

## Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group

**Tuesday, 25 June 2024 at 2.15 pm**  
**Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton**

**Next ordinary meeting**  
**Tuesday, 24 September 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 will be made and published on the website after the meeting**

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

Meeting ID: 329 892 212 527

Passcode: R2V3d2

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## Membership

B Holdman  
C Connor  
D Broom  
A Cuddy  
M Farrell  
A Glover  
C Harrower  
H Tuffin

# AGENDA

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

- 1      **Election of Chairman**  
To elect a Chairman of the Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 2      **Election of Vice-Chairman**  
To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 3      **Start Time of Meetings**  
To agree the start time of meetings for the remainder of the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 4      **Apologies and Substitute Members**  
To receive any apologies for absence and notices of appointment of substitute Members (if any).
- 5      **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.
- 6      **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**  
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 7      **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** *(Pages 5 - 14)*  
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 March 2024.
- 8      **Chairmans Announcements**  
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 9      **Draft Corporate Plan** *(Pages 15 - 40)*
- 10     **Performance Dashboard and Outturn Quarter 4** *(Pages 41 - 48)*  
To receive a verbal update on the Performance Dashboard from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager and receive the Outturn detail.
- 11     **Food Safety Plan** *(Pages 49 - 74)*  
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health providing a service update for the statutory work of the Food Safety team within Public Health and Housing Options.

- 12     **Resilience Strategy** (*Pages 75 - 102*)  
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health relating to Resilience Strategy.
- 13     **Town and Parish Charter** (*Pages 103 - 144*)  
To receive a report from the Town and Parish Liaison Officer regarding the Town and Parish Charter.
- 14     **Work Programme** (*Pages 145 - 148*)  
To receive the current work plan for the Community PDG.

**Stephen Walford**  
Chief Executive  
Monday, 17 June 2024

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Member Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

Members of the public may also use other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to discussion. Lift access to the Council Chamber on the first floor of the building is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available. There is time set aside at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to ask questions.

An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, or

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact David Parker on:

Tel: 01884 234251

E-Mail: [ahowell@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:ahowell@middevon.gov.uk)

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## **MINUTES of a MEETING of the COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

held on 26 March 2024 at 1.00 pm

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

B Holdman (Chairman)  
C Connor (Vice Chairman), D Broom,  
G Cochran, G Czapiewski and C Harrower

### **Apologies**

#### **Councillor(s)**

S Robinson

### **Also Present**

#### **Councillor(s)**

G Duchesne

### **Also Present**

#### **Officer(s):**

Maria De Leiburne (Director of Legal, HR & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Lisa Lewis (Corporate Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Jason Ball (Climate and Sustainability Specialist), James Hamblin (HR Business Partner) and Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer)

### **Councillors**

#### **Online**

J Buczkowski

### **Officers Online**

## **59 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (03:45)**

Cllr S Robinson sent her apologies and Cllr G Czapiewski attended as her substitute.

## **60 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (04:15)**

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

There were no declarations of interest.

## **61 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (04:45)**

There were no members of the public present.

62 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (05:00)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

63 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (05:18)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

64 **MEETING MANAGEMENT (05:28)**

The Chairman announced that the Group would be discussing Agenda Items 9 and 10 before Agenda Item 6.

65 **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY (06:04)**

The Group had before it a report \* from the Operations Manager Human Resources on the Health and Safety Policy which had been reviewed and approved by the Health and Safety Committee on 24 January 2024 as well as the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee (JNCC) on 25 January 2024.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The main changes were to the job titles.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- Accidents, incidents and near misses and how these were recorded and reviewed. It was explained by the Corporate Manager for People, Performance and Waste that the data was analysed at a quarterly corporate meeting which was chaired by the Chief Executive that looked at the high risks which were scrutinised across the Council.
- Emergency evacuations and the use of the evacuation chair, where they were stored and staff training. All members of the Democratic Services Team and all Caretakers had received training.
- The requirement of a fire drill at a meeting of full Council and when this would be. This would be confirmed by the Corporate Manager for People, Performance and Waste.

**RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the revised Health and Safety Policy be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr C Connor and seconded by Cllr G Cochran)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: (i) \* Report previously circulated.

## 66 SINGLE EQUALITIES SCHEME AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVES (13:14)

The Group had before it a report \* from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager with an update on action taken to help meet the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010).

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- This report was presented annually to the Community PDG.
- The report outlined how the Council worked to implement equality duties.
- The Policy had been reviewed over the past 6 months by the Equality and Diversity Inclusion Group (EDI).
- Following the review a new set of objectives had been proposed to make them more specific and measurable.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- Mid Devon residents being able to access the Council's services despite having no email address or internet facilities and how this was overcome by the existing channels in place such as the press and lobbying for better digital connectivity. An idea suggested by the Group was to approach Town and Parish Councils asking them to advertise on their local notice boards.
- Supporting Ukraine families now that CHAT were no longer managing this.

The Community PDG also thanked Dr Stephen Carr for his work on this report.

**RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the Single Equality Scheme together with the Equality Objectives for 2024/2025 be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr G Cochran and seconded by Cllr C Connor)

### Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

## 67 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q3

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, the Performance Dashboard \* providing summary information reflecting performance for the previous quarter.

The following was highlighted:

- All Council complaints had been resolved within the timescales.
- Environment Protection Services were showing red as this was a new indicator set up for this financial year.

Discussion took place with regard to:

- Capital Projects and why there were showing Amber. It was explained that there were 5 projects running behind schedule and that this was not unusual.

Note: \* Dashboard previously provided.

## 68 BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a briefing paper \* from the Climate and Sustainability Specialist and the Director of Place and Economy setting out the need for all of the Council's operating areas to be fully aware of their responsibility in needing to meet the biodiversity duty.

The following was highlighted within the paper:-

- Local Authorities had been asked by Government to set out an action plan which would be monitored to enhance nature in all areas to be applied across the organisation.
- The Cabinet had asked for all Policy Development Groups to consider this statutory duty under their own remits and to provide ideas and policies to take back to Cabinet so that they could be incorporated into an action plan.
- In the last 5 years the Council had achieved its tree planting targets.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- Whether Council tenants were able to plant trees in their gardens. It was explained that tenants would be encouraged to plant native trees as long as it did not affect neighbouring properties.
- The planting of community orchards and how this had already been a success.
- The idea of planting a tree for each baby born in Mid Devon, including stillborn babies as there was a similar scheme in Somerset.
- Biodiversity on waste land or brownfield sites and whether areas should be left for natural regeneration.
- The State of District Debate and how this highlighted how Town and Parish Councils wished to be involved.
- The monitoring of the survival of trees and how to protect trees that had been planted.
- Flood management schemes and how support was actively being offered to support projects for natural flood management.

Note: \* Briefing paper previously circulated.

## 69 PUBLIC ACCESS FOR VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS

The Group had before it a report \* from the Corporate Manager Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement to present the findings of the Public Access Working Group.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- On the 22 August 2023 the Community PDG commissioned a Working Group to be set up to assess the impact of reduced opening hours of Phoenix House for vulnerable residents.
- The Working Group had met 3 times where Members worked with officers to assess the current provision and how this could be improved.
- The Working Group had forwarded a request to the Car Parking Working Group to identify whether it would be possible to provide free blue badge parking in the disabled parking facility as currently customers had to cross the car park to pay which could be difficult.
- The Working Group had suggested the provision of an intercom to be placed at the front of the building within the airlock so that when reception was closed to the public, the intercom would still be accessible.
- The calls made using the intercom would go through to the Contact Centre where they would be triaged and dealt with effectively.
- The usage would be monitored after 6 months of installation to see how much the facility was used. This would be reported back to the Community PDG.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- The installation time and how long this would take. It was hoped, if approved that this could be achieved within a few weeks from approval.
- How this would be communicated to ensure members of the public were aware of the intercom being installed. This would be achieved through normal channels such as press releases and signage.
- It was also suggested by the Group that a table with a pen and paper be provided in the airlock for customers to use when making calls.
- The personal protection of staff when dealing with members of the public that were abusive or threatening.

**RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet the approval of the installation of an intercom for use by the public when Phoenix House was closed (available office hours only).

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

## 70 DEVON PREVENTING SERIOUS VIOLENCE STRATEGY

The Group had before it a report \* from the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing which was presented by Cllr D Wulff, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The report outlined the overall vision and priorities to prevent violence.
- There was a legal requirement for a Strategy for the area to be published by 31 January 2024.
- The work was completed with the Community Safety Partnership who had worked closely with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to develop the adopted governance framework for delivery of the duty.
- There were 3 states of prevention, Universal (Primary Prevention), Targeted (Secondary Prevention) and Specialist (Tertiary Prevention).
- Cabinet had previously looked at the report in January 2024 and was now being presented to the Community PDG to embed the Strategy within the Council Policy Framework to enable delivery.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- The unfortunate language used in the report when referring to children in care as it appeared they were being demonised.
- When referring to children in the report the Community PDG requested that it also included missing children.
- The need to work alongside Town and Parish Councils to ensure they were engaged and working alongside the Community Safety Partnership.

The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing would put forward the above suggestions to the Community Devon Partnership.

**RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet recommends to Council the adoption of the Devon Preventing Serious Violence Strategy 2024-29 as attached in Annex A to enable delivery as appropriate by the Council's Community Safety Partnership (as a specified authority under the Serious Violence Duty).

(Proposed by Cllr D Broom and seconded by Cllr C Harrower)

#### Reason for the decision

The purpose of the report was to enable the Community PDG to make a forward recommendation for adoption of the Strategy. As a new Strategy within the Policy Framework it would require full Council approval to adopt.

Note: (i) \* Report previously circulated.

## 71 SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Group had before it a report \* from the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing with a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The current Policy was last reviewed by the Community PDG in March 2022.
- A Policy review was instigated to take into account changes of responsibilities within the Council.
- As part of the review process, views were sought on current safeguarding policy and operational practice from an internal Working Group of safeguarding leads and the external Devon Districts Safeguarding Officer Network.
- A draft Policy was also reviewed by a Housing Safeguarding Policy expert.
- Feedback from Members Safeguarding Training which took place in December 2023 had also helped to shape the policy format.
- The Policy was now updated and fit for purpose.
- As part of the policy review process it also identified a potential gap in safeguarding provisions for Members with a recommended mechanism to review Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks which could be included in a future update of relevant policies. This would be a Member led decision.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- The action taken if a DBS result disclosed information. It was explained that it would be kept confidential and that there would be steps put in place to deal with such matters.
- The DBS check would be a basic check rather than an enhanced check.
- The importance of best practice and eligibility.
- The Group requested that on Page 124, 1.3.3 – the last bullet point of the report which currently read as “having been in care, prison or other institution” that children in care are not put in the same category as prison or other institution. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing would change this before it went to Cabinet.

**RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

**RECOMMENDED** to Standards Committee that a Member Working Group be established to review the potential future inclusion of DBS checks for Members within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and related DBS Policy.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

## 72 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Group had before it, and **NOTED** a \* report from the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing on the annual report of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and planned activities for the coming year 2024/25.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The CSP priority areas of focus for 2024/25 were based on Strategic Assessments that had been discussed, shaped and agreed by the CSP Board Members.
- The Policy was largely unchanged from the previous year with priority areas of focus being based on violent crime and youth risk and vulnerability.
- The Terrorism Bill also known as Martyn's Law would require venues to assess and mitigate potential risks and to be prepared to deal with incidents to protect people.
- A new requirement based on a national of Community Safety Partnership and Anti Social Behaviours (ASB) powers. This work would need to be incorporated into the Council's Action Plan going forward to have plans in place to strengthen relationships with the local Police Team and other bodies.

Discussion took place with regards to:-

- Martyn's Law and whether training and guidance would be put in place to support those managing facilities. It was explained that at the moment the Council were unsure where this funding would be coming from.
- The need to have more information to encourage people who have intelligence regarding a crime to come forward. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing would look into this further.

Note: (i) \* Report previously circulated.

## 73 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the Chairman's Annual Report for 2023/2024  
\*.

The following was discussed:-

- The need to invite Devon and Cornwall Police back to future meetings of Community PDG.
- To also engage more with Town and Parish Councils moving forward.



There being no further comment on the report, this would now be presented to full Council at their meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Note: \* Report previously circulated

(The meeting ended at 3.33 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**

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**Report for: Community, People and Equalities PDG**

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Date of Meeting:	25 June 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Draft Corporate Plan 2024-28</b>
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Luke Taylor, Council Leader
Responsible Officer:	Stephen Walford, Chief Executive  Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance and Waste  Steve Carr, Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager
Exempt:	N/A  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:	Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Plan 2024-28

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

To consider the draft Corporate Plan for 2024-28.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Members are asked to review the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28, Appendix 1, and recommend their feedback to Cabinet for amendment to the final draft.**

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 A Corporate Plan is a strategy that documents, communicates and provides a framework for the delivery of strategic priorities. It should provide a shared understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve. This ensures the public are aware of the Council's objectives, and can therefore hold the Council accountable.
- 1.2 The Corporate Plan also clarifies to staff what the Council's priorities are, and enables their role in delivering the Plan to be delegated to them, such as through the appraisal process.
- 1.3 A Corporate Plan enables governance, resources and other management controls, such as risk management, to be aligned to the Council's strategic goals.
- 1.4 It is also used to assess performance by internal and external auditors in terms of Value for Money considerations, ensuring that Council resources are aligned and are being used effectively to achieve corporate aspirations.

### **2.0 Corporate Plan 2024-28 Development**

- 2.1 The draft Corporate Plan has been under development since January 2024 when an initial meeting was held by the Council Leader with the Cabinet and committee/ Policy Development Group chairs and vice chairs. Officer support was provided by the Leadership Team and the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager.
- 2.2 This initial meeting began to clarify the timeline for developing a new corporate plan, the approach to be undertaken, and the thematic areas to be explored.
- 2.3 Further research was undertaken by the Council Administration into the key development areas to be considered under each thematic area. Analysis of this feedback was provided by officers at a subsequent meeting in March 2024. Members from the Administration used this information to clarify and prioritise their aims and objectives. From this, the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 has been developed by Council officers.

### **3.0 Draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 Structure**

- 3.1 The draft Corporate Plan has a fairly typical layout for a strategy document. Following a front cover and a contents page, there are a series of background and contextual pages to introduce the reader to the Plan, the District, and to the Council.
- 3.2 The Council's priorities are structured around five themes, these are:

- Planning, Environment & Sustainability
  - Community, People & Equalities
  - Homes
  - Economy & Assets
  - Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement
- 3.3 The Council reviewed its governance arrangements in spring 2024, and realigned its Policy Development Groups to these themes.
- 3.4 For each theme in the draft Corporate Plan, a number of Aims are listed. 28 Aims are currently proposed. These provide a strategic statement of what the Council is aiming to achieve. For each Aim, there is an objective statement detailing how the Council will deliver on each Aim.
- 3.5 A set of performance indicators are provided within the draft document. These indicators and their targets are very much in development by officers. The performance indicators will enable both the Council, and others, to monitor and scrutinise performance in delivering the Corporate Plan. By exception, these indicators have draft performance targets in place. These are either set as annual targets, or as a target over the course of the Plan.
- 3.6 The final pages of the draft Plan detail the Council's values and there is a summary statement provided by the Chief Executive.
- 4.0 Further Refinement**
- 4.1 As stated, this is a draft document. It would benefit from the insight and review of all Elected Members. Members of this PDG are asked to consider the draft document, in particular the sections which pertain to this PDG, and recommend their feedback to the Cabinet meeting on 02 July. The draft Corporate Plan will subsequently be presented to Full Council on 17 July 2024 for consideration and approval.

## **Financial Implications**

A new corporate plan will set the direction of policy travel for the Council at a strategic level. However, it does not have any direct actions associated with it at this point, and the council's financial context will continue to be set at a strategic level via the annual budget and Medium Term Financial Planning processes. When the Council agrees a new corporate plan, subsequent decisions that may be taken to realign activity to the new corporate plan in due course, will each be subject to the appropriate impact assessments given to decisions made by the Council in the normal way.

## **Legal Implications**

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.

## **Risk Assessment**

Not applicable at this stage. Upon approval, the Council's performance to achieve its corporate plan will be measured and monitored through a suite of performance metrics. This will help to identify underperformance as soon as possible, and enable decisions to be taken to improve performance.

Risk management processes within the Council reflect the strategic and operational priorities of the Council. Therefore, once a new corporate plan is approved all relevant risk registers, particularly the Corporate Risk Register, will need to be reviewed to ensure they appropriately capture all relevant risks.

## **Impact on Climate Change**

Throughout the draft Corporate Plan, aims and objectives related to the Council's impact on climate change can be noted. These are supported by relevant performance measures. Alongside this reference is made to climate resilience, ensuring that the Council and our communities are prepared and able to meet the challenges of a changing climate.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

One of the five themes of the Corporate Plan is Community, People and Equalities which details a number of aims and objectives related to equalities. All policies and decisions undertaken by the Council as a result of a new Corporate Plan will be subject to an equalities impact assessment in the normal way.

## **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

This report introduces the draft Corporate Plan 2024-28 which will replace the current Corporate Plan. A final performance report on the current Corporate Plan will be presented to Cabinet on 02 July 2024. The new corporate plan will set the overarching direction of travel for the council and will guide all future decision-making for the remainder of the political cycle.

## **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

**Date:** 6 June 2024

**Statutory Officer:** Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date:** 6 June 2024

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford

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

**Date:** 6 June 2024

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

**Date:** 24/05/2024

**Cabinet member notified:** (yes/no)

**Report: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. (No)**

**Appendix: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. (No)**

#### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Dr Steve Carr, Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager

Email: [scarr@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:scarr@middevon.gov.uk)

Telephone: 3CX Extension: 4217

**Background papers:**

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# Corporate Plan 2024-2028

*Additional title statement tbc*

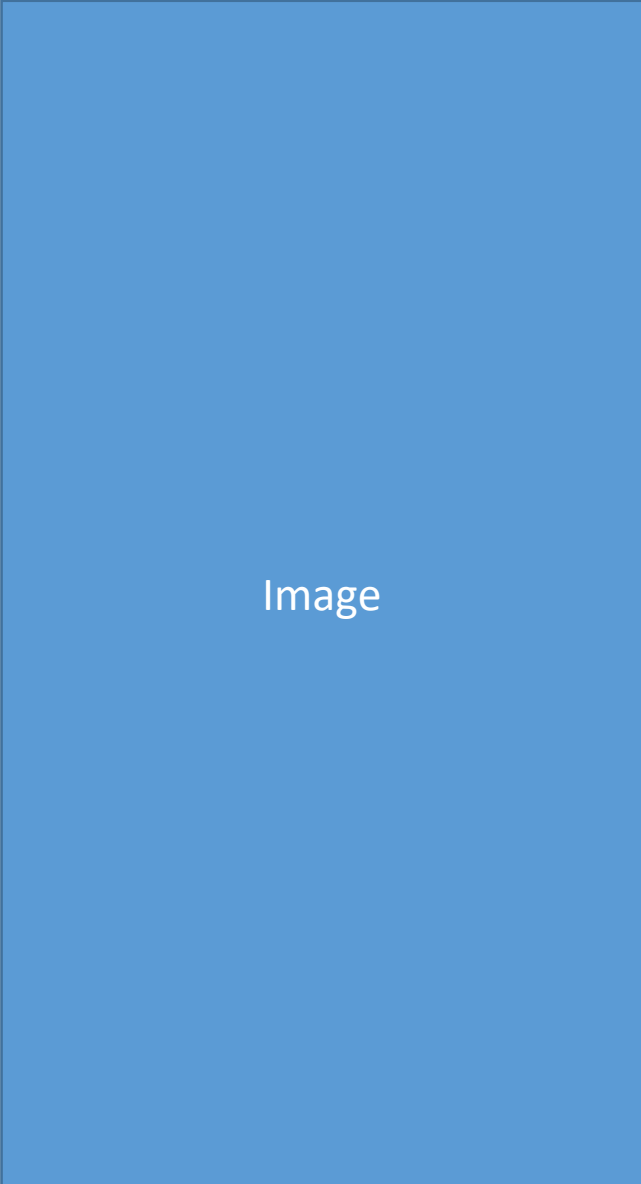
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# Introduction

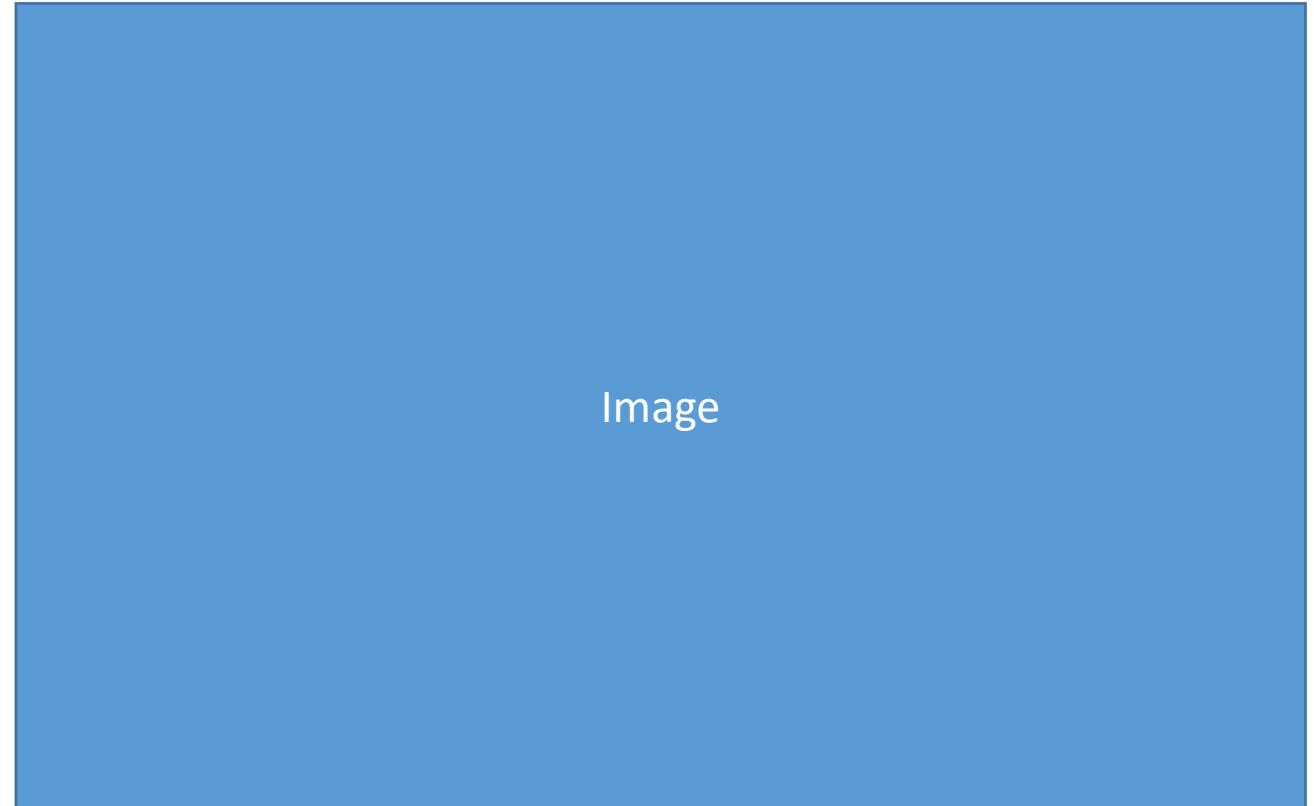
Through our Corporate Plan, we want to set out our ambitions for Mid Devon and the Council. By doing this, we hope to provide a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve. Our Corporate Plan is split into five sections (or themes). These are:

- Planning, Environment & Sustainability
- Community, People & Equalities
- Homes
- Economy & Assets
- Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

Within each of these five themes we set out:

- What we want to achieve
- How we will achieve it
- How we will measure our performance

The Council's Corporate Plan provides the framework for the delivery and monitoring of the Council's corporate ambitions.



## Background

Mid Devon District Council serves a rural location covering an area of 353 square miles (914 km<sup>2</sup>) in the agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. Mid Devon has three principle towns – Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. These towns provide services for surrounding rural communities.

Approximately 83,000 people live in Mid Devon, and more than half of our residents live in villages across the rural heartland. Of the 296 districts in England, Mid Devon is the 32<sup>nd</sup> largest by area, but it is also the 23<sup>rd</sup> smallest by population. This reflects its rural characteristics.

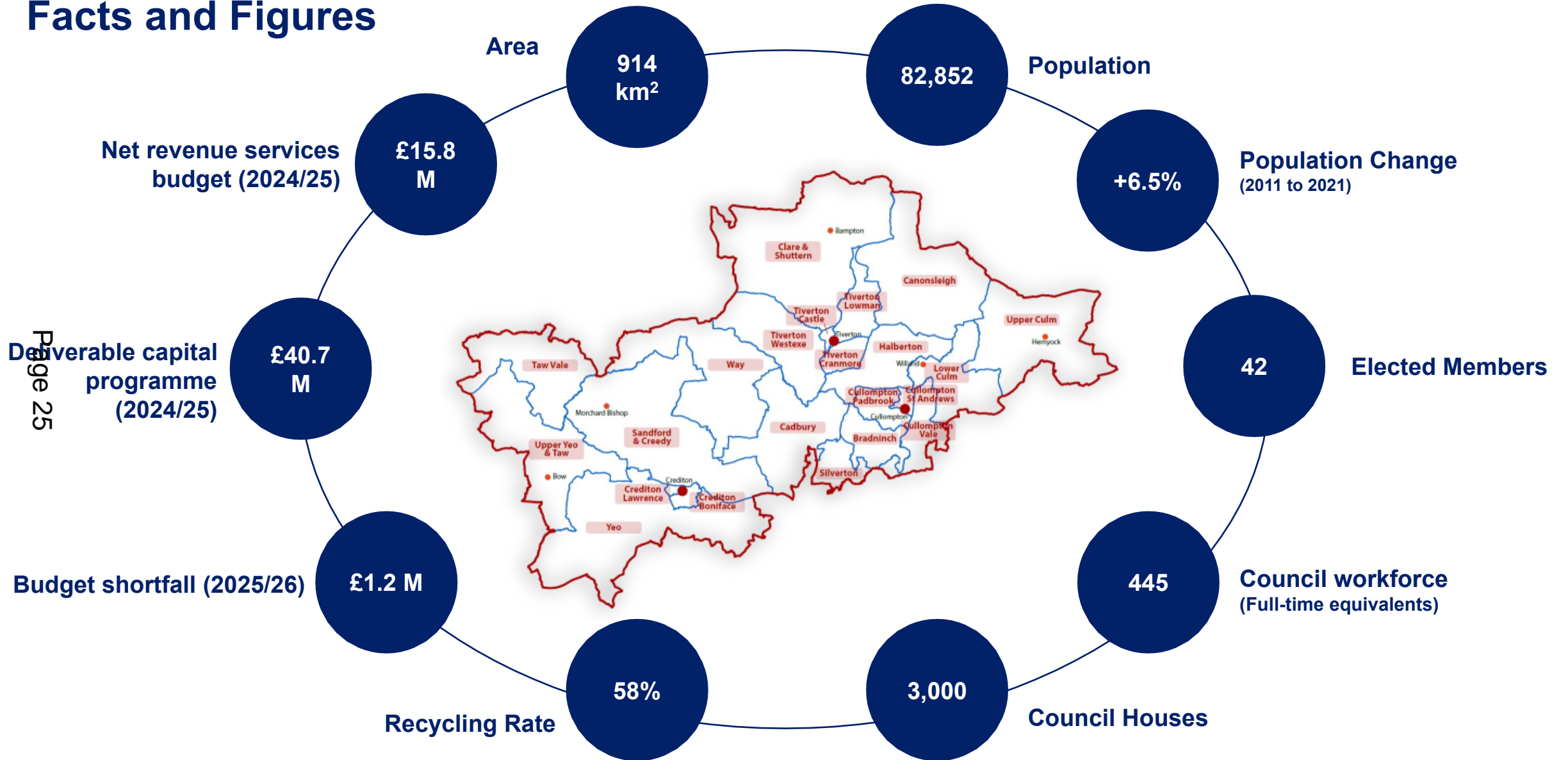
Strategically located on South West England's main transport and communication corridor, Mid Devon is mid-way between Taunton and Exeter. Our main offices lie to the North East of the city of Exeter, one of the most rapidly expanding economies in the country. As a district council, Mid Devon has sought to maximise this opportunity by delivering quality growth in a high-quality environment.

*“It is my pleasure to present the Corporate Plan 2024 - 2027. This Plan expresses a positive and ambitious vision for Mid Devon, however it also acknowledges the financial challenges facing the Council, and the district more generally. Understanding this broader context is important for setting the right expectations. The actions and targets set out in the corporate plan must be both ambitious and achievable in order to provide a meaningful assessment of the progress the Council is making. We will keep these under regular review to ensure they drive continual improvement and deliver the Council’s vision. We are committed to engaging with others in a collaborative way. We are strong local leaders, and will help others to improve and grow. We take pride in doing this.”*

Cllr Luke Taylor  
Leader of Mid Devon District Council



# Facts and Figures



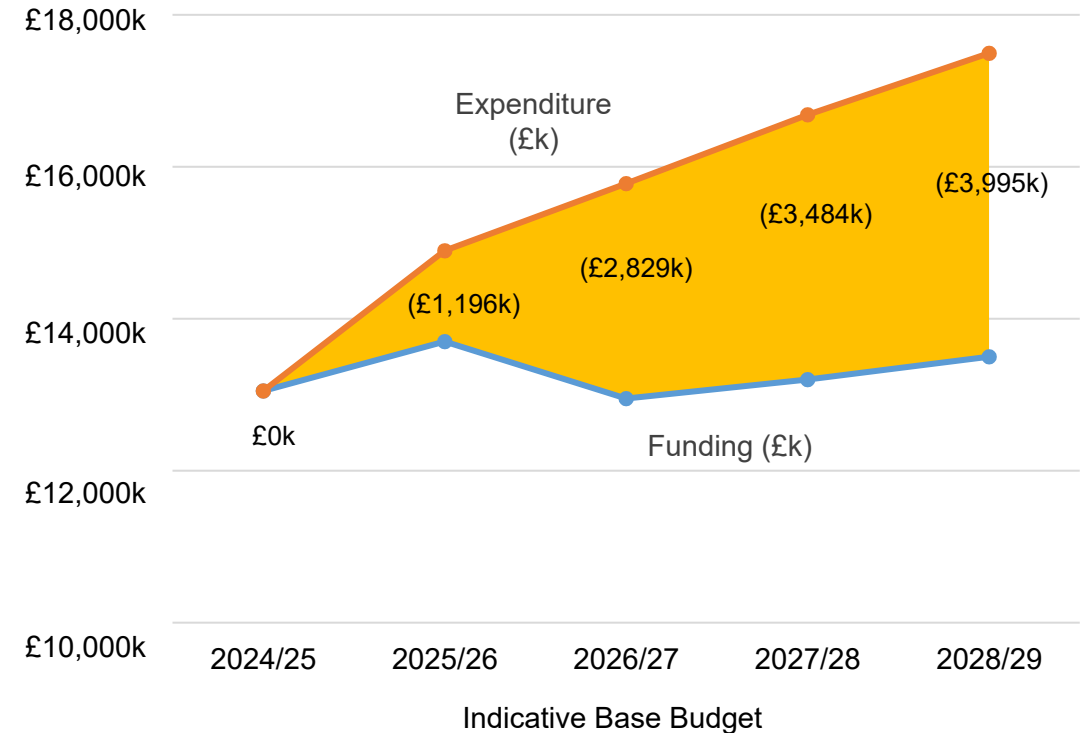
# Medium Term Financial Plan

The General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan summary position shows a cumulative shortfall of £3,995k over the remaining four-years of the Plan which remains to be addressed.

The underlying budget shortfall occurs largely in 2025/26 and 2026/27 due to inflation and reduced grant funding assumptions linked to long outstanding and overdue reforms to Local Government Funding mechanisms. These include:

- 2025/26 Grant allocations remain as per 2024/25. 2026/27 and beyond Grant Allocations assume a 50% reduction;
- A partial loss of historic growth in business rates on reset of the business rates system in 2026/27;
- Council Tax referendum principles at previous levels (£5 or 2%) from 2025/26.

These projections demonstrate the challenging financial position facing local councils, and set the context for outlining our corporate objectives.



# Our Priorities

Our aims and objectives are centred around five themes:



**Planning, Environment & Sustainability** - To be a leader and pioneer of best practice so new innovation and thinking is at the heart of the services we deliver and informs our planning policies.



**Community, People & Equalities** - Involving and engaging with our communities, ensuring everyone is treated with equity and respect, and protecting our most vulnerable.



**Homes** - Delivering new affordable and social homes annually, improving and maintaining the existing stock to the highest standards.



**Economy & Assets** - Growing the District Economy and increasing returns from our assets.



**Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement** - Delivering Council services that residents want in the right way, in the right place and at the right price.

# 1 Planning, Environment & Sustainability

To be a leader and pioneer of best practice so new innovation and thinking is at the heart of the services we deliver and informs our planning policies.

## 1.1 Demonstrate climate leadership through achieving ambitious net zero targets

We will take action on reducing our own emissions, but will also look to bring in additional funding to make our journey towards net zero a reality. Lowering our fleet emissions and supporting tree planting schemes will feature alongside opportunities to ensure our high-energy services, such as leisure centres, are as efficient as possible.

## 1.2 Support the district's climate resilience and net zero carbon aspirations

We will continue to expand the provision of electric charging points across the district and will support community groups undertaking environmental action – sharing best practice and encouraging learning across Mid Devon. We will continue to work to support the implementation of the Devon Carbon Plan and will look beyond our borders to learn from others as we support our communities to take opportunities to lower emissions and generate renewable energy.

## 1.3 We will work with stakeholders to introduce planning policy which reflects the key issues and challenges facing the district

We will work with communities to bring forward the new local plan – Plan Mid Devon based around our top planning priorities, seeking to encapsulate and reflect the planning ambitions of the council and its communities. As the Government increases its oversight on planning performance, we will ensure our planning decisions are timely, robust and defensible.

## 1.4 We will ensure that biodiversity is increased across the district

We will develop and implement our biodiversity duty action plan, and will encourage developers to exceed the minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, working with local communities where possible, in order to bring real enhancement to nature across the district.

## 1.5 We will value and protect Mid Devon's natural and built environment

We will work with our communities to address environmental damage and will look to prosecute those who cause harm through fly tipping or littering. We will also challenge those who fail to mitigate environmental impact, liaising with other statutory bodies as required to bring about change. We recognise the importance of the built environment and will work to protect our heritage.





## Performance Measures and Targets

To ensure transparency and accountability, we have set out how we will measure the performance of our Corporate Plan and our targets.

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
1.1	Council carbon footprint	17,730 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	TBC	To be discussed	
1.1	Carbon emissions avoided (renewables and green transport)			TBC	
1.2	Electric car charger points across MDDC car parks	0	0	10 by 2028 (TBC)	Need to clarify baseline (start point)
1.2	Secure external funding to deliver carbon reduction in the district			(TBC)	In development (RM)
1.3	Planning application standards on the speed and quality of decision making				In development (RM), suite of PIs
1.3	Strengthen planning enforcement approach by bringing forward a revised local enforcement plan			Adoption of new plan by end of 2024	RM to timeline
1.3	Adopt Plan Mid Devon			Adoption by 2027	In development (RM)
1.4	Biodiversity gain above 10% across new developments		>10%	>10%	To be reviewed once we have a meaningful baseline

## 2

## Community, People & Equalities

Involving and engaging with our communities, ensuring everyone is treated with equity and respect, and protecting our most vulnerable.

2.1

### We will work closely with Town and Parish councils

We value and understand the importance and expertise of our Town and Parish councils. We will seek to develop closer collaborative working relationships through improved communications and engagement.

2.3

### We will support the health, wellbeing, and safety of our residents

We will ensure that our leisure services continue to help improve peoples' health outcomes. We will keep the public safe through our rigorous public health inspections. And we will continue to enable people to stay in their homes by coordinating housing adaptations. We will work to ensure our places are planned to improve health and wellbeing.

2.5

### We will listen to and respond to feedback

We value all feedback that the Council receives. We will maintain an effective complaints process and ensure that we respond promptly and appropriately. We will ensure that the we consult and engage with stakeholders in an open and transparent manner.

2.2

### We value and will work closely with local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations

We recognise the vital role that voluntary, community and social enterprises play in our district. We will continue to support these organisations develop including through the use of grant funding. We will support community events across the district and recognise the importance of youth services.

2.4

### We will support our residents and communities through the Cost of Living Crisis

We recognise the challenges facing people brought about by the Cost of Living crisis. Through administrating benefit schemes and applying Council Tax Reduction schemes we will support the vulnerable in our communities. We will draw down grant funding to support businesses in our communities through these challenging times.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
2.1	Support towns and parishes to develop their Community Emergency Plans		4	4 p.a.	New measure
2.2	Support the VCSE sector by securing additional external funding		£200k	>£200kp/a	Need to baseline
2.3	Homes made safe under the Housing Assistance Policy	N/A	81	60 p.a.	
2.5	New Subscribers to Let's Talk Mid Devon	N/A	415	400 p.a.	
2.5	Complaints resolved within target timescales	93 %	92 %	85 % p.a.	Revised complaints policy timelines are far shorter for complex cases, hence reduced proportion expected

## 3

# Homes

Delivering new affordable and social homes annually, improving and maintaining the existing stock to the highest standards.

## 3.1

**We will increase the delivery of quality designed, well built homes across the housing market to meet identified needs**

Mid Devon does not have enough homes. We will support the delivery of quality new homes built in the district. We will build and expand our own social housing, and encourage the delivery of new affordable homes built in the district.

## 3.2

**We will build, promote, and encourage the building of energy efficient and low carbon homes and communities**

We recognise that our homes in Mid Devon need to be fit for the future. We will ensure our social housing meets high energy efficiency standards. Through planning and building control we will act so that homes in the district are energy efficient, low carbon, and resilient to climate change.

## 3.3

**We will invest in our homes**

We will upgrade our social housing by installing energy efficiency measures and renewable energy. We will maintain our high standards of maintenance across Mid Devon Homes. We will monitor tenant satisfaction with maintenance and act on the feedback received.

## 3.4

**We will work closely with our tenants to ensure they feel safe, secure and happy in their homes**

We will monitor and continue to improve overall tenant satisfaction. We will work to ensure that cases of antisocial behaviour are kept to a minimum. We will work with our tenants through engagement events, and be guided by them to ensure they feel safe, secure, happy and satisfied in their homes.

## 3.5

**We will support and respond to people presenting as homeless**

We will act compassionately to minimise rough sleeping in the district, ensuring people have a safe warm place to sleep. We will maximise homelessness prevention through the use of different types of accommodation, and increase the number of housing options available. We will provide support and guidance for people presenting as homeless.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
3.1	New Council houses added to MDH stock	N/A	6 (check number – not correct)	100p/a	Anticipated 440 by 27/28
3.1	Additional affordable homes delivered across the district			TBC (LHNA figure)	Including market delivery and RSLs
3.2	New net-zero MMC properties in Mid Devon stock			50/pa	The majority (greater than half) to be net zero
3.3	Tenant satisfaction with the overall repairs service (TP02)			70 % p.a.	Check we check regulatory regime – are these min thresholds?
3.4	Tenant satisfaction that home is safe (TP05)		71.6 %	70% p.a.	See above
3.5	Support those experiencing homelessness by minimising the use of B&B accommodation				Lower than £xxx spent

## 4

## Economy & Assets

Growing the District Economy and increasing returns from our assets.

4.1

**We will work with local businesses, stakeholders and residents to regenerate our town centres**

We will act to secure and distribute grant funding to support our town centres. Events and projects will be used to encourage increased footfall and ensure vibrant high streets.

4.4

**We will support business and economic development across Mid Devon, enabling job creation, and supporting sustainable tourism growth**

We will build on our excellent track record of securing funding to support economic development projects and will support businesses develop into new markets. We will work to develop events and festivals in Mid Devon to encourage footfall into our communities to benefit our businesses, making Mid Devon a destination in its own right.

4.6

**Work with our communities and stakeholders to ensure our car parks meet the parking requirement needs of our communities**

We will continue to work in a collaborative manner with key stakeholders to review the use of our car parks. We will ensure that our parking charges are fair whilst maintaining a sustainable business model.

4.2

**We will build on successful commercial activity, working with our communities to ensure its success**

We will continue with prudent commercial ventures. This includes letting industrial units to local businesses, expanding electric vehicle charging points on council assets, and ensuring Tiverton Pannier market continues to be a success.

4.5

**We will work with partners to ensure that Mid Devon has the infrastructure it requires to meet its potential**

We will play a key role in realising the major infrastructure the district requires to help it meet its potential. This includes the upgrade to J28 of the M5; the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road; Cullompton Station; Culm Garden Village; and Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension.

4.7

**The Council is able to maintain its property and land and maximise the benefits of these assets to the council and to the public**

It is vital that we maximise income streams from our assets. We will explore opportunities for partners becoming commercial tenants in our existing properties.

4.3

**We will support local businesses set-up, develop and grow**

We will fully investigate the potential of establishing a co-working space for small businesses through the Work Hub project. We will drawdown and administer grants for businesses local to set up, develop and grow in the district.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure (reporting timespan)	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
4.1	Events supported in our town centres			6 p.a.	In development (RM)
4.2	Pannier market occupancy rate	85 %	86 %	85 % p.a.	To be discussed?
4.3	Co-working spaces developed to support local economic activity			5 by 2027/28	In development (RM)
4.3	Businesses supported (non-financial support)	269	292	TBC	In development (RM), also applicable for 4.4
4.4	Tourism events supported			2 or 3 p/a?	In development (RM)
4.5	Secure the delivery of key enabling infrastructure at Cullompton				In development (RM)
4.7	Commercial property voids			Less than 5 %	

## 5

## Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

Delivering Council services that residents want in the right way, in the right place and at the right price.

## 5.1

**We will ensure that The Council remains the employer of choice in Mid Devon**

Against a set of challenging circumstances, we will ensure that our staff remain motivated and satisfied. We will ensure that staff development opportunities are available and that people choose to have long, productive, and happy careers with us.

## 5.3

**We will maintain our leisure services and ensure they are fit for the future**

We recognise the need to continue to reduce the environmental impact of our leisure services and will work to reduce the carbon emissions of our leisure centres. We will also strive to move the service to having less financial dependence on the council, whilst ensuring our leisure users are satisfied.

## 5.5

**We will continue to improve and transform our services**

We will continue to take the opportunities that arise from digital transformation to improve our services. Where appropriate we will consider opportunities for shared services or new ways of working with our partners. We will seek to improve our overall productivity to ensure Value for Money.

## 5.2

**We will further increase our recycling services, enabling our communities to achieve even higher levels of recycling**

Through education and enforcement, we will continue to reduce residual waste collected. Alongside this we will strive to have one of the highest recycling rates in England, and consider additional waste streams we can collect as recycling. Our services will remain excellent, with minimal missed bin collections, and a high opt-in rate to our garden waste service.

## 5.4

**Council finances remain sustainable despite difficult financial conditions**

Prudent financial management is critical in the testing financial environment. We will build up our financial reserves, maximise income collection, and ensure that debt remains at an appropriate level.

## 5.6

**Ensure that the public have a good understanding of council services, and that they are satisfied that the services are efficient and effective**

We will strengthen our public communications to ensure clarity on the services that we are responsible for. We will measure public satisfaction and act on the results to ensure residents are satisfied with our performance.





## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure (reporting timespan)	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
5.1	Staff turnover	19.5 %	17.0%	17.0% in 2024/25	2027/28 target: 15% (excluding retirees/ dismissals)
5.1	Positive staff engagement (staff survey measure)		TBC	72% in 2025/26	75% in 2027/28
5.2	Residual waste per household	327.3 kg	313.3 kg	300 kg in 2024/25	Targets: 290 kg (25/26); 285 kg (26/27); 260 kg (27/28)
5.2	Household recycling rate	55.4%	57.8%	58.5 % in 2024/25	Targets: 59% (25/26); 59.5% (26/27); 62 % (27/28)
5.2	Missed Bin Collections (All)	0.04 %	0.03 %	0.03 % p.a.	Need the aggregated figure
5.3	Total leisure memberships / Reducing level of public subsidy			TBC	Check with members on preferred metric
5.4	National non-domestic rates collection rate	96.8 %	99.4 %	98 % p.a.	
5.4	Council Tax collection rate	97.1 %	97.5 %	98 % p.a.	
5.6	Public survey engagement rate			15 % p.a.	
5.6	Overall council approval rating			70 % p.a.	Use residents survey data as baseline?

## Our Values

The organisation has an agreed set of core values that underpin the way we work and how we fulfil our aspirations. These values are known as the four Ps and set out what we believe should be the basis for the type of organisation we want to be.

These values are:

- People
- Performance
- Pride
- Partnership

While our organisation is a place-based entity, rooted in the custodianship of the area of Mid Devon, it is nevertheless primarily a people-focused business. The organisation supports and is steered by our Councillors as the democratically-elected representatives of the people, and is run for the benefit of the people of Mid Devon. Our performance as individuals and as a collective is paramount, and we expect all those working for or with Mid Devon to take pride not only in their own work, but in the way we operate and the outcomes that are achieved for our communities.

Finally, we recognise the core value of partnership as so many of our services depend on our relationships and collaboration with suppliers, contractors, government and its departments and agencies; local towns, parishes and the voluntary sector; or the wider strategic network of councils working together across Devon and the South West.

## Summary

The corporate plan sets out the ambition for what the council is aiming to achieve over the next four year period. It acts as the driving force behind our collective efforts and the guiding principles unifying our shared intent. Importantly, it also sets the strategic framework for managing our performance – and this cascades through the organisation in order that everyone can understand their role and how their success as an individual or as a local delivery team contributes to the success of the whole organisation and wider Mid Devon team.

We will use regional and national benchmarking to evaluate our performance and will ensure that we take opportunities to learn in order to deliver services for the people of Mid Devon that are informed by best practice and tailored to reflect the needs of our residents and communities. We will look ‘up and out’ not only to contextualise our own performance, but also to seek opportunities to collaborate with other authorities; neighbours, peer groups, and national innovators, to deliver better quality, more efficient services.

We start this corporate plan with a number of award winning services and top quartile achievement on a national basis. Against an increasingly difficult resource backdrop for local government, our challenge will be to maintain our existing high performance in the priority areas set out in this plan, and to support those functions where greater focus is needed. Our ambition can only be delivered by continuing to transform and modernise the way we work in order to deliver best value, by recognising the partnership and community interests of many other stakeholders in delivering this plan, and by working to maximise the effectiveness of all those with whom we share a common goal.



Stephen Walford  
Chief Executive

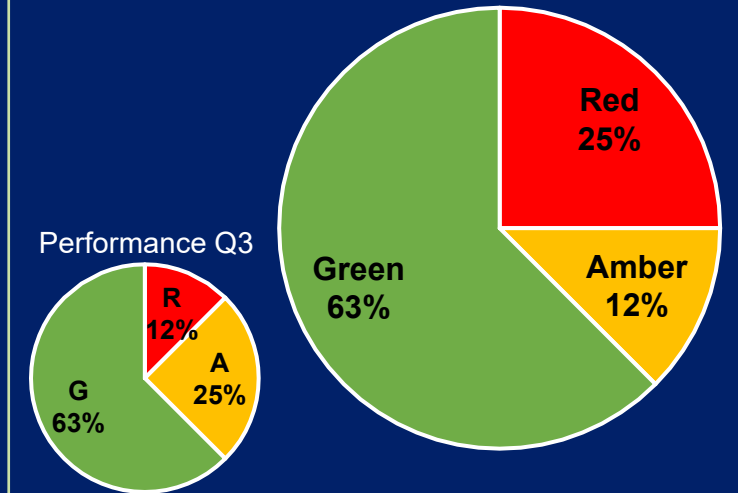




# Community PDG Performance Dashboard – Quarter 4 2023/24

Performance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
All council complaints resolved within timescales (Average YTD)	92%	95 %	A
Licenced vehicle inspections (YTD)	94	40	G
Food safety inspections (YTD)	347	200	G
Private water supply sampling (YTD)	120	120	G
Environmental protection service requests (Average YTD)	82.0 %	95 %	R
Engagement rate on Let's Talk Mid Devon (Current)	16.0 %	TBD	

## Overall Performance Q4



Finance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
Community PDG – Outturn	£4,715K	£5,418k	G
Leisure Income	(£3,324K)	(£2,931k)	G
CMY PDG – Capital Slippage % of projects (Current)	36%	0	R

Corporate Risk	Risk Rating (Trajectory)
Severe Weather Emergency Recovery	12 (no change)

## In Focus

The Complaints and Feedback Policy has been reviewed. It sets out the standards and response timescales that customers can expect when providing feedback to the authority. In 2023/24, we received 486 complaints.

98% of environmental protection requests were responded to within 5 working days in Quarter 4.

Leisure membership numbers and income have increased and returned to pre-Covid-19 levels. In particular, swimming lesson income has increased. When coupled with the 20% VAT that no longer needs to be passed to Government, overall income is £419k higher.

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## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24

## Customer Services

Code	Customer Services	2023/24 Budget £	2023/24 Actual £	Variance £	Variance %
1000	Employees	747,793	727,355	(20,438)	-2.7%
2000	Premises	0	0	0	0.0%
3000	Transport	400	0	(400)	-100.0%
4000	Supplies and Services	41,450	39,240	(2,210)	-5.3%
	<b>Total Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>789,643</b>	<b>766,595</b>	<b>(23,048)</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>
7000	External Income	0	(1,473)	(1,473)	0.00%
	<b>Net Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>789,643</b>	<b>765,122</b>	<b>(24,521)</b>	<b>-3.1% (a)</b>
	<b>Total Customer Services Expenditure</b>	<b>789,643</b>	<b>765,122</b>	<b>(24,521)</b>	<b>-3.1%</b>
	<b>Customer Services - Service units</b>				
CS200	Communications	109,152	110,830	1,678	1.5%
CS900	Central Photocopying	4,530	2,954	(1,576)	-34.8%
CS902	Central Postage	13,700	17,460	3,760	27.4%
CS930	Customer First Management	197,963	186,288	(11,675)	-5.9%
CS932	Customer First	464,298	447,589	(16,709)	-3.6%
	<b>Total Customer Services Expenditure</b>	<b>789,643</b>	<b>765,122</b>	<b>(24,521)</b>	<b>-3.1%</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>			<b>£ (24,521)</b>	<b>(a)</b>
	<b>Major Cost Changes</b>				<b>0</b>
	<b>Major Cost Savings</b>				
CS930	Salary savings due to vacancies			(9,650)	
CS932	Salary savings due to vacancies			(11,000)	
					<b>(20,650)</b>
	<b>Major Changes in Income Levels</b>				<b>0</b>
	<b>Minor Variations</b>				<b>(3,871)</b>
	<b>Expenditure Variation</b>				<b>(24,521) (a)</b>
	<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>				
	<b>Utilised 2023/24</b>				
	<b>Proposed contribution c/fwd to 2024/25</b>				
	<b>Net movement in earmarked reserves</b>				<b>0</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure variation after Earmarked Reserves</b>				<b>(24,521)</b>

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24

## Public Health

Code	Public Health	2023/24 Budget £	2023/24 Actual £	Variance £	Variance %
1000	Employees	1,003,998	1,077,315	73,317	7.3%
2000	Premises	494,034	238,851	(255,183)	-51.7%
3000	Transport	29,988	24,239	(5,749)	-19.2%
4000	Supplies and Services	160,691	135,454	(25,237)	-15.7%
	S106 Expenditure	0	9,734	9,734	0.0%
	<b>Total Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>1,688,711</b>	<b>1,485,593</b>	<b>(203,118)</b>	<b>-12.0%</b>
7000	External Income	(452,015)	(539,779)	(87,764)	-19.4%
	S106 contributions	0	0	0	0.0%
	<b>Net Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>1,236,696</b>	<b>945,815</b>	<b>(290,881)</b>	<b>-23.5% (a)</b>
	<b>Total Public Health Expenditure</b>	<b>1,236,696</b>	<b>945,815</b>	<b>(290,881)</b>	<b>-23.5%</b>
	<b>Public Health - Service units</b>				
CB100	Cemeteries	(54,130)	(36,970)	17,160	31.7%
CB101	Cemetery Lodge	(7,560)	(7,485)	75	1.0%
CB110	Bereavement Services	29,451	25,729	(3,722)	-12.6%
PS200	CCTV Initiatives	57,785	36,307	(21,478)	-37.2%
PH250	Community Safety	6,070	2,804	(3,266)	-53.8%
PH260	Food Protection	(300)	(1,950)	(1,650)	-550.0%
PH270	Water Quality Monitoring	(16,734)	(17,873)	(1,139)	-6.8%
PH354	Private Sector Housing	(3,160)	621	3,781	119.7%
EE360	Dog Warden	3,490	4,223	733	21.0%
OS450	Parks and Open Spaces	148,109	53,460	(94,649)	-63.9%
OS455	Amory Park	111,354	22,143	(89,211)	-80.1%
OS460	Play Areas	80,916	42,305	(38,611)	-47.7%
PH500	Emergency Planning	7,500	38,415	30,915	412.2%
PH550	Licensing	(140,300)	(145,742)	(5,442)	-3.9%
FM580	Pool Car Running Costs	619	(56)	(675)	-109.0%
PH600	Pest Control	1,000	682	(318)	-31.8%
PH660	Control of Pollution	23,300	18,050	(5,250)	-22.5%
PH670	Local Air Pollution	(10,030)	(7,668)	2,362	23.5%
EE730	Environmental Enforcement	147,228	139,027	(8,201)	-5.6%
PH733	Environmental Health	684,646	633,009	(51,637)	-7.5%
PH740	Licensing Unit	167,442	146,784	(20,658)	-12.3%
	<b>Total Public Health Expenditure</b>	<b>1,236,696</b>	<b>945,815</b>	<b>(290,881)</b>	<b>-23.5%</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>			<b>£ (290,881) (a)</b>	
	<b>Major Cost Changes</b>				
	Public Health salary overspend due to Agency costs which is off-set by the COMF EMR &				
PH733	Homes for Ukraine grant funding			72,000	
PH500	New post for Emergency Planning Officer added has resulted in a salary overspend			30,900	
					<b>102,900</b>
	<b>Major Cost Savings</b>				
PS200	CCTV maintenance underspend (EMR contribution)			(35,800)	
OS450	Parks & Open Spaces maint underspend (EMR contribution)			(88,500)	
OS455	Amory Park maintenance underspend (EMR contribution)			(92,000)	
OS460	Play Area maintenance underspend (EMR contribution)			(40,000)	
PH740	Licensing salary underspend due to vacant posts			(20,820)	
PH660	Control of Pollution monitoring equipment cancellation of maintenance contract			(14,000)	
PH550	Licensing software maintenance underspend due to alignment of contract			(12,000)	
					<b>(303,120)</b>
	<b>Major Changes in Income Levels</b>				
CB100	Cemetery Income down on exclusive burial rights			22,000	
	Homes for Ukraine grant income received to off-set Agency overspend within Public Health -				
PH733	EMR contribution			(113,280)	
					<b>(91,280)</b>
	<b>Minor Variations</b>				<b>(9,115)</b>
					<b>£</b>
	<b>SERVICE MOVEMENT BEFORE STATUTORY ADJUSTMENTS</b>				<b>(300,615)</b>
PH660	Net S106 Receipts and Grants (also see EMR below)				9,734
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>				<b>(290,881) (a)</b>



**GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24****Public Health**

<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>		
<b>Utilised 2023/24</b>		
ES660	S106 - Air Quality	(9,734)
EE730	EQ756 - Fleet costs	(1,673)
PH733	ER003 - COMF funding to off-set Public Health overspend	(55,000)
<b>Proposed contribution c/fwd to 2024/25</b>		
FM580	EQ756 - Fleet costs	6,092
PS200	EQ709 - CCTV maintenance underspend	25,000
OS450	EQ767 - Parks & Open Spaces maint & other underspends	96,800
OS455	ER005 - Amory Park maintenance underspend	90,000
OS460	EQ715 - Play Area maintenance underspend	40,000
PH733	EQ711 - Public Health salary underspend	40,000
EE730	EQ756 - Vehicle Sales	6,950
FM580	EQ756 - Vehicle Sales	4,750
<b>Net movement in earmarked reserves before statutory adjustments</b>		<b>243,185</b>
<b>Total Expenditure variation after Earmarked Reserves</b>		<b>(47,696)</b>

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24

## Planning and Regeneration

Code	Planning and Regeneration	2023/24 Budget £	2023/24 Actual £	Variance £	Variance %
1000	Employees	2,250,231	2,021,624	(228,607)	-10.2%
2000	Premises	0	0	0	0.0%
3000	Transport	19,500	15,811	(3,689)	-18.9%
4000	Supplies and Services	1,612,859	2,110,298	497,439	30.8%
	S106 Expenditure	0	357,995	357,995	0.0%
	<b>Total Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>3,882,590</b>	<b>4,505,728</b>	<b>623,138</b>	<b>16.0%</b>
7000	External Income	(1,307,328)	(1,197,875)	109,453	8.4%
	S106 Contributions	0	(20,961)	(20,961)	0.0%
	Grant funding	(584,879)	(1,091,868)	(506,989)	-86.7%
	<b>Net Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>1,990,383</b>	<b>2,195,024</b>	<b>204,641</b>	<b>10.3% (a)</b>
	<b>Total Planning and Regeneration Expenditure</b>	<b>1,990,383</b>	<b>2,195,024</b>	<b>204,641</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
	<b>Planning and Regeneration - Service units</b>				
PR100	Building Regulations	8,025	25,120	17,095	213.0%
PR110	Enforcement	102,820	112,354	9,534	9.3%
PR200	Development Control	357,680	451,525	93,845	26.2%
PR210	Local Land Charges	(42,506)	(82,120)	(39,614)	-93.2%
PR225	Garden Village Project	121,865	13,004	(108,861)	-89.3%
PR227	J28 Feasibility	0	416,315	416,315	0.0%
PR400	Business Development	417,983	464,755	46,772	11.2%
PR402	Cullompton HAZ	433,654	384,396	(49,258)	-11.4%
PR403	Shared Prosperity Fund	0	28,095	28,095	0.0%
PR420	Tiverton Town Centre Regen Project	0	15,434	15,434	0.0%
PR600	Forward Planning Unit	320,462	293,823	(26,639)	-8.3%
PR810	Statutory Development Plan	269,500	72,273	(197,227)	-73.2%
PR820	Assets of community value	0	50	50	0.0%
PR900	Dangerous Buildings And Trees	900	0	(900)	-99.9%
	<b>Total Planning and Regeneration Expenditure</b>	<b>1,990,383</b>	<b>2,195,024</b>	<b>204,641</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>			<b>£ 204,641</b>	<b>£ (a)</b>
	<b>Major Cost Changes</b>				
PR200	Agency spend (partially offset by £10,400 EMR release)			40,168	
PR110	Enforcement staffing, agency spend and recruitment costs, offset by vacant posts and Planning Skills Delivery Grant			18,650	
PR225	Garden Village Project spend which has been offset by capacity funding			36,139	
PR227	J28 Project spend (fully funded by EMR releases)			416,315	
PR400	Project spend on Crediton Town Centre Masterplan (fully funded by EMR release)			42,206	
PR400	Project spend on Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan (fully funded by EMR release)			2,400	
PR400	Project spend on Cullompton Rail Project (fully funded by EMR release)			19,937	
PR400	Project spend on Homes England bid (fully funded by grant from Homes England)			76,993	
PR400	Shared Prosperity Fund match funding (fully funded by EMR release)			54,330	
PR403	Project spend which has been offset by Shared Prosperity Grant (and EMR release)			210,867	
PR420	Project spend (fully funded by EMR releases)			15,434	
PR600	Consultancy and grants funded by Neighbourhood Plan grant (and EMR releases)			29,340	
				<b>962,779</b>	
	<b>Major Cost Savings</b>				
PR100	Underspend as a result of reduced income and so picking up a reduced share of costs and savings from vacant posts			(68,308)	
PR200	Staff vacancies			(141,224)	
PR200	Appeals underspend from releasing £200k provision (of which £100k transferred to EMR)			(161,804)	
PR400	Staff vacancies (£17k put into EMR to fund 24/25 staffing)			(68,058)	
PR402	Project underspend on Cullompton HAZ			(46,372)	
PR600	Staff vacancies			(23,169)	
PR810	Local Plan reprofiled spend, based on new timetable and when technical evidence is needed (funds put back into EMR)			(197,822)	
				<b>(706,757)</b>	

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24

## Planning and Regeneration

	£	£
<b>Major Changes in Income Levels</b>		
PR100 Underachievement on income	85,403	
PR200 Underachievement on income	82,844	
PR200 Grant income, Planning Skills Delivery & Biodiversity Net Gain	(68,207)	
PR210 Underachievement on income (partially offset by New Burdens grant)	33,748	
PR210 Grant income, New Burdens	(11,131)	
PR210 HM Land Registry contribution for works done	(60,000)	
PR225 Grant income, DLUHC	(145,000)	
PR400 Grant income, Homes England	(76,993)	
PR403 Grant income, Shared Prosperity	(182,772)	
PR600 Grant income, Neighbourhood Plan	(20,000)	
		<b>(362,108)</b>
<b>Minor Variations</b>		
		<b>(26,308)</b>
<b>SERVICE MOVEMENT BEFORE STATUTORY ADJUSTMENTS</b>		
		<b>(132,394)</b>
PR200 Net S106 Receipts and Grants (also see EMR below)		337,035
<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>		
		<b>204,641 (a)</b>
<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>		
<b>Utilised 2023/24</b>		
PR200 EQ790 - Agency staffing on Development Management	(10,400)	
PR200 S106 - Public Open Space	(357,995)	
PR227 EQ781 - J28 Feasibility work	(397,112)	
PR227 EQ656 - J28 Feasibility work	(19,203)	
PR400 EQ722 - Shared Prosperity match funding	(54,330)	
PR400 EQ656 - Cullompton Rail Station work	(19,937)	
PR400 EQ728 - Crediton Masterplan work	(42,206)	
PR400 EQ728 - Cullompton Masterplan work	(2,400)	
PR402 S106 - Public Open Space & Air Quality	(8,129)	
PR402 EQ656 - Cullompton Rail Station work	(60,000)	
PR402 EQ722 - Cullompton HAZ project	(29)	
PR402 EQ652 - Return of unspent budgeted release, Cullompton HAZ project	82,251	
PR402 EQ653 - Return of unspent budgeted release, Cullompton HAZ project	34,385	
PR403 ER010 - Shared Prosperity Fund	(28,095)	
PR420 EQ653 - Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration project	(15,434)	
PR600 EQ780 - Community Land Trust work	(9,000)	
PR600 EQ741 - Community Housing grant spend	(2,890)	
PR600 EQ727 - Joint Strategy work	(2,943)	
PR600 EQ821 - Neighbourhood Plan work	(4,507)	
PR810 EQ728 - Return of unspent budgeted release, Local Plan	197,822	
<b>Proposed contribution c/fwd to 2024/25</b>		
PR110 ER015 - Land Charges HMLR Projects	60,000	
PR200 EQ774 - Planning Legal Expense Reserve	100,000	
PR200 EQ782 - Planning Skills Delivery Fund	19,500	
PR200 S106 - Public Open Space	20,961	
PR225 EQ824 - Garden Village	108,861	
PR400 EQ722 - Staffing in 2024/25	17,000	
		<b>(393,831)</b>
<b>Net movement in earmarked reserves</b>		
		<b>(393,831)</b>
<b>Total Expenditure variation after Earmarked Reserves</b>		
		<b>(189,190)</b>

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN SUMMARY 2023/24

## Leisure Services

Code	Leisure Services	2023/24 Budget £	2023/24 Actual £	Variance £	Variance %
1000	Employees	2,493,822	2,506,632	12,810	0.5%
2000	Premises	1,562,550	1,327,278	(235,272)	-15.1%
3000	Transport	6,400	4,997	(1,403)	-21.9%
4000	Supplies and Services	270,210	294,196	23,986	8.9%
	<b>Total Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>4,332,982</b>	<b>4,133,103</b>	<b>(199,879)</b>	<b>-4.6%</b>
7000	External Income	(2,931,266)	(3,323,517)	(392,251)	-13.4%
	<b>Net Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>1,401,716</b>	<b>809,586</b>	<b>(592,130)</b>	<b>-42.2% (a)</b>
	<b>Total Leisure Services Expenditure</b>	<b>1,401,716</b>	<b>809,586</b>	<b>(592,130)</b>	<b>-42.2%</b>
	<b>Leisure Services - Service units</b>				
RS100	Leisure Facilities Maintenance and Equipment	464,920	258,817	(206,103)	-44.3%
RS110	Leisure Management and Administration	45,130	60,223	15,093	33.4%
RS140	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	489,347	189,908	(299,439)	-61.2%
RS150	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	274,619	249,798	(24,821)	-9.0%
RS155	Leisure Land Rents	(12,018)	(12,042)	(24)	-0.2%
RS160	Culm Valley Sports Centre	139,718	62,883	(76,835)	-55.0%
	<b>Total Leisure Services Expenditure</b>	<b>1,401,716</b>	<b>809,586</b>	<b>(592,130)</b>	<b>-42.2%</b>
				<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>				<b>(592,130) (a)</b>
	<b>Major Cost Changes</b>				
RS150	LMLC decarbonisation works (EMR utilise)			20,516	
Various	Savings on salaries lower than budgeted £100k			20,000	
Various	Overspend on course running costs, materials & chemicals, and consultancy for service review			20,000	
					<b>60,516</b>
	<b>Major Cost Savings</b>				
RS100	Leisure Facilities maint underspend (EMR contribution)			(214,300)	
RS140	EVLC utilites & rates underspend			(27,400)	
RS150	LMLC utilities underspend			(20,000)	
					<b>(261,700)</b>
	<b>Major Changes in Income Levels</b>				
Various	Wetside income up on budget mainly due to an increase in the swimming lesson programme			(66,000)	
Various	Fitness income up on budget mainly due to an increase in member numbers at all sites			(344,000)	
					<b>(410,000)</b>
	<b>Minor Variations</b>				<b>19,054</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure Variation</b>				<b>(592,130) (a)</b>
	<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>				
	<b>Utilised 2023/24</b>				
RS150	EQ785 - LMLC decarbonisation works			(20,516)	
	<b>Proposed contribution c/fwd to 2024/25</b>				
RS100	EQ764 - Leisure Facilities maint underspend			215,000	
	<b>Net movement in earmarked reserves</b>				<b>194,484</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure variation after Earmarked Reserves</b>				<b>(397,646)</b>



**Report for: Community, People & Equalities PDG**

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Date of Meeting:	25 June 2024
Subject:	<b>PUBLIC HEALTH FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN AND SERVICE UPDATE</b>
Cabinet Member:	David Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality (Cost) of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health
Exempt:	No
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Enclosures:	Annex A - Food Safety Service Plan 2024/2025

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation**

This report intends to provide a service update for the statutory work of the Food Safety team within Public Health and Housing Options and introduce the Food Safety Service Plan for 2024/25.

**Recommendation:**

- 1. That the PDG note the Food Safety Service Plan and wider service update**

**Section 2 – Report**

**1 Introduction**

1.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has the lead role as the central competent authority in overseeing official feed and food controls undertaken by local authorities. It also seeks to work in partnership with local authorities to help them to deliver these statutory functions. The FSA is therefore proactive in setting and monitoring standards, and in auditing local authorities' delivery of official controls, in order to ensure that this activity is compliant, effective and risk-based whilst also being proportionate and consistent.

- 1.2 Powers enabling the FSA to monitor and audit local authorities, and ultimately take over delivery of official controls, are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999 and in the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations.
- 1.3 A Food Service Plan is required under the Statutory Food Law Code of Practice and Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food controls by Local authorities.
- 1.4 The Service Plan sets out how the competent authority intends to deliver and resource official food controls and other official activities in its area, and address any variance in meeting the outcomes of the previous Service Plan.
- 1.5 The 2024-2025 Food Service Plan (attached as Annex A) outlines the strategic link to corporate and financial planning through the Service Business plan.
- 1.6 This Plan has been produced in accordance with the FSA's service planning guidance for Food Law Enforcement, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and Practice Guidance.
- 1.7 Under this legislation and statutory guidance, such a Plan therefore sets out how the Council will meet its minimum statutory service delivery for Food Safety.

## **2 Current challenges and opportunities**

- 2.1 Over the past few years, officer capacity and experience within the Food Safety team has prevented us from consistently meeting statutory targets and the formal requirements of the FSA. As a result we have been in proactive communication with the agency to ensure high-priority and/or back-log inspections were completed using (in-part) a competent contractor whilst a review of service structure and use of resources was carried out in order to develop a new Service Plan that will ensure we meet the statutory requirements in full going forward.
- 2.2 Without an effective, updated Plan in place we can increasingly expect to see formal intervention by the FSA and greater oversight including the potential imposition of third-party providers to ensure an acceptable service was being provided using legal powers set out above. Costs incurred would have to be met by the Council.
- 2.3 Consequently, a full service review was completed in 23/24 which identified a mini-restructure including 2 new posts, within the existing budget, that will significantly strengthen the team in terms of capacity and capability to deliver against our service requirements. This restructure was presented to Leadership Team and approved. Consequently, these posts are currently going through the job evaluation process prior to implementation.
- 2.4 A fully updated Service Plan has not been produced since 2017 where there is a requirement within the Food Law Code of Practice to publish an annual document. This requirement was relaxed during the Covid pandemic where the work of many competent environmental health professionals was reprioritised

nationally, however the FSA now expect a return to a full statutory service delivery provision. An updated Food Service Plan is therefore overdue and there is an agreement in place with the FSA for Mid Devon to have a new Plan in place for the current financial year.

- 2.5 This service review also identified that current Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are largely historic and do not fully help the service to measure the overarching objective of the statutory Service Plan, which is to ensure food is safe for public consumption. For example, setting an arbitrary number of inspections as a target with no consideration of premises-specific risks or fluctuations in business numbers, does not measure compliance or necessarily drive forward service delivery. A focused set of updated KPIs have therefore been developed for this Service Plan as set out in section 4 below.

### 3 Service update

- 3.1 The primary aim of the food safety service is to ensure food safety across the district. This is delivered through interventions that aim to prevent food poisoning, food borne and water borne illness and to ensure, so far as is possible, that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the district is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer.
- 3.2 At the time of writing, Mid Devon District Council has 905 registered food premises. Under the FSA Code of Practice all food premises are categorised with an inspection rating score that determines the frequency of interventions from 6 months to 3 years.
- 3.3 New food business registrations are steady, with 120 made in 2023/24. Approximately 2.3 a week.
- 3.4 During 2023/24, 67.6% of due interventions with established businesses were carried out.
- 3.5 717 businesses are currently in scope of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and are scored as follows:

Rating	5	4	3	2	1	0
Descriptor	Very good	Good	Generally satisfactory	Improvement necessary	Major improvement necessary	Urgent improvement necessary
Number *	594	72	26	4	19	2
%	82.8%	10.1%	3.6%	0.6%	2.6%	0.3%

\*taken from FHRS public facing website 30/04/24

- 3.6 Of the two '0' rated premises above, one is currently not open, however we have not had confirmation or official notification that the business has formally ceased trading and we are continuing to monitor whilst the operator is still responsible for the premises, as enforcement notices were served on this business. The second has had subsequent visits made and improvements have been implemented, however they did not apply for an early revisit enabling the

score to be updated formally, however a further monitoring visit will be carried out in June 2024.

- 3.7 Last year, 233 food and environmental samples were taken by the team. 82% were satisfactory, 14% unsatisfactory (predominantly environmental) and 4% borderline.
- 3.8 During 2023/24, 72 notifications of infectious disease were received and dealt with by the service, this shows a 26% increase on last year. These included, 39 Campylobacter, 16 Salmonella, 10 Cryptosporidium, 3 Giardia, 1 Legionella, 1 Typhoid and 2 Listeria.
- 3.9 The food team have tackled a backlog of unrated premises during 2023/24 whilst the number of new premises remains high.
- 3.10 In relation to the production, handling and storage of Products of Animal Origin there are currently 17 approved establishments operating under Regulation (EC) 853/2004 in Mid Devon, summarised below:

<b>Approved Premises Type</b>	<b>Number of Premises</b>
Dairy Products	4
Meat Products	1
Meat Preparations	1
Cold Store	3
Fish Products	1
Egg products	1
Egg Packing Centres	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

- 3.11 At the time of writing this report, the team are dealing with approval enquiries from 3 establishments, these are specialist areas of work and require significant time, competency and resource to deliver.

#### **4 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

- 4.1 Proposed internal service management KPIs for 2024/2025:
  - % of interventions due at each risk category carried out (should be 100% at each risk category)
  - Improvement in Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score (FHRS) for premises rated 0, 1 or 2, at subsequent food hygiene interventions
  - % of new businesses assessed within 28 days of registration (this should be 100%)

#### **5 Actions**

- 5.1 The service review and action plan have been agreed with both the FSA and Leadership Team in principle so the service is now implementing the new structure to enable delivery. The FSA will no doubt look closely at our next



annual statutory return (due after 31 March 2025) and will expect to see further progress during 2024/25 towards achieving the required intervention programme across all risk categories.

- 5.2 Whilst working towards the full structure and compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice, the focus will remain on the higher risk premises and processes as well as new registrations, meaning there will be insufficient capacity in the short-term to complete all interventions with existing, lower risk D and E rated premises.
- 5.3 A vacancy approval has been secured to retain a consultant (contractor) Food Safety Officer in the short-term to help us bridge this gap and continue to deliver progress including minimising any further backlog of interventions/inspections.
- 5.4 The new KPIs will be introduced. It is noted that work will need to be completed by the service System Administrator to produce the correct reporting facilities to achieve this. These will then be reported on internally as part of the service performance review and updated through the annual Service Plan.

**Financial Implications:** Failure to deliver against the service plan has the potential for financial implications, as the FSA have authority to deliver official controls where a Local Authority fails in its obligations, this is done on a cost recovery basis.

The proposed changes that have been approved and described in this report have no financial implications as they are within existing budget and no additional budget is being sought.

**Legal Implications:** The Authority have a statutory obligation to deliver food safety official controls in accordance with The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009.

**Risk Assessment:** Failure to deliver official controls in accordance with the Food Law code of Practice, as laid out in the service plan, presents a risk to members of the public, due to drop in food hygiene standards within food establishments. Failure to deliver official controls in accordance with the Food Law code of Practice leaves the Authority at risk of reputational damage and financial cost due to potential FSA intervention.

**Impact on Climate Change:** There is no direct impact on climate change as a result of this report.

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** An equality impact assessment is not required in respect of this update report.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** This report links directly to the primary aim of protecting public safety and ensuring the well-being of our community. It therefore directly contributes to the priority of Community, People and Equality within the Corporate Plan.

A new Corporate Plan for 2024 – 2028 is currently under development. A draft priority within this plan is ‘Community, People and Equalities’ with a specific objective to “support the health, wellbeing, and safety of our residents”. This includes keeping the public safe through rigorous public health inspections.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:**

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

**Date:**

**Statutory Officer:**

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date:**

**Chief Officer:** Simon Newcombe

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

**Date:** 28 May 2024

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

**Date:** 31 May 2024

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

Harriet Said, Team Leader (Commercial), Public Health or Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Email: [hsaid@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:hsaid@middevon.gov.uk) / [snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01884 255255

**Background papers:**

Food Standards Agency, Food Law Code of Practice [Food law code of practice \(England\)](#)

Framework Agreement on official Feed and Food control by Local Authorities [THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON LOCAL AUTHORITY FOOD LAW REGULATION](#)

Food Standards Agency Food Law Practice guidance (England) [FSA Communications \(food.gov.uk\)](#)

The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 [The Official Feed and Food Controls \(England\) Regulations 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)



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## 1.0 Introduction

An annual Food Safety Service Plan is required under the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement by the Food Standards Agency. The plan outlines the strategic link to corporate and financial planning through the Service Business plan. This plan has been produced in accordance with the FSA's service planning guidance for Food Law Enforcement, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and Practice Guidance.

The service plan relates to the 2024/2025 year.

The plan provides key stakeholders, and members of the public, the information that they require to understand the approach to food safety enforcement adopted by the Council.

Food safety enforcement is covered by the Mid Devon District Council Enforcement Policy PH/EP/09/20, however this plan may make reference to enforcement practice where applicable. The service plan will help to ensure that the actions of the Council are fair, consistent, open and effective.

The Plan provides a focus for service delivery outcomes and provides a framework for assessing performance against those outcomes.

The plan will set out our priorities and our planned approach to the following:

- Inspection programmes
- Methodology for risk rating
- Sampling programmes
- Enforcement
- Food Business Registration
- Communication and engagement
- Approved Premises
- Export certificates
- Dealing with complaints about a food business

A series of processes and procedures will sit behind this plan for internal use by officers to ensure consistency.

## 1.1 Aims and Objectives of the service

The primary aim of the food safety service is to ensure food safety across the district. This is delivered through interventions that aim to prevent food poisoning, food borne and water borne illness and to ensure, so far as is possible, that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the district is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer.

In delivering this service the food team aims to:

- (i) Perform the Council's statutory food safety responsibilities required by the Food Safety Act 1990 as amended, the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and relevant regulations made thereafter, including duties related to imported food.

- (ii) Protect public health, promote consumer confidence and enhance food safety through the provision of food which is safe and without risk to health.
- (iii) Prevent and control the spread of food borne illness.
- (iv) Ensure that enforcement work is targeted, proportionate, consistent, and transparent and supports the principles of good enforcement and the provisions of the Regulators' Code 2014 as outlined in our Enforcement Policy.

1.1.2 Our key objective is to promote and maintain high standards of food hygiene and safety across the district and will be achieved by:

- (i) Carrying out a risk-based programme of food hygiene enforcement interventions in accordance with statutory requirements, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990; regulation 24 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and regulation 6 of the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) regulations 2009; and associated guidance.
- (ii) Registering and/or Approving premises and maintaining a food premises register of all food establishments operating in the district.
- (iii) Inform businesses of their legal obligations under relevant legislation
- (iv) Responding to notified cases and outbreaks of food borne infectious diseases, advising on precautionary and control measures in order to minimize effects on the community.
- (v) Investigating serious and high-risk complaints concerning unfit, unsound or contaminated food or unacceptable food hygiene practices compromising food safety.
- (vi) Sampling of food produced, sold or imported across the district and/or environmental swabbing of surfaces and equipment within food establishments in accordance with our Food Sampling Policy.
- (vii) Respond to food alerts issued by the FSA in accordance with national and local guidance.
- (viii) Providing food hygiene advice, guidance, coaching and training and development opportunities to businesses, and where relevant consumers. Promoting best practice.
- (ix) Ensuring staff are adequately qualified and competent to carry out food safety work and adequate equipment and resources are in place.
- (x) Developing and improving the service to meet the needs of customers, statutory requirements and to achieve best practice.
- (xi) Tackling food fraud and organised crime by conducting investigations and working with relevant agencies to target criminals.



- (xii) Giving consumers the right to make informed decisions about where they choose to eat and purchase food and drink with the implementation of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- (xiii) Promoting food safety and, where appropriate, participating in local and national campaigns.
- (xiv) Working in partnership with other agencies to help secure and promote good food hygiene and safety, including the Devon Food Liaison Group.
- (xv) Supporting the Primary and Home Authority Principles.
- (xvi) Providing appropriate responses to public health emergencies.

## **1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans**

1.2.1 Our Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 has a vision of “creating an environment where communities and businesses can flourish and grow together” and four priority areas covering:

- (i) Economy;
- (ii) Homes;
- (iii) Community; and
- (iv) Environment

1.2.2 Food Safety links to the priority areas of economy and community. Through our work to promote and enhance the safety of the food offer available within the District, we aim to increase economic and community confidence in and pride in Mid Devon.

1.2.3 A new Corporate Plan for 2024 – 2028 is currently under development. A draft priority within this plan is ‘Community, People and Equalities’ with a specific objective to “support the health, wellbeing, and safety of our residents”. This includes keeping the public safe through rigorous public health inspections.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 Profile of Mid Devon District Council**

2.1.1 Mid Devon covers an area of 353 square miles (914 km<sup>2</sup>) in the rural, agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. Over half the population of some 82,000 people is scattered in villages in the rural hinterland, with the balance divided between the three main towns of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. Although set in a predominantly rural area the towns offer a diverse range of industry and a seasonal tourist trade both within the towns and outlying rural villages.

2.1.2 As at April 2024 there are 905 food businesses registered and 17 approved establishments within the District. This includes a diverse range of food businesses from large manufacturers, distributing nationally and internationally, meat and dairy processors, schools and residential care settings, to predominately small to medium sized independent catering and retailing premises. The authority has a steady number of new businesses, however with closures of existing businesses, numbers remain more or less stable.

## 2.2 Organisational Structure

2.2.1 The Council operates under an Executive structure, with a 'Cabinet'. The Council structure and executive member contacts are available on the Internet under <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/your-council/how-the-council-works/>.

2.2.2 The food safety team is part of the Commercial Team, led by the Team Leader (Commercial) within the Public Health and Housing Options Service. The Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options reports into the Head of Health and Housing at Corporate Management team level. Activities of the Commercial team are covered by the Community Policy Development Group (PDG) and ultimately Cabinet. The portfolio holder for the Community PDG is responsible for this service area.

2.2.3 There has been a mini restructure during the 2023/2024 year that has led to the creation of a new post and amendments to an existing and vacant Lead post within the structure.

The food team structure is now made up of the following posts at April 2024:

Team Leader (0.4) – occupied  
Lead officer (0.4) – currently awaiting advert  
Specialist Officer (2.0 FTE) – occupied  
Regulatory Officer (1.0 FTE) – currently awaiting advert  
Specialist support (1 FTE)

2.2.4 A food safety consultant will be engaged during the 2024/2025 to cover the shortfall whilst the new posts are being implemented.

2.2.5 The Section employs the following additional support services;

- (i) Public Analyst - Public Analyst Scientific Services, i54 Business Park, Valiant Way, Wolverhampton, WV9 5GB
- (iii) Food Examiner - Public Health England, Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Laboratory Porton Down, Salisbury, SP4 0JG

For other specialist work the services of other analysts may be employed.

## 2.3 Scope of the Service

2.3.1 The Food Safety Team delivers a wide range of key food-related service functions, which includes:

- Food hygiene interventions of premises, based on risk assessment of business activity and level of compliance, which will dictate the frequency of visits, in accordance with Annex 1 of the Food Law Code of Practice;
- Identifying and determining premises that require approval of specific food products of animal origin. Assessing and inspecting these premises as required to ensuring that they are issued with conditional and full approval as necessary;
- Implementing and promoting the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to encourage businesses to improve and promote hygiene standards and give consumers the information they need to make informed decisions about where they choose to eat and purchase food and drink;
- The enforcement of all aspects of Food Hygiene and Safety in Food business in the District;

- Imported food control as an inland authority for food imported from outside the European Union through sampling, inspection and enforcement;
- Maintaining a register of food premises trading in the district;
- Issuing of health certificates for the export of food products.

2.3.2 The Food Safety Team is also responsible for a range of non-food related work, including;

- Health and Safety at Work enforcement and advice;
- Promoting and enforcing smoke-free legislation in workplaces and enclosed public places;
- Responding to and investigate, as necessary, RIDDOR reported accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences;
- Responding to and investigating work related safety complaints;
- Supporting local health improvement programmes;
- Commenting on planning and Licensing applications.

## 2.4 Demands on the Food Safety Service

2.4.1 Mid Devon District Council has 905 registered food premises. Under the FSA Code of Practice all food premises are categorised with an inspection rating score that determines the frequency of interventions from 6 months to 3 years. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, the premises profile according to the inspection risk-rating scores is as follows:

Category	Premises Category	Frequency of Intervention	Number of Premises	Number variance since 2023
A	High	6 months	4	42% ↓
B	High	12 months	57	36% ↑
C	High	18 months	108	9% ↑
D	Medium	24 months	276	0.3% ↓
E	Low	36 months	419	8% ↓
Unrated	Prioritised	Awaiting inspection	37	
Outside programme			4	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>905</b>	

2.4.2 There has been overall an increase in the number of higher risk premises in the district. However, we have seen 2 of our A rated premises risk rating reduce due to improvements in compliance, and 1 of our A rated premises ceased operation during the year.

2.4.3 From April 2023, 1 FTE was tasked with a focus on the unrated premises that had registered and not been visited. The impact is the significant reduction in unrated premises awaiting inspection at the end of the 23/24 year.

2.4.4 4% (37) of all rated food businesses in Mid Devon are less than broadly compliant. Officers work with all non-compliant businesses to improve standards, and a measure of our performance will be movement from non-compliant to broadly compliant between

interventions. This is a performance measure that we plan to establish during the 2024/2025 year.

2.4.5 The food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) provides the public with a view of compliance for all food businesses that are in scope of the scheme and that sell to the final consumer. The service aims to drive up food safety standards with businesses encouraged to improve and promote hygiene standards through the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Currently 96.5% of food businesses that have been subject to an intervention and rated, hold a food hygiene rating of 3,4 or 5.

2.4.6 717 businesses are currently in scope of the scheme and are scored as follows:

Rating	5	4	3	2	1	0
Descriptor	Very good	Good	Generally satisfactory	Improvement necessary	Major improvement necessary	Urgent improvement necessary
Number *	594	72	26	4	19	2
%	82.8%	10.1%	3.6%	0.6%	2.6%	0.3%

\*taken from FHRS public facing website 30/04/24

2.4.7 The premises profile shown below highlights manufacturing, catering and retail as being the dominant sectors. Catering premises are typically small to medium and independently owned establishments made up of accommodation services, care settings, restaurants, cafes, takeaways and pubs. We also have many sole traders where individuals cater from farms and domestic premises. Primary production in the area is predominantly in the dairy and meat industry. Food and drink manufacture continues to be a significant sector in Mid Devon with a number of established manufacturers, including tofu, breweries, ice-cream makers and confectioners.

Category	Number of Premises
Primary Producers	17
Manufacturers and Packers	93
Importer/Exporter	2
Distributors	20
Retailers	179
Caterers	594
<b>Total</b>	<b>905</b>

2.4.8 In relation to the production, handling and storage of Products of Animal Origin there are currently 17 approved establishments operating under Regulation (EC) 853/2004 in Mid Devon, summarised below:

Approved Premises Type	Number of Premises
Dairy Products	4
Meat Products	1
Meat Preparations	1
Cold Store	3
Fish Products	1
Egg products	1
Egg Packing Centres	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

- 2.4.8.1 Officers approved 3 new establishments during 2023/2024, with 1 closure.
- 2.4.8.2 Officer who conduct official controls in these establishments require specialist knowledge and competencies in the relevant area.
- 2.4.9 New food business registrations are steady, with 120 made in 2023/2024. Approximately 2.3 a week.
- 2.4.10 The food team issue food export certificates to businesses who commercially export food. 41 were issued between April 2023 and March 2024. These businesses include confectioners and chocolatiers, coffee suppliers and jams and preserves manufacturers.
- 2.4.11 Imported food controls are important to ensure that consumers and businesses are protected from contaminated products. The authority has responsibility for imported food control as an inland authority and imported food control forms part of the overall food safety intervention process. Officers will routinely look for foods imported during visits to premises and carry out imported food examination to check traceability and compliance with standards as necessary.
- 2.4.12 The Food Safety officers are district based and operate under a hybrid working scheme, based either from home or from Mid District Council offices located at Phoenix House in Tiverton.
- 2.4.13 Food Safety officers are available Monday to Friday working hours, and public access at Phoenix House is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am till 1pm (the offices are closed to public access on Wednesday). Central telephone lines are available Monday to Friday 9am till 5pm. An emergency out-of-hours service is available at all other times.

## **2.5 Regulation Policy**

- 2.5.1 The Public Health Services Enforcement Policy details our approach to the use of enforcement powers to ensure compliance with Regulators' Code and the principles of good enforcement. It also gives clarity as to how the unit will achieve compliance by setting out options and the criteria used to determine the most appropriate, effective and efficient response to breaches of legislation.
- 2.5.2 The Food Law Code of practice defines the interventions and the range of official controls which may be used to ensure that food is safe to eat and that all food premises in the district comply with food safety legislation. This can range from informal action through to the service of formal notices or the issue of simple cautions or prosecutions.
- 2.5.2 All enforcement action will be taken having regard to this Enforcement Policy based on the provisions of the Regulators' Code 2014 (Department of Business Innovation and Skills), the Code of Practice Powers of Entry 2014 (Home Office) and the provisions outlined in the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulatory and Enforcement Sanctions Act 2008. This policy was adopted by Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

## **3.0 Service Delivery**

### **3.1 Premises Interventions**

3.1.1 Mid Devon District Council considers programmed interventions of food premises to be essential to ensure consumers are protected in terms of food safety by:-

- establishing whether food is being handled, produced and kept hygienically;
- determining whether food is safe to eat;
- Identifying foreseeable incidents of food poisoning or illness resulting from the consumption of food.

3.1.2 It is the policy of this authority to carry out a programme of planned interventions of food premises in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice using a wide range of interventions to monitor, support and increase business compliance. Such measures are key to ensuring food business operators comply with food law which at the same time embraces the Government's regulatory reform agenda. A risk-based approach will be taken such that resources will be focused on those businesses posing a greater risk whilst adopting a lighter approach to businesses that do comply.

3.1.3 In accordance with this and our own internal Food Hygiene Intervention Procedure, we aim to apply the following risk based approach:

- Assess 100% of category A and B premises which are due a programmed intervention with a full inspection, partial inspection or audit
- Assess 100% of category C less than broadly compliant premises which are due a programmed intervention with a full inspection, partial inspection or audit
- Broadly compliant category C rated premises will be subject to an intervention that is an inspection, partial inspection or audit, alternated with another type of official Control; sampling, monitoring, surveillance or verification.
- Assess 100% of category D premises that are less than broadly compliant which are due a programmed intervention with an inspection, partial inspection or audit.
- Broadly compliant category D rated premises will be subject to an intervention that is an official control, alternated with an intervention that is not an official control.
- Where a D rated premises is assessed and scores 30 or 40 for type of food and method of handling, an inspection, partial inspection or audit will be carried out.
- Inspect premises which are overdue a food hygiene intervention targeting those considered a higher risk to food safety or in circumstances where it is considered necessary to review a premises rating;
- Apply an alternative enforcement strategy to food premises rated category E such as the use of self-assessment questionnaires, mailshots, information gathering exercises, seminars or other targeted campaign;
- In any case, where the premises in question is subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 the intervention will be an inspection, partial inspection or audit.

- Interventions for higher risk businesses or those that are likely to be high risk always take priority over interventions for lower risk businesses, unless information or intelligence suggests that there is a need for earlier intervention.

3.1.4 The intervention programme for 2024/2025 includes 539 programmed (including overdue and missed premises), as detailed below:

<b>Food Interventions Due 2024 – 2025</b>	
<b>Premises Category</b>	<b>Number of premises</b>
A	4
B	57
C	73
D	114
E	254
<b>Total Programmed Interventions</b>	<b>502</b>
Unrated	37
<b>Total Inspection Programme</b>	<b>539</b>

3.1.5 Additional areas of non-programmed interventions include:

- Non-compliant premises will receive a revisit or further intervention with an objective of assessing improvements in levels of compliance, and facilitating required improvements through a graduated and proportionate level of enforcement action. All 0, 1 and 2 rated premises would receive at least one follow up revisit. It is anticipated that around 50 revisit interventions will be carried out in addition to the programmed interventions and alternative enforcement interventions.
- The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme also encourages businesses given a 0-4 rating to request a revisit for re-rating purposes once non-compliances have been addressed. In March 2022, the Council introduced a charge for a revisit to re-rate, this has resulted in a slight drop in requests for this service. We delivered 6 re-visits to re-score premises during 2023/2024. This was lower than expected and we need to look at ways to encourage uptake.

## **3.2 Food Complaints**

3.2.1 Food safety-related service requests requiring a response within 5 working days are received by the food team about the condition of food, food premises, practices or food handlers. A risk-based approach will be taken such that investigations will be carried out on those complaints posing the greater risk to ensure that resources are used effectively. The Service will investigate all such complaints in accordance with our service standards and documented food complaints procedure. There were 56 food complaints received last year, this shows an increase of 16% in the number of complaints since 2022/2023.

3.2.2 All consumer complaints are taken as potential indicators of management problems within a food business and prompt a level of investigation. This includes general complaints relating to cleanliness or waste disposal, as well as allegations of food poisoning. If the business in question is due or shortly will be due a routine intervention,



the complaint will trigger this and a visit will be made. The complaint will be investigated as part of the inspection process. If the business has only recently been assessed and is not due a routine intervention, officers' judgement is utilised to determine the most appropriate action to investigate the complaint.

### **3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme**

3.3.1 Although this Service has no formal agreements currently in place to act as a Primary Authority for any food business, the Authority does support the Primary Authority Scheme advocated by the Better Regulatory Delivery Office and takes full regard of the relevant principles and guidance when dealing with any food business which is part of a Primary Authority arrangement. The Authority is committed to support local businesses and would welcome discussions from Mid Devon based manufacturers looking to enter into a Primary Authority agreement.

3.3.1 Mid Devon is the Originating Authority for a number of food manufacturers and will provide advice to relevant businesses on legal compliance. In addition we will have regard to any information or advice received from home and/or originating authorities elsewhere, and we will liaise with the home and/or originating authority of any business where identified non-compliance appears to be associated with the business's centrally defined policies and procedures. In accordance with the Home Authority Principle, this authority will respond to all reasonable requests for appropriate information and or assistance from other local authorities about locally produced foods that are the subject of a complaint outside of this district.

3.3.2 It is anticipated that 10 requests for advice from other authorities concerning Mid Devon food producers will be received during the course of a year.

### **3.4 Advice to Business**

3.4.1 This Authority is committed to assisting all Mid Devon based food premises meet their legal obligations and achieve best practice, by offering free advice and assistance, irrespective of their size or scale of operations, through a range of activities and interventions, including;

- Advice during the course of an intervention
- Responding to enquiries from food business operators for advice and information using email and telephone communication
- Proactively commenting on, and providing advice on food safety via planning applications
- Providing food safety advice to food business operators and groups represented on Safety Advisory Group's
- Reference and referral to free Food Standards Agency advice leaflets and guidance such as allergens, Safer Food Better Business
- Maintenance and development of food safety information on the Council's website with signposted links to relevant information providers
- Participation in Food Standards Agency food safety awareness campaigns
- Signposting businesses via letter and questionnaire as part of an alternative intervention

3.4.1 The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) gives individuals the right to access recorded information and it is anticipated this will generate 5 requests for food-related information for the year.

### **3.5 Food Sampling**

3.5.1 Sampling makes an important contribution to the protection of public health and the food law enforcement function of the Local Authority.

3.5.2 In addition to routine sampling programmes, food and environmental sampling is considered a valuable tool to support interventions and assessment of food safety procedures and practices. Sampling is routinely carried out as part of wider food safety inspection or audit to validate or verify a part of a process or a HACCP plan.

3.5.3 Food sampling is carried out in accordance with Food Sampling Policy that sets out our general approach to sampling and the approach to more specific situations. This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Food, Water & Environmental Lab (FWEM) at Porton Down and the Public Analyst which undertakes food examination for Mid Devon District Council.

3.5.4 A food and environmental sampling programme has been set to reflect local and national priorities and is coordinated with the Devon and Cornwall Food Liaison group. The current sampling programme also provides for routine sampling from producers, retailers and approved establishments across the district.

3.5.5 2024/2025 sampling priorities in line with regional studies are:

- Cheese – pathogen of interest *Listeria*
- Tattoo and piercing premises – pathogen of interest *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*
- Raw shell eggs – pathogen of interest *Salmonella*

Last year 233 samples were taken, it is anticipated that approximately 180 samples will be taken during the course of 2024-2025. This decrease is due to ensuring targeted sampling is carried out in line with local and regional priorities.

3.5.6 There has been a rolling annual agreement in place between Mid Devon District and the Food, Water and Environmental Lab (FWEM) at Porton Down since March 2020 for provision of food, water and environmental microbiology services.

### **3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

3.6.1 Officers in the team investigate notifications of infectious disease including food poisoning and community outbreaks. During 2023/24, 72 notifications of infectious disease were received and dealt with by the service, this shows a 26% increase on last year. These included, 39 Campylobacter, 16 Salmonella, 10 Cryptosporidium, 3 Giardia, 1 Legionella, 1 Typhoid and 2 Listeria.

3.6.2 Outbreak control plans are in place between UKHSA and Public Health for the control of communicable disease. Outbreaks are dealt with as a high priority and will be assigned an officer who will focus on the investigation and work with partners to ensure a fast response to identify the source of the outbreak and deal with the causes.

### **3.7 Food Safety Incidents**

3.7.1 This authority has a procedure which explains how to respond to Food Alerts for Action, Product Withdrawal Information Notices and Product Recall Information Notices notified by the FSA, including those received outside office hours.

3.7.2 The purpose of the response is to inform businesses and the general public of any potential contamination or risk to food and to advise them of any course of action. The procedure includes receipt of alerts, notices, appropriate actions, closure and record keeping. Alerts and Notices are received by email to the services generic email: [health@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:health@middevon.gov.uk) and direct to the Commercial Team Leader.

### **3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations**

3.8.1 Local and National partnership working is pivotal to continuing the drive to improving and delivering better public health outcomes for the residents, businesses and communities of Mid Devon. The scope of work and partnerships outlined below shows the positive impact made by the food team.

3.8.2 Food liaison arrangements are in place with neighbouring south west local authorities, Trading Standards, Food Standards Agency, through regular attendance at the Devon and Cornwall Food Liaison Group. The group acts as a discussion forum and shares intelligence, information and best practice to ensure consistent enforcement.

3.8.3 Working in collaboration with UKHSA South West Centre, we are actively involved in surveillance, reporting and control of communicable diseases across the south west by participation in regular UKHSA Group meetings and working groups.

### **3.9 Food Safety Promotional Work**

3.9.1 Limited resources have impacted on our ability to deliver promotional work. The Regulatory Officer post will take a lead role in promotional work and utilise Food Safety campaigns to share information with our lower risk premises. They will also facilitate other initiatives available to all businesses, including those below.

3.9.2 The service has a web based information subscription service, called Pin Point. This has not been well utilised since the Covid 19 outbreak. The service plans to use this platform going forward to push out Food Safety and other relevant information to the subscribers. The responsibility for this will sit with the Regulatory Officer once they are in post.

3.9.3 The intention was to reintroduce Food Hygiene Training Level 2 refresher during 2024, gradually building to a monthly classroom based provision if the demand is there. This is dependent on the availability of the Regulatory Officer to arrange and facilitate. Training will be delivered at Specialist Officer Level or above.

3.9.4 There has been a delay to putting together a low cost and accessible food hygiene training course for Mandarin speakers. This will be prioritised by the Regulatory Officer once in post.

## 4.0 Resources

### 4.1 Financial Allocation

	Set Budget for the year	Income target		Actual spend	Actual income	
	Includes staff costs, training, management, equipment, ICT and sampling specifically related to food safety	Export Certificates	Re-score visits	Includes staff costs, training, management, equipment, ICT and sampling specifically related to food safety	Export Certificates	Re-score visits
<b>2023/24</b>	£281,590	£500	£0	£212,162.40	£1854.19	£278.34
<b>2024/25</b>	£241,560	£1000	£500	£0	£0	£0

### 4.2 Staff Allocation

4.2.1 The allocated resources within the Commercial Team which are committed to food safety enforcement equates to 2.8 FTE Officers who hold either registration with CIEH as an Environmental Health Practitioner or the Higher Certificate in Food premises Inspection. The new 1 FTE Regulatory Officer will not have enforcement responsibilities but will implement Food Hygiene requirements through alternative interventions.

4.2.2 1 FTE support roles have been in place since October 2023.

4.2.3 The System Administrator is responsible for the FHRs upload and supports with the provision of management information essential for delivering and also assessing the effectiveness of the service. The System Administrator works alongside the Team Leaders to deliver data quality checks to ensure that the database is up to date, accurate and compliant with data standards.

### 4.3 Resource assessment against demands

4.3.1 The food team have tackled a back log of unrated premises during the 2023/2024 year. Number of new premises remain high, with an average of 2.3 new food registrations a week, so this demand is factored into the resources required to deliver the food service.

4.3.2 The proposed structure detailed in section 2.2.3 would provide adequate resource to ensure compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

4.3.3 Team Leader Focus on higher risk and approved establishments  
Lead Officer Focus on higher risk and approved establishments  
Specialist Officers Focus on premises rated C and D  
Regulatory Officer Premises rated E and other educational campaigns

4.3.4 The ability of the service to deliver against this plan has been determined with consideration to the input from the System Administration.

4.3.5 The continued use of a consultant EHO will be required until the full structure detailed in section 2.2.3 is in place.

4.3.6 Whilst working towards the full structure and compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice, the focus will remain on the higher risk premises and processes, and new registrations, there will be insufficient capacity to complete interventions with lower risk D and E rated premises.

#### **4.4 Staff Development Plan**

4.4.1 This authority has a clear commitment to maintain and develop staff competencies to ensure we continue to deliver a high quality service to our community.

4.4.2 Specialist Officers are assisted in achieving 20 hours continuing professional development training.

4.4.3 All training needs are identified through the appraisal process and incorporated into a service training plan, all CPD training is recorded and certificated. Ad hoc training needs will also be considered and fulfilled outside of those on the training plan, as the need arises.

4.4.4 The service utilise the Food Standards Agency Competency Framework to support with the assessment of officer competencies and identify gaps in knowledge and skill that then feed into future training plans.

#### **4.5 Information Technology**

4.5.1 A Uniform database is maintained to keep the register of food businesses, facilitate risk rating and upload of Food Hygiene Rating data to the national database. Details of interventions and other contacts between businesses and the service are managed on the platform.

### **5.0 Quality Assessment**

#### **5.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring**

5.1.1 The following monitoring arrangements are in place to assist in the quality assessment of the work carried out by the food team:

- Local scoring consistency discussions are carried out routinely at team meetings
- National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme national consistency exercises are carried out and reviewed
- Quality management procedures are delivered through monitoring arrangements including through team meetings, reviews of inspection paperwork, monthly case review meetings (new April 2024), one-to-ones, staff appraisals and development plan reviews, as well as accompanied interventions
- Uniform database and National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme data analysis and cleansing exercises are carried out regularly by System Administrator and Team Leader
- Statistical performance monitoring including inspection and complaint monitoring
- Returns of Mid Devon District Council food law enforcement activities are submitted to the Food Standards Agency as requested
- We continue to review our systems and procedures in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice and to ensure compliance with the enforcement framework requirements

## **6.0 Review**

### **6.1 Review against the FSA recovery plan**

6.1.1 It is now felt that this review element can be removed from the service plan.

### **6.2 Review against service plan**

6.2.1 During 2023/2024 67.6% of due interventions with established businesses were carried out

### **6.3 Review against internal performance indicators**

6.3.1 The Public Health Services Business Plan is subject to scrutiny and includes performance targets relevant to food safety. Our food safety Performance Indicators are checked, reviewed and reported quarterly to Cabinet Committee. The food service Performance Indicator for 2023 - 2026 currently is: "Number of food premises inspected for compliance against Food Safety legislation". With a defined target score of 200 inspections per year.

6.3.2 Performance against this indicator for 2023 - 2024 was met and exceeded.

6.3.3 Performance indicators have been reviewed, as they do not reflect commitments to the Food Law Code of Practice, or the deliverables of the service.

6.3.4 New internal indicators from April 2024:

- % of interventions due at each risk category carried out
- Improvement in Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score (FHRS) for premises rated 0, 1 or 2, at subsequent food hygiene interventions
- % of new businesses addressed within 28 days of registration.

6.3.4 From an operational perspective the Commercial Team Leader will review the key performance measures and service improvements contained in this plan on a quarterly basis.

### **6.4 Deviation from service plan**

6.4.1 There were no major deviations from the 2023/2024 service plan.

### **6.5 Areas of Focus**

6.5.1 There are a number of areas where we are working to improve the service, with the key aim of building resilience and capability to ensure compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice. We are continually seeking to improve service delivery and look to smarter ways of working to ensure that we are utilising the resources available to us to achieve our overall objective of ensuring Food Safety within the District.

6.5.2 The focus during the 24/25 year will be to bring the new structure in and ensure appropriate period of training and development takes place.

6.5.3 Bring in new performance indicators and implement as corporate performance indicators through SPAR.

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**Report for: Community, People & Equalities PDG**

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Date of Meeting:	25 June 2024
Subject:	<b>RESILIENCE STRATEGY</b>
Cabinet Member:	David Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality (Cost) of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health
Exempt:	Not Applicable
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Annex A – Resilience Strategy Annex B – Resilience Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

One of the key outputs of the newly appointed Resilience Officer role is the creation of a Resilience Strategy and the provision of day-to-day oversight of its delivery. Whilst it is not a mandatory requirement to develop such a Strategy, the document sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties as a Category 1 responder under Civil Contingency legislation in a coherent and defined way. It therefore provides a key framework and assurance with respect to how the Council will plan for, assess and ultimately respond to major incidents as well as events which impact on its own business continuity through increased resilience. The Strategy also sets out how the Council will undertake its role in the recovery of communities after an incident and also support our communities to increase their own resilience to emergencies and business disruptions.

The Strategy is split into four main sections each covering an aspect of resilience which, when working in tandem will ensure that the Council has identified risks, planned accordingly and is agile in testing and updating these plans to ensure they remain fit for purpose. These four sections are:

**Risk Management:** This details the different ways in which Mid Devon assess and will assess risks going forward. This includes the current Corporate Risk Register



alongside the addition of two new documents, the Business Impact Assessments and the Community Risk Register. The later will function similarly to the Corporate Risk Register but has a greater emphasis on very local risks to the wider community and it is likely that district Councillors will either own or be consulted on these risks.

**Core Plans:** These are the two key plans to improve resilience and is a large proportion of the Resilience Officer's duties which includes the Emergency Plan for the Council as a whole and the individual service Business Continuity plans.

**Supporting Plans:** This is a repository which details all of the additional plans that relate to responding and recovering from potential emergencies and business disruption. This allows the Council to accurately understand what plans are in place, the ownership of those plans and the frequency of their review/updating.

**Preparedness:** This lists out the training, testing and reviewing of the plans mentioned within the document. This will ensure that our staff are competent and confident to fulfil their roles during and emergency or business disruption and the testing/updating will ensure that the plans are fit for purpose and up to date.

The Resilience Strategy is in essence an internal operational document however there are links to the role of District Councillors including specific media training identified for the Cabinet due to their potential role within an emergency. Furthermore, it is important for members to be sighted on the wider document so as to have assurance that the Council has a structure in place to meet its Civil Contingency duties and to build on recent member briefings regarding the specific role (and therefore boundaries) of the Council during and after an incident.

#### **Recommendation:**

### **1. That the Community PDG notes the new Resilience Strategy**

#### **Section 2 – Report**

#### **1 Introduction**

1.1 Mid Devon District Council is required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as a Category 1 responder organisation to be prepared for a range of different emergencies and business disruptions. Integral to this is the validation and testing of plans to ensure business continuity solutions and response structures reflect the needs of the Council and community, and that plans are current, accurate, effective and complete.

1.2 As a Category 1 responder there is a requirement on us at the core of any response and recovery. The Act requires Category 1 responders to maintain plans for preventing emergencies; reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies in both the response and recovery phases; and taking other action in the event of emergencies. There are additional overarching requirements with regard to co-operation, information sharing and assessing the risk of emergencies.

- 1.3 Other Category 1 organisations include all emergency services, acute and ambulance NHS trusts and upper tier Local Authorities.
- 1.4 As a lower tier Local Authority, our specific role in the response phase of an incident is:
- Support Emergency Services
  - Attendance at multi-agency Strategic and Tactical Coordinating Groups
  - Contribute to development of a wider Common Operating Picture of any live incident
  - Supporting the establishment of Rest Centres for displaced people (with Devon County Council)
  - Resources – e.g. clothing, food, refreshments, sleeping bags
  - Advice on environmental health and structural safety
  - Temporary and emergency housing
  - Warning & Informing/Communications
  - Mutual aid – provision of emergency or backfill staff to support other Districts and/or the County Council and vice-versa as required
- 1.5 Once the response phase of a major incident is over, then local authorities including District Councils take the lead role in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the community – either back to normal or to a new normal. This includes specific statutory responsibilities to assist economic/business recovery. As such local authorities will lead any Recovery Coordinating Group (the relevant District Council if only the district area is impacted or the County Council if multiple districts are impacted).
- 1.6 Category 2 organisations have a supporting or co-enabling role in both response and recovery in their respective specific areas and include the Environment Agency, Met Office, Telecoms, Transport and Utility Companies.
- 1.7 During an incident, the combined Category 1 and 2 responders come together on a regional (Policing area) multi-agency basis through a partnership known as the Local Resilience Forum. For our area, this is the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly forum (DCIOS LRF). At a delivery level, all the District Councils and the County Council work as part of a Devon-wide group known as the Devon Emergency Planning Partnership (DEPP) which supports on the development of emergency plan templates and provides a focus for wider local authority cooperation, shared arrangements (e.g. rest centres) and training/development (e.g. competency frameworks and co-delivery of learning).
- 1.8 Because of this we have developed and adopted a Resilience Strategy covering key aspects of our Emergency and Business Continuity Planning. The Resilience Strategy has been created to:
1. Ensure effective consideration of risks that may impact on the Council and its communities

2. Improve the resilience of Council operations, systems, and processes to operate in the event of an incident or emergency
  3. Encourage greater resilience in the Council and its communities
  4. Meet Council responsibilities as a Category 1 responder in relation to emergency planning and business continuity, including dealing with an emergency or incident
- 1.9 The Strategy also links into the Council's approach to addressing climate change, including reducing the amount of carbon issued (mitigation) and preparing for more extreme weather and climatic events (adaptation).
- 1.10 To ensure that the Council can fulfil its requirements under the Civil Contingency legislation and provide resilient services there are a number of plans that work in conjunction with each other. The Strategy sets out the framework that the Council uses to meet its statutory requirements as well as remaining resilient as an organisation. The Strategy should be read in conjunction with the plans identified within the "supporting plans" section of the document as it is the combination of these plans that increases the overall resilience of the Council and does not function in isolation. If followed, these plans provide a high level of resilience for both our statutory Category 1 responsibilities and responding to internal incidents that could impact on one of more service areas.
- 1.11 The overall strategic approach as seen in the diagram on page 4 of the document comprises of four main areas; Risk Management, Preparedness, Core Plans, and Supporting Plans. Each area provides a different purpose and each, if completed, will provide a holistic and agile suite of plans to ensure the Council is able to adequately respond to incidents and emergencies.

## **2 Supporting community resilience (towns and parishes)**

- 2.1 As set out in the Supporting Plans section of the Strategy, the Council has a role in building resilience in the local community which it will do so through a several approaches:
- Using the Community Risk Register to identify and plan for risks specific for the local community
  - Where possible create useful resources and signposting for our local communities to become more resilient. These can then be published on the website or other forms of media, for example our recent Flood Guide
  - Work with local Towns and Parishes to identify their local risks and if possible assist in the promotion and creation of Community Emergency Plans in partnership with Devon Communities Together
  - Assist local businesses to create their own Business Continuity Plans
  - Communicate with communities during an incident/emergency as detailed within the Crisis Comms plan

- 2.2 Work on the development of Community Emergency Plans has also been put forward under the emerging new Corporate Plan for 2024-28. It is proposed that this element of the Resilience Strategy directly links to wider corporate aspirations to work more closely with Town and Parish Councils and as such a specific target has been suggested regarding the number of new (or significantly) updated such plans completed annually.

### **3 Recommendation**

- 3.1 In accordance with the above, and given the operational nature of the Strategy, the recommendation is that the PDG note the document only.

#### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications of the resilience strategy is the potential costs towards training key individuals as some of the training has to be conducted externally. Where possible training will be completed in house, through the Devon Emergency Planning Partnership or the DCIOS LRF of which Mid Devon is a part of. Training costs will vary year on year due to the different lengths of time between retaking the training as set out within the DEPP competency framework. It is proposed that where possible the cost of this training will be absorbed within the existing corporate training budget.

#### **Legal Implications**

The strategy sets out to ensure MDDC meets its statutory duties as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. More information on these duties is set out within the report.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The overall risk of the strategy is very low with much of the work being to enhance and up to date pre-existing plans along with producing robust new ones and insuring they are fit for purpose. Like with many of the plans, this is not a static document and will be reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory requirements and the requirements of the Council and its communities.

#### **Impact on Climate Change**

None directly arising from the report. Climate change is highlighted within the document from the perspective of creating adaptation plans for our communities to ensure they are more resilient to more severe and frequent weather events.

#### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The Resilience Strategy sets out a framework for the Council to meet its statutory duties for the benefit of the wider community of Mid Devon as a whole. It does not positively or negatively impact directly anyone with protected characteristics however the component emergency plans that sit below the strategy do take into account vulnerable members of the community such that their needs are prioritised in both the response and recovery phases of any emergency or major incident. Overall, the

Strategy is neutral regarding equalities as reflected in the screening assessment attached in Annex B.

### **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

The purpose of the Resilience Strategy is to provide a compliance framework regarding MDDC's statutory responsibilities as a Category 1 responder and so relates to those duties first and foremost. However, the Strategy goes beyond this and in doing so relates to multiple aspects of the Corporate Plan including but not limited to; Climate mitigation and adaptation relating to a "Sustainable Planet" and an emphasis on building whole society resilience which relates to "Sustainable and Prosperous Communities".

As noted within the report, work on the development of Community Emergency Plans has also be put forward under the emerging new Corporate Plan for 2024-28. It is proposed that this element of the Resilience Strategy directly links to wider corporate aspirations to work more closely with Town and Parish Councils.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

**Date:** 12 June 2024

**Statutory Officer:** Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date:** 12 June 2024

**Chief Officer:** Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

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

**Date:** 29 April 2024

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health or Lewis Dyson, Resilience Officer

Email: [snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk) or [ldyson@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:ldyson@middevon.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01884 255255

### **Background information**

# Resilience Strategy

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This strategy was approved by MDDC Leadership Team and CMT in April and noted at the Community PCG in June 2024.

## Introduction

Mid Devon District Council is required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as a Tier 1 organisation to be prepared for a range of different emergencies and business disruptions. Integral to this is the validation and testing of plans to ensure business continuity solutions and response structures reflect the needs of the council and community, and that plans are current, accurate, effective and complete.

This Resilience Strategy has been created to:

1. Ensure effective consideration of risks that may impact on the council and its communities
2. Improve the resilience of council operations, systems, and processes to operate in the event of an incident or emergency
3. Encourage greater resilience in the council and its Communities
4. Meet council responsibilities as a category 1 responder in relation to emergency planning, and business continuity, including dealing with an emergency or incident

This strategy also links into the council's approach to addressing Climate Change, including reducing the amount of Carbon issued (mitigation) and preparing for more extreme weather and climatic events (adaptation).

To ensure the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) can fulfil its requirements of the civil contingencies legislation and provide resilient services there are a number of plans that work in conjunction with each other. This strategy sets out the framework that MDDC uses to meet its statutory requirements as well as remaining resilient as an organisation. This strategy should be read in conjunction with the plans identified within this document as it is the combination of these plans and does not function in isolation.

Within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 there are seven key areas that are statutory for MDDC as a Category 1 responder: Co-operation, Information Sharing, Assessing the Risk of Emergencies, Emergency Planning, Business Continuity Management, Warning and Informing, Business Continuity Advice to Business.

The resilience strategy was created to give a robust framework that, if followed, would provide a high level of resilience for both our statutory category 1 responsibilities and responding to internal incidents that could impact on one of more service areas.

The overall strategy as seen in the diagram on page 4 comprised of four main areas; Risk Management, Preparedness, Core Plans and Supporting Plans. Each area provides a different purpose and each if completed will provide a holistic and agile suite of plans to ensure MDDC is able to adequately respond to incidents and emergencies.

### Emergency Planning

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“Emergency planning is at the heart of the civil protection duty on Category 1 responders. The Act requires Category 1 responders to maintain plans for preventing emergencies; reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies in both the response and recovery phases; and taking other action in the event of emergencies”<sup>1</sup>

#### **What is an “Emergency” and what to do?**

“An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or national security in a place in the UK”

When an Emergency requires a multi-agency response a “Major Incident” is declared and the agencies come together to identify, assess and respond. A Major Incident is “an event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency.” Any Category 1 agency can call a “Major Incident” however it is the Police service that calls the multi-agency response. If you are unsure if an event meets the “Major Incident” criteria, call the LRF Office on 01392 226469. If a major incident has occurred, call 999.

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<sup>1</sup> Cabinet Office, Revision to Emergency Preparedness

**Once a “Major Incident” has been declared, follow the Mid Devon District Councils Emergency Plan found on the Emergency Planning Microsoft Teams Team or printed in various locations found on page 9.**

## **Business Continuity Planning**

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“Business Continuity Management (BCM) is about identifying those parts of your organisation that you can’t afford to lose – such as information, stock, premises, staff – and planning how to maintain these, if an incident occurs”<sup>2</sup>

Emergency and Business Continuity Plans are paramount for MDDC to navigate unforeseen disruptions and events. These plans serve as lifelines during crises mitigating risks, safeguarding assets and people whilst maintaining essential functions. By anticipating various scenarios these plans also aim to minimize downtime and financial losses. As a landlord to 3,000 tenants alongside providing vital services, MDDC has a duty to ensure our service areas are functioning to a sufficient standard and if stopped are recovered as quickly and efficiently as possible. BCP’s foster confidence among, our communities and councillors showcasing our organization’s commitment to preparedness and stability. Ultimately, these plans are not just documents; they represent a proactive approach to preserving the integrity and sustainability of the council.

Business Continuity Plans are internal plans held by each individual service area owner. These can be activated and used whenever that service area is effected by an event/incident to ensure that the core services remain functional and normal services are resumed as quickly as possible. If the event or incident is significant enough and you require assistance from other Category 1 responders it can be escalated to the emergency plan. The Emergency Plan is a single plan that covers the entirety of MDDC and when stood up will bring together all Category 1 responders to assist in the response and recovery of that event. If you are experiencing an incident or event that causes your service area to stand up their business continuity plan, ensure that the Corporate Management Team (CMT) are aware of this. If you believe that it should be escalated to the emergency plan, contact the on-call Emergency Officer.

## **Partnership Working:**

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Local Resilience Forums (LRF) are groups of representatives of Category 1, 2 and specialist organisations in a geographical area. MDDC is part of the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LRF which functions to prepare and support the response to major incidents and emergencies. If a major incident is declared a representative of MDDC would attend that Tactical/Strategic Coordination Group (TCG/SCG). MDDC have an on-call rota which can be found in the Out of Hours Service Teams site. The MDDC Emergency Plan specifically sets out the process for working with the LRF to follow the JESIP principles of: Collocate, communicate, co-ordinate, jointly understand risk and shared situational awareness.

The LRF maintains a Community Risk Register which lists hazards that are a potential risk to those in the area. This informs the councils own Community Risk Register which is focused on risks local to Mid Devon.

The Council is also a partner of the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership. The Partnerships Climate Task Force is operating to maintain and implement the Climate Adaptation Strategy (and the Devon Carbon Plan). A Climate Adaptation Plan lists the key areas for partners to concentrate on to make sectors more resilient.

MDDC is also part of the Devon Emergency Planning Partnership (DEPP), formed of the District Councils and Devon County Council. The aim of DEPP is:

1. To work collaboratively, decreasing workload and assisting Devon communities to be more resilient. Most districts do not have a dedicated Emergency Planner so by working collaboratively the group are able to produce higher quality plans at a higher quantity.
2. There is a mutual aid agreement which allows any member to request additional resources during an emergency that can then be charged back at a standard rate. The Emergency Plan used by MDDC is from a DEPP template so that if the council required additional support from another Emergency Planner they would immediately be familiar with the structure and content of the Emergency Plan.

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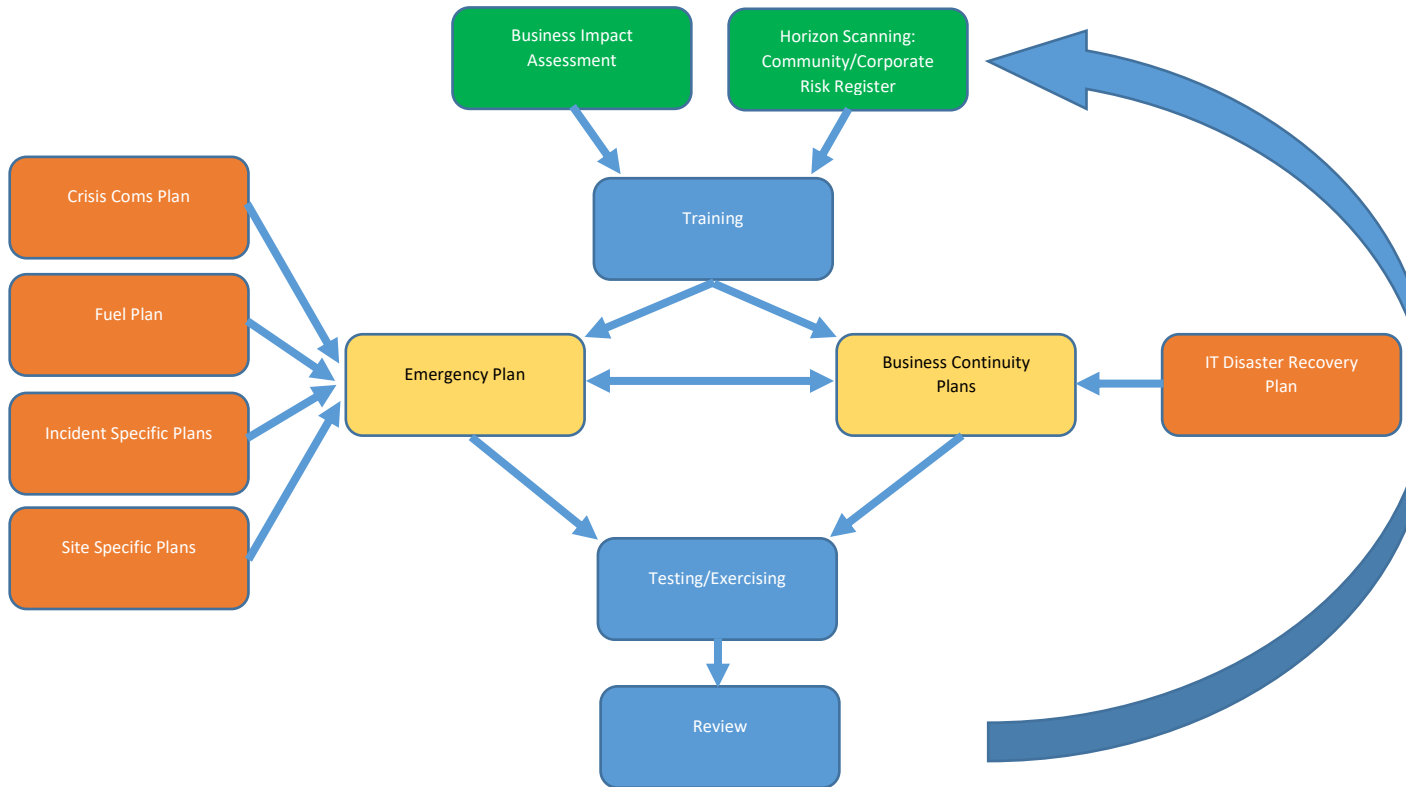
<sup>2</sup> HM Government, Business Continuity Management Toolkit



## Risk Management (Page 4)

**Business Impact Assessment:** Is an assessment carried out on a three year bases to identify what services are most critical to MDDC. This will feed heavily into the BCP's and the IT Disaster Recovery Plan to ensure the most crucial services are maintained across the organisation or if down are the first to recover.

**Horizon Scanning:** This will ensure that MDDC is agile and proactively planning for risks. These risks will be informed by the National Risk Register and LRF Community Risk Register. MDDC will maintain a Corporate Risk Register (Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager) and a Community Risk Register (Resilience Officer).



## Supporting Plans (Page 10)

These plans are written and maintained by different service leads but each feeds directly into both the EP and BCP's and focus on horizontal risks that effect multiple service areas.

## Core Plans (Page 9)

These plans are the core plans to meet our statutory requirements as set out in the Civil Contingency's Act and ensure the resilience of MDDC. The details of these plans are throughout the resilience strategy.

The BCP's must work alongside the Emergency Plan and ensure that MDDC do not compromise our ability to assist a multi-agency response. Business Continuity issues may be significant enough to declare an emergency.

## Preparedness (Page 12)

**Training:** Training will align to the DEPP competency framework

**Testing/Exercising and Review:** Tests/Exercises will be completed on regular intervals. These will ensure they are fit for purpose, identify improvements and test how the supporting plans feed into the core plans. This includes reviews which take place at regular intervals or after a test, training or actual incident to allow for continual improvement.

## Overall Ownership

Name of plan	Responsible for review/update	Senior Owner	Relevant Member
Business Impact Assessment	Resilience Officer	Head of Housing & Health	Community & Leisure
Community Risk Register	Resilience Officer	Head of Housing & Health	Community & Leisure
Corporate Risk Register	Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager	Head of People, Performance & Waste	Leader
Emergency Plan	Resilience Officer	Head of Housing & Health	Community & Leisure
Business Continuity Plans	Individual Service Managers and Operational Leads	Corporate Management Team (CMT)	All Cabinet
EP & BCP Training Plan	Resilience Officer	Head of Housing & Health	Community & Leisure
EP & BCP Testing Plan	Resilience Officer	Head of Housing & Health	Community & Leisure
IT Disaster Recovery Plan	ICT Operations Manager	Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Working Environment
Crisis Comms Plan	Communications and Engagement Manager	Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Working Environment
Fuel Plan	CMT for Waste and Recycling	Head of People, Performance & Waste	Environment & Services
Incident Specific Plans	Differs depending on incident	Differs depending on incident	
Site Specific Plans	Differs depending on site	Differs depending on site	

## Roles within MDDC

### Strategic/Gold:

The Strategic group are represented at MDDC by the leadership team and CEO. They will attend any Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG) if required and ultimately make the larger strategic decisions during an emergency.

- Attend the Strategic Coordination Group
- Create the overall strategic aims/plans which are disseminated to the TCG to complete
- Coordinate with the TCG if any decisions are different from those set out within the already established Emergency Plan
- Strategic group deal with strategy and policy and are **not** responsible for tactical or operational decisions
- Agree and allocate spending over £20,000 during an emergency

Triggers:

- An emergency that has called for an SCG to be called (this **should not** be given to a delegated authority)
- An incident in which a BCP has been activated in which there is potential financial or reputational damages to either the council, members or local community (this can be given to a delegated authority in the Tactical Group if required).

More specific guidance for the Strategic level employees including draft meeting agendas/templates can be found on the Emergency Planning Teams site.

### Tactical/Silver:

The Tactical group are represented by the five members of the CMT plus the Resilience Officer. These six individuals are on a six week rolling on-call rota and will be the first contact should an emergency be declared by the LRF. They will attend any Pre-Event Assessment Teleconference (PEAT) and Tactical Coordination Groups.

- Attend Pre-Event Assessment Teleconference (PEAT) and Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)
- Report on progress and situational updates to the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)
- Make the tactical decisions of how MDDC are responding to an emergency in line with the overall plan/strategy created by the SCG.
- Coordinate and disseminate tactical information to operational leads to complete
- Stand up/down additional cells to support the TCG (or recommend to SCG if applicable)
- Agree and allocate spending under £20,000 during an emergency

Triggers:

- A TCG is called
- A BCP has been used

More specific guidance for the Tactical level employees including draft meeting agendas/templates can be found on the Emergency Planning Teams site.

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### Resilience Officer:

MDDC has a full time role dedicated to Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Planning. Although not directly responsible for those plans, they are able to assist in the production/updating of these plans and will ensure that the relevant employees have the correct training to fulfil their roles. The Resilience Officer has ownership of the Resilience Strategy and so has responsibility to ensure that the roles identified within the strategy understand and follow the strategy. They will also assist both the Tactical and Strategic roles during an emergency.

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### Volunteer:

Volunteers are a key aspect to MDDC for both the response and recovery phases of an emergency. Unlike the roles above these are not within the officer's job description and are able to opt in/opt out as applicable in addition to their MDDC role. These roles are vital in an emergency and the Resilience Officer will keep a list of volunteers signed up and will aim to ensure a minimum number are available at any given time. Although not directly within the job description, TOIL will be given to any employee that works on a voluntary role outside of their usual work hours. These voluntary roles can include:

- **Rest Centre Staff:** Able to attend a local rest centre if stood up during an emergency. Rest Centres are rarely stood up but if they are they are temporary accommodation for up to 72hrs following an emergency for a large group of displaced people (50+). The voluntary role includes assisting with the preparing of the site, reception duties and care of the displaced people.
- **Loggists:** During an emergency is vital that decisions are logged including their rationale in the event that they are questioned, require reviewing or in the event of an inquiry. Due to the high stress and fast paced nature of an emergency it is not always possible for a member of the tactical or strategic groups to take these minutes/logs especially in larger meetings. Because of this, loggists work alongside these individuals to ensure decisions are captured.

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### Members:

Our elected members have a role within incidents and emergency as a way to directly engage and communicate with our local communities. Members are able to contact the emergency planning e-mail during an emergency. In addition information will be sent out to Members in an emergency. Members should be informed of emergencies within their area following guidance from the Warning and Informing cell and in line with our Crisis Communications Plan.

## Risk Management

### Business Impact Assessment

**Ownership:** The Business Impact Assessment will be carried out by the CMT and selected Leadership Team representatives and facilitated by the Resilience Officer. This will ensure that all service areas are being reviewed in totality and not in isolation.

**Triggers:**

The Business Impact Assessment will be used;

- When writing/reviewing/updating business continuity plans
- To identify gaps/high risk areas for externally facilitated testing

The Business Impact Assessment will be updated

- When there is a significant change to a business area in terms of risk/importance
- After an annual review has identified a need to update
- Every three years if not updated due to a factor detailed above
- In response to lessons learnt from a test, incident or audit

**Maintenance/Review:** It is the responsibility of the CMT or relevant member of Leadership Team to ensure that the Business Impact Assessment is maintained and reviewed/updated according to the triggers above.

A review will be carried out annually facilitated by the Resilience Officer to check that the assessment is still applicable however an update may not be required.

The Business Impact Assessment will be held as a digital file only, stored on the Emergency Planning Teams Site as it is not a document that will be used in an emergency. It is the plans created from the outcome of the Business Impact Assessment that should be used during an incident.

### Community Risk Register

**Ownership:** The Community Risk Register is owned and maintained by the Resilience Officer supported by the CMT and the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager. It is an internal register detailing serious risks specifically for Mid Devon (the community as well as the council) that could result in an emergency. An emergency is defined as an event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or security.

**Triggers:**

The Community Risk Register will be used;

- To inform other plans such as business continuity plans
- To identify and manage risks that effect Mid Devon
- To identify gaps/high risk areas for externally facilitated testing

The Community Risk Register will be updated;

- As a live document meaning updates can happen when ever a new risk is identified or the likelihood/impact changes
- After an annual review has identified a need to update
- In response to lessons learnt from a test, incident or audit

**Maintenance/Review:** The overall maintenance of the Community Risk Register is the responsibility of the Resilience Officer however, each individual risk will have an assigned owner relating to that risk who will be responsible for keeping their individual risk up to date. The document will be live and risks can be changed as

and when appropriate. However there will be a formal review annually to check the information stored within the Community Risk Register is up to date and relevant.

## Corporate Risk Register

**Ownership:** The CRR is owned by the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager with support from CMT/Service Area Managers responsible for certain risks.

### Triggers:

The Corporate Risk Register will be used;

- To inform other plans such as Business Continuity Plans
- To identify and manage corporate risks
- To identify gaps/high risk areas for externally facilitated testing

The Corporate Risk Register will be updated;

- As a live document meaning updates can happen when ever a new risk is identified or the likelihood/impact changes
- After a quarterly formal review
- In response to lessons learnt from a test, incident or audit
- Annually

**Maintenance/Review:** The Corporate Risk Register (CRR) is a live document which is maintained by the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager. However each individual risk will have an assigned owner relating to that risk who will be responsible for keeping their individual risk up to date. The CRR is a live document however undergoes a formal review every quarter and a formal update annually alongside the National Risk Register.

## Core Plans

### Emergency Plan

**Ownership:** The ultimate ownership of the Emergency Plan is the CEO as the plan details MDDC processes, procedures and contacts during an emergency to fulfil our duty as Category 1 responders and to respond efficiently/effectively. The Resilience Officer has day to day oversight of the Emergency Plan.

**Triggers:** The Emergency Plan will be used;

- In the event of an emergency or major incident is declared. An emergency is defined as an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, environment or security.

The Emergency Plan will be updated;

- When key contacts have changed
- When any aspect of the process has changed
- After an annual formal review
- At the request of the Devon Emergency Partnership or the LRF
- In response to lessons learnt from a test, incident or audit

**If there is a major incident which has not been identified or cascaded through the LRF the on-call members of the tactical group should call the LRF Office on 01392 226469 and if risk to life should call 999.**

**Cascade:** If a PEAT, TCG or SCG is called there will be an immediate call and e-mail from “OpLink” to each member of the CMT.

The CMT will then communicate through the Emergency Planning WhatsApp group. This is a group consisting of the Leadership Team (Strategic), CMT (Tactical) and the Resilience Officer. This communication will;

- Inform the leadership team and resilience officer (as they are not contacted by Op Link, although may still be contacted via e-mail directly from Resilience Direct)
- Confirm that the member of the CMT who is on-call is able to attend. If unable to attend a replacement **must** be arranged. It is suggested that this will always be a member of the CMT, Leadership Team or the Resilience Officer as these are the roles with the training and competence to do so.

Led by the actions from the TCG/SCG communication will continue to cascade from the on call CMT member and any information specific to areas MDDC will be completed directly from the on call CMT or cascaded down through the other members of the CMT.

**Maintenance/Review:** It is the responsibility of the Resilience Officer to ensure that the Emergency Plan is up to date and fit for purpose. Although the template is created by DEPP there are sections specific to the district which need to be updated and reviewed by the Resilience Officer on an annual basis.

The Emergency Plan will be available on the “Emergency Planning” team on Microsoft Teams. There will be 20 printed copies which will be stored at:

- 1 Copy held by the Resilience Officer (Phoenix House)
- 9 Copies held each member of the CMT and Leadership Team (Phoenix House)
- 1 Copy held by the Communications Team (Phoenix House)
- 1 Copy held in the Grab Bag in Phoenix House (1<sup>st</sup> Floor by Public Health)
- 1 Copy held in the Grab Back at the Old Road Depot
- 1 Copy held by the Leader of the Council (Leaders Office, Phoenix House)
- 1 Copy held by the Cabinet member for Community & Leisure (Members Room, Phoenix House)
- 3 Copies held at each Leisure Centre
- 2 Copies held at Carlu and Hitchcocks

## Business Continuity Plans

**Ownership:** Business Continuity Plans are the responsibility of each Service Area Manager and should be reviewed by the relevant member of the CMT and the Resilience Officer. Below is a full list of service areas that maintains a Business Continuity Plan and the owner.

Business Area	Owner
Communications	Communications and Engagement Manager
Corporate Property and Commercial Assets	Contracts and Services Manager
Customer First	Customer Service Manger
Finance and Procurement	Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience
Governance	Director of Legal, HR and Governance
Human Resources	Operations Manager for Human Resources
ICT	CT Operations Manager
Legal and Land Charges	Operations Manager for Legal Services
Leisure	Leisure Business Manager
Member Services	Democratic Services Manager
Planning and Economic Regeneration	Development Management Manager
Revenues and Benefits	Operations Manager for Revenues and Benefits
Street Scene	Ops Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces
Public Health and Housing Operations	Ops Manager for Public Health
Elections	Electoral Services Manager
Building Services	Operations Manager for Building Services
Housing	Operations Manager Housing Services
Emergency Planning	Resilience Officer

**Cascade:** If a Business Continuity Plan is used, the service area manager should inform their relevant CMT along with the on-call tactical group member as per the on-call rota. That member of CMT can then communicate this with the other members of the CMT.

**Triggers:** A business continuity plan will be used;

- If an event has the potential or has caused a service area to be unable to fulfil its usual operations

A Business Continuity Plan will be updated;

- If there are any significant changes to the service area in question including staff/organisational
- If a risk identified (i.e. in CRR) has changed significantly (i.e. become more likely/more impact potential)
- After an annual formal review
- In response to lessons learnt from a test, incident or audit
- To reflect changes to suppliers, contractual arrangements or ICT Systems
- To reflect changes in business objectives and processes

**If the BCP incident is classed as an emergency which requires a multi-agency response the on-call member of the tactical group should call the LRF Office on 01392 226469 and if risk to life should call 999.**

**Maintenance/Review:** It is the responsibility of the Business Continuity Plan owner to update and maintain the plans on an annual basis in line with the activity schedule held on the Emergency Planning Microsoft Teams Team.

**Plan Owners/Teams should consider the following when reviewing plans;**

1. Review what has changed since the last update (triggers above).
2. Identify and agree if any changes need to be made to specific elements.
3. Analyse the impact of any changes (e.g. impact on timeframes - MTPD's or cost implication)
4. Identify any parties that may be impacted of these changes and advise them.
5. Identify additional requirements for training, exercising or communications.
6. If plans and documents have changes, distribute new version and save as appropriate.
7. Identify the date for undertaking the next planned maintenance review.

## Supporting Plans

Supporting plans are additional plans that are specific for Mid Devon District Council which cover specific incidents, scenarios and locations. Below is a list of the identified supporting plans and the owner responsible for the maintenance and review of these plans. More detail on each plan including triggers and Maintenance plans can be found in the “Supporting Plans” folder on the Emergency Planning Microsoft Teams Team.

Type	Name	Owner
Scenario Plans	IT Disaster Recovery Plan	Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
	Crisis Communications Plan	Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
	Fuel Plan	Head of People, Performance & Waste
Incident Plans	Minor Injuries/Incidents	Health and Safety Officer
	Major First Aid Emergencies	Health and Safety Officer
	Head Injuries	Health and Safety Officer
	Fire & Evacuation	Leisure Business Manager
	Power & Structural Failure	Leisure Business Manager
	Dealing with Blood, Vomit & Faeces	Leisure Business Manager
	Overcrowding	Leisure Business Manager
	Disorderly Behaviour	Leisure Business Manager
	Bomb Threat	Customer Service Manager
	Robbery	Leisure Business Manager
	COSHH Incidents ( <i>Toxic Gas Emissions &amp; Chemical Spillage</i> )	Health and Safety Officer
	Lost Children	Leisure Business Manager
	Serious Injury to Bather ( <i>Exe Valley &amp; Lords Meadow only</i> )	Leisure Business Manager
	Discovery of Casualty in Water ( <i>Exe Valley &amp; Lords Meadow only</i> )	Leisure Business Manager
	Removal of Casualty with a Suspected Spinal Injury ( <i>Exe Valley &amp; Lords Meadow only</i> )	Leisure Business Manager
	Dosing System Failure ( <i>Exe Valley &amp; Lords Meadow only</i> )	Leisure Business Manager
	Lift Failure ( <i>Lords Meadow only</i> )	Leisure Business Manager
	Housing Emergency Evacuation and Accommodation Plan	CMT for Housing
	Street Scene EAP	Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces
	Depot fire	Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces
	Intruder alarm	Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces
	WTS – Dust	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services
	WTS – Leaks & spillages	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services
WTS – Non-conformance waste	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services	
WTS – Vehicle fires	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services	
WTS – Odour	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services	
Site Plans	Phoenix House EAP	Health and Safety Officer
	Pannier Market EAP	Health and Safety Officer
	Old Road Depot EAP	Operations Manager for Building Services
	Culm Valley Sports Centre	Leisure Business Manager
	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	Leisure Business Manager
	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Leisure Business Manager
	Carlu	Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces
	Carlu Environmental Management Plan	Operations Manager for Street Scene Services

## Community Plans

MDDC has a role in building resilience in the local community which it will do so through a few avenues.

- Using Community Risk Register to identify and plan for risks specific for the local community
- Where possible create useful resources and signposting for our local communities to become more resilient. These can then be published on the website or other forms of media. E.g. Flood Guide
- Work with local Towns and Parish’s to identify their local risks and if possible assist in the promotion and creation of community emergency plans in partnership with Devon Communities Together.
- Assist local businesses to create their own Business Continuity Plans
- Communicate to the community during an incident/emergency as detailed within the Crisis Comms plan.



## Preparedness

### Testing

This section sets out the councils approach to testing, exercising and reviewing Mid Devon District Councils (MDDC's) testing/exercising arrangements, to ensure the council maintains a good level of preparedness as required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Validation is achieved through three activities

1. **Exercising:** A process to train for, test, assess, practise and improve the business continuity capability of Mid Devon District Council.
2. **Maintenance:** A process to ensure that the organisations business continuity arrangements and plans are kept up to date, and operationally ready to respond.
3. **Review:** A process for assessing the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the business continuity programme and identifying opportunities for improvement.

**Where practicable the validating of plans will incorporate supporting plans to improve them and to test the interoperability of these plans.**

**There are three different variances on how testing can be delivered**

1. **Team Based:** This is led by the service level manager using one of the pre-made tests within the MDDC Testing Playbook. This type of testing does not include the resilience officer however the outcomes of which will be shared. These tests can vary in size from a few hours to a full day and can vary in size dependent on resource availability.
2. **Facilitated:** This is led by the Resilience Officer with a specific service area. This is to ensure that areas are focusing on key gaps and also provide a more holistic view given by the resilience officer. These tests are usually longer (half day-full day) and often focused on a wider number of team members.
3. **Externally Facilitated:** This is led by an external company/group focused on an identified area of weakness or importance. These are organised by the identified service area CMT manager with support of the Resilience Officer.

### Testing Schedule

- Each service area will complete at least one **Team Based or Facilitated** test for their Business Continuity Plan **biannually**
- Up to **three externally facilitated** tests will be completed per year as appropriate across the service areas applicable. These will be selected from identified areas of weakness or importance. This identification can come directly from Leadership/CMT, or be identified within the Business Impact Assessment, Business Continuity Plans or the Corporate/Community Risk Register.

**Maintenance:** The responsibility for the maintenance of plans sits with the plans owner as detailed on page 5, 10 and 11. Maintenance refers to keeping plans up to date and accurate. This ensures MDDC remains ready to respond to, and manage the impacts from incidents effectively.

**Review:** The purpose of the review process is to evaluate the plans and processes for continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

Mid Devon District Council will undergo the following reviews at planned intervals as set out in the activity schedule which can be found on the Emergency Planning Microsoft Teams Team;

- **Formal audit:** Audit of the Business Continuity Service conducted by the Devon District Audit Partnership to ensure the council is conforming to the organisations governance policies and legal and regulatory requirements.
- **Self-assessment:** Review conducted by managers/ plan owners of their teams business continuity arrangements. Purpose of self-assessment reviews is to identify areas for improvement and should be carried out between audits and after the audit of BC plans.

- **Supplier performance:** A review of key suppliers (those identified on the councils priority list) business continuity arrangements. To be conducted during annual review of service resumption plans for priority functions.
- **Management review:** a review conducted by senior management of the organisations business continuity programme to ensure it aligns with organisational objectives.
- **Lessons Learnt:** when a test/exercise is completed or if the plans have been used for a live incident, it is important to review how well those plans fulfilled MDDC’s requirements and note any learning both positive and negative which can then be updated in the plans. The Resilience Officer should be notified of all lessons learnt which will be captured centrally on the “Emergency Planning” Microsoft Teams Team for corporate oversight and shared learning.

## Training

As a member of the Devon District Emergency Planning Partnership there is an expectation that a minimum standard of training is met by individuals who have certain roles during an incident response or recovery.

The purpose of training staff is to ensure suitably qualified and experienced and empowered personnel are responding to incidents. All personnel involved in an incident may be required to call on the evidence of training and exercising to support their rationale for decisions and actions during an inquiry.

A robust audit trail of attendance and participation in training and exercising will be maintained by the Emergency Planning Officer to ensure we are meeting our agreement with the Devon District Emergency Planning Partnership and the Local Resilience Forum.

All training relating to this strategy will be kept on the Learning Hub, monitored by the Resilience Officer. Each link on learning hub will detail when it needs to be completed and how to complete it as the type of training varies from online e-learning to face to face. It is the individual’s responsibility to ensure they are trained on the modules assigned to them however this will be monitored by the Resilience Officer who has overall responsibility for the assigning and communicating of this training. Overall training compliance will be monitored by an annual review conducted by the Resilience Officer and presented to the Strategic Group in line with the Emergency Planning KPI’s.

Mid Devon District Council will follow the “Competency Framework” created by DEPP for its employees. The following table identifies the roles and training required along with the duration of the training and when the training must be redone/updated.

Name	Who	Takes place	Type of Training
<b>Business Continuity Management</b>	• Service Level Managers	Annually	E-Learning
	• Resilience Officer	Three Years	Online Course with EPC
<b>Emergencies on Trial</b>	• Leadership Team • CMT • Resilience Officer	Three Years	Online or Face to Face (additional travel/hotel cost)
<b>Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP)</b>	• Service Level Managers • Resilience Officer	Annually	E-Learning
<b>Rest Centres</b>	• CMT • Resilience Officer	Three Years	Face to Face
<b>Major Incident Recovery</b>	• Leadership Team • CMT • Resilience Officer	Three Years	Face to Face
<b>Media Training</b>	• Leadership Team • Cabinet	Three Years	Face to Face
<b>Multi Agency Gold Incident Command (MAGIC Lite)</b>	• Leadership Team	Three Years	Face to Face or Online course (through LRF)
<b>Multi Agency Triage Team (MATT)</b>	• CMT • Resilience Officer	Three Years	Face to Face via LRF or DEPP

In addition, training will be provided to loggists on an ad-hoc basis. This is not however within the DEPP competency framework and so is not included above.

## Lessons Learnt

Reviewing lessons learned after the emergency plan, business continuity have been used is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it offers a valuable opportunity to assess the response and recovery process, identifying what worked well and what didn't. This evaluation aids in refining future emergency plans and enabling better preparedness for similar situations. Additionally, reflecting on the lessons learned fosters a culture of continuous improvement within teams, promoting adaptability and resilience. It also allows for the identification of any gaps or shortcomings in resources, communication, or protocols, paving the way for necessary adjustments to enhance overall efficiency and effectiveness in handling emergencies. Ultimately, this reflective process serves as a foundation for growth and better response strategies in the face of unforeseen circumstances.

A lessons learnt/debrief should be completed after one of the following:

- Emergency Plan has been used
- Business Continuity Plan has been used
- Testing of any plan has been completed
- An event/incident in which there was potential for the EP or BCP to be used

These lessons learnt/debriefs can be completed in a number of ways dependent on the situation and locality. For example, for a more extreme emergency, an in person session to discuss is more favourable and may include other agencies whereas for a smaller incident on a single business area a survey to those involved which is collated may be adequate. It is recommended that the key individual involved in the event/incident chooses the format of the lessons learnt based on what would provide the best results paired with what resource is available. If possible you should have a "hot" debrief/lessons learnt whilst the incident is ongoing while information is fresh in your mind in addition to a "cold" debrief/lessons learnt after the event has concluded.

When completing a lessons learnt is important to review the following JESIP principles:

- Co-Locate: Co-locate with other responders as soon as practicably possible at a single, safe and easily identified location
- Communicate: Communicate using language which is clear, and free from technical jargon and abbreviations
- Co-Ordinate: Co-ordinate by agreeing the lead organisation, identifying priorities, resources, capabilities and limitations for an effective response, including the timing of further meetings
- Jointly Understand Risk: Jointly understand risk by sharing information about the likelihood and potential impact of threats and hazards, to agree appropriate control measures
- Shared Situational Awareness: Establish shared situational awareness by using M/ETHANE and Joint Decision Model

Lessons learnt should be shared with the Resilience Officer and recorded and saved on the Emergency Planning Teams site.

For Emergencies that have required a multi-agency response there will a lessons learnt session conducted by the LRF and information from that will be shared to the relevant individuals and saved on the Emergency Planning teams site. In addition sometimes there are emergencies which were not relating to MDDC but were significant enough that the lessons learnt will be passed onto us either directly or through the LRF. These lessons will be disseminated to the relevant individuals and saved on the Emergency Planning Teams site.

## Additional information and signposting

### Glossary

<b>BCP</b>	Business Continuity Plan
<b>CMT</b>	Corporate Management Team
<b>CRIM</b>	Corporate Risk and Improvement Manager
<b>CRR</b>	Community Risk Register
<b>CX</b>	Chief Executive
<b>D&amp;CP</b>	Devon & Cornwall Police
<b>DCC</b>	Devon County Council
<b>DEPP</b>	Devon Emergency Planning Partnership
<b>DO</b>	Duty Officer
<b>DSF&amp;RS</b>	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue
<b>EAP</b>	Evacuation Assembly Point
<b>EHO</b>	Environmental Health Officer
<b>EP</b>	Emergency Plan
<b>EPO</b>	Emergency Planning Officer
<b>JESIP</b>	Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>LRF</b>	Local Resilience Forum
<b>LT</b>	Leadership Team
<b>MAGIC</b>	Multi Agency Gold Incident Command
<b>MATT</b>	Multi Agency Triage Team
<b>PEAT</b>	Pre Emergency Assessment Teleconference
<b>RC</b>	Rest Centre
<b>SCG</b>	Multi-Agency Strategic Coordination Group
<b>TCG</b>	Multi-Agency Tactical Coordination Group

### Additional information:

All of the plans detailed in this document can be found on the Emergency Planning Microsoft Teams Team saved under "4.Papers and Policies". The following roles have access to this page:

- Leadership Team
- CMT
- All Service Level Managers
- Resilience Officer
- Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager

### Staff Welfare:

Emergencies and Incidents can be very stressful and as a Council we should be mindful of this and work with each other to ensure the welfare of our staff. If you believe that either yourself or another employee is struggling or suffering with stress, fatigue or similar then raise this with the tactical or strategic team who will then aim to address the situation. Once an incident or emergency is over it is recommended that managers have a debrief with staff involved to check their welfare needs/requirements.

This may mean that during an emergency the "on-call" member of CMT may change during their rota' d week if they have been working on an emergency especially if long hours. Information of On-Call contacts will be updated and can be found on the "Out of Hours Service" Microsoft Teams Team.

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## 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:	MDDC Resilience Strategy
Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment:	Resilience Officer
Council service:	Public Health
Date of assessment:	May 2024
What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?	
<p>The Resilience Strategy (the 'Strategy') sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties as a Category 1 responder under Civil Contingency legislation in a coherent and defined way. It therefore provides a key framework and assurance with respect to how the Council will plan for, assess and ultimately respond to major incidents as well as events which impact on its own business continuity through increased resilience. The Strategy also sets out how the Council will undertake its role in the recovery of communities after an incident and also support our communities to increase their own resilience to emergencies and business disruptions.</p> <p>The Strategy is in essence an internal operational document however it provides the core basis for how the Council should and will act to the benefit of communities when there is an event which could give risk to serious damage to human welfare or the environment in our locality.</p> <p><b>Aims</b> The aims of the Strategy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure effective consideration of risks that may impact on the council and its communities</li> <li>2. Improve the resilience of Council operations, systems, and processes to operate in the event of an incident or emergency</li> <li>3. Encourage greater resilience in the Council and its communities</li> <li>4. Meet council responsibilities as a Category 1 responder in relation to emergency planning, and business continuity, including dealing with an emergency or incident</li> </ol> <p><b>Objectives</b> Within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 there are seven key areas that are statutory for MDDC as a Category 1 responder: Co-operation, Information Sharing, Assessing the Risk of Emergencies, Emergency Planning, Business Continuity Management, Warning and Informing, Business Continuity Advice to Business.</p> <p>The Strategy has been created to give a robust, coherent framework that, if followed, would provide a high level of resilience for both our statutory Category 1 responsibilities and responding to internal incidents that could impact on one or more service areas.</p>	
Who may be affected by the policy/ decision?	All residents, visitor and businesses
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise	Internal operating document - consultation with CMT and LT

Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision?	Not applicable		
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 strategy ensures consistency of approach and ensures that no resident or visitor is treated any more fairly or unfairly than any other
2. Advance equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Foster good relations between different groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 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 Resilience Strategy sets out a framework for the Council to meet its statutory duties for the benefit of the wider community of Mid Devon as a whole. It does not positively or negatively impact directly anyone with protected characteristics however the component emergency plans that sit below the strategy do take into account vulnerable members of the community such that their needs are prioritised in both the response and recovery phases of any emergency or major incident. Overall, the Strategy is neutral regarding equalities as reflected in the screening assessment attached in Annex B.

Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health



**EIA Screening Complete**



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**Report for: Community, People & Equalities  
Policy Development Group**

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Date of Meeting: 25 June 2024

Subject: Town and Parish Charter Review

Cabinet Member: Councillor Gwen DuChesne  
Cabinet Member for Community and Parishes

Responsible Officer: David Parker Democratic Services Officer and  
Town and Parish Liaison Officer

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: (i) Charter between Mid Devon District Council and the Town and Parish Councils  
(ii) Annexe 1 – Planning Charter  
(iii) Responses from the Towns and Parishes  
(iv) Schedule of Responses

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

To present to the Policy Development Group a revised Charter between Mid Devon District Council and the Town and Parish Councils in Mid Devon having undertaken a thorough review.

### **Recommendation(s):**

**That the PDG considers and recommends to Cabinet for approval the revised Town and Parish Charter.**

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Town and Parish Charter was originally approved in December 2010, following this the Charter was circulated to parishes for adoption at the Annual Meeting of the Town and Parish Council Clerks in March 2011. As of May 2012, of the 48 Town and Parish Councils in Mid Devon 37 had adopted the Charter.
- 2.2 As agreed at that time, the Charter was to be reviewed after 12 months and thereafter on a 3 yearly basis.
- 2.3 In May 2012, a review duly took place and amendments were made to the document providing clarity and in line with changes to legislation.
- 2.4 A further review took place in 2016/2017 meaning that a review was due during 2020. This review commenced but, with the ongoing effects of covid-19 and changes within the organisation, the review was not completed.
- 2.5 This review is therefore proposed in order to reflect on the current effectiveness of the Charter and ensure it is fit for purpose in accommodating the needs and working practices of both the District Council and Parish and Town Councils.

### **3.0 Proposed 2024 Consultation and Review**

- 3.1 This review has been led by the Town and Parish Liaison Officer, but has also involved engagement with the Development Management (Planning) and Forward Planning (policy) teams in order to ensure that both the Charter and the Planning Charter reflect current legislation, best practice and working practices.
- 3.2 The draft Charter with the Towns and Parishes is attached for review and consideration. The document including the annex has been sent to all Towns and Parishes for their comment. 21 Towns and Parishes responded, all but one approving the proposed changes although some Parishes made comments on the text and some made general comments for Mid Devon District Council to take note of.
- 3.3 The working group looking at this document, considered all the suggestions and made changes as appropriate.
- 3.4 In considering the suggested amendments, it is considered important to make specific reference to the following points to allow full consideration of the proposed changes:
- 3.4.1 The Town and Parish newsletter stopped being published during Covid. Now that the Communications Team send out regular press releases with any items of interest it is considered to be unnecessary to recommence the Town and Parish newsletter especially bearing in mind the historical difficulty of finding enough content to fill its pages.

3.4.2 Since Covid, the District Council and many Town and Parish Councils have become much more technologically agile so that many meetings are now held virtually, facilitating and enabling increased public participation.

3.4.3 Resources: Council resources continue to be squeezed meaning that the District Council is, along with many other Council's, needing to find efficiencies and financial savings wherever practicable in order to ensure that it can continue to meet its statutory obligations. Although the changes proposed through the document are considered minor and are not considered to fundamentally affect the operation or intent of the Charter, it is necessary to understand that some of the proposed changes seek to reflect working practices which have been adopted in order to ensure the Council is achieving more efficient ways of working and managing operational cost savings.

#### **4.0 Next Steps**

4.1 To recommend to Cabinet that the revised Charter and its annex be adopted.

**Financial Implications:** As set out within the main body of the report; direct financial implications to the Council are minimal. However, it should be noted that some of the proposed changes do reflect current working practices which have been adopted in order to ensure the efficient use of financial resources. Should any of the proposed changes not be accepted, it is therefore possible that financial implications would accrue to the District which would place pressures on existing budgets.

**Legal Implications:** Community engagement and empowerment is one of the key implications of the Localism Act 2011. Good working relationships with the Town and Parish Councils will build mutual trust and support, leading to more effective local government. By contrast, poor relationships may lead to a breakdown in trust, communication and ethical standards.

**Risk Assessment:** Failure to work effectively with Town and Parish Councils could lead to a breakdown in the relationship which could ultimately impact on our community.

**Impact on Climate Change:** No direct impact, although there is a link with ensuring effective communication with Town and Parish Councils in planning matters and ensuring that the Council (the LPA) fully discharges its obligations on planning consultation and in the achievement of climate/carbon/biodiversity objectives and requirements.

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** No equality issues have been identified.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Strengthening the relationships with Town and Parish Councils assists in the delivery of the 'empowering our communities' policy.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151  
**Date:** 17 June 2024

**Statutory Officer:** Maria de Leburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 17 June 2024

**Chief Officer:** Richard Marsh  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director  
**Date:** 17 June 2024

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 10 June 2024

**Cabinet member notified:** (yes/no)

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** David Parker, Democratic Services Officer and Parish Liaison Officer  
Email: [dparker@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:dparker@middevon.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01884 234311

**Background papers:** Town and Parish Charter (Version 3 – June 2024)  
Annex 1 – Planning Charter

# Charter

between

**Mid Devon District Council**

and

**Town and Parish Councils  
in Mid Devon**

June 2024 (V3)

**CHARTER BETWEEN MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
AND THE TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS IN MID DEVON**

Partnership working between town and parish councils (local councils) and the district council will only be successfully achieved if both partners recognise, understand and



respect the role that the other plays and work to promote those roles. This Charter was originally adopted in 2011 and has been consulted about various times since then. Version 3 has been agreed following consultation between Mid Devon District Council and the local councils and sets out a framework to enable this partnership working to happen. The Charter will be reviewed on a three yearly basis, consultation will take place with Town and Parish Councils prior to consideration by the Community Policy Development Group.

The District Council will work in partnership with local councils in its area to promote sustainable social, economic and environmental development for the benefit of local communities.

**Mid Devon District Council** recognises that local councils:

- 1 Are an important part of local government representing their communities at the most local level.
- 2 Are a primary source of information about the community's opinions and aspirations.
- 3 Provide an opportunity to develop greater engagement with the local community.
- 4 Are heavily reliant on volunteering and goodwill. The differences between smaller and larger local councils in terms of ability to handle information and resources will be respected.

**Local Councils** recognise that Mid Devon District Council:

- 1 Whilst conscientiously taking account of local views also has to take into account community interests across the Mid Devon District.
- 2 Has strategic roles and responsibilities and has to work within legislative, financial and policy constraints.
- 3 Is able to work most effectively with parishes that are well organised, pro-active, informed and willing to engage.

## Communications and Liaison

**Mid Devon District Council** will undertake to:

- 7 Encourage officers and Members to attend local council meetings

- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Arrange and host on at least an annual basis a district-wide meeting of clerks to discuss matters of mutual concern and also to periodically arrange training and meetings for Town and Parish Councillors.                        |  | and speak on issues of concern/interest and provide feedback.  |
| 2 | Provide a liaison officer(s) who will act as the point of contact for local councils, providing support and information, directing enquiries, advising and ensuring that issues are followed up and dealt with in a timely manner. | 8  | Ensure District Council key documents, where appropriate, contain a short executive summary or an explanation of the document's relevance.   |
| 3 | Work with the Devon Association of Local Councils to provide more information to towns and parishes about obtaining 'Local Council Award Scheme' and the 'General Power of Competence'.  | 9  | Use plain English in written communications and explain all acronyms used.   |
| 4 | Assist Town and Parish Councils with the formulation of an Emergency Plan.   | 10                                       | Encourage Local Councils to use in their e-mail addresses the trusted suffix .gov.uk in order to provide community assurance and improved engagement.  |
| 5 | Encourage District Councillors to attend their local council meetings and ensure that issues raised by District Councillors acting in support of local councils will be responded to.  | <b>Local Councils</b> will undertake to: |  |
| 6 | Formally add to the role of Chairman of the District Council that of being 'Local Council Lead Member' who with the Cabinet Member for Community and Parish Engagement will encourage better working across the district.          | 1  | Be represented at the annual meeting of clerks.  |
|   |  | 2  | Use the Council's Liaison Officer for contact with the District Council in the first instance where the name of the appropriate officer is not known, unless responding directly to consultations. |
|   |  | 3  | Welcome District Councillors to town and parish meetings and send them agendas and minutes and invite reports.   |
|   |  | 4  | Utilise the services of Customer First where direct service contact details are unknown.   |
|   |  | 5  | Invite relevant officers to meetings where there are issues of concern or interest to the local council.   |

## Consultation

## **Mid Devon District Council**

will undertake to:

- 1 Proactively engage with local councils on issues which are likely to affect their area.
- 2 Allow five weeks for local councils to respond to consultation. If this is not possible the local council will be given an explanation. (This does not apply to planning applications. These are covered in the attached annexe).
- 3 Provide briefing sessions/workshops to groups of local councils on complex consultation issues as requested/required.
- 4 Make specific arrangements for consultation on planning (see Annexe 1).
- 5 Have regard to the views of the local councils when making decisions.
- 6 Keep under review the level and quality of consultation.

## **Local Councils** will undertake to:

- 1 Take part in consultation exercises seeking to represent the views of the community and respond within the given period.
- 2 Notify Mid Devon District Council if they cannot respond to a consultation within the given period, but will be making a response.
- 3 Work with Mid Devon District Council to seek the views of residents on issues of common interest and achieve a wider response rate.

## **Planning**

**Mid Devon District Council** will undertake to:

- 1 Have due regard to the views of the local council in determining all planning applications and where relevant neighbouring parishes.
- 2 Ensure planning notices are prominent and A3 size notices are used for major applications.
- 3 Ensure where practicable, notices in connection with planning policy public consultation meetings are placed prominently and at least 14 days in advance of meeting dates.
- 4 Support and encourage the creation of Neighbourhood / Parish Plans.

- 5 Notify the relevant local council(s) of any public meetings and exhibitions organised by Mid Devon District Council about policies and plans affecting the parish.
- 6 Hold separate meetings in the three main towns where matters affecting the preparation of a local plan and specific sites only are being considered.
- 7 Consult with the local councils on planning applications within the Town or parish area in accordance with statutory procedures and on applications in neighbouring parishes where appropriate and inform the Local Council which Planning Officer is dealing with the application.  
  
(NB. Plans with only minor changes are not subject to re-consultation)
- 8 Engage with local councils with regard to the use of discretionary S106 monies and request that schemes are put forward that would enhance the local area.
9. Allow a representative of local councils to attend and speak at meetings of Mid Devon District Council's Planning Working Group in respect of any planning application within that parish/town and to address the Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.
- 10 Explain the reasons and seek to make time available to discuss aspects of key planning decisions within the Officer report and decision notice.
- 11 If staff resources allow, endeavour to make officers available to attend meetings of local councils to clarify the details of significant or controversial applications.
- 12 Endeavour to ensure that the 'Public Access' facility on the website is available at all times.

**Local Councils** will undertake to:

- 1 Acknowledge that Mid Devon District Council will not always be able to accede to the views of parish/town councils.
- 2 Respond to all consultations on planning applications within the District Council's deadlines, even if it is a 'no comment' response.
- 3 Comment on planning applications on material planning grounds, and specify as fully as possible the reasons for an objection to, or support for, a particular application.
- 4 Ensure that all councillors are made aware of the contents of planning decision notices sent to the local council by reference to the reasons for approval / refusal.
- 5 Assist Mid Devon District Council by reporting perceived local breaches of Town and Country Planning Legislation, submitted via the online "alleged planning breach" form..
- 6 Attend relevant meetings, briefings and training to gain a better understanding of the planning process.

- 7 Consider preparing a Parish/Neighbourhood Plan. If they have made one, consider offering their assistance and experience to other councils that have not. Provide Mid Devon District Council with sufficient advance notice of requests to designate a neighbourhood area, draft neighbourhood plan consultation, or the submission of a neighbourhood plan, so that Mid Devon District Council is able to provide technical support and meet statutory time limits where it is responsible for these stages.

*Please note: A more detailed Planning Charter between MDDC and Town and Parish Councils is attached to this document (Annexe 1).*

## Training and Support

**Mid Devon District Council** will undertake to:

- 1 Continue to provide regular and ongoing planning and ethical standards training to local councils with particular emphasis on the guidance already provided.
- 2 Endeavour to provide website advice where requested.
- 3 Share training where appropriate.

**Local Councils** will undertake to:

- 1 Use the services of Customer First and the Parish Liaison Officer.
- 2 Examine the wide range of training and best practice sources available, particularly through the Devon Association of Local Councils.
- 3 Ensure, where possible, the training needs of their councillors, clerks and chairmen are met.
- 4 Consider training requirements when setting their precepts.

## Partnership and Financial Arrangements

**Mid Devon District Council** will undertake to:

**Local Councils** will undertake to:

1 Collect and pay in a timely manner any precept levy requested by the local councils.

Make any precept requests within the timescale set by Mid Devon District Council.

2 Operate and keep under review the financial arrangements with local councils in respect of services such as public conveniences and street cleaning.

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# Planning Charter for Town & Parish Councils

**June 2024 (V3)**



## PLANNING CHARTER FOR TOWN and PARISH COUNCILS

1. The Planning Team of Mid Devon District Council will consult with its constituent Town and Parish Councils on all applications for planning permission, Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent, applications within Conservation Areas, deemed applications from Devon County Council and Government Departments, and some notifications (for example, telecommunications).
2. In order to aid the decision making process, we will make every effort to forward full and adequate details of applications to Town and Parish Clerks within **three working days** of their validation, together with a link to application drawings and other relevant information. All information will be provided in electronic format. Weekly email alerts of new applications can be sent to Parish and Town Clerks if an email address is provided.
3. Planning will consider any reasonable requests for additional information from Town and Parish Councils whilst having regard to the statutory, fifty-six day period (8 weeks) for determining most planning applications., ninety-one days (13 weeks) for Major applications and one hundred and twelve days (16 weeks) for applications accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
4. The Planning Team will wait **twenty-one days** for receipt of Town and Parish Councils views on the above noted applications (a week in excess of the fourteen day period provided by statute) before determining applications and issuing the relevant Decision Notice.
5. Any reasonable requests to delay consideration of applications so as to allow full comment to be made by Town and Parish Councils will be at the discretion of the Development Management Manager or relevant case officer. In the majority of cases, Town and Parish Councils will be expected to respond to notification on planning applications within twenty-one days of receipt of an application.
6. Representations received from Town and Parish Councils will be considered in accordance with the Council's Planning Scheme of Delegation.

An electronic alert of your Planning Application(s) on Weekly List will automatically be sent every Friday (if an email address is provided) with web links to associated documents.

7. The Planning Team will continue to advertise details of applications in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). It should be noted that further neighbour notifications may be sent according to the case officer's assessment of who may be affected materially and directly by the development following a site visit.
8. Town and Parish Councils will be notified of planning application revisions to major applications and those known to be of significant local interest, and copies of revised plans will be forwarded.

9. We will ensure that the opportunity is given for Town and Parish Councils to attend and speak at Planning Committee. A representative of the Town or Parish Council may also attend and speak at meetings of the Planning Working Group on site.
10. We will report, in full, representations received from Town and Parish Councils on applications that are presented to Planning Committee. The views will be included on the agenda report, but if received after printing, views will either be tabled or verbally reported.
11. The Planning Team will advise Town and Parish Councils of the relevant date it is anticipated a deferred application will be presented back to Planning Committee.
12. The Planning Team will provide full, unrestricted access to all public information held on planning application files and on the Council website [www.middevon.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=113](http://www.middevon.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=113) via the <https://planning.middevon.gov.uk/online-applications/> link for Planning, an on-line service that allows you to view Mid Devon applications. You can also search and view property details, submit comments (within 21 days) on individual applications, view weekly lists of applications, the decision, reasons for the decision and a copy of the officer report.
13. Within five working days of issuing the decision to the applicant, we will notify Town and Parish Councils of that decision and by email alert on a weekly basis if subscribing to the service.
14. The Planning Team will undertake full consultation where appeals are lodged in order to provide Town and Parish Councils with an opportunity to make their views known or to be taken into account by the Planning Inspectorate. (Please note this does not apply to Householder Appeals where only the comments made at application stage can be taken into account).
15. The Planning Team will respond to all reasonable requests for appropriate officers to attend Town and Parish Council meetings to discuss planning matters or development proposals where resources allow.
16. We will act promptly on high priority breaches of unauthorised development, submitted via the online 'alleged planning breach' form, and will, as appropriate, keep key parties informed of the progress and outcome of subsequent enquiries and action proposed. The alleged planning breach form can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-enforcement/>
17. The Planning Team will consult with Town and Parish Councils regarding matters which could have implications on land use, community development and environmental / enhancement initiatives, etc. This will include the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents and Conservation Area Appraisals.
18. The Council will consult with and take into account all views received from Town & Parish Councils in the preparation and review of the Development Plan documents (e.g. Local Plan) in accordance with details set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The current Local Plan and Local Development Scheme are

available on the Council's web site, [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk) or, if required, may be viewed by prior arrangement at the Council's offices.

19. Copies of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 are available for purchase. Again, please see the web site noted above.
20. The Planning Team will continually review the information it holds on its web pages to improve access to information by all its customers including Town and Parish Councils. This includes its Planning Handbook, formal Supplementary Planning Documents, and informal advice leaflets. We are also looking to extend this to include other relevant information.
21. Should Town and Parish Council's have any suggestions for items which could be introduced on to the web site or as new leaflets / information sheet then please do not hesitate to feed this back to the Planning department.

### **Contacting Us:**

If visiting, the Reception is on the Ground Floor, and the Planning Department is on the First Floor of Phoenix House.

Our postal address is:

Mid Devon District Council, Development Control, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6PP ☎ 01884 255255

**Direct Line(s) into Planning department 01884 234260 / 01884 234262**

**Email contact address: [devcon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:devcon@middevon.gov.uk)**

## **GUIDANCE NOTE 1 (Ver 3.2)**

### *Treatment of Town and Parish Council Responses on Planning Applications*

Schedule 1 (paragraph 8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that Parish Councils (or Town Councils) may request District Councils to send them details of planning applications for their areas. Mid Devon District Council aim to work closely with the community and will formally consult the appropriate Town and Parish Council and where relevant, neighbouring parishes, on all applications that require consultation as per the Act.

The Planning Team will use its best efforts to ensure that consultations are carried out within three working days of validation of the application.

The Planning Team is continually trying to develop the delivery of its service. To this end, we will consider ways of improving electronic access to information by Town and Parish Council's through e-mail and its web site [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk), in addition to officers attending council meetings (if necessary) to advise on procedures and developments, etc.

Article 18 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 states that District Councils do not make a decision on a planning application until after twenty-one days have elapsed from the date of notification to Town and Parish Councils.

The twenty-one day period starts from the date of consultation with Town and Parish Council's as recorded on the application file and electronic planning application database.

Town and Parish Councils are encouraged to discuss applications with the Case Officer who will be pleased to clarify any details necessary.

The Planning Team will consider any reasonable requests for additional information for Town and Parish Council's whilst having regard to the statutory fifty-six day period for determining planning applications.

The twenty-one day period ends on receipt of post on day twenty-two (to enable any last minute responses to be cleared).

A written response via the Public Access system or by telephone message; e-mail to [devcon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:devcon@middevon.gov.uk) will all be considered as a valid consultation response. All consultation responses are posted on our website (Public Access) in line with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 which requires that such correspondence be available for public inspection.

If the application is not a Delegated item (can be processed without the need for Committee

approval), all Town and Parish Councils responses will be noted on the application file and reported to the Councils Planning Committee

### **Scheme of Delegation to the Development Management Manager**

To exercise all the powers of the Council as Local Planning Authority (including the conduct of appeals and enquiries) under the Planning Acts, (unless expressly delegated to another officer) except where: **-In the case of all Applications:**

1. In the opinion of the Development Management Manager or the Area Planning Officer, the application is of a significant controversial or sensitive nature;
2. The application has been submitted by or on behalf of the Council;
3. The application is from an Elected Member or Officer
4. The application is accompanied by an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA);
5. The application is a significant or major departure and is recommended for approval;
6. The Ward Member; Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Planning Committee requires that the Committee consider an application having given clear planning reasons;
7. Applications will be delegated to the Development Management Manager to refuse if Section 106 Agreements are not signed and completed within 8 or 13 week time-scale.

### **In the case of re-negotiations on a planning obligation (S106 Agreements and Undertakings);**

8. The Ward Member, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Planning Committee and Cabinet Member for Housing (the latter in the case of amendments to affordable housing only) requires that the Committee consider the proposed changes having given clear planning reasons
9. In the case of renegotiations on another planning obligation issue the Ward Member, Chair and Vice Chair of Planning requires that the Committee consider the proposed changes having given clear planning reasons, otherwise they be delegated to the Development Management Manager

### **In the case of Formal Enforcement action**

10. In the opinion of the Development Management Manager, the proposed enforcement action raises matters of significant public interest and /or significant cost to the Council for which there is no budget and/or would prevent a person from residing or continuing to reside on land within the district;
11. The action relates to land in which the Council, a Member or an Officer has an interest;
12. The action is the issue of an enforcement notice, stop notice, temporary stop notice or legal proceedings, in which case the notice or proceedings will be issued by the District

Solicitor (Monitoring Officer) or a solicitor employed by the Council, in consultation with the Development Management Manager and/or Director of Place and Economy.

(Note: Formal action does not include the service of a Planning Contravention Notice or Section 330 requisition for information)

**In the case of Conservation:**

13. It requires the issue of repair and urgent work notices
14. It involves the submission of funding bids or schemes that have budgetary implications

**In the case of the Local Plan:**

Local Plan proposal's and policies with reasoned justification for publication and consultation or adoption at the following stages (other than where minor modifications and other minor changes are made).

- Local Plan options consultation
- Publication and consultation of the 'submission' Local Plan
- Local Plan adoption

(or the equivalent stages of processes of successors to Local Plans).

**In the case of Planning Guidance or other strategic development plans:**

- Strategic development plans and policies at a larger than district scale will be consulted on.
- Supplementary Planning Documents dealing with Mid Devon wide guidance and sites/areas for publication prior to consultation and for adoption (other than where minor modifications and other changes are made).

**Notes**

The above procedure should be read alongside the Town and Parish Council Charter which is available from the Planning Team.

Training workshops in the operation of the Planning System will continue to be offered to Town and Parish Councils.

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# TOWN AND PARISH CHARTER RESPONSES 2024

## Town and Parish Charter Responses 2024

Town or Parish	Accepted	Specific Comments
Holcombe Rogus	Yes	None
Willand		Many comments to Charter and Annex – see substantive comments below
Uplowman	Yes	Noted support available from MDDC and requested that, wherever possible, training and other events for councillors be in the evenings to accommodate those with day time jobs.
Kentisbeer	Yes	Can MDDC take their obligation to consider responses to consultations from the Parish Council and their duty to enforce planning seriously.
Cullompton	Yes	
Oakford	Yes	
Bradninch	Yes	Comments added to the Charter and Annex - i) paragraph 10 of the planning section - the use of plain English would be beneficial as would an explanation of acronyms. ii) planning annex 1, revised paragraph 6, a request for the stated updates to be emailed to Clerks for onward circulation to Councillors would be made. iii) paragraph 15, a request would be made for the Town Council to receive the stated updates.
Clayhidon	Yes	
Tiverton		The Planning Charter has been reviewed by the Committee this week. No amendments have been suggested by them. The working charter has yet to be reviewed at full council, but we will contact you with any feedback after 20th May as we agreed. Hi David, No feedback was provided so I would just proceed. Only comment I would make is that sometimes response times on some documents is poor, but then we failed this time as well. Regards John
Chawleigh	Yes	As far as the detail is concerned, I think the paragraphs 5 and 7 in the main charter could be merged as they both relate to District Councillors attending parish council meetings where possible, but otherwise it looks fairly sound.
Borden Gate		The Parish Council decided to make no response
Crediton	Yes	Many comments to Charter and Annex – see substantive comments below
Morcharad Bishop	Yes	
Bow	No	



Silverton	Yes	The only point I have been asked to raise with you is the lack of clarification when the Parish Council objects to a planning proposal on valid planning grounds and the District Council then decides to grant an approval. No explanation is forthcoming as to why the Parish Council's objections were apparently overlooked and it would be hugely beneficial if the District Council could write to the Parish Council in these circumstances to explain the reasoning behind their decision to overlook the comments of the Parish Council.
Wembworthy	Yes	
Puddington	Yes	
Morebath	Yes	
Uffculme	Yes	
Crediton Hamlets	Yes	
Hittisleigh	Yes	Thank you for your email and reminder. We have our next parish council meeting on the 15th and will be able to reply after that on the 16th. We trust that's OK with you but let me know if not. Many thanks - Ruth
Sampford Peverell	Yes	
Halberton	Yes	

### **Detailed Responses:**

#### **1. Holcombe Rogus PC**

Dear David,

Holcombe Rogus Parish Council discussed the review of the Town and Parish Charter at the PC Meeting yesterday evening and approve the amendments to the Charter and have no further comments to make.

*Leslie*

Leslie Findlay (Mrs)

Parish Clerk

On behalf of Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

## **2. Willand PC**

Dear David,

The Charter was discussed at last Thursday's Council, with feedback as follows:

**Main Charter Document:** Planning, Page 4, point 2 - to query the statement that the size of planning notices for major applications are stated as being A3 – it was noted that is not always the case in practice.

### **Annex 1 – Planning:**

- Point 1 – Why is conservation consent been removed?
- Point 5 – The PC would request that the District Council are mindful of the Parish Council meeting cycle and dates when sending in consultation requests, we meet monthly but still receive quite a few requests just after the agenda goes out with deadlines prior to our next meeting, We are aware that there are deadlines for determining applications but it would be helpful if, as much as possible, response requirements could fall within a monthly meeting cycle.
- Point 10 – The PC would wish to point out that if officers are making a judgement not to advise this does not appear reflective of working in partnership with Parish Councils.
- Point 12 – The Parish Council support this but note that in practice officers' reports have on a number of occasions summarised Town and Parish comments rather than report them in full and would ask that they are replicated in full as stated in the charter.
- Enforcement – The Parish Council would like to register their concern at the lack of proactive enforcement. It was felt that the amendments shown should be deferred until the proposed updated Enforcement Policy had been adopted by the Council. It was known that the proposed policy had been referred back by the Scrutiny Committee for rewriting.

Kind regards,

Debbie

Debbie Bird

Clerk to Willand Parish Council

Dear David,

Following my email of the 19<sup>th</sup> March I attach a more extensive response re the proposed amendments to the Town and Parish Charter.

### Town and Parish Charter Review

Willand Parish Council has considered the Town and Parish Charter together with Appendix 1 [Charter for Parish and Town Councils]. It offers the following comments and observations for considerations.

It would help to be consistent with the titles with regard to the headings. The main document uses *Town and Parish Councils* yet the Appendix uses *Parish & Town Councils*. Differing orders of the words appear at other places within the text.

### Charter Mid Devon District Council and Town and Parish Councils in Mid Devon

**Page 3 - 6** Formally add to the role of Chairman of the District Council that of being 'Local Council Lead Member' who will encourage better working across the district. **by attending local council meetings and providing feedback on any issues of local concern or interest.**

**Comment.** We always used to get at least one annual visit from the Chairman of the Council to one of our meetings which was an opportunity to have an informal discussion and exchange of views. This is seen as a backward step. The Chairman projected an overall view for the District whereas the District Councillors, when they do attend, are more inclined to be more 'localised' in their input.

### Page 4 – Planning

1 Have due regard to the views of the local councils in determining all planning applications **and where relevant neighbouring parishes.**

**Comment.** The wording in red is a positive addition and reflects what has been happening in practice in most relevant cases over the last few years.

Regrettably '*Have due regard to the views of the local councils*' has not been followed where in a recent case the Parish Council pointed out that what was applied for was not in accord with policy but the officer openly disregarded policy rather than get the applicant to comply.

2 Ensure planning notices are prominent for all planning applications and A3 size notices are used for major applications.

**Comment** Members have not seen the A3 notices displayed for major applications. Is this . correct?

3 Ensure **where practicable**, notices in connection with planning policy public consultation meetings are placed prominently and at least 14 days in advance of meeting dates.

**Comment** The words in red are considered to be an excuse if not done. Is it legal not to display . notices?

### Planning Charter for Parish & Town Councils (Appendix 1)

#### Page 3

1. The Planning Team of Mid Devon District Council will consult with its constituent Town and Parish Councils on all applications for planning permission, Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent, **Conservation Area Consent**, deemed applications from Devon County Council and Government Departments, and some notifications (for example, telecommunications).

**Comment.** Why has the Conservation Area Consent has been removed as Parishes have been consulted when applications have been made for felling of trees etc. in Conservation Areas.

2. In order to aid the decision-making process, we will make every effort to forward full and adequate details of applications to Town and Parish Clerks within three working days of their validation, together with a link to copies of accompanying application drawings and other relevant information. *All information will be provided in electronic format.* Weekly email alerts of new applications can be sent to Parish and Town Clerks if an email address is provided.

**Comment.** It is appreciated that most information would be in electronic format but when it moved to electronic from paper there was an assurance given that large paper copies [A3] of layout plans for major estates could be made available if requested. Will this arrangement still be available?

5.4. The Planning Team will wait twenty-one days for receipt of Town and Parish Councils views on the above noted applications (a week in excess of the fourteen day period provided by statute) before determining applications and issuing the relevant Decision Notice.

6.5. Any reasonable requests to delay consideration of applications so as to allow full comment to be made by Town and Parish Councils will be at the discretion of the Development Management Manager or relevant case officer. In the majority of cases, Town and Parish Councils will be expected to respond to notification on planning applications within twenty-one days of receipt of an application.

**Comment.** There needs to be flexibility to take account of the position of parishes who only have a meeting once a month, or even longer periods in some cases. Although 21 days are mentioned as a 'concession' we are experiencing cases where amendments have been made to plans and 14 days has been insisted upon. This has required the expense of arranging additional meetings on occasions. It has been noted that other consultees, including MDDC's own departments/officers, seem to regularly take longer without issue.

#### Page 4

10. At the *discretion* of the Development Management Manager or relevant case officer, Town and Parish Councils will be notified of planning application revisions (unless of a minor nature), and copies of revised plans will be forwarded.

**Comment.** The '*discretion*' creates inconsistencies and then, on occasions, conflict. The words '*At the discretion of*' should be removed from the text.

12. We will report, in full, representations received from Town and Parish Councils on applications that are presented to Planning Committee. The views will be included on the agenda report, but if received after printing, views will either be tabled or verbally reported.

**Comment.** The wording is agreed and supported but in reality, particularly when there have been a number of changes resulting in more than one representation, the report to Planning Committee has been summarised and relevant critical facts have been omitted.

#### Page 5.

20. The Council will consult with and take into account all views received from Town & Parish Councils in the preparation and review of the Development Plan documents (e.g. Local Plan) in accordance with details set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The current Local Plan and Local Development Scheme are available **for viewing at Reception, or** on the Councils web site, [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk)

**Comment.** Is it legal to only make the document available on the website?

#### Page 6

Schedule 1 (paragraph 8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that Parish Councils (or Town Councils) may request District Councils to send them details of planning applications for their areas. Mid Devon District Council aim to work closely with the community and will formally consult the appropriate Town and Parish Council on all applications that require consultation as per the Act.

**Comment.** Did this ought to also include the wording '**and where relevant neighbouring parishes.**' To be consistent with 1 on page 4.

#### In the case of Formal Enforcement action

**Comment.** The Parish Council would like to see a wider and less restrictive form of words here to ensure that Planning Enforcement is dealt with in a more positive and proactive manner than is currently experienced. Parishes are being asked to report breaches using the forms but have little confidence that any action will be taken.

### **3. Uplowman PC**

Good afternoon David,

The Town & Parish Charter was discussed at Uplowman PC's meeting last week. The councillors were pleased to approve it without comment.

They noted the support available from MDDC and requested that, wherever possible, training and other events for councillors be in the evenings to accommodate those with day-time jobs.

Thank you,

Robert

From the Clerk,

Uplowman Parish Council,

### **4. DALC**

**From:** Cara Stobart <[cara@devonalc.org.uk](mailto:cara@devonalc.org.uk)>

**Sent:** 26 March 2024 12:57

**To:** Sylvia Holme <[sholme@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:sholme@middevon.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Stephen Walford <[swalford@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:swalford@middevon.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: State of the District Debate - 20 March

Thanks for the opportunity to be involved - and sorry for a duplication in message following Luke and Stephen.

I thoroughly enjoyed the discussions around the PTC charter table. Stephen – I made offers to support MDDC to develop that document. But I would welcome a chat generally about whether there is a role DALC could play in helping your council engage better with PTCs. Please come back to me if there is any interest.

Kind regards

**Cara Stobart**, County Officer

Devon Association of Local Councils

t: 01392 241131 | w: devonalc.org.uk

Hi David

Hope you are well.

I'm just checking in re progress with reviewing the parish charter, I've understood from one of our members that engagement in the review has been low. I wanted to reiterate my offer to support the review of this document – I believe its important for setting the tone and principles of how councils will work together. One of the take aways I had from the State of the District event was how little PTCs knew of the document, and it came across to me that they didn't feel like they co-own/co-produce the document with MDDC. Is this a barrier to engagement?

Please do reach out if there is anything DALC can do to support better engagement and/or the review of the document itself. Always happy to chat.

Kind regards

**Cara Stobart**, County Officer

Devon Association of Local Councils

## **5. Kentisbeare PC**

Hi David – as I mentioned to you at the State of the District Debate I have been asked to feedback to MDDC to request that our responses to consultations are taken seriously.

Please enforce planning in respect of the Planning Charter.

The Parish Council had nothing further to add in respect of the Charter review. Many thanks, Melanie

Hi David, here is the draft minute for your info. Many thanks, Melanie

**41/03/24. MDDC Town and Parish Charter Review** – the Chairman requested that MDDC in signing the Charter take their obligation to consider responses to consultations from the Parish Council and their duty to enforce planning seriously.

## **6. Cullompton TC**

Dear David,

Thank you for sight of the Town and Parish Charter. It was approved at our Full Council meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> March with Council seeking no amendments.

Kind Regards,

**Dan Ledger**

Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer  
Cullompton Town Council

## **7. Oakford PC**

Dear David

Oakford Parish Council has considered the attached Town and Parish Charter and Annexe and agreed to approve both. They had no suggestions for changes.

Kind regards

Jill

Jill Larcombe - Clerk to Oakford Parish Council

## **8. Bradninch TC**

Dear David,

Further to a review by Bradninch Town Council, I have been asked to forward to you the following comments for consideration with regards to the Town and Parish Charter Review:

MDDC Town and Parish Charter review – it was RESOLVED to respond with the following suggestions: i) paragraph 10 of the planning section - the use of plain English would be beneficial as would an explanation of acronyms. ii) planning annex 1, revised paragraph 6, a request for the stated updates to be emailed to Clerks for onward circulation to Councillors would be made. iii) paragraph 15, a request would be made for the Town Council to receive the stated updates.

Don't hesitate to get back to me if further information is required.

Kind regards,

Alison

Alison Marshall

Clerk

Bradninch Town Council

## **9. Clayhidon PC**

Dear David

Clayhidon Parish Council found the State of the District Debate extremely useful and were able to make several points.

Given that Clayhidon Parish Council resolved to accept the Town and Parish Charter as written.

Kind regards

Sue

*Susan McGeever*

Susan McGeever

Clerk to Clayhidon Parish Council



## **10. Tiverton TC**

Dear David,

The Planning Charter has been reviewed by the Committee this week. No amendments have been suggested by them.

The working charter has yet to be reviewed at full council, but we will contact you with any feedback after 20<sup>th</sup> May as we agreed.

Hi David, No feedback was provided so I would just proceed. Only comment I would make is that sometimes response times on some documents is poor, but then we failed this time as well. Regards John

Many Thanks

With Regards

Linzi Hubbard BA (Hons) PSLCC

*Clerical Assistant*

Tiverton Town Council

Hi David

No feedback was provided so I would just proceed. Only comment I would make is that sometimes response times on some documents is poor, but then we failed this time as well

Regards

John

## **11. Chawleigh PC**

David,

Thank you for trying to put into words what we all hope will happen anyway. The main task from the parish council end will be getting councillors to read it and understand that we are all just trying to get the job done.

As far as the detail is concerned, I think the paragraphs 5 and 7 in the main charter could be merged as they both relate to District Councillors attending parish council meetings where possible, but otherwise it looks fairly sound.

Regards,  
Rob Martin  
Clerk to Chawleigh Parish Council

## **12. Borden Gate PC**

Dear David

This slightly dropped off the radar.

Our next meeting is on the 29<sup>th</sup> May.

If you are happy to receive a response after the closing date (I did notice you say your review was a little late) it can be done.

If you could let me know if this would be acceptable.

Kind regards  
Patricia  
Patricia Bainbridge  
Clerk and RFO to Borden Gate Parish Council

30/5/24  
Dear David

Just to let you know that at the meeting last night of Borden Gate Parish Council where the Town and Parish Charter Review was discussed, the Parish Council decided not to make a comment/response.

I hope this helps with your report.

Kind regards

Patricia

### **13. Crediton TC**

Good morning David

Please find attached CTC's comments regarding the Charter Review.

I would be grateful if you could outline the next stages of the process; when will town and parish comments be reviewed, which committee or advisory group will review, and will it be approved at a future cabinet or FC meeting?

I am obviously not sure of the other responses, but I think there is a real opportunity here for MDDC and town/parish councils to start working far more collaboratively. CTC hopes that its comments will be considered fully.

Kind regards

Rachel

**Rachel Avery FSLCC**

Town Clerk and Responsible  
Finance Officer

Telephone: 01363 773717

Website: [www.crediton.gov.uk](http://www.crediton.gov.uk)

Address: 8A North Street,  
Crediton, EX17 2BT



### **Planning Charter comments**

#### **Generic Comments**

- Most of the document relates to planning applications. Significant applications have already been through various stages, whereby local councils have not been involved

- The Planning Charter could be used as a vehicle to expand on how MDDC will engage with local councils and their communities, who should be involved in the process of allocating sites. Inclusivity of local councils is required within the legislative framework
- A summary or mission statement should be provided at the beginning of this document; MDDC could be more communicative about what, how and why they wish to achieve.

Front page:

- MDDC logo – reads like a policy, rather than a collaborative working document.

Page 5, point 19:

- Seek should be removed and replaced with effectively consult
- A scheme should be developed to improve local consultation on higher level documents such as the Local Plan, SPDs and Conservation Area appraisals.

Page 7, points 1 and 2:

- Local councils should be consulted with earlier in relation to the formalisation of S106 agreements, ensuring that local projects requiring funding can be considered as part of discussions
- Any renegotiations should be consulted on with local councils
- Open and transparent communication and report on S106 is integral to the ability for local councils to apply for funding.

Page 8 (CIL):

- CTC would like MDDC to revisit the adoption of CIL, which would empower local councils to undertake much needed local projects.

**Charter comments**

## Generic Comments

- This document appears to be an MDDC policy, rather than an agreement or 'Charter' between MDDC and town/parish councils
- There is no sense of 'buy-in' from the sector, other than to review changes
- The support of DALC to enable a full review of the document and to agree new ways of working would have been welcome
- A different style of numbering for each section of the document would make it clearer and easier to read.

### Front page:

- MDDC logo – reads like a policy, rather than a collaborative working document.

### Page 2, opening paragraph:

- The Charter appears to have been formulated in 2017, some 7 years ago. The town and parish council sector, specifically, has changed a lot in that period and recognition in the opening paragraph would be welcomed.

### Page 2, point 1 (District Council):

- There has been one planning training series delivered by MDDC since 2020. How is periodically defined and what does MDDC think training would incorporate?

### Page 2, point 3 (Local Councils)

- How does MDDC define a well organised, proactive, informed and willing local council?

### Page 2, point 1 (Communications and Liaison, District Council):

- Prior to the State of the District Debate, there had been no meetings of clerks or training/meetings for councillors other than the planning training session above. How will this be arranged and then effectiveness measured?

### Page 3, point 3:

- Unaware of any ways that MDDC have supported local councils with LCAS or GPC? CTC obtained a Quality Gold Award (the second in the whole of Devon) and there was no recognition. Information regarding the DALC and MDDC relationship would also be useful to obtain for local councils.

Page 3, point 4 (District Councils):

- Does the liaison officer replace the newsletter? It would be useful for local councils to understand the role of the parish liaison officer and their job remit.

Page 3, point 6 (District Councils):

- It is understood that there is now a portfolio holder for Parishes and Communities? Therefore, will this point be amended to reflect the change and will local councils be informed of their remit? If not, how will the Chairman encourage better working across the district?

Page 3, point 1 (Local Councils):

- There has not been an annual meeting of clerks since at least 2020.

Page 3, point 4 (Local Councils):

- Whilst officers are happy to use Customer First, we are not the public and open communication between clerks and officers is integral. Please can MDDC clarify whether they see Local Councils as a customer or a partner?

Page 4, point 6 (District Council):

- Who and how will the level and quality of consultation be reviewed?

Page 5, point 8:

- How will local councils be consulted and at what point in the discussion? It is integral that local councils can join early conversations to enable project formulation (or to advise that projects already exist for funding)

Page 5, point 11:

- Should be amended to 'Endeavour to make officers available'. It is integral that officers can attend important meetings regarding planning issues.

Page 6 - Training and Support:

Whilst larger town councils do not generally require website support, shared resources would be useful such as an internal portal. However, since 2020, there has been very little training and there have been no shared training opportunities.

Page 6 - Partnership and financial arrangements, point 2 (District Council):

- open communication in a timely manner is required to enable clear communication between the tiers.

#### **14. Morchard Bishop PC**

Dear David,

Morchard Bishop Parish Council considered this matter at their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March .

The Parish Council accepted the proposed changes in the Charter with no alterations.

Thank you for involving us.

Kind Regards

David Parker

Clerk to Morchard Bishop Parish Council

#### **15. Bow PC**

Dear David

Thank you for your email dated 6 February 2024, together with the recent reminder.

This matter was referred to Bow Parish Council, by email dated 9 February and has been considered at Parish Council meetings since that date.

I regret to advise, however, that Bow Parish Council does not accept/approve the document, neither were there any suggested amendments forthcoming which would make the document acceptable.

I'm sorry not to be able to assist further.

Kind regards  
Brenda Ware  
Clerk to Bow Parish Council

## **16.Silverton PC**

Dear David

Silverton Parish Council considered the details of the Town and Parish Charter review at its meeting last evening.

The only point I have been asked to raise with you is the lack of clarification when the Parish Council objects to a planning proposal on valid planning grounds and the District Council then decides to grant an approval. No explanation is forthcoming as to why the Parish Council's objections were apparently overlooked and it would be hugely beneficial if the District Council could write to the Parish Council in these circumstances to explain the reasoning behind their decision to overlook the comments of the Parish Council.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Sheila Woodland

Clerk to Silverton Parish Council



## **17. Wembworthy PC**

Dear David

This email is to confirm that Wembworthy Parish Council do not have any comments to make about the amendments and therefore adopted the new Charters formally at our PC meeting on 9th May 2024.

Regards

Sarah Goody

Clerk to Wembworthy Parish Council

## **18. Puddington PC**

Dear David,

We have no comments.

Kind Regards

Katie

Katie Vallance

Puddington Parish Clerk

## **19. Morebath PC**

Dear David

I circulated the details to Parish Councillors at Morebath Parish Council and the item was on the Agenda for further discussion at the last meeting on 2 April. The Minutes record that the item was 'noted', so I'm afraid that there will not be a response from Morebath and I'm sorry that I couldn't get Councillors motivated to respond.

Kind regards  
Sue Squire  
Parish Clerk, Morebath Parish Council

## **20. Uffculme PC**

Hi David,

Apologies for the delay in response. Uffculme Parish Council resolved to adopt these going forward with no further comment at our March 2024 meeting.

Kind regards,

Gemma  
**Gemma Cole**

**Uffculme Parish Council Clerk**

## **21. Crediton Hamlets**

Dear David

Thank you for your reminder and I apologise for not responding to your email of 6th February.

I confirm that Crediton Hamlets Parish Council is content with the two amended Charters.

Kind regards

Rachel  
Rachel Hodder, Clerk/RFO, Crediton Hamlets Parish Council

## **22. Hittisleigh PC**

Dear David

Thank you for your email and reminder. We have our next parish council meeting on the 15th and will be able to reply after that on the 16th. We trust that's OK with you but let me know if not. Many thanks - Ruth

Ruth Curtis, clerk to Hittisleigh Parish Council

## **23. Sampford Peverell**

Dear David

Apologies, I am not sure if I responded on behalf of Sampford Peverell Parish Council.

Councillors are happy with the charter.

Regards

Sue

Susan McGeever  
Clerk to Sampford Peverell Parish Council

## **24. Halberton**

Dear David

Apologies I was on holiday at the beginning of May and not sure I have responded.

Halberton Parish Council believe this is a statutory document and are therefore happy with it.

Councillors did raise points at the State of the District Debate but not anything that would change the wording – more clarification.

Regards

Sue  
Susan McGeever  
Clerk to Halberton Parish Council

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Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
<b>25 June 2024</b>				
	<b>Election of Chairman</b> To elect a Chairman for 2024/2025			
	<b>Election of Vice Chairman</b> To elect a Vice Chairman for 2024/2025			
	<b>Start Time of Meetings</b> To determine the start time of future meetings			
25.06.24	New Corporate Plan		Dr Stephen Carr	
	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 4			
25.06.24	<b>Food Safety Plan</b> To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health providing a service update for the statutory work of the Food Safety team within Public Health and Housing Options.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
25.06.24	<b>Resilience Strategy</b> To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Health relating to Resilience Strategy		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
25.06.24 9.07.24	Town and Parish Charter		Paul Deal	
	Work Programme - 2024/2025			
<b>24th September 2024</b>				
24.09.24	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 1		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Dr Stephen Carr	
25.06.24 15.10.24	Corporate Anti Social Behaviour Policy			
15.10.24	<b>CCTV Policy</b> To consider the Report		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Keith Ashton	
<b>3 December 2024</b>				
3.12.24	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 2		Director of Place and Economy Dr Stephen Carr	
2.07.24	<b>Enforcement Policy</b> Joint PDG Community/ Environment /Homes		Director of Place and Economy Luke Howard	
10.12.24	<b>Air Quality Action Plan</b> To consider the report		Director of Place and Economy Jason Ball	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
10.12.24	Regulation of Investigatory Powers		District Solicitor (Monitoring Officer) Maria De Leburne	
<b>25 March 2025</b>				
25.03.25	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 3		Director of Place and Economy Dr Stephen Carr	
1.04.25	<b>Community Safety Partnership Policy</b> To consider the report		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
1.04.25	Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk Policy		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
1.04.25	Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective		District Solicitor (Monitoring Officer) Matthew Page	



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