

Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 14 April 2025 at 5.00 pm
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next ordinary meeting
Monday, 9 June 2025 at 5.00 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.

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Membership

Cllr L G J Kennedy
Cllr G Westcott
Cllr D Broom
Cllr E Buczkowski
Cllr A Cuddy
Cllr G Czapiewski
Cllr M Farrell
Cllr C Harrower
Cllr B Holdman
Cllr L Knight
Cllr R Roberts
Cllr S Robinson

AGENDA

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

- 1 **Apologies and Substitute Members**
To receive any apologies for absence and notices of appointment of substitute Members (if any).

- 2 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.

- 3 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions from members of the public and replies thereto.

Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for this item.

- 4 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (*Pages 5 - 24*)
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on Monday 17 March 2025.

- 5 **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chair of Scrutiny Committee may wish to make.

- 6 **Decisions of the Cabinet**
To consider any decisions made by the Cabinet at its last meeting on Tuesday 1 April 2025 that have been called in.

- 7 **Annual Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee** (*Pages 25 - 26*)
To receive the Annual Report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

- 8 **Work Programme** (*Pages 27 - 52*)
To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the committee's future consideration, taking account of:

- a) Any items within the forward Plan for discussion at the next meeting;
- b) Suggestions of other work for the committee in 2025/26.

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.

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 17 March 2025 at 5.00 pm

Present

Councillors

L G J Kennedy (Chair)
G Westcott (Vice-Chair), D Broom,
E Buczkowski, G Czapiewski, M Farrell,
C Harrower, B Holdman, L Knight,
R Roberts and S Robinson

Also Present

Councillors

M Jenkins and S Keable

Also Present

Officers:

Richard Marsh (Director of Place & Economy), Maria De Leburne (Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)) and David Parker (Democratic Services & Policy Research Officer)

Councillors

Online

J Buczkowski, S J Clist, A Cuddy, G Duchesne, A Glover and J Lock

90 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies: Cllr A Cuddy attended on line.

91 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations of interest where appropriate.

92 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0:06:26)**

Paul Elstone

The Chair explained that as the questions related to an item that was not on the agenda, that they would not be permitted.

Malcolm Lock

Mr Lock was representing residents of the Ashley Rise Estate. He commented that on the estate there had been an increase in the intolerable smell of fishy sewage. There had been a recent increase in property development in the area that had not been supported, as far as he was aware, with increased sewage facilities. There was believed to be a system of tankers taking sewage from Moorhayes to the sewage works daily and it raised the question of whether there was sufficient capacity in the existing facility to cope with the current sewage volumes? When new developments were begun, it was believed that the developer had to pay a sum to South West Water for each property built to cover any investment required in infrastructure as a result of the development. It was evident that the existing systems were barely adequate before the developments in and around Tiverton were started. Had South West Water invested sufficiently in the sewage schemes and if not when would this happen?

Response from South West Water

Developers do pay an infrastructure charge per property for connecting new properties to mains sewers. However, the capacity of the treatment works was funded separately through the price review process that South West Water (SWW) had with the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) every five years. In fact, the works at Tiverton had been granted funding through that process and so over the next five years SWW would make improvements to the capacity of the works.

93 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0:15:14)

The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 17 February 2025 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

94 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET (0:16:08)

The Committee **NOTED** that none of the decisions made by the Cabinet on 4 March 2025 had been called in.

95 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0:16:19)

The Chair gave directions as to how the business of the meeting would be conducted and that questioners would be allowed one supplemental question only. The Chair also explained that South West Water would not be able to answer any question related to; individual casework; anything subject to a legal review or proceedings; anything that was subject to commercial confidentiality and anything relating to shares or dividends.

96 PRESENTATION FROM SOUTH WEST WATER (0:17:54)

Attending from South West Water (SWW) were:
Mr Alan Burrows, Head of Local Government Liaison,
Mr Mark Worsfold, Director of Asset Management,
Mr Ian Lake, Head of Solution Development and Technical Performance.

SWW overview of current position:

SWW's priorities for 2025-2030 were:

- Water Quality and Resilience – was there enough water in the region?
- Storm overflows and pollutions,
- Net zero and environmental gains,
- Delivering for customers and addressing affordability.

Pollutions

- There were 6 minor water quality pollutions in the Council's area in 2024.

Storm Overflows

- SWW had 100% monitoring of all 1,379 storm overflows, which was ahead of the Government target.
- The Environment Agency (EA) published the storm overflow annual review in March each year after they had validated SWW's data.
- The public could see where and in what 5 year period, investments were being made by looking at SWW's Storm Overflow Action Plan:
<https://www.water.org.uk/overflows-plan>
- The National Storm Overflow Action Plan provided an overview of their investment to 2040.
- SWW's investment would focus on bathing waters and shellfish water in the first instance as well as highly sensitive areas such as nationally designated nature sites.
- SWW would deliver their overall programme by 2040 (10 years ahead of the Government target of 2050).

Sewage Treatment Works

- There were 655 wastewater treatment works in SWW's region.
- All wastewater treatment works in the Council's area were compliant with their permit conditions. Those were continuous discharges and were separate from storm overflows.
- All leakage targets that had been set for the periods 2021/2022, 2022/23 and 2023/24 had been met. 2024/25 had yet to be closed and verified.

Performance

Public Information:

- WaterFit Live provided information on the operation of their storm overflows in near real time.
- The National Storm Overflow Action Plan (SOAP) showed where and when SWW planned to improve each storm overflow.

River Quality

- South West Region River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) provided the detailed analysis on causes and was 'owned' by the EA.
- Overall SWW operations contributed circa 12% towards the Reasons for Not Achieving Good (RNAG) ecological status, the remaining 88% could come from agriculture, industry, urban run-off, private septic tanks or quarries etc.
- Main catchments in mid Devon included: River Exe, River Culm and River Creedy.
- Reasons for not achieving good ecological status formed the basis of SWW's Environmental Programme.

Bathing Water Quality

- Achieved 100% compliance with bathing water standards across bathing beaches in Devon in 2024.

Environmental programme

- Peatland restoration, fish migration, catchment management. SWW had a number of programmes that were to do with bio-diversity and natural improvement. Those programmes looked at how they could use nature and bio-diversity to improve water quality within the South West.

Leakage

- Achieved target for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Reservoirs

- A new reservoir was planned to be built at Cheddar and would be called Cheddar II. Water could be moved from there over to the River Exe and then abstracted at Bolham and at Pynes.
- Water could be released from Wimbleball Reservoir when SWW needed to supplement abstraction from the River Exe.
- Additional resources were being developed in Cornwall and the plan was to integrate that network across the region.

Councillors and members of the public then asked questions of SWW, the questions and responses were as follows:

Sewage Discharge

Question 1: As we know, water companies were only allowed to discharge overflows in exceptional circumstances, how did they decide what was an exceptional circumstance?

Response from SWW

The EA permitted water companies to discharge treated effluent to the environment. Each permit would be specific to the location and would be set to protect the objectives set for a particular water course or estuarine /coastal environment. Those objectives were provided by the Water Framework Directive which was transcribed in UK Law following BREXIT. For storm overflows, this meant that when the permitted 'pass forward flow' had been exceeded i.e. the rate at which the pumps could pass flow to the water treatment works, then the storm overflow may be operated. This was to protect houses from sewer flooding. The target set by the Government for all Water Companies was to achieve no more than 10 spills per annum on average over 10 years (the rainfall target). Those were required by 2050.

The Government had set out a clear set of targets for water companies which covered bathing waters, shellfish water and sensitive sites. Those each had different timeframes and targets:

But broadly,

- Bathing waters (BW) were allowed to achieve 2 or 3 spills per bathing season (2 for excellent BW and 3 for Good/Sufficient) as well as achieving the 10 spills per annum on average over 10 years. These were required by 2035.
- Shellfish waters were required to achieve the 10 spills per annum on average over 10 years by 2030.

- Sensitive sites required an Environmental Assessment but otherwise were required to achieve 10 spills (or subject to individual analysis or a more stringent target by 2045).
- All overflows were required to achieve the 10 spills on average over ten years by 2050.
- South West Water planned to achieve this target 10 years ahead of schedule i.e. by 2040.

Question 2: When would the practice of untreated discharges and therefore the pollution of the seas and protected nature sites end?

Response from SWW

The Government had set a target to reduce the operation of all storm overflows by 2050. SWW planned to achieve this target 10 years ahead of schedule i.e. by 2040. SWW had set aside circa £780m as part of their £3.2bn programme for 2025 – 2030 to tackle the use of storm overflows which was brought about by the implementation of the Environment Act in 2022.

Achieving the targets did not remove all spills - it just reduced the number below the targets set. There was no plan to end the practice of storm overflows.

Question 3: In Padbrook Ward, at the sewage farm, (which we had been told for a long time was too small for the local need), a large macerator fed liquidised faeces, etc. into the River Culm, which was now so badly affected that many rare species of flora and fauna had entirely disappeared. When would SWW upgrade the treatment works?

Response from SWW

Cullompton Sewage Treatment Works in the Padbrook Ward did not “feed liquidised faeces” into the River Culm and there was no macerator on site. The treatment process started with a large screen to remove any material such as grit, plastics, wet wipes, nappies etc (or anything that was not pee, poo and paper). Next the waste was moved to a primary settlement tank where solids (poo / paper) were separated from the liquid. The liquid was then processed using a biological treatment using filter beds (which had gravel and good bacteria) to reduce the ammonia and improve the oxygen. A final settlement tank and cloth filter underneath were used to further remove suspended solids before being discharged back into the environment. This discharge was permitted by the Environment Agency and subject to strict conditions.

Based on current Local Plans, SWW were designing for increased population growth to circa 11,000 people. This growth planned to accommodate housing in the Culm Garden Village and Kentisbeare areas. This investment was planned to be completed by 2030.

Question 4: There were 49 salmon rivers in the UK, of which the Exe was one of the very few in the South West. It ran from North West of Tiverton, in a South East direction, and through Exeter to Exmouth.

Those were Atlantic salmon, who returned to their spawning grounds annually.

On either side of the River Exe, 90% of our wetland habitat in the past 100 years had been lost.

On specific, agreed, days, during June, salmon were caught, weighed, and returned to the river. The relevant data was in the Appendix (sent to SWW with the question), from the Environment Agency data on the Annual Salmon Count on the River Exe,

tables and charts. (The lowest tally to that date was shown in bold. Data collection began in 1971.)

Please would SWW review this data, and comment, wherever possible, on what the changes to our environment may have been, to have led to yet another sharp decline in our salmon numbers and what could be done to reverse the decline?

Response from SWW

This question was best answered by the EA who were the Government's lead for water, air and land quality and were the lead for this protected species i.e. salmon and sea trout. There were many factors that impacted the survival rate of salmon and included: sea survival and over exploitation at sea, changes in climate affecting and migratory routes and river temperature, environmental habitat changes e.g. in river works or tree removal, farming practice and sedimentation, tourism and impacts of people in rivers etc. The EA set standards for environmental protection which required water companies then to invest to either protect or where necessary improve both water quality and quantity and remove features which may impact salmon migration. This was called the Water Industry Environment Programme. The EA monitored SWW's Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) and reported on their progress to the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Question 5: What was SWW doing to upgrade sewerage plants so that the amount of macerated sewerage deposited into rivers significantly decreased? What funds had been set aside for any upgrades and how did those funds compare to monies received by SWW directors and shareholders on an annual basis?

Response from SWW

SWW had allocated circa £780m to address pollutions and storm overflows for the period 2025 – 2030. This investment was approved by OFWAT on 19 December 2024 as part of their Final Determination. SWW were now working on their plans to deliver the Business Plan requirements for 2025 to 2030. Maceration was a part of the treatment process but no macerated sewage went straight into rivers. A screening process prevented any solids from entering water courses.

Question 6: Were SWW still pumping raw sewage into our coastline, if so, why? And when would this practice stop? This region relied very heavily on its tourist industry, therefore we should be cleaning our coastline, not polluting it.

Response from SWW

At the time of privatisation in 1989, 60% of all sewage discharges were raw sewage and discharged through long sea outfalls many of those were continuous discharges. Today, all continuous discharges had different levels of treatment including ultra-violet (UV) treatment in places of higher sensitivity. The only discharges were associated with intermittent discharges (CSOs), SWW calculated that those now represented only circa 3% of the flows with circa 97% being treated. The programme of work by 2040 would reduce the circa 3% to less than circa 1%.

All discharges required a specific level of treatment based on the permit SWW had been provided by the EA. Many of SWW's discharges to the coastal environment had tertiary treatment which included UV to protect both bathing waters and shellfish waters. If those designated areas were impacted by our operations SWW would be required to make further improvements. Bathing water quality, as measured by the EA was better than it ever had been. More details on the bathing water classification

could be found here: <https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/2024/05/15/how-the-environment-agency-monitors-and-tests-bathing-water-quality/>

Howard Cuthbert – Member of the Public – Question supplied in advance

Question 7: The Rivers Trust for the Exe and Lowman as they pass through Tiverton had a number of storm drain sites listed “Not Asset Maintenance, Hydraulic Capacity”. This was a result of the SWW asset being undersized and no amount of fiddling on how they were operated could prevent a spillage. Did this not cause concern and suggest corrective action be taken to remedy before pollution occurred?

Response from SWW

The information highlighted by the Rivers Trust was data SWW had been required to provide to the Government as part of the National Storm Overflow Action Plan. This set out where SWW’s storm overflows were and what they believed to be the reason for them operating. SWW had allocated circa £780m to reduce the use of storm overflows and pollutions over the next 5 years and had committed to meet the national storm overflow target by 2040, 10 years ahead of the Government target of 2050. Preventative measures included disconnecting surface run off (for instance from highways and car parks) from the sewer network and channelling it through rivers and streams and also the building of large capacity storage tanks. All of SWW’s programme could be found on the WaterUK website:

<https://www.water.org.uk/overflows-plan> . In Mid Devon there were 88 storm overflows, with 10 sites in Tiverton of which 5 already met the storm overflow reduction target. All storm overflows in Tiverton had a current target improvement date of 2030.

Floods

Question 8: Reference the Cole Brook, and the Main River (leat), both in Padbrook, Cullompton. What measures were being put in place to reduce the risk of further flooding, given the very serious nature of the floods in September 2023?

Response from SWW

The EA held the Strategic Overview for flooding. This question would best answered by them in the first instance. There were many sources of flooding and where SWW had a role to play they would, and they would work with the EA and other Risk Management Authorities for example Devon County Council (DCC) as the Lead Local Flood Authority to resolve the issues. They could be contacted via the following email address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about-access-and-opening> The Area Flood Risk Manager at the EA was called Ben Johnston and questions could be addressed to him. The Regional Flood and Erosion Coastal Committee made decisions about future investment in flood schemes.

Question 9: It had been known since 2015 that there were problems with the shutlake at Station Road, Hemyock. The drains were now blocked or ineffective. This meant that heavy rain resulted in a lot of water on the road and certain driveways of residential properties, which could freeze in cold weather presenting a safety hazard. Families with children walking to school got drenched when a car passed. DCC Highways Department had been approached and clearly mentioned it was SWW’s responsibility to remedy the situation. Residents were told on 10 January 2025 that

there were 'multiple defects in the sewer that had been raised for repair,' but that the repairs were not yet planned. When was this problem likely to be remedied?

Response from SWW

SWW wrote to the Clerk of Hemyock Parish Council on 5 February 2025 and 5 March 2025 and confirmed that a thorough investigation had been conducted approximately 5 years ago. It was found that this pipework was not a SWW asset. Hence, SWW held no responsibility for the drains and the responsibility for physical ownership and maintenance was a riparian responsibility. Copies of SWW's replies had been sent to Hemyock Parish Council Clerk.

Environment Agency

Question 10: What were the responsibilities SWW accepted, and which were the responsibilities of the EA?

Response from SWW

SWW's primary objective was to treat and supply safe wholesome drinking water then remove wastewater and return it to the environment. SWW were regulated by a number of authorities as followed: EA for environmental protection, Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) for drinking water quality, OFWAT for financial purposes, DEFRA for future water resources, Consumer Council for Water for Customer purposes and well as other financial institutions. SWW also had WaterShare where their customers could provide feedback direct to them on their services. The EA's role could be found here: [Environment Agency - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency) . [https://](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)
EA Pollution Hotline number was 0800 807060.

When it could not be agreed which agency should be responsible for a problem, SWW, EA and DCC Highways had a duty to co-operate and work together, they did that through the South West Regional Flood Committee. Such issues could be raised to that Committee where the agencies would co-operate and try to solve the problem.

River Management

Question 11: SWW was contracted to release 900 million litres of water annually from Wimbleball Reservoir into local rivers – this has not happened. Why?

Response from SWW

SWW would release water from Wimbleball for two main reasons: (i). To enable water to be abstracted further downstream at Allers (near Tiverton) for use in drinking water (ii). To protect salmon migration. Releases were made when the river levels in the River Exe met certain conditions. If it had been a wet year, releases may not be required as often. Those conditions were included on operating agreements or permits as issued by the EA who would monitor whether SWW were meeting their requirements.

Question 12: Why does SWW, along with RETA (River Exe and Tributaries Association), wish to get rid of 19 weirs on the Exe? Was this to help landowners so that they no longer had to maintain weirs on their land?

Response from SWW

SWW worked with a variety of organisations such as RETA, EA, West Country River Trust, Devon Wildlife Trust to review if any of SWW's operations may impact protected species including salmon and sea trout. Where SWW owned a weir and if it was causing an issue with salmon migration, SWW may be required to make

improvements under the Water Industry Environment Programme – it was for owners of other weirs to do the same if they were able to. However, establishing the ownership of historic weirs was problematic and time consuming. Some weirs had a heritage value and so had to be maintained.

Water Quality

Question 13: Why would SWW not allow public access to the water quality analysis in the rivers Exe, Culm and Barle?

Response from SWW

SWW were not responsible for the water quality analysis on the rivers Exe, Culm and Barle. The EA collected and managed this data and placed this into the public domain.

SWW did provide water quality data if requested under the Environment Information Regulations (EIR) – if it was their data to provide. This could be requested via their EIR team. Any request would need to be specific to enable the EIR team to process it – SWW's services level agreement was to provide this within 20 working days.

Question 14: Why had there been such a deterioration of water quality since 2012?

Response from SWW

The EA monitored and reported on water quality and would be the authority to speak to on this matter. Where the EA's data indicated that an improvement was required and it was for SWW to deliver, SWW would do this under the Water Industry National Environment Programme.

Question 15: In relation to the very low water pressure in the Whitnage Road area of Sampford Peverell, which had occurred since the new housing estate (The Orchards) had been occupied, what measures were being taken to remedy this, currently and planned? When was it expected to be resolved? (SWW had not seen fit to state any difficulty in relation to the planning application for this estate in relation to water supply).

Response from SWW

SWW had carried out some work to resolve pressure issues on this housing estate and were hoping this would solve the problem. At this stage, SWW did not believe they had fallen below the minimum standards. However, they had some follow-on work to ascertain if their interventions had been successful. Unfortunately when SWW considered this housing estate their modelling did not pick up on the low pressure issue. The team at SWW considered circa 30,000 planning applications every year. They looked at whether they could supply the water that was required for each property and from the perspective of whether the existing drainage network would support the discharges from those properties. Thirdly, they considered the application from the perspective of what impact the development would have on their assets.

Question 16: How was SWW working with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to control the amount of run off and sewage from new developments near rivers?

Response from SWW

SWW continued to work closely with LPAs to support the planning process including engagement on Local Plans and individual planning applications. SWW's engagement was to provide information in relation to available capacity within their drinking water and wastewater networks as well as ensuring that new development was not built too close to their assets, which could impact their ability to undertake maintenance in the future.

Historically there were a lot of combined surface water and foul drainage sewers. For all new sites developers could request a connection to SWW's networks and they followed best practice to deal with domestic surface water drainage which were the flows which came off roofs and hard standing areas.

When considering any request SWW insisted upon the applicant following the surface water drainage hierarchy through which surface water run off must aim to be discharged as high up the following hierarchy as possible:

- Rainwater re-use (rainwater harvesting/greywater recycling)
- An adequate soakaway or other infiltration system
- Hybrid solution of infiltration and discharging to a surface water body
- To a surface water body (e.g. an ordinary watercourse)
- To a surface water sewer, highway drain, or other drainage system
- To a combined sewer

Land drainage and surface water runoff was not permitted to be discharged to SWW's networks and must therefore be addressed by the developer within their drainage proposals, which should be signed off by the LPA supported by DCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Similarly, highway drainage could only be discharged into the public sewerage with the permission of the Water Company and SWW would continue to insist upon this being a last resort after all other discharge options had been considered.

Foul sewage connections would be made to either a dedicated foul sewer or a combined sewer and SWW would consider the impact of those flows into their network as part of their investment planning process.

SWW's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMP) included proposed development growth, as identified within the Planning Authority's Local Plans, to ensure that they understood what growth was anticipated and incorporate it into their investment programmes.

Agricultural Runoff

Question 17: What had SWW done to prevent the runoff from the Exmoor Mires Project running into local streams and rivers?

Response from SWW

SWW commissioned a research report from the University of Exeter published in 2020, which set out all the benefits of the package of interventions delivered through the Mires programme to slow the flow of water across the landscapes of Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor. The full report could be read here, including specific

sections on Exmoor.
https://issuu.com/universityofexeter/docs/creww_mire_on_the_moors_report_2020 .

Question 18: Would SWW support the funding of countryside stewardship from their fines, rather than being paid to HM Treasury?

Response from SWW

SWW believed that this was referring to the Water Restoration Fund rather than the “Countryside Stewardship”. If so, that was an issue for Government – and was currently part of the Water Special Measures Bill currently going through Parliament.

Water Management and Monitoring

Question 19: How much water was lost through leaks?

Response from SWW

SWW met their targets for leakage 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24, their outturn for 2024/25 was currently being verified. In 2023/24 SWW reported that across their network (including Bournemouth) 107.1 million litres per day was lost through leakage. Over the next 5 years SWW had a target to reduce that figure to 85.9 million litres per day.

SWW’s Water Resources Management Plan provided the details on leakage and their plans for improving this over the next 5 to 25 years. The link to their Water Resources Management Plan is here: <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/about-us/what-we-do/improving-your-service/water-resources-management-plan> . Water loss included that lost on private land such as dripping taps and slightly leaking toilet cisterns. People were encouraged to take a meter reading just before they left to go away for 4 or 5 days and to take one on return to gauge if any water was being lost on their premises (which they would be paying for). Water lost from the network went back into the environment.

Question 20: Was anything being done to speed up the responses to complaints about faulty water meters? Residents had made comments that there were very long waits to replace faulty or suspect water meters, one was over 6 months and the occupant was told that SWW receive 30 complaints a day. Could SWW clarify the procedure and current times involved from complaint to repair and the number of such complaints?

Response from SWW

SWW were not a limitless organisation and sometimes had to make tough choices on resources and priorities, it was admitted that sometimes they got the decision wrong. If there was a specific issue on this matter then the Councillor could take it to SWW outside of the meeting and they would look at it.

Question 20A: What was SWW’s approach to assessed charges which appeared to unfairly penalise customers that could not have individual water meters installed? This happened for instance in flats where there was a shared water supply and SWW stated that a meter could not be installed and an assessed charge was made. Why did SWW not allow customers to challenge an assessed charge using previous meter readings as evidence of actual consumption? What work had SWW done to investigate modern solutions that allowed more accurate measurement of usage in shared supply properties?

How many households in Mid Devon were being charged on an assessed basis because SWW said a water meter could not be fitted and what steps was the company taking to ensure that those residents were not being unfairly overcharged?

Response from SWW

This question referred to a casework issue. SWW worked with other water companies through the OFWAT Innovation Fund to look at various projects including SMART meterage. SWW would answer those questions in writing after the meeting directly to the Councillor.

Question 21: What support did SWW give to those customers who were struggling to pay bills on low incomes or had particular circumstances they were facing when customers were facing bills which were currently the highest in the country?

Response from SWW

SWW's Business Plan for the period 2025 to 2030 set out a £200m fund to help customers with affordability issues. More information could be found here: <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/siteassets/documents/about-us/business-plans/2025-30/addressing-affordability-and-delivering-for-customers.pdf> . That information was circulated to SWW's customers on their website.

Question 22: What assistance was currently given to customers who were struggling to pay their bills, and had SWW assessed how the planned higher than inflation price increases would affect this group of customers?

Response from SWW

SWW's Business Plan for the period 2025 to 2030 set out a £200m fund to help customers with affordability issues. More information could be found here: <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/siteassets/documents/about-us/business-plans/2025-30/addressing-affordability-and-delivering-for-customers.pdf>

Question 23: SWW was hit with a £12m fine from the regulator and the company was ordered to pay back the money to its customers in the form of discounts, had this money been refunded in full?

Response from SWW

SWW were fined £17.4m in 2024 by OFWAT for failure to meet performance targets. That money had been returned to customers.

Question 24: Could SWW provide details of all discharges, giving: location, date/time; duration; and volume of fluid discharged?

Response from SWW

This question fell within the Environmental Information Regulations(EIR)s and would need to be directed to SWW's EIR team. They would process this request and ensure a response was provided within 20 working days. The questioner would need to be specific i.e. what location or area they were interested in, over what period to enable SWW to respond accurately to the request. The EIR team would then ensure the request was logged, tracked and responded to within 20 working days. SWW was limited in terms of volume information that they provided because the Event Duration Monitoring data set did not capture details of volume, but SWW would provide the

information they had available. The flow of continuous discharges was measured but due to the nature of storm overflows, intermittent discharges could not be measured.

Question 25: Were there different types of discharges? (if so, what were they?) What were the reasons for the discharges? (e.g. rainfall, failure of technology, maintenance etc.)

Response from SWW

There were two main types of discharges: continuous and intermittent. Continuous discharges were primarily related to treated final effluent from sewage treatment plants. Those were permitted by the EA and SWW were required to monitor them and provide this data to the EA for compliance purposes. Each discharge would have a site specific permit to protect the environment.

The second was intermittent discharges which were primarily related to storm overflows. All storm overflows were monitored and SWW were required to provide this data to the EA as requested and annually were part of their Event Duration Monitoring Returns. Each discharge would have a site specific permit to protect the environment. The return was published by the EA in March each year and could be found here: [Environment Agency publishes Event Duration Monitoring data for 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

Emergency discharges came from a pumping station, where for instance there was a loss of power to the pumping station which caused a discharge. The reasons for any emergency discharge were recorded and that information could be disclosed unless there was any legally prejudicial reason why SWW were not able to.

Question 26: Can SWW advise on how this is monitored? Was it empirically measured or was it a “guesstimate”? Were there documented procedures around this? How were the figures:

- a. Verified?
- b. Audited
 - i. Internal?
 - ii. external?
- c. Monitored
 - i. By whom?
 - ii. Method?
 - iii. Frequency?
- d. Investigated
 - i. Random check?
 - ii. Regular reviews?
 - iii. Incident investigation?
 - iv. Was there a documented procedure?

Response from SWW

The permits set out how often and what was required to be monitored. Those permits were set to protect the environment and had clauses which described how SWW measured and to what standards. Each permit had its own permit conditions. SWW had both internal and external audits undertaken. External audits were completed to ensure they complied with Monitoring Certification Scheme (MCERT)'s certification. The EA would also review data and undertake site visits to check SWW's sites were compliant with specific permits. SWW would review data daily to ensure their sites were operating to the required standards this would form part of SWW's overall

operational activity. Ultimately, there were two primary outcomes: maintain compliance with the permit conditions and protect the environment – if either were compromised, SWW would rectify and / or the regulator would decide what action they may wish SWW to take under the WINEP.

Question 27: Were any of the items above published:

- a. For the general public?
- b. For stakeholders
 - i. Local councils?
 - ii. Central government?
 - iii. National bodies?

Response from SWW

There was a plethora of information in the public domain which was available to anyone who wished to use it. Where information was not available direct to the public via SWW's website or others, individuals could request information under the EIRs. If Members would like, SWW could offer a 'teach in' session where they could explain in more detail how the water industry was regulated. SWW published data on all storm overflows on their website which could be viewed ahead of the annual return. All storm overflow data was published on the website within an hour of the discharge commencing and within an hour of the discharge finishing and was visible on SWW's WaterFit Live Website where all storm overflows could be seen live at any moment. That information was replicated on the National Storm Overflow Hub which contained data from all the Water Companies in England within an hour of the data being published.

Question 28: There had been a lot of comment recently from the Government reported in the news, that there had not been any new reservoirs built in England since 1972 and that new reservoirs were desperately needed. Did SWW have any plans to build a new reservoir? If so could it be built in Mid Devon?"

Response from SWW

No new reservoirs were planned for the Council's area. SWW's Business Plan and Water Resources Plan set out future investment and water needs. SWW had already established new resources in Cornwall: Hawkstor and Blackpool Pit and SWW had new abstractions established on the River Tamar at Gatherleigh. As part of the wider Strategic Resource Options lead by RAPID link here: [RAPID - Ofwat](#) SWW would be building a new reservoir near Cheddar called Cheddar II during the 2030's.

Ms Tara Fraser – Member of the Public – Question supplied in advance

Question 29: Reviewing the newspaper archives for the Ashley area we note that the residents of Ashley had been complaining about the smell from the water treatment works for well over 150 years! What updates to the system had been made since it was first built and if the reason it smelled so bad was that it was, and had always been, inadequate for the number of dwellings it served? How and when would the system be updated so that it could cope effectively without blighting the lovely hamlet with obnoxious smells on a regular basis?

Response from SWW

SWW had plans to update the Tiverton Sewage Treatment Works (STW) by 2030. Tiverton STW was also a sludge treatment holding area where solids created as part

of the treatment process from in and around Tiverton were all brought to Tiverton and stored prior to being treated. It could be that that was what was causing the odour. SWW would investigate further the odour issues from this site that were being reported by the local residents and report back.

Fly Tipping

Question 30: Who and how did one contact the agency about fly tipping for example in the River Lowman? It did appear that SWW had assumed the role of water bailiff.

Response from SWW

SWW had not assumed the role of water bailiff – the EA and relevant local authority were responsible for waste incidents including major waste crime and fly tipping.

SWW had been working with Environmental Health and others, as part of the Food Hygiene rating, to consider whether or not the establishment had a fat trap. If there was an issue causing pollution SWW would prefer that the incident was reported to them.

Community

Question 31: There was a leat that went through several wards in Tiverton. This was a valuable asset to the people of Tiverton. The Friends of the Leat were a new charity set up to restore the leat. So that it ran again.

How could The Friends of the Leat or other groups like them form a formal partnership, (in whatever form) moving forward, with SWW?

Response from SWW

SWW's Natural Resources Team had many links with environmental organisations and would be happy to discuss issues with you. In a large number of instances there may be a partnership that had already been formed so it would be advisable to see what already existed. To understand more contact SWW's Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Nick Paling who would be pleased to help. His email address was: npaling@southwestwater.co.uk.

The Committee should note SWW had no assets in relation to that leat. Hence, there may be limited help that SWW could offer. There was a Neighbourhood Fund which could be bid into. This would start up again from 1 April 2025 and details could be found on SWW's website here: <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/our-south-west/community/neighbourhood-fund>.

Question 32: The River Culm in 2023 was designated the eighth most polluted river in the United Kingdom for illegal sewage spills. Plans were outlined in 2023 for alleviating that problem. In context the pollution came from 655 spills lasting a total of 7,303 hours and approximately 1.8 times per day. What had SWW done to alleviate that problem?

Response from SWW

£780m had been set aside for the next business period, 2025–2030, to address pollution and storm overflows. The work was shown on the National Storm Overflow Action Plan which showed when the storm overflows would be addressed. If the storm overflows into the Culm were into an area of Environmental Sensitivity then those issues would come forward in the programme to 2030-2035. The National Storm Overflow Action Plan showed when the investment was planned to occur.

Question 33: Did SWW monitor microplastics and how?

Response from SWW

A source control measure, removing microplastics from things like face creams, was put in place by the Government to ban microplastics going into products. SWW were taking part in a number of research projects looking at the presence of microplastics. The treatment processes that SWW operated removed approximately 99% of all microplastics from waste water.

SWW requested that Councillors promote that pee, poo and paper were the only items that were put into the sewage system.

Two Members of the Council would be offered the opportunity to see what SWW were doing with Exeter University at the Centre for Resilience in Environment, Water and Waste (CREWW). There they had a microplastic lab analysis where they could look at microplastics down to nanoparticles.

Question 34: The Council were currently trialling recycling for nappies and sanitary products etc. Would SWW support this measure and would there be any possibility in the future of some financial assistance?

Response from SWW

SWW applauded the Council for this trial as it would lead to less blockages occurring on the sewer network. It would be useful to share data where they could see whether the Council's trial reduced blockages and hence the true economic benefit to SWW.

Question 35: Bearing in mind the projected increase in housing numbers, would the new reservoir at Cheddar II have sufficient capacity to supply a certain amount of its water to the Mid Devon area? Had climate change and prolonged dry spells in weather been taken into account? Had SWW considered the potential for desalination plants?

Response from SWW

Climate change, population growth and housing increase was all part of the Water Resource Management Plan. The plan took into account the latest climate change projections, each time those changed, that had to be built into the plan. Housing numbers and plans were also built into the plan. SWW also had to look at per capita consumption (how much water each individual used). SWW were working with developers to encourage less water being used by household appliances for instance and lower capacity toilet cisterns and shower heads. SWW were encouraging the take up of water meters so that customers could see how much water they were using. SWW were looking at leakage on their own network but also encouraged customers to look at it on their network.

SWW already engaged with the Council's Forward Planning Team. SWW were putting in place some incentive schemes to encourage developer customers to use less water and so reduce the impact of new development.

Question 36: Would it be possible to have an off line conversation about the shutlake in Hemyock? It was an ever escalating situation with ongoing problems.

Response from SWW

SWW agreed to respond after the meeting.

Question 37: Accidents by their nature were urgent, how were they managed? What were the internal processes and procedures undertaken? What engagement happened with the EA or the Council's own Public Health Team? What was the reasonable timescale for when a spillage clear up could be expected? What was the context of reasonable in terms of making good when something had gone wrong?

Response from SWW

The Wastewater Operations Team would be responsible for clearing up any mess that SWW may have made at a location. Reasonable timescales may depend upon what was the immediate impact? Was it causing an environmental impact to the water course at that moment in which case it would probably have a higher priority? It would depend upon the potential risk and impact upon a water course. If the Regulator was made aware of it they may instruct SWW to clear the mess within 12 or 24 hours depending upon what the Regulator believed to be the impact of the issue on the water course. It did depend upon the risk and what else SWW were dealing with at the time and whether they could get people there in the time that they would ideally wish to. SWW would take away the question of the Service Level they operated when a spill had occurred.

Question 38: What were SWW's protocols and treatment of residents when new sewage pipes had to be laid across their land? How did SWW consider, consult with and communicate with those residents?

Response from SWW

Water companies had something called a requisition which was part of the Water Act. A developer could requisition SWW to provide either a water main or a sewer for a new development. It avoided the principle of ransom so that if the developer could not get their drainage out or their water main in by any means that they could negotiate, they could approach SWW who had land entry powers. SWW would serve a Notice to go and do the work. However, whilst SWW had the legal powers, there was a certain way to engage. As part of any work SWW carried out, they would be responsible for reinstating and making good.

Question 39: How did SWW deal with complaints and how were the non-standard complaints escalated?

Response from SWW

There was an escalation process with complaints however, first SWW needed to determine whether or not they were part of the problem or if they were not the organisation to resolve it. If a customer felt that their complaint had not been taken up, they could write to their MP who may ask SWW to review their decision. If an individual felt that they had not been dealt with properly they could take the issue to the Consumer Council for Water.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked the officers of SWW for their presentation, for answering the questions and for their time that evening.

97 WORK PROGRAMME (2:29:58)

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** the *Forward Plan and the *Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

The following was highlighted:

- (i) The only item on the agenda for the next meeting was the Scrutiny Chair's Annual Report. The Committee did not ask to add anything to that agenda having taken into account the Cabinet's Forward Plan.
- (ii) There would be an item on Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution which would likely be scheduled for 9 June and failing that 14 July dependent upon what information was available.
- (iii) The work item on Progress to Junction 28 and inviting the DCC Cabinet Member for Highways Management had been postponed due to the Pre-election Period. Once it was confirmed who the new Cabinet Member for Highways Management would be, an invitation would be sent to them.
- (iv) To be added to the Work Plan for 9 June, a report from the Leader of the Council on the State of the District, the Cabinet's priorities for the coming year and its performance in the previous year.
- (v) The report on house maintenance, general and emergency repairs, pollution monitoring and resident safety would be included in the Work Plan for 9 June.

The following work proposals were received:

- Cllr R Roberts – Modular Buildings (Zed Pods)
As a report covering the work proposed was already being prepared for the Homes PDG it was **agreed** that that report also came to the Scrutiny Committee.
- Cllr G Czapiewski – Land use for planning.
After discussion it was agreed that this proposal was amended by the proposer and then sent to (Planning Policy Advisory Group) PPAG for them to review and consider in the new local plan.
- Cllr G Czapiewski – Ambulance Response Times
After discussion regarding whether the Council was the right body to look at this matter and it was **agreed** that DCC was the most appropriate body and that the Chair and Clerk together with the Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement would encourage Town and Parish Councils to offer CPR/defibrillator and First Aid training in their locality.
- Cllr G Czapiewski – Social Housing Review
As a report covering the work proposed was already being prepared for the Homes PDG it was **agreed** that that report also came to the Scrutiny Committee.
- Cllr G Czapiewski – S106 Review – did current and future awards meet relevant infrastructure and social needs?
It was **agreed** that a report be produced explaining the procedure and processes that the Council went through and append the December 2024 Infrastructure Funding List to that with the report to come before the Scrutiny Committee over the summer.

Note: the *Forward Plan and the *Scrutiny Committee Work Programme were previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at 8.05 pm)

CHAIR

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Scrutiny Chairman's Annual Report – 2024-2025

It's been a busy year for the Scrutiny Committee, with ten full meetings all with hybrid accessibility, and briefings. I was delighted to be elected Chair for this year and continued the previous Committee's way of working, that of 'critical friend' giving robust clear guidance to Cabinet, Council, officers and external bodies / organisations, both pre- and post-decision making. I stated from the outset that openness and transparency would be the watchwords of this committee and am proud to report that we have not had any reports presented in part II.

Of the varying work that Scrutiny Committee undertook we actively encouraged public participation – a key facet of local government activity. As usual, the committee deliberated and debated a wide range of topics, reaching decisions and democratically resolving to advise the various bodies engaged. The Committee remained available to scrutinise the decisions of Cabinet, Council, Officers and external organisations but none were called in.

Areas that the Scrutiny Committee has considered this year include:

- Six monthly Establishment updates
- Six monthly whistleblowing updates.
- Six monthly Corporate performance reports
- Town and Parish Charter
- Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter
- Sale of Land that would unlock 70 Affordable Homes
- Planning Enforcement Policy Update
- Community Safety Partnership Report
- Mid Devon as a Trauma Informed Council
- Cullompton Infrastructure update
- Air Management in Cullompton and Beyond
- Mid Devon housing Voids
- Solar Panel Farms and Anaerobic Digesters – Quantity of Sites and Land Use
- Annual report of complaints and compliments
- The Impact of the Government's Proposed Changes to National Planning Policy on the Council's Priorities and Preparation of a New Local Plan
- Examination and Review of Freedom of Information Processes within Mid Devon District Council and Monitoring
- The Destination Management Plan
- Annual Report under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
- Housing Rents
- Budget Review
- How Devolution may affect Mid Devon District Council

Finally we invited representatives from South West Water to our meeting in March and scrutinised them about their policies and procedures. The meeting was well

attended by Councillors and Members of the Public and there was a frank exchange of views.

We have completed the process of scrutinising the portfolios of the Cabinet members to get a better understanding of their responsibilities and oversights. This year we heard from:

- Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement
- Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change
- Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services
- Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement
- Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health

It has been a privilege and pleasure to chair the Scrutiny Committee and I am indebted to officers and members for their tireless hard work, thus making our meetings well informed. A large thank you to everyone.

Cllr Lance Kennedy (Tiverton Cranmore)

Chair – Scrutiny Committee

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL – NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS

March 2025

The Forward Plan containing key Decisions is published 28 days prior to each Cabinet meeting

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
April 2025					
Replacement PVCU Double Glazed Unit / Entrance Doors	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy (NEW) To detail MDDC's AI policy in the protection of Information assets and ethical use.	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group	10 Mar 2025	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025			
	Council	23 Apr 2025			

Agenda Item 8

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Tenancy Accommodation Project	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025	Tanya Wenham, Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Housing Rent Error Update Report To receive a report updating the current position regarding the Housing Rents Error.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	18 Mar 2025 1 Apr 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Complaints and Feedback Policy	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Cabinet Member for People, Development and Deputy Leader	Open
Corporate Performance Q3; Performance Dashboard Q3	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Tenancy Management Policy To receive the revised Tenancy Management Policy.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	18 Mar 2025 1 Apr 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Variation to Standard Tenancy Agreement That the Homes PDG recommends to Cabinet that the procedure for the variation of tenancy conditions in line with the Housing Act 1985 (sections 102 & 103) commence.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	18 Mar 2025 1 Apr 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	25 Mar 2025 1 Apr 2025	Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance & Waste	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health Cabinet Member for People, Development and Deputy Leader	Open
Housing Delivery Test Action Plan	Cabinet	1 Apr 2025	Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
May 2025					
Tenancy Options Waste Services– Carlu Close To consider the future of the tenancy at Carlu Close	Cabinet	20 May 2025	Darren Beer, Operations Manager for Street Scene	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open
Air Quality Action Plan To consider the report	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	25 Mar 2025 Not before 20th May 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road - Verbal update	Cabinet	20 May 2025	Director of Place and Economy	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	
Digital Transformation	Cabinet	20 May 2025	Andy Mackie, Leisure Services Manager	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	
Contract Decision- Mid	Cabinet	20 May 2025		Cabinet Member for	Fully exempt

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Devon Housing build, Honiton Road, Cullompton				Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	
June 2025					
Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan	Cabinet	17 Jun 2025	Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Housing Strategy To receive the revised Housing Strategy.	Homes Policy Development Group	3 Jun 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
	Cabinet	17 Jun 2025			
2024/25 Annual Treasury outturn report	Cabinet	17 Jun 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
2024/25 Revenue and Capital Outturn Report	Cabinet	17 Jun 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Tiverton EUE. Area B Masterplan	Cabinet	17 Jun 2025	Christie McCombe, Area Planning Officer	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
July 2025					
Public Health Food Safety Service Plan To consider the report.	Cabinet	8 Jul 2025	Harriet Said, Team Leader (Commercial), Public Health, Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
Unauthorised Encampment Policy To consider the report	Cabinet	8 Jul 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Corporate Risk Report	Audit Committee Cabinet	24 Jun 2025 8 Jul 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Annual Performance Report	Cabinet	8 Jul 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Community Engagement Strategy (Including Action Plan) Community Engagement Strategy	Cabinet	8 Jul 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement	Open
Asset Management Plan To receive the revised Asset Management Plan.	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	19 Jun 2025 8 Jul 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Destination Management Plan for Mid Devon	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	19 Jun 2025 8 Jul 2025	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Economic Strategy 2024 - 2029	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	19 Jun 2025 8 Jul 2025	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
August 2025					
Plan Mid Devon- Draft Policies and Site Options	Cabinet	Not before 31st Aug 2025	Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader		Open
September 2025					
MTFP Report	Cabinet	2 Sep 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Corporate Risk Report	Audit Committee Cabinet	30 Sep 2025 7 Oct 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
October 2025					
Play Area Inspection Policy To receive and approve the revised Play Area Inspection Policy.	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group Cabinet	15 Sep 2025 7 Oct 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open
Corporate Performance Q1	Cabinet	7 Oct 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	7 Oct 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Data Policy (NEW) for MDH To receive the new Data Policy for Mid Devon Housing	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	Not before 9th Sep 2025 Not before 7th Oct 2025 Not before 29th Oct 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
November 2025					
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	4 Nov 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Corporate Recovery Policy To receive the updated Corporate Recovery Policy.	Audit Committee Cabinet	30 Sep 2025 4 Nov 2025	Dean Emery, Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Tax Base Calculations	Cabinet Council	4 Nov 2025 17 Dec 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
December 2025					

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
MDDC Council Tax Rebate Policy	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	11 Nov 2025 2 Dec 2025	Fiona Keyes, Operations Manager for Revenues Benefits & Recovery	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	
Tenancy Strategy To receive the revised Tenancy Strategy	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	18 Nov 2025 2 Dec 2025	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Strategic Grants Review 2025 To consider requests from external organisations for grants.	Cabinet	2 Dec 2025	Zoë Lentell, Economic Development Team Leader	Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement	Open
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	2 Dec 2025	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Corporate Performance Q2	Cabinet	2 Dec 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Corporate Risk Report	Cabinet	2 Dec 2025	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	
Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy To consider the report.	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	11 Nov 2025 2 Dec 2025		Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
January 2026					
Shopfront Enhancement Schemes To receive a report setting out the Shopfront Enhancement Scheme for approval.	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	27 Nov 2025 13 Jan 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Fees and Charges Report	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
February 2026					
Pay Policy Report	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	James Hamblin, Operations Manager for People Services	Leader of the Council	Open
	Council	18 Feb 2026			
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
	Council	18 Feb 2026			
Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
	Council	18 Feb 2026			
2026/2027 Capital Strategy and 2026/2027 Capital Programme	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
	Council	18 Feb 2026			

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Establishment Report	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	James Hamblin, Operations Manager for People Services	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open
Policy Framework	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Laura Woon, Democratic Services Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Business Rates Tax Base	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
April 2026					
Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective To consider the report.	Cabinet	7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager, Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance & Waste	Cabinet Member for People, Development and Deputy Leader	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Corporate Risk Report	Cabinet	7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Corporate Performance Q3	Cabinet	7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Customer Care Policy To received the revised Customer Care Policy.	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group Cabinet	23 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open
Tenancy Fraud (NEW) To receive and approve a new policy in relation to Tenancy Fraud.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	17 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026 22 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Aids and Adaptations policy To receive a report updating and reviewing the Aids and Adaptations Policy.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	17 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2025-2026

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
9 June 2025				
9.06.25	Election of Vice-Chair To elect a Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Committee		David Parker	
9.06.25	Start Time of Meetings To agree the start time of meetings for the remainder of the municipal year.		David Parker	
09.06.25	Leader of the Council's Annual Report Report on State of the District, the Cabinet's priorities for the coming year and its performance in the previous year.		Chief Executive	
09.06.25	Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation		Chief Executive	
09.06.25	House Maintenance To receive a report on House Maintenance, general and emergency repairs, pollution monitoring, and resident safety.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
9.06.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
14 July 2025				
14.07.25	Freedom of Information Dashboard To receive the Dashboard		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Lisa Lewis	
14.07.25	Progress on Junction 28 of the M5 To receive a report from the DCC Cabinet Member for Highways		Devon County Council	
14.07.25	Annual Corporate Performance Report Including the Leader's Response To consider the Report and response.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Steve Carr	
14.07.25	Housing Strategy To receive a report already going to Homes PDG that would include Modular Buildings and Social Housing Review.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
14.07.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
18 August 2025				

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
8 September 2025				
8.09.25	Whistleblowing - 6 month update To receive the report		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Matthew Page	
8.09.25	Establishment - 6 month update To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Matthew Page, James Hamblin	
8.09.25	Community Safety Partnership To consider the report.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
8.09.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
29 September 2025				
29.09.25	S106 Review To receive a report explaining the procedure and processes that the Council went through and append the December 2024 Infrastructure Funding List		Director of Place and Economy	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
29.09.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
20 October 2025				
20.10.25	Freedom of Information Dashboard To receive the Freedom of Information Dashboard		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Lisa Lewis	
20.10.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
17 November 2025				
17.11.25	Annual Report of Complaints and Compliments To consider the report.		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Lisa Lewis	
17.11.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
15 December 2025				
15.12.25	Interim Corporate Performance report to Quarter 2 To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Steve Carr	
15.12.25	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
26 January 2026				
26.01.26 Cabinet 10.02.26	Budget Update To consider the initial draft 2026/2027 Budget and options available in order for the Council to set a balanced budget.		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Paul Deal	
26.01.26	Freedom of Information Report To receive a report relating to future Freedom of Information reporting and to agree the information to be reported on a Dashboard.		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Lisa Lewis Ewan Girling	
26.01.26	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Annual Report To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Maria De Leburne	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
26.01.26	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
23 February 2026				
23.02.26	Whistleblowing Annual Update To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Matthew Page	
23.02.26	Establishment Report To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Matthew Page James Hamblin	
23.02.26	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
16 March 2026				
16.03.26	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	
20 April 2026				
20.04.26	Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee Chair		David Parker	
20.04.26	Work Plan To review the existing Work Plan and consider items for the Committee's future consideration including a) Any items within the Forward Plan, b) Suggestions for future work.		David Parker	

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