry out the work.
- e) Refuse to carry out any work relating to the management of asbestos where the above has not been provided
- f) An appointed Specialist Officer will re-inspect the asbestos and record the condition within the asset database

3.7 Licensed and Unlicensed Asbestos Contractors/Surveyors will be required to:

- a) Comply with current legislation and associated Approved Codes of Practice and guidance.
- b) Provide their employees with the appropriate training, health screening for the works, PPE, risk assessments and method statements as well as inductions and copies of the survey report.
- c) Carry out surveys following the HSG 264 The Survey Guide [Asbestos: The survey guide HSG264 \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/surveyguide.htm)
- d) Attend site to assess and prepare a Plan of Work and submit this to the HSE
- e) Attend site to assess and prepare a Risk Assessment and Method Statement and provide MDH with a copy
- f) Notify the HSE of any Notifiable Non Licensed Work (NNLW)
- g) Provide a safe method of work for emergencies that will be discussed and agreed with the Principle Designer or Contract Administrator managing the works
- h) Provide specialist asbestos advice
- i) Arrange transport and disposal of asbestos waste materials in accordance with current regulation and good practice.
- j) Arrange Four Stage Air Clearance and Certificate of reoccupation or a Statement of Cleanliness.
- k) Provide copies of Notifications, Certifications, Waste Consignment Notes and other relevant documentation on request to the Principle Designer or Contract Administrator

3.8 All other Contractors will

- a) Restrict access from areas where asbestos is present.
- b) Provide their employees with the appropriate asbestos training to ensure they understand any information they are provided with and what they are being asked to do.
- c) Provide their employees with information from the asbestos register or survey of the property they are working on.
- d) Provide their employees with inductions, including provision of the risk assessment and method statement.
- e) Implement a safe system of work
- f) Provide a permit to work, if required.
- g) Provide adequate PPE, management and supervision.

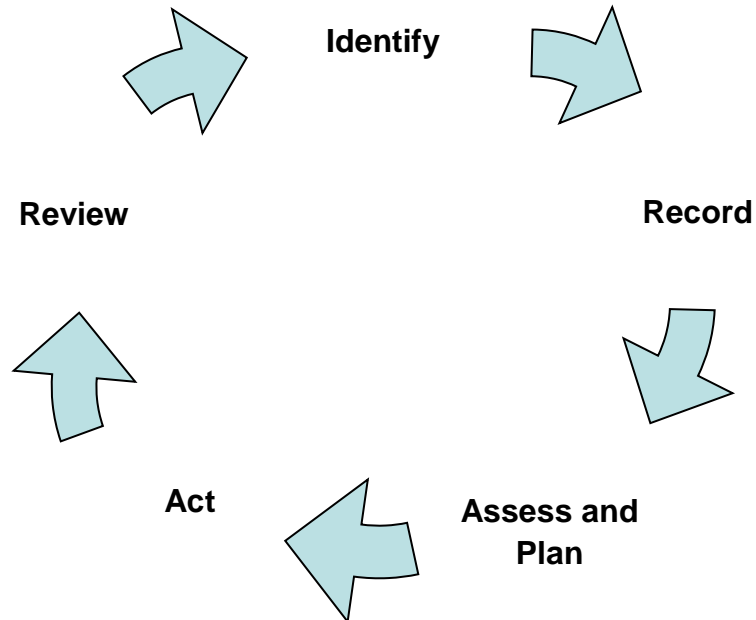
3.9 The Health and Safety Advisor will:

- a) Investigate and report incidents under RIDDOR
- b) Provide advice on Asbestos Awareness and Task Training for staff as necessary.
- c) Provide advice on good practice, relevant legislation and assess compliance.

4.0 Managing Asbestos within Mid Devon Housing's Stock

4.0.1 No new or recycled ACMs can be used.

4.0.2 As part of the legal obligation to manage the ACMs within the housing stock, MDH have to carry out the following processes:



4.1 Identify

- 4.1.1** MDH are legally obliged to identify the ACMs within the housing stock prior to managing them and before allowing any works to start that may disturb the asbestos fibres for both Major and Minor Works.
- a) Major Work includes planned/cyclical/voids which require technical input and pre-assessment. This will include preparation of drawings, sketch details, specifications, notes, schedules or contract documents
 - b) Minor Work are defined as those that would normally be actioned by the issuing of a works order or instruction and would include emergency, reactive, routine, day-to-day or other small jobs.
- 4.1.2** ACMs are identified by carrying out a survey and taking samples following The Survey Guide HSG 264, available from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) [Asbestos: The survey guide \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/surveyguide/). There are two types of survey, a Management Survey used to identify ACM's with only a minor amount of intrusive work and a Refurbishment and Demolition Survey, used where major works including demolition are planned. MDH have a contract with a competent asbestos surveying contractor for this role.
- 4.1.3** MDH currently has management surveys, which includes samples, of over 75% of its housing stock and is working towards a target of 100% by 2026. Where there are gaps in our information we arrange for a survey to be carried out or rely on cloned information.
- 4.1.4** Refurbishment and Demolition Surveys are carried out where more intrusive works or demolitions are planned
- 4.1.5** Re-inspections of known ACMs are carried out at a rate of 20% per annum, unless there is a recommendation within the survey report that this should be done sooner.

4.2 Record

- 4.2.1** When an asbestos material is identified via a survey and a UKAS accredited laboratory analysis; the results are recorded within the Asset Database, which is a live document and provides the information for the Asbestos Register that MDH are legally obliged to hold and maintain.
- 4.2.2** The Asbestos Register contains information including the type of asbestos, its condition and location, which is continually updated from the surveys, re-inspections and removal reports as they are received. A copy is held on the shared drive R:\ASBESTOS INFORMATION\ASBESTOS REGISTER

- 4.2.3** The Asbestos Register into which ACM locations are entered is maintained by the Maintenance Supervisor (Cyclical) Building Maintenance.
- 4.2.4** MDH is legally obliged to provide a copy of the Asbestos Register to all employees and contractors prior to them starting work on a property. Operatives are provided with this information via their tablets.
- 4.2.5** Tenants and Leaseholders have been provided with details of where asbestos is contained within their homes as well as guidance on how to deal with asbestos in an information letter sent during 2020 and as part of their tenancy sign up pack. This information is also to be provided upon request.
- 4.3 Assess and Plan**
- 4.3.1** The asbestos register is to be reviewed annually to identify an Action Plan of measures, works and recommendations relating to the management of the ACMs.
- 4.3.2** The following priorities will be used to drive the programmes of work within an Asbestos Action Plan.
- a) Any ACMs with a Material Assessment score greater than 10 require immediate action.
 - b) Any ACM in good condition, but with a high potential for disturbance either during normal occupancy or foreseeable maintenance should be protected or removed
 - c) ACM's likely to be disturbed by any major planned refurbishment works must be removed unless work can be designed to avoid the ACMs
 - d) Some ACMs may require more frequent condition checks to inform long term management actions
 - e) Some locations may be subject to activity changes and will require a review of the actions and priorities
 - f) When surveys or condition checks identify further information, this and any altered priorities as well as the impact is to be included in the action plan.
- 4.3.3** The Action Plan of measures are aimed at reducing the higher level assessment scores
- 4.3.4** Where an existing ACM has been identified and it is in good condition, not releasing fibres and not subject to abrasion, damage or imminent works, it should be left undisturbed.
- 4.3.5** The decision to remove an ACM that is in good condition is only made under the following conditions:

- a) When the property is empty and it is safer to carry out the works rather than when the property is occupied.
- b) When there are major works planned that would significantly disturb the ACM.
- c) When there is an anticipated spike in the removal costs in the future and there is an opportunity to considerably reduce that anticipated spike by bringing the works forward.

4.3.6 Before the ACM has any management works carried out to it. The works need to be assessed to determine if the work can be carried out by a **Licensed or Unlicensed Contractor**. To help with this there is a **Decision Flow Chart** contained within Appendix 1. This flow chart is to be treated as a guide; if there is any doubt a manager is to be consulted regarding the decision.

4.3.7 When it has been recommended that the works should be carried out by an Unlicensed Contractor, but there is a higher risk of fibre release due to the condition of the material, it may need to be treated as Notifiable Non Licensed Works (NNLW).

4.4 Act.

4.4.1 This may include, but is not limited to, full or partial removal, encapsulation or monitoring. All of these are known as measures.

4.4.2 When a decision has been made to carry out work to an ACM a decision then has to be made as to whether a licensed or unlicensed contractor can carry out that work.

4.4.3 All employees and contractors must have appropriate **awareness and/or task** training at a sufficient level before being allowed to work on any of MDHs stock; including to any ACM that is not being removed or encapsulated. Some tasks, like cleaning vinyl floor tiles, can be done by workers who have had asbestos awareness training.

4.4.4 Anyone doing unlicensed works must be suitably trained for the task and follow the HSE's guidance www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials. The guidance is the HSE's task manual for building, maintenance and allied trades on non-licensed asbestos work (Asbestos Essentials). MDH have a contract in place with a suitable qualified unlicensed asbestos contractor.

4.4.5 Some tasks, for example the removal of multiple damaged AIB ceiling tiles, must be done by a licensed contractor.

4.4.6 A licensed contractor is qualified to work with ACM's that pose the highest risk to health by the type of asbestos and potential for fibres to be released from that material. The list of these contractors can be found on

the HSE's website [Current Licensed Asbestos Contractors | CONIAC](#)
MDH have a contract in place with a suitable qualified licensed asbestos contractor.

- 4.4.7** Before any Licensed or Unlicensed works are carried out the contractor must supply a risk assessment and method statement. For Notifiable Non-Licensed Work the contractor must submit a notification to the HSE before starting the work. In the case of the licensed work the contractor must supply the HSE with a notification of work two weeks in advance. This is also known as the Plan of Work or ASB5, and the contractor will provide a copy of this to MDH upon request.
- 4.4.8** Where a suspected ACM is discovered that is not on the Asbestos Register, work that may disturb it is to stop and it is to be reported to a manager within Building Services to allow a sample survey to be carried out and the appropriate action taken to manage the material.
- 4.4.9** If an ACM has been accidentally disturbed then work in that area is to cease. The Contract Administrator must be notified and the Contingency Plan within Appendix 2 needs to be implemented.
- 4.4.10** All asbestos waste must be disposed of in an approved licensed tip. Only an approved registered waste carrier is permitted to dispose of waste from site to point of final disposal. The contractor must provide a method statement as to the complete packaging and removal of the waste to the point of final disposal and provide copies of the Waste Transfer/Consignment Notes to the Contract Administrator.
- 4.4.11** Upon completion of the unlicensed works the contractor is to supply a copy of the Statement of Cleanliness and Waste Consignment Note
- 4.4.12** Upon completion of the licensed works, the contractor is to supply a waste consignment note and a satisfactory copy of the four stage air clearance certificate that is also the certificate of reoccupation. Where a partial enclosure has been used a limited four stage air clearance certificate will still be required.

4.5 Review

The Planned Maintenance Manager and the **Maintenance Supervisor (Cyclical) Building Maintenance** are to review the Asset Database and Asbestos Register throughout the year to identify works and also to identify more effective ways of managing the asbestos that is contained within the housing stock.

5.0 Training

- 5.1** Employees such as surveyors, supervisors, contract managers, health & safety staff, trade operatives and caretakers will receive one full day

training on general asbestos legislation and awareness training, which is to be recorded on the learning hub.

5.2 Asbestos awareness refresher training will be held to meet legislative requirements or when the legislation changes or following a reportable incident.

5.3 All contractors' operatives working on MDH properties will also have had to receive appropriate Asbestos Awareness Training within the last year and all MDH operatives who will work with ACMs will undertake non-licensed task specific training on working with asbestos.

6.0 Fly Tipped waste

6.1 When a report has been received that a suspected ACM has been illegally tipped in an area that is the responsibility of MDH. The Planned Maintenance Manager is to be notified and is to arrange for it to be removed via the Contract with the Licensed or Unlicensed Asbestos Contractor. If the Planned Maintenance Manager is not available, the Operations Lead Mid Devon Housing is to be contacted

6.2 Prior to its removal the Repairs Service are to cordon off the area to prevent unauthorised access.

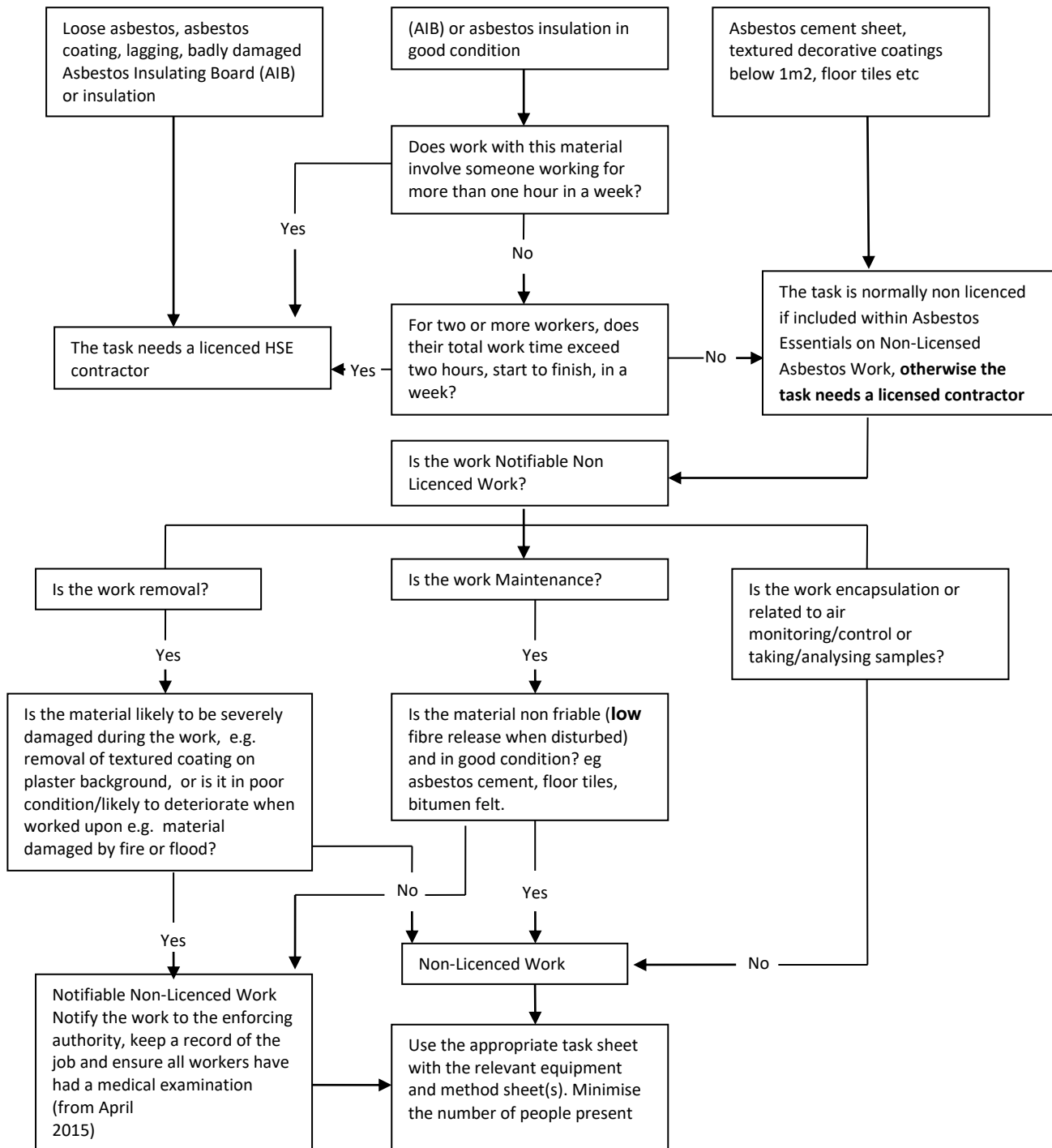
6.3 The Planned Maintenance Manager is to contact the Housing Management Service to inform them of the anticipated actions and to allow them to contact nearby residents and let them know of the actions being taken.

6.4 Upon completion of the removal and disposal works the Contractor is to supply the Waste Consignment Note and Certificate of Reoccupation.

6.5 When a report is received out of hours, the out of hours team are to contact the standby officer, who will coordinate the appropriate action.

Appendix 1 - Decision flow chart

Use this simple flow chart as a guide to help you decide who needs to do the work.



Appendix 2 – Contingency Plan – Procedures to be followed in the event of unexpected exposure to suspected asbestos fibres

- 2.1 Immediately stop all work in the area
- 2.2 Evacuate and seal off the immediate area, for example by closing doors etc. If this involves tenants or members of the public, it may need to be done with the assistance of housing management.
- 2.3 Prevent anyone else from entering the area
- 2.4 The incident should be reported immediately to a supervisor
- 2.5 The Supervisor will check the Asbestos Register. If the material is confirmed or suspected to be asbestos then.
- 2.6 There should be an immediate site visit by an appropriately qualified Surveyor from Wakeham Asbestos Services Ltd to decide on the measures required.
- 2.7 Notify the Health and Safety Advisor and the Corporate Manager for Public Health Regulation and Housing and seek their advice.
- 2.8 Notify the Health and Safety Executive of the incident with copies of correspondence to Supervisor in charge of works. The HSE's concerns team are also to be notified. Update the accident book and consider reporting the incident as part of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- 2.9 After carrying out any necessary measures to make the area safe, ensure the contractor issues a statement of cleanliness or certificate of reoccupation before allowing access
- 2.10 Counselling/health surveillance for anyone affected to be considered;
- 2.11 Notify the Estates Manager in case of publicity and insurance claim by parties involved.
- 2.12 A debrief should be held after the matter has been fully dealt with to review the incident, determine what measures, if any, that could be taken to prevent a recurrence. To be chaired by the Health and Safety Officer with input from the surveyor involved and Housing Management as required.
- 2.13 Operations Lead for Mid Devon Housing to draw up and circulate an appropriate advisory notice and make recommendations for inclusion in the Asbestos Management Plan at the next review.
- 2.14 Asbestos register to be updated

Mid Devon District Council

Corporate

Asbestos Management

August 2022

Version Control

Title: Asbestos Management Policy

Purpose: Compliance with health and safety legislation

Owner: M Lowman

Date: January 2022

Version Number: 3.0

Status: Final

Review Frequency: at least every 3 years

*Next review date: **February 2025***

Consultation:

This document has obtained the necessary approvals:

Purpose

Mid Devon District Council aims to be a responsible employer which accepts its responsibilities and duties to provide a safe working environment for all employees, in accordance with the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and measures to ensure the management and control of existing asbestos is carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012.

Asbestos Policy

1. Introduction

This policy document refers to the Council's arrangements for managing the risks of exposure to asbestos by employees and non-employees within its activities.

Staff involved with maintenance of buildings, supervising such work, or issuing contracts should fully familiarise themselves with the contents of this document.

Asbestos was widely used as a building material for many years, particularly between the period 1950–1980 and can be found in a wide variety of forms, being used in all aspects of the construction process. The use of asbestos products for construction materials is severely restricted today, due to the long-term legacy of illness associated with exposure to the product.

There are many forms of asbestos, the main types being:

- white asbestos (chrysotile);
- brown asbestos (amosite);
- blue asbestos (crocidolite).

All types of asbestos are considered dangerous and stringent control limits are set for personal exposure (0.1 fibres per cubic centimetre averaged over a continuous period of 4 hours).

There are a number of problems associated with exposure to asbestos namely:

- asbestos fibres are not detectable to the naked eye;
- the health effects of exposure can be fatal;
- the onset of symptoms is often delayed for decades after exposure;
- there is widespread public concern over exposure;
- asbestos was widely used in the construction industry and will be found in many pre-1980 buildings (although not exclusively);
- it is not possible to determine that a material contains asbestos by visual examination;
- by law - exposure has to be rigorously controlled and monitored.

It is not possible to identify asbestos by its colour as the age of the product and its combination with other products can alter the appearance.

Approximately 5,000 people die each year from asbestos-related diseases and this number is increasing year on year. Many of these deaths are from working in high risk industries many years ago with the emphasis now being on the maintenance trade. There are now much more stringent controls over the management of asbestos in the workplace to ensure that its presence is identified and an appropriate management plan put into place to prevent exposure.

The legislation relating to the control of asbestos in the workplace is extensive and is supported by Approved Codes of Practice and HSE Guidance Notes. This chapter provides a general overview of how to manage asbestos in the workplace **but does not provide guidance as to the safe treatment or removal of asbestos due to the specialist nature of the work and its applicability to a minority of employers, who by the very nature of their business have to be fully aware of the legislative requirements. These employers must be licensed by the Health and Safety Executive to work with asbestos. Mid Devon District Council is not licensed and must therefore employ external properly licensed contractors where required by law (see section 7).**

Asbestos only causes problems when fibres are released into the atmosphere, such as when it is being worked on, disturbed by nearby maintenance work, or where the material is friable and may suffer abrasion or there are strong air currents. If the asbestos is in a good condition and protected against damage, the danger will be negligible unless the material is being worked on. It should be noted that potentially more problems can be caused by removing sound and protected asbestos than by leaving it in place so, if depending on risk assessment the risk is considered to be low, it is best left undisturbed.

The supply and use of asbestos and asbestos-containing products is prohibited (except for a limited number of specified uses). Asbestos-containing products in use before 1 January 1986 (blue and brown asbestos), 1 January 1993 (other forms of asbestos except white asbestos) and 24 November 1999 (white asbestos) were permitted to be used, but their replacement must be of an asbestos-free material. Once an asbestos material has been removed arrangements must be made for its safe disposal.

2. Responsibilities

Mid Devon District Council's policy on asbestos must ensure that known and identified locations of asbestos are recorded and that this information is given to those persons who require it to protect not only themselves but others around them. The 'Duty to Manage' requirement under Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 will apply.

The Chief Executive is ultimately held responsible for compliance with health and safety law. Below the Chief Executive level, Managers are identified as being responsible, so far as is reasonably practicable, for managing the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees in their respective areas, and for non-employees where their health or safety may be affected by the Council's activities. In particular Managers will:

- Maintain an Asbestos Register identifying the locations and types of asbestos that are within the Council's control.
- Make a point of checking the relevant Asbestos Register at the point where works are planned.

- Prepare and revise as necessary the arrangements for managing work involving asbestos material in their service area.
- Ensure works involving licensed asbestos are carried out by a licensed competent contractor and that the work is notified to the HSE using the FODABB5 notification form (see www.hse.gov.uk).
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable the arrangements to be implemented. Arrangements include management surveys, analysis and where necessary advice and removal by a specialist licensed contractor.
- Ensure appropriate asbestos awareness training, information and instruction is provided for relevant employees.
- Ensure that where specialist technical expertise in relation to asbestos is not available within the Service, suitable arrangements are made to obtain this information as required. This can be obtained from the Environmental Services Manager or the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor as the first point of contact.
- Ensure that employees or relevant contractors are provided with all the appropriate information, instruction and training on work being undertaken in areas containing anything suspected of containing asbestos.

The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation & Housing is responsible for maintaining an Asbestos Register of all MDDC corporate buildings and domestic council owned tenanted property and shall be responsible for ensuring that all designated responsible premises officers are aware of the locations, condition and control measures recommended to prevent risks to health and safety.

Asbestos Registers must be continuously reviewed and updated as changes occur.

3. Health Effects of Asbestos

There are three main types of serious health risks associated with exposure to asbestos fibres:

Asbestosis – chronic obstructive lung disease

Lung cancer – a fatal lung disease

Mesothelioma – a fatal cancer of the outer lining of the lung specific to asbestos exposure.

It is recognised that the largest group of workers at risk from asbestos exposure are workers involved in the repair and maintenance, refurbishment and demolition of buildings, including electricians, plumbers, joiners, computer and telecommunication

engineers – people who may encounter asbestos during their normal day to day work activities.

5. Legislation

The legislation relating to the management of asbestos in the workplace can primarily be found in:

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (general duties on employers and management of premises);
The general provisions of the 1974 Act are applicable to the management of asbestos in the workplace, particularly s 2 (duty towards employees), s 3 (duty to non-employees) and s 4 (duty of person having control of premises).
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
The Management Regulations require employers to undertake risk assessments of the risks to health and safety arising out of, or in connection with, their business.
Duties are also placed in respect of co-operation and co-ordination where persons are sharing a workplace.
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
These Regulations place requirements on employers to maintain their buildings so as not to cause a risk to health and safety.
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015;
These Regulations require clients to provide pre-construction information to persons carrying out construction work. Such information would include the results of any asbestos surveys undertaken in the premises. There is also a requirement to ensure that the 'health and safety file' is prepared and maintained for future reference.
- Defective Premises Act 1972;
The Act places a duty on landlords to ensure that tenants and other persons are safe (so far as is reasonable) from personal injury or disease that results from the defective state of the premises.
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
The Regulations set out the duties relating to exposure to asbestos and its correct management. The Regulations include:
 - management in non-domestic premises (reg 4);
 - identification of the presence of asbestos (reg 5);
 - assessment of work that exposes employees to asbestos (reg 6);
 - plans of work (reg 7);
 - licensing of work with asbestos (reg 8);
 - notification of work with asbestos (reg 9);

- information, instruction and training (reg 10);
- prevention or reduction of exposure to asbestos (reg 11);
- use of control measures (reg 12);
- maintenance of control measures (reg 13);
- provision and cleaning of protective clothing (reg 14);
- arrangements to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies (reg 15);
- duty to prevent or reduce the spread of asbestos (reg 16);
- cleanliness of premises and plant (reg 17);
- designated area (reg 18);
- air monitoring (reg 19);
- standards for air testing and site clearance certification (reg 20);
- standards for analysis (reg 21);
- health records and medical surveillance (reg 22);
- washing and changing facilities (reg 23);
- storage, distribution and labelling of raw asbestos and asbestos waste (reg 24);
- labelling of products containing asbestos (reg 30);

7. Asbestos Licensing

The 2012 regulations prohibit anyone from carrying out work with high risk asbestos e.g. insulation, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board unless they hold a licence granted by the HSE (Health & Safety Executive).

To be exempt from needing a licence the work must be:

- Sporadic and low intensity - to be considered sporadic and low intensity the concentration of asbestos in the air should not exceed 0.6f/cm³ measured over 10 minutes; and
- Carried out in such a way that the exposure of workers to asbestos will not exceed the legal control limit of 0.1 asbestos fibres per cubic centimetre of air (0.1 f/cm³); and
- Meet at least one of four other conditions:
 - It is a short non-continuous maintenance task, with only non-friable materials (friability describes how likely an ACM is to release asbestos fibres when worked on, so non-friable materials will only release a small number of fibres during work); or
 - It is a removal task, where the ACMs are in reasonable condition and are not being deliberately broken up, and the asbestos fibres are firmly

contained within a matrix, e.g. the asbestos is coated, covered or contained within another material, such as cement, paint or plastic; or

- It is a task where the ACMs are in good condition and are being sealed or encapsulated to ensure they are not easily damaged in the future; or
- It is an air monitoring and control task to check fibre concentrations in the air, or it's the collection and analysis of asbestos samples to confirm the presence of asbestos in a material.

8. Notification of Non-licensed asbestos work (NNLW)

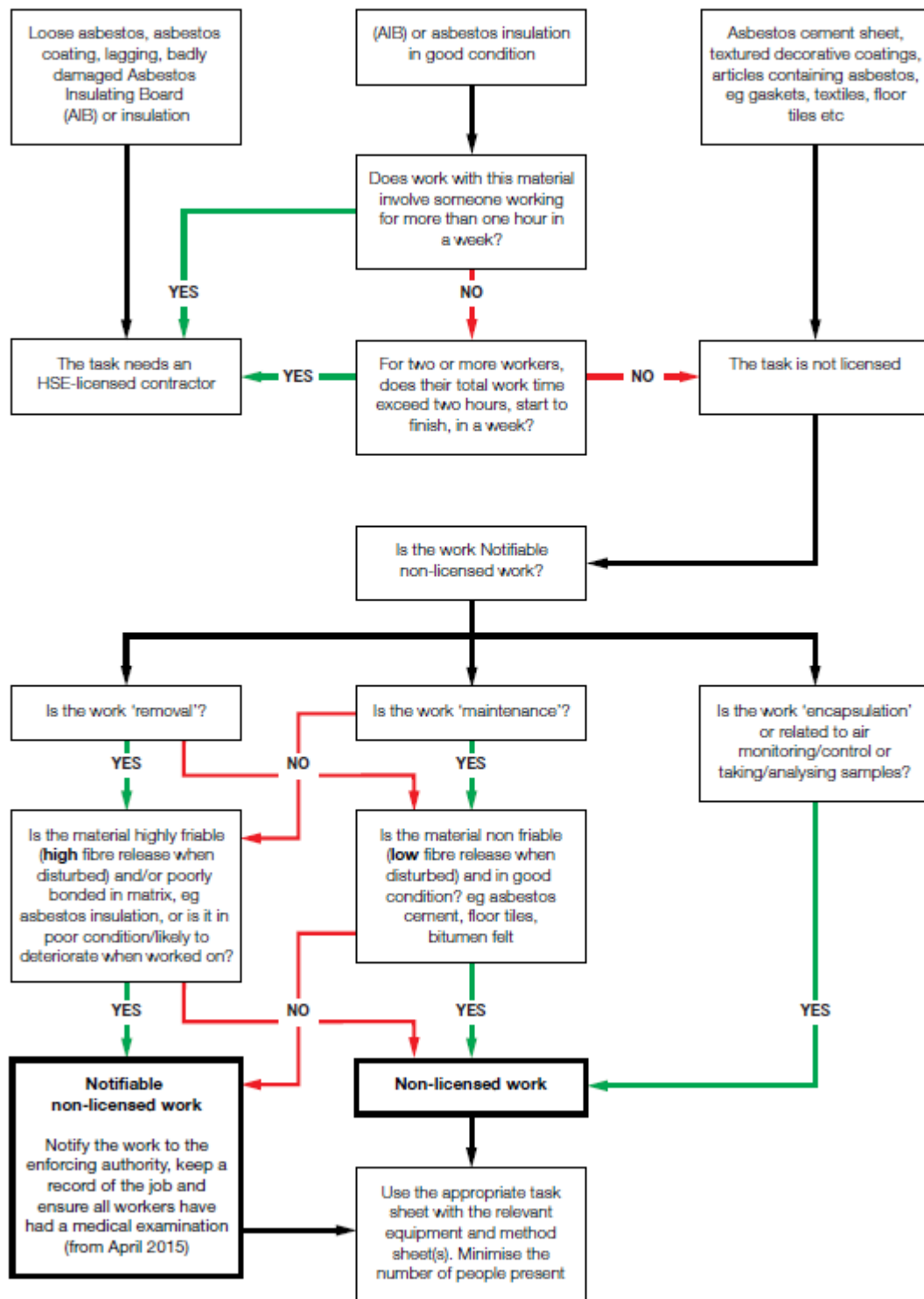
The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 introduced the following requirements:

- Notification of certain types of relatively low-risk work on ACM that does not require the use of a licensed contractor. This notification is on-line here <https://extranet.hse.gov.uk/lfservlet/external/asbnnlw1>
- Medical examination of those persons carrying out the work
- Maintaining registers of work (health records)

Whether a type of asbestos work is either licensable, NNLW or non-licensed work has to be determined in each case and will depend on the type of work that is going to be carried out, the type of material being worked on, and its condition. The identification of the type of asbestos-containing material (ACM) to be worked on and an assessment of its condition are important parts of the risk assessment that must be carried out before the work commences. The HSE asbestos essentials guidance (AE) includes the following to assist:

Decision flow chart

Use this simple flow chart to help you decide who needs to do the work:



9. Policy Application

The following arrangements consist of a series of procedures which are intended to safeguard persons who may encounter the possibility of discovering asbestos in the

course of their work and to ensure the safety of any premises occupants who may be affected by any associated works which may involve the disturbance of asbestos containing materials.

All reasonable practicable steps will be taken to ensure that MDDC employees, tenants and contractors working on behalf of the MDDC will not be exposed to hazards associated with materials containing materials.

10. Asbestos Surveys

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication HSG264 Asbestos: The Survey Guide sets out how to survey workplace premises for asbestos containing materials and how to record the results in a usable form. A decision needs to be taken at an early stage as to whether to carry out a management or refurbishment/demolition survey – or a mixture of the two.

Management Survey:

Seen as a standard survey (previously known as Type 1, 2 or 3 asbestos surveys) – these are concerned with the risk management of asbestos in normal occupation and will be less expensive, intrusive and disruptive than the alternative. The emphasis is on identifying asbestos containing material (ACM) as far as is reasonably practicable and assessing the potential for fibre release during normal occupancy of the building and the activities carried out there – including during routine maintenance and repair e.g. redecoration.

Refurbishment and Demolition Survey:

Where major refurbishment or demolition is planned, this is an intrusive examination of the building including sampling to identify and control the risks of asbestos release. Refurbishment can include projects where plant is removed from a building.

A systematic programme of surveying all MDDC owned domestic and Corporate properties has been undertaken overseen by Housing and Property Services and as these are reviewed they will be brought into line with the current guidance HSG264.

12. Asbestos Register

Data collected on site will be input by the Housing and Property Services onto the Asbestos Register.

The information will include:

- Property information;
- Inspection method;
- Surveyor's detail;
- Site plans;
- Material detail;
- Sample analysis results;
- Material assessment;

- Priority assessment;
- Risk rating;
- Management recommendations

13. Material Assessment

The condition of each asbestos element identified on site is assessed using the material assessment algorithm as defined in the HSE publication HSG264.

The assessment will depend on four different parameters:

- Asbestos type
- Product type
- Extent of damage
- Surface treatment

15. Assessment Score

The total score of material assessment and priority assessment gives the risk rating which is high, medium, low, or very low.

This is used to determine the management actions necessary for ensuring safety.

- High - urgent action required
- Medium - remedial works required
- Low/very low - manage/maintain

All the information collected during the asbestos surveys will be recorded in the Asbestos Register.

The Asbestos Register of Council owned housing will be maintained in the Housing Services (repairs and maintenance) offices at Old Road depot, Tiverton.

The register for all Corporate buildings will be maintained by the Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager and held at Phoenix House.

A hard copy of the register will be issued to the responsible officer of each property on the register.

Access to the Register will also be made available to property managers, Building Maintenance staff and contractors working on the property.

The public utility services, the fire brigade and others whose presence may expose them to possible risk from asbestos will have access to the council asbestos register as appropriate.

18. Information for Contractors

All officers with the responsibility for issuing works orders will ensure that prior to the works commencing the asbestos register is consulted and the existence of asbestos is brought to the attention of the contractors in writing, clearly identifying areas which are known/presumed to have asbestos containing materials. In addition a **“Permit to Work”** will be issued to all contractors prior to commencement of both licensed and non-licensed work activities.

Where contractors arrive on site, they must be under instruction to report their presence and identify the tasks that they are to carry out to the responsible property officer. At this point the Asbestos Register located at the Old Road or Phoenix House must be accessed and the premises must be checked to confirm either way the information previously issued by the ordering officer.

Should the contractors discover any variances to the information contained in the asbestos register, this must be reported to the Manager responsible for Asbestos management to enable him to update the Register.

19. Asbestos Licensed Contractors

A system of vetting and appointing suitable applicants for inclusion on the Council’s standing list of asbestos contractors is operated. Contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Council are subject to performance monitoring and recording.

Only contractors who have been vetted and approved by MDDC Housing and Property Services shall be eligible to tender for asbestos work. All Contractors shall be reviewed by the Housing and Property Services Manager every five years.

Housing and Property Services shall ensure that prior to any asbestos removal works being undertaken, the appointed contractors provide all relevant documentation required for works with asbestos.

This shall include:

- ASB5 notification form and plan of work
- Copy of their Asbestos Licence
- Company insurance document
- Company Health and Safety policy
- CDM Health and Safety plan as notified to the HSE
- Training records
- Medical Certificates
- RPE face fit test certificates
- Plant examination and test certificates
- Permit to work
- COSHH data
- Waste disposal arrangements

Documentation required on completion of the removal works shall include:

- Site diary

- Site induction records
- Daily enclosure and air lock inspection records
- Daily negative pressure units and vacuum inspection records
- Respirator inspection records
- Daily decontamination unit inspection records
- Operative showering records
- Working platform inspections
- Air monitoring and clearance certificates
- Personal air monitoring records
- Asbestos exposure records
- Waste consignment notes

20. Disposal of Asbestos Waste

The contractor used for the disposal of asbestos must be licensed for this by the Environment Agency.

All asbestos containing material shall be disposed of by double wrapping in labelled 1000 gauge polythene sheeting or bags, and transported by a licensed carrier to a landfill site correctly licensed to receive asbestos waste.

The disposal of asbestos material shall be the responsibility of the appointed contractor. As such, evidence of appropriate documentation for the consignment and disposal of asbestos waste shall be required prior to payment.

21. Disposal of Fly-Tipped waste containing Asbestos

The Council (Environmental Services) will be responsible for the arranging for the removal of fly-tipped waste, which is suspected of containing asbestos. Where large amounts of fly-tipped waste (which is suspected of containing asbestos) are reported, the Environment Agency should be consulted on the collection and disposal methods to be used. A contractor appropriately licensed for the collection of this waste will be used and the costs of this re-claimed from the offender where possible.

22. Training

All staff who may encounter asbestos during the course of their work shall be given the necessary training to be able to identify the situations in which asbestos may be present, to be able to recognise asbestos or similar suspect materials and to set out safe working practice to minimise risks to health and safety.

Persons in charge of buildings will be provided with appropriate training and information regarding accessing information from the Asbestos Register.

Induction training will be provided to all new staff falling into these groups.

22. Advice

The Head of Housing and Health or the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor can be contacted for advice relating to management of materials suspected of containing Asbestos. If in doubt the rule is to leave it alone until risk assessed by a competent person.

If during the course of normal work practices suspected asbestos-containing material is encountered, the following procedures should be followed:

23. Contractors / Employees

Action to take on the disturbance of asbestos containing materials:

1. **STOP ANY WORK**, remove and keep all persons out of the area. Where practicable close or seal or lock off the area. Do not remove any equipment or material.
2. Stop other people entering the area e.g. prepare and display a 'potential Asbestos hazard keep out' sign.
3. If there is any dust present on clothing or on the person – remove clothing and place in a plastic bag and seal – and take a shower or wash thoroughly as soon as possible. Seek advice from the Corporate H&S Advisor.
4. Inform the line manager who will report the discovery to the Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager or the Housing and Property Services Manager who will inform the MDDC Corporate Health and Safety Advisor.
5. The Responsible Manager will arrange for the property to be inspected and for any samples or air tests to be taken if required and will keep the premises management and the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor informed. Depending on the type and extent of the asbestos contamination - a specialist licensed asbestos contractor will be required to carry out the cleanup.
6. Following laboratory analysis the responsible Manager will advise the premises management and the Corporate Health and Safety Officer of the outcome and the proposed action.
7. On completion of any repair or removal work the respective Manager will advise the premises management and the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor when the area has been made safe.

The responsible Manager will ensure that all actions including areas where asbestos has been removed and analytical reports are included in the Asbestos register and copies forwarded to premises management and the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor.

For more information on asbestos go to www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos

Where can I find out more information about asbestos?

- Information regarding asbestos can be found by visiting the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk or by contacting them over the telephone on **0845 345 0055**.
- Alternatively, please contact Mid Devon District Council on **01884 233024**.



Address: Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton, EX16 6PP

Telephone: 01884 233024

Fax: 01884 234318

Email: plannedmaintenance@middevon.gov.uk

Please note: Mid Devon District Council is presenting this leaflet to tenants to help provide information about asbestos. It provides advice and information available at the time of writing which may change. It is intended for guidance only and does not provide authoritative legal advice.



For large print, audio version or other languages please call 01884 233024



Your guide to help you deal with

Asbestos in your home

- Facts about asbestos
- What should I do if I think I have asbestos in my home?
- What can be done about asbestos?
- Will Mid Devon District Council remove the asbestos?
- Common locations of asbestos
- Where can I find more information regarding asbestos?

www.middevon.gov.uk

Facts about asbestos

- Building materials containing asbestos were widely used between 1950 and 1980, particularly from 1960 onwards, as its fibres are strong and resistant to heat and chemicals.
- When asbestos is damaged it releases fibres into the air which can cause problems if breathed in.

What should I do if I think I have asbestos in my home?

- Don't panic as it is very unlikely that the levels of asbestos fibres found in the building will be harmful.
- Don't attempt to remove the asbestos lagging, spray coatings or large areas of insulation board yourself. Nobody should undertake the removal of asbestos unless they have obtained the HSE license to do so.
- If you are planning to carry out any DIY, painting or alterations (this includes drilling and sanding) and it has been confirmed your home has asbestos, please contact Mid Devon District Council for advice and guidance before proceeding with this work.
- If you are at all concerned that you might have damaged or aging asbestos, please do not hesitate to contact one of our members of staff trained in dealing with asbestos on **01884 233024**.

What can be done about asbestos?

- As a landlord, we have a legal duty to register each property that has asbestos.
- We have carried out a representative survey of all properties and identified all known locations of asbestos.
- Depending on the severity of the asbestos material found in your home, we will either repair the material usually by sealing or enclosing it, or we will remove it, especially where it is badly damaged or deteriorated.

Will Mid Devon District Council remove the asbestos?

- We will manage and regularly monitor all asbestos found in your home.
- Not all asbestos will be immediately removed. However, we will carry out a programme of removal where asbestos is found to be in disrepair and needs replacing.
- Asbestos materials in a good condition that can not readily be damaged are often best left where they are.
- The general rule for asbestos removal is: if undamaged and completely sealed, leave it alone.

The common locations of asbestos in the home



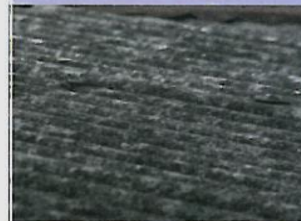
◀ Asbestos cement bath panels

- ▶ Insulation panels to the inside of the doors to warm air boiler cupboards



◀ Ceiling tiles and textured coatings

- ▶ Artex and vinyl floortiles up until 1999



◀ Asbestos cement on garage or shed roofs and wall panels

- ▶ Sprayed coatings for insulation and fire protection



◀ Asbestos cement drain pipes, gutters, soil outpipes, soffits and fascias.

- ▶ Watertanks in roof space



◀ Asbestos cement insulation boards, infill panels and partitions

Appendix 5 - Action plan

300 Surveys per annum £200 per survey, including samples	2024-2025	=	£60,000.00
	2025-2026	=	£60,000.00
Re-inspections 20% per annum	annual cost		£25,000.00
Planned Removals costs from Gwella and Wakeham 2024-2025 SOR's	2024-2025		£35,000.00
	2025-2026		35,000.00

Assumption that every property allows access

If property occupied and acm in reasonable condition leave due to prohibitive cost of decant for licensed work

Leaseholders are to be included, although MDH will need to consult with the leaseholders and have a good rationale for removal

The list of works has been based on material and priority assessment scores over 10, a single material assessment score over 5 or a medium risk level rating.

Material and Priority Assessment scores over 10

Flat 13	Cockles Rise	Crediton	EX17 3JB	First Floor	Kitchen	Insulating Board Boxings	Encapsulate and remove when void £500.00
76	Ford Road	Tiverton	EX16 4BE	Other	Loft	Panel	Survey required as refers to 74 Ford Rd
8	Ashley Close	Uffculme	EX15 3BW	Ground Floor	Store	Insulating board panel	£600.00
4	Ford Road	Bampton	EX16 9LW	First Floor	Bedroom Rear	Ceiling Boards	£1,300.00
6	Fosterlea	Cullompton	EX15 1HH	Ground Floor	Cupboard	Cement panels	£500.00
6	Fosterlea	Cullompton	EX15 1HH	Ground Floor	Bedroom Front	Cement Panel	£500.00
6	Fosterlea	Cullompton	EX15 1HH	Ground Floor	Bedroom Rear	Cement panels	£500.00
6	Fosterlea	Cullompton	EX15 1HH	Ground Floor	Lounge	Cement panels	£500.00

14	Knightswood	Cullompton	EX15 1ET	Ground floor	Family room	Panel	£1,300.00
7	Market Close	Bampton	EX16 9NU	Ground Floor	Lounge	Insulating board panel	£1,300.00
26	Prospect Way	Lapford	EX17 6QB	Ground Floor	Cupboard	Insulating board panel	£1,300.00
30	Prospect Way	Lapford	EX17 6QB	Ground floor	Lounge	Insulating board panel	£1,300.00
3	Somerville Park	Willand	EX15 2PB	Ground Floor	Kitchen	Ceiling Boards	£500.00
34	Sunnymead	Copplestone	EX17 5NQ	Ground floor	Lounge	Ceiling panel	Survey with wakeham
39	Westfield	Bradninch	EX5 4QU	First Floor	All	Ceiling	£2,500.00
39	Westfield	Bradninch	EX5 4QU	Ground Floor	All	Ceiling Lining	£2,500.00

There are 11 MA assessment scores of over 5

50	Butt Parks	Crediton	EX17 3HE	Ground Floor	External	Downpipes	Survey £200.00
10	Churchill Drive	Crediton	EX17 2DW	Ground floor	Loft space	Wall cladding	Encapsulate £1500.00
20	Brady Close	Sandford	EX17 4LQ	Ground Floor	Porch	Ceiling Boards	Survey £200.00
19	Culver Close	Bradninch	EX5 4NY	Roof	Loft space	Cement debris	Survey £200.00
11	Heggadon Close	Bradninch	EX5 4NQ	Ground floor	Store cupboard	Lining Board	Survey £200.00
7	Knightswood	Cullompton	EX15 1ET	Ground floor	External store	Ceiling panel	Survey £200.00
15	Market Close	Bampton	EX16 9NU	Ground floor	External	Roof	Survey £200.00
20	Prospect Way	Lapford	EX17 6QB	Ground Floor	Lounge	Insulating board panel	£1,300.00
Flat 122	St Andrews Estate	Cullompton	EX15 1HZ	Ground Floor	Lounge	Vent	Monitor
Flat 122	St Andrews Estate	Cullompton	EX15 1HZ	Ground Floor	Bathroom	Box riser	When void £2,000.00
13	Sunnymead	Copplestone	EX17 5NQ	Roof	Roof	Undercloaking	When renewing roof

There are 7 medium risk level scores

12	Churchill Drive	Crediton	EX17 2DW	Roof	Loft	Party wall	Encapsulate £1,500.00
83	Higher Cotteylands	Tiverton	EX16 5BL	Ground Floor	Store	Cement panels to coal store	£200.00
Flat 7	Appledore Close	Cullompton	EX15 1ER	First Floor	Lounge	No Sample	Sample survey

							required
Flat 7	Prowses	Hemyock	EX15 3QG	Garden	Bin Store	Insulating board panel	£1,300.00
43	Shortlands Road	Cullompton	EX15 1HW	Ground Floor	External	Soffit	Novus 2024 – 2025 if required
Flat 1	Wyndham Road	Silverton	EX5 4JU	Ground Floor	Store	AIB	£1,300.00
21	Yeo View	Yeoford	EX17 5HY	Roof	Roof	Felt	Survey £200.00

Communal areas

Fir Close 39 & 40	Cullompton	EX15 2PZ	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Porch	£2,600.00
Fir Close 39 & 40	Cullompton	EX15 2PZ	Ground floor	Ceiling board	Bin store ceiling	£2,600.00
Highland Terrace 82 to 85	Cullompton	EX15 3EW	Ground floor	Ceiling panel	Porch	£2,600.00
Highland Terrace 82 to 85	Cullompton	EX15 3EW	Ground floor	Ceiling board	Bin store ceiling	£5,200.00
Prowses 1 to 11	Cullompton	EX15 3QG	Ground floor	Ceiling panel	Bin store ceiling	£2,600.00
Churchills 2 to 8 Evens	Cullompton	EX15 3QN	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	£1,300.00
Churchills 2 to 8 Evens	Cullompton	EX15 3QN	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Porch	£1,300.00
Prowses 12 to 18	Cullompton	EX15 3QN	Ground floor	Ceiling panel	Porches Bin Stores	£6,500.00
Siddalls Gardens 21 to 21A	Tiverton	EX16 6DG	First floor	Roof panels	roof and porch	Survey £200.00
Siddalls Gardens 22 to 22A	Tiverton	EX16 6DG	First floor	Roof panels	roof and porch	Survey £200.00
Siddalls Gardens 23 to 23A	Tiverton	EX16 6DG	First floor	Roof panels	roof and porch	Survey £200.00
Siddalls Gardens 24 to 24A	Tiverton	EX16 6DG	First floor	Roof panels	roof and porch	Survey £200.00
Boyes Close 11 & 12	Tiverton	EX16 7DB	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	Survey £200.00
Boyes Close 14 & 15	Tiverton	EX16 7DB	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	Survey £200.00
Boyes Close 4 & 5	Tiverton	EX16 7DB	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	£1,300.00
Brays Close 11 to 16	Crediton	EX17 3HZ	Second floor	Soffit Board	Roof	Survey £200.00
Brays Close 23 to 28	Crediton	EX17 3HZ	Second floor	Soffit Board	Roof	Survey £200.00

Wyndham Road 1 to 11	Exeter	EX5 4JU	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	£5,200.00
Wyndham Road 1 to 11	Exeter	EX5 4JU	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	canopy	£5,200.00
Wyndham Road 13 to 23	Exeter	EX5 4JU	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	£2,600.00
Wyndham Road 25 to 31	Exeter	EX5 4JU	Ground floor	Ceiling panels	Bin store ceiling	£2,600.00

Appendix 6 - Asbestos Management Plan relating to a non domestic locations

The duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises is set out in Regulation 4 of the 2012 Regulations. The duty to management asbestos in non-domestic premises does not apply to individual council houses but does apply to all non-domestic premises like factories or shops. It can also apply to the 'common parts' of multi-occupancy domestic premises, like purpose-built flats. The common parts do not cover individual flats, but do include:

foyers and corridors

lifts and lift-shafts

staircases

roof spaces

gardens and yards

outhouses and garages

Because the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises applies to the common parts of multi-occupancy domestic premises there is some overlap with the approach taken in this management plan and the specific duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises. However where the specific duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises applies the requirements of that duty must be complied with.

Although this management plan is not prepared in relation to the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises It should be noted that that the Council's duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises requires the following site specific steps to be taken for each premises

- a) assess if there are asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) present, the amount, where they are and their condition
- b) presume materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence that they do not
- c) make, and keep up to date, a record or register of the location and condition of the ACMs or presumed ACMs
- d) assess the risk of anyone being exposed to airborne fibres from the ACMs
- e) write an asbestos management plan to manage the risk, put the plan into action, monitor it and review it every 12 months or sooner if necessary
- f) monitor the condition of any ACMs or suspected ACMs

g) provide information on the location and condition of the ACMs to anyone who may work on or disturb them, including the emergency services.



Report for: HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Date of Meeting: 10 September 2024

Subject: **MID DEVON HOUSING (MDH) SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT FOR Q1 2024-25**

Cabinet Member: Councillor Simon Clist, Cabinet Member for Housing and Property

Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Exempt: None

Wards Affected: All wards

Enclosures: Annex A: Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1
 Annex B: Tenancy Enforcement Activities – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1
 Annex C: Rent Recovery – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1
 Annex D: Building Repairs and Maintenance – performance data for 2024-24: Quarter 1

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report has been presented in support of an ongoing commitment to provide a quarterly update to Members on activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing (MDH), including some relating to enforcement.

It also contains relevant information relating to performance as measured in line with the guidance relating to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) requires registered providers of social housing (RPs) to provide a report on a set of TSMs which includes perception and performance data on a rolling annual basis. This data was provided on a first full-year basis earlier this year for 2023-24. Management data for relevant TSMs is provided for the first quarter of this year however the first TSM perception surveys will not be completed until the second

quarter and results provided in due course. Overall, three perception surveys will be undertaken in 2024-25 and the results aggregated in accordance with RSH methodology to provide the next annual TSM perception survey data in April 2025 alongside the full TSM management data for quarters 1-4.

Recommendation(s):

That the PDG notes the outturn performance for Quarter 1 2024/25 as provided in Annexes A, B, C and D

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 MDH has approximately 3,000 homes in its management located across the District.
- 1.2 This report provides a summary of activity and performance for the first quarter of 2024-25 (Q1) ending 30 June 2024.
- 1.3 In accordance with this, data for Q1 provided on the following Annexes:
 - Annex A: Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)
 - Annex B: Tenancy Enforcement Activities
 - Annex C: Rent recovery
 - Annex D: Building Repairs & Maintenance

2 Assurance requirements and reporting

- 2.1 RPs are now required by the RSH to provide effective assurance to Members and this should include relevant, updated performance data relating to service delivery.
- 2.2 The RSH takes a co-regulatory approach which means that Councillors are responsible for ensuring that MDH is meeting their standards. There are currently five consumer standards, although following the implementation of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act these are about to be changed, once a review has been concluded. Currently, RPs such as MDH are expected to have due regard to the required outcomes and specific expectations as set out in these standards, which are:
 - The Safety and Quality Standard
 - The Tenancy Standard
 - The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
 - The Neighbourhood & Community Standard
- 2.3 The Rent Standard, an economic standard, also applies and MDH is required to have regard to this.

- 2.4 Councillors also have a responsibility to ensure that MDH is being open and accountable with regard to how the organisation meets its objectives. In line with the principles of co-regulation, RPs are also required to support tenants so that they can shape and scrutinise service delivery and hold Councillors to account.
- 2.5 Performance data recorded in support of the TSMs is shown in the report. The aim is to ensure that Members can be reassured that data is being collected. As set out in the introduction, some of the data in this report will be included in the data submission which will be made to the RSH during the first part of 2025-26.
- 2.6 Perception data to inform our return to the RSH, in line with the new regulatory requirement, will be collected throughout the year during three specific survey periods in a change of approach away from a single winter survey as completed for the TSM return for 2023-24. The first of this year's surveys went live on 19 August for a two-week period and will therefore be reported in the second quarter data for this year. 80% of surveys will be completed via telephone and 20% online. Going forward, it is intended complete such surveys every quarter/4 times annually.
- 2.7 During the survey, tenants were given an opportunity to provide limited feedback in response to some questions and were able to do this anonymously. Many tenants chose to give their name and address and officers will follow-up on any service requests or complaints received.
- 2.8 This work was procured by a partnership involving MDH and two other local authority providers with retained housing stock. As a result, there will be opportunities for local benchmarking alongside national benchmarking once all RSH have collected all relevant data and it has been published, provided that all partners wish to participate in this.
- 2.9 At the end of January, MDH commissioned an external review of compliance against the regulatory framework. The findings of this have been used, together with the analysis of the data collected during the perception survey, to inform an understanding of necessary service improvement. This insight has informed the development of a MDH Impact Improvement plan which contains a number of actions. This plan takes into account resourcing, legislative and regulatory requirements and good practice and this plan has been shared with MDH managers ahead of being disseminated more widely for consultation with staff and other stakeholders.
- 2.10 The work of different MDH teams is shown in the annexes as set out below. Information is provided on key areas of work. It is important for Members to be reassured that the homes in our management are safe and secure and to understand how teams are performing in relation to certain

indicators relating to tenancy and estate management. There are legislative and regulatory requirements which RPs must adhere to. However, it is also important that service delivery also takes account of MDH's own policies and good practice.

2.11 This service delivery report sets out the following specific data:

- 12 performance data TSMs (not data available yet for the 10 perception survey TSMs)
- Tenancy enforcement data
- Rent collection and debt data
- Full repairs data including Decent Homes
- Voids data (metrics determined by updated Voids Management Policy)

2.12 The TSMs include three measures designed to demonstrate how RPs are performing with regard to service delivery in connection with complaints. If a tenant remains dissatisfied following the conclusion of their complaint, they can escalate that complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS). In the new regulatory framework, recently introduced, the role of the HOS has been expanded. Every year, RPs must undertake a review of compliance against the Complaints Handling Code, issued by the HOS. This has recently been reviewed by the HOS and there is now a requirement to submit an annual complaints performance and service improvement report to the PDG, in support of this. This report was completed and reviewed for 2023-24 at the previous PDG meeting.

2.13 In addition, it should be noted that there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the HOS and the RSH which allows the transfer of information with the aim of ensuring that any regulatory failings associated with service delivery as performed by RPs are identified and dealt with in the most appropriate way.

3 Performance and context

3.1 Annexes A to D contain comments and narrative on performance provided against specific metrics and there is further context provided below.

3.2 In the absence of TSM benchmark data, which will be available once all RPs have submitted relevant information nationally, the results of the satisfaction survey obtained as part of the pilot exercise undertaken during late 2022 has been published alongside some indicators for comparative purposes. When the national data is published, a further report will come to this PDG showing how MDH compares with other organisations nationally.

3.3 In the meantime, MDH will focus on any TSM results where the score was 60% or less. The actions required to address any issues arising from this review of the data will be fed into the wider MDH Impact Improvement Plan.

- 3.4 MDH team leaders meet with senior managers on a monthly basis to discuss performance against a range of indicators across the business. This delivers a greater understanding and insight and ensures that performance is routinely monitored which in turn delivers an understanding of any pressures. This informs the allocation of resources, as appropriate.

4 Building Services

- 4.1 Performance relating to this area of work is dependent upon having a full complement of operatives who have the necessary skills to manage the workload. Unfortunately, there continue to be challenges with regard to recruitment due to prevailing market conditions with service staffing levels in front-line roles at its lowest point for around 10-years. This, combined with issues long term sickness, can have an impact on the ability of the team to manage the priorities. For these reasons, priority continues to be given to completing the most urgent works to ensure that they are completed on time, as well as to those routine repairs having the most impact upon tenants. Similar issues also affected the administrative team responsible for processing repairs requests. Taking these resourcing issues into account, managers are satisfied with the level of performance, especially as targets have been met, although, there is, of course, always room for improvement to ensure that 100% of repairs are completed on time.
- 4.2 Overall, our service priority is, and always has been, on keeping people safe, which we have been able to do by appropriately triaging and completing the most urgent repairs. Encouragingly all repairs were completed within target for the first quarter even if a 100% of repairs could not be completed on time or at first visit and performance is upper quartile in comparison with the social housing sector average.
- 4.3 The service has taken steps through role re-evaluation and regrading to address some of the recruitment and retention issues and is also currently recruiting new building services trade apprentices into housing. The positive benefits of this should be seen as this year moves forward.
- 4.4 Customer satisfaction with planned maintenance remains strong despite some challenging performance issues associated with a very limited number of contractors.
- 4.5 Members will note from previous reports that we have an internal target to achieve 100% of all our properties holding a full management survey for asbestos which includes material sampling, alongside an additional requirement to have 100% of our properties holding a full electrical safety check ahead of potential regulatory changes. This does not mean our properties are not presently safe or properly assessed within the requirements of current safety legislation and the RSH. More information is given below.

4.6 Asbestos Safety Checks

A management survey can, but does not always require a sample of a suspected asbestos containing material (ACM) to be taken; however the only way to 100% determine if a material contains asbestos is to take a sample and have this analysed. MDH want to be able to provide more accurate information so are only reporting on the number of properties where we have a management survey that has included samples.

Overall, we still hold a current asbestos register for all properties in our stock which adopts a no-risk approach and makes conservative assumptions on the presence of ACM based on property design and age in specific areas of each building which may subsequently be confirmed or otherwise through sampling where the register will then be updated. This enables our tenants, staff and contractors to stay safe at all times and approach any works with the appropriate level of caution and risk management.

Where MDH do not have samples of an ACM that we want to work on then the suspected material is sampled and analysed. To avoid any doubling up on surveys, for a number of years we have been asking for management surveys with samples or sampling where required due to a more detailed refurbishment and demolition survey, which is only used for intrusive works, such as new kitchens and bathrooms.

As we modernise properties and/or undertake works during property void periods this will therefore result in ACM being removed from properties even where there is no specific safety reason for doing so (i.e. the ACM is safe and in good condition) and the register is updated accordingly.

Overall, this is a proactive risk-reduction approach where we can remove some properties completely from the register or reduce the scope of the register entry where some material is removed or it is confirmed as not being ACM.

The reason for the drop in the number of surveys for August and September relates to some cross checking of information relating to the refurbishment and demolition surveys.

4.7 Electrical Safety Checks

Historically MDH carried out a Visual Inspection Report (VIR) every 5 years and an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every 10 years which is in line with current regulations as Social Housing is currently exempt from The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020, and we reported compliance on these figures.

But we are expecting that Social Rent properties will be brought in line with these regulations soon with a minimum five-year transition period. 'Housemark' nationally have changed the way we report with them already and are only recording EICRs.

As an EICR needs to be carried out every 5 years it would not be sensible to do lots at once we need to spread them out over a 5 year period which will equate to around 600 a year going forward, so in reality at the end of this year we will need to be around 50 % and then 60% next year and so on. This will ensure we are fully compliant at the end of the transition period.

5 Building Services – Voids Specific

- 5.1 The team which manages this work has been busy this year managing a large number of voids in both the housing revenue account and on behalf of the general fund strategic housing functions. The condition of the properties being returned has, on occasions, continued to be poor, and it remains a combination of these factors which has impacted the ability of the team to achieve set targets. Standard and major voids have been prioritised in order to ensure that the supply of available homes is maintained. However, some work, including that relating to decarbonisation, has taken longer than hoped due to external resourcing issues and therefore the target relating to the turnaround time for these properties was missed.
- 5.2 Notwithstanding the above, there has been between a 20-45% improvement (reduced turnaround times) in key void categories as set out in Annex D compared to the outturn for 2023-24.

6 Tenancy and Estate Management

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood team works in partnership with other agencies to manage tenancy-related issues and those on the MDH estates, including anti-social behaviour (ASB). Following period of holding a vacancy in the team, a new Officer has been recruited commenced work at the beginning of May 2024. This brings the team back up to full current strength and Annex B shows performance with regard to some of the tools available to the team. Many of these can be used to support the management of reports of nuisance and in particular, following training, the team are now equipped to deploy a wider range of ASB tool including formal Community Protection Warnings and Notices.
- 6.2 In line with good practice, our officers will endeavour to resolve any issues reported at an early stage. This can involve a range of options, including partnership working, informal mediation undertaken by team members and referrals for formal mediation. Therefore, the statistics in the Annex do not always reflect the extent of the work which is required when managing nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- 6.3 With regard to fraud, tackling this is also continues to be a priority with two new cases opened in the first quarter. Tenancy fraud can encompass many issues, but if someone is living in a home where they do not have a right to be, that has an impact on the availability of that property for a household in greater housing need. For this reason, officers will be proactive about investigating any

concerns and making the necessary referrals for further investigation and action.

7 Income Collection

7.1 It is encouraging that the Neighbourhood team has continued its strong work managing the level of debt attributed to current dwelling tenants whilst still sustaining tenancies. At the end of quarter one, the debt stood at 2.22%, comparable with the overturn for 2023-24 and better than quarter one performance last year. This is also well within target. Just three convictions have come forward on the basis of rent arrears during quarter one.

7.2 When managing rent arrears, the team endeavours to work closely with the tenants involved. The aim is to offer an empathetic and supportive approach to encourage individuals to speak to the team about any financial issues they may be experiencing. Referrals for debt counselling and money advice are offered. The aim is to create a culture whereby all tenants are able to pay their rent; and, to this end, the team will offer realistic arrangements to facilitate the payment of rent arrears in instalments.

8 Recommendation

8.1 The following recommendation is made:

- That the PDG notes the outturn performance for Quarter 1 2024-25 as provided in the Annexes A, B, C and D.

Financial Implications

The activity of MDH is funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is ring fenced and subject to specific financial controls. The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) charges a mandatory membership fee based on the number of homes in the management of the registered provider (RP) of social housing.

Legal Implications

The tenancy agreement defines MDH's relationship with tenants and sets out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. This takes account of legal and regulatory requirements. The Council is an RP and therefore is required to comply with the regulatory framework operated by the RSH. The regulatory framework has been reviewed. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard contains provisions relating to the management of complaints. There is also a requirement for MDH to manage complaints in accordance with the Complaints Handling Code (the Code) which is issued by the HOS. Landlords are expected to self-assess against the Code. Landlords are required to use the learning from complaints to drive service improvement. Following publication of the Social Housing White Paper in late 2020,

the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, has now been implemented and gone into statute.

Risk Assessment

The Council has approximately 3,000 homes in management and the performance of MDH impacts upon the lives of many thousands of tenants and their families. This represents a huge responsibility and investment, consequently a major area of risk. Not providing an effective housing management service has the potential to result in failure to meet legal and statutory obligations including those relating to health and safety issues, repairs obligations, tenancy fraud, and reputational issues which could result in our tenants feeling stigmatised. Failure to collect rental income could impact the ability to fund necessary management and maintenance activities.

Finally, a failure to provide adequate information on service performance for the purposes of governance and scrutiny is a specific area of non-compliance with the requirements of the RSH. This regulator has new powers to impose performance improvements and potentially fine registered providers where performance is poor and/or adequate assurance is not provided.

Impact on Climate Change

None directly arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

MDH has a collection of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. These are currently being reviewed with the aim of aligning them more closely with the Regulatory Standards. There is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their services to meet the needs of tenants. MDH requests diversity data from tenants to enable compliance to be monitored. MDH is required to work with people from all sections of society and having an agreed policy ensures that all tenants and other stakeholders are treated in the same way with adjustments being made to meet their needs, as necessary. The Housing Ombudsman Service Complaints Handling Code which MDH adhere to also requires landlords to have an awareness of accessibility so residents are easily be able to access the complaints procedure via several routes.

Our “Getting to Know You” project has been designed to refresh our knowledge relating to the diversity of our tenants and over the next two years, we will be surveying them in an effort to better understand their needs.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Homes are a priority for the Council and in the context of MDH service performance this includes supporting the delivery of several key objectives; investing in our homes, monitoring tenant satisfaction and ensuring our tenants feel safe, secure and happy in our homes.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 30 August 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 2 September 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 19 August 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 23 August 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health
Email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

Mid Devon Housing Strategies and Policies:
[Procedures, Policies and Strategies - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](#)

The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing:
[Regulatory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Tenant Satisfaction Measures:
[Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code:
[Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](#)

Annex A: Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1

Overall Satisfaction						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP01: Overall satisfaction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator

Keeping Properties in Good Repair						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP02: Satisfaction with repairs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
TP03: Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	N/A	N/A	NA	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
TP04: Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
RP01: Proportion of Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0.72%				0.72%	There are 21 properties that are outstanding, all of which are on a future list of works.
RP02: Repairs completed within target timescale	98.27%				98.27%	Target 100% The 1.7% not completed within target is reflective of the staff resource issues on the maintenance operative side, with a

						<p>number of long term vacancies due to an inability to fill positions at the current salaries. Although we would always aim for 100%, the completions on target are still higher than we would otherwise expect, due to being able to pull resources from the commercial and voids team, as well as delay other more major works. This all has a detrimental effect on income and major works becoming urgent. Our priority is, and always has been on keeping people safe, which we have been able to do by appropriately triaging and completing the most urgent repairs.</p>
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Maintaining Building Safety						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP05: Satisfaction that the home is safe	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
BS01: Gas safety checks	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
BS02: Fire safety checks	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
BS03: Asbestos safety checks	79.53%				79.53%	There is a plan in place to carry out 300 surveys a year and reach the goal of 100% by 2026
BS04: Water safety checks	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
BS05: Lift safety checks	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target

Respectful and Helpful Engagement						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP06: Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
TP07: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator

tenants informed about things that matter to them						
TP08: Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator

Effective Handling of Complaints						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
CH01: Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	14				14	The number of complaints received during the first quarter of this year is lower than the previous year but this is not expected to continue and initial data for quarter 2 shows an upswing in cases.
CH02: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	95.0%				95.0%	Target 100% There were two complaints which were not responded to within the timescales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One was re-assigned from another service • One required an external contractor to visit the property and there was a delay in completing the necessary visit

Responsible Neighbourhood Management

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Annual Indicator
NM01: Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	1.35				1.35	This equates to four new cases.

Annex B: Tenancy Enforcement Activities – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1

Neighbourhood & Community Standard – Housing Revenue Account – Estates Team						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Fraud cases opened	2				2	Two new fraud cases raised and referred to the external investigator, however there has yet to be feedback on these.
Fraud cases referred to an external investigator	2				2	
Acceptable Behaviour Agreements signed	0				0	
Good Neighbourhood Agreements signed	0				0	It has been very encouraging that the team are now able to serve Community Protection Warnings. This has already seen the progression to two Community Protection Notices being served, for some of our more persistent repeat offenders. A very encouraging start to the year.
Community Protection Notice warnings issued	8				8	
Community Protection Notices issued	2				2	
Possession Actions commenced on grounds of ASB	0				0	
Closure Orders – obtained	0				0	
Injunctions sought	0				0	

Evictions on grounds of anti-social behaviour/ other tenancy breach	0				0	
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Annex C: Rent recovery – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1

Income Recovery – Housing Revenue Account – Income Team							
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target	YTD	Comments
Current dwelling rent arrears at quarter end %	2.22%				<5%	2.22%	Current rent cases are managed weekly to ensure early contact to keep arrears to a minimum and support tenants to maintain their rent and avoid escalating actions.
Notice of Seeking possession served	48				N/A	48	Notices served in order to protect the Council's interests whereby we can apply for possession of a property following 28 days after the notice is served if the tenant fails to make an arrangement or clear arrears in full.
Judgement obtained	1				N/A	1	Most common order is a suspended possession order whereby the tenant is advised to pay current weekly rent plus an agreed amount on top towards the arrears. If maintained the tenancy continues. Once arrears and court costs paid back the court order is deemed satisfied and removed from the tenants' records.
Warrants issued	0				N/A	0	Tenants failing to maintain their court order will be taken back to court for breach of the order. The District Judge will issue a warrant to evict based on the failure to meet the terms of the court order. Tenants in this position can apply for a 'Stay of Execution', whereby the District Judge can suspend the warrant to evict and agree new payment terms.

Evictions on grounds of rent arrears	3				N/A	3	Evictions are always a last resort, but this shows that the tenants in these cases failed to comply with a previous court order and/or did not take up an offer of advice/signposting to avoid eviction and make an arrangement to repay the debt they owed.
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Annex D: Building Repairs and Maintenance – performance data for 2024-25: Quarter 1

Homes and Neighbourhood & Community Standards – Housing Revenue Account – Building Services						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Decent Homes Standard %	99.28%				99.28%	Target 100% There are 21 properties that are outstanding, all of which are on a future list of works
Emergency repairs completed on time %	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
Urgent repairs completed on time %	97.7%				97.7%	Target 95% - Above target
Routine repairs completed on time %	98.5%				98.5%	Target 95% - Above target
Repairs completed first visit %	98.8%				98.8%	Target 95% - Above target
Gas safety checks %	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
Fire risk assessments %	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target
Water safety checks (Legionella) %	100%				100%	Target 100% - On target

Voids*

Voids performance – Housing Revenue Account – Building Services and Allocations Teams						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Comments
Standard voids including temporary accommodation	44.24				44.24	Target 35 working days. Whilst slightly above target there is an improvement on last year's figures where we finished the year with an average of 53.99 days of nearly 20%
Major voids	61.13				61.13	Target 55 working days Whilst slightly above target there is an improvement on last year's figures where we finished the year with an average of 111.57 days of just over 45%
Decent homes voids	141.00				141.00	Target 90 working days This type of Void is where we struggle the most due to current resourcing issues and the amount of works required to bring them up to the Decent Homes standard.
Development voids	N/A				N/A	Target 1 calendar year
Occupancy rate (whole stock)	97.09%				97.09%	Target 97% - Above target

* Definitions and targets as per adopted Voids Management Policy 2023