

Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group

Monday, 10 March 2025 at 5.30 pm
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next meeting
Monday, 23 June 2025 at 5.30 pm

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

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

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 343 989 252 807
Passcode: 9byBBN

Membership

Cllr M D Binks
Cllr C Connor
Cllr M Farrell
Cllr B Fish
Cllr M Fletcher (Chair)
Cllr A Glover
Cllr C Harrower
Cllr M Jenkins
Cllr J Poynton

A G E N D A

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

- 1 **Apologies and Substitute Members**
To receive any apologies for absence and notice of appointment of substitutes.
- 2 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 3 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 4 **Minutes** (*Pages 7 - 16*)
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 2nd December 2024.
- 5 **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chair may wish to make.
- 6 **Performance Dashboard Q3** (*Pages 17 - 18*)
To receive summary performance information for the areas falling under the remit of this Policy Development Group for quarter 3 of 2024/2025.
- 7 **Artificial Intelligence Policy** (*Pages 19 - 32*)
To receive a report from the Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement proposing a policy to govern and monitor the use of artificial intelligence (AI) within Mid Devon District Council.
- 8 **Leisure Service - verbal update**
To receive a verbal update regarding current activity in the Leisure Service.
- 9 **Environment & Enforcement Performance Report Q3** (*Pages 33 - 38*)
To receive a report from the Head of Performance, People and Waste and the Environment & Enforcement Manager providing a quarterly update on key environment enforcement performance data.
- 10 **Chairman's Annual Report for 2024/2025** (*Pages 39 - 40*)
To receive the Chair's Annual Report on the work of the Policy Development Group during 2024/2025.

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

Members are asked to note that the following items are already identified in the work programme for the next meeting:

- Election of Chair for 2025/2026
- Election of Vice Chair for 2025/2026
- Start time of meetings for 2025/2026
- PDG workshop feedback
- Performance Dashboard Q4
- Leisure Service Update

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

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive
Friday, 28 February 2025

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

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

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

1. Inspection of Papers

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

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

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

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

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

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting

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

4. Public Question Time

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

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

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

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

For those joining the meeting virtually:

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

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

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

7. Recording of meetings

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

8. Fire Drill Procedure

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

9. WIFI

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

This page is intentionally left blank

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SERVICE DELIVERY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 2 December 2024 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

M Fletcher (Chair)
M D Binks, C Connor, M Farrell, C Harrower
(Vice-Chair), M Jenkins and J Poynton

Apologies

Councillors

B Fish and A Glover

Also Present

Councillor

J Wright

Also Present

Officers

Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Matthew Page (Head of People, Performance & Waste), Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Dean Emery (Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure), Andy Mackie (Leisure Services Manager), Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street Scene), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, G Czapiewski, J Lock,
D Wulff and L Taylor

Officers Online

Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager)

32 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr B Fish and Cllr A Glover.

33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

34 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

No interests were declared under this item.

35 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 September 2024 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

36 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair had the following announcements to make:

1. He informed the Group that he and the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement had visited the Leisure Centres recently and had enjoyed the experience greatly and learnt a lot. Sessions would be arranged with the remaining members of the Group to visit the Leisure Centres early in the new year and various drop in sessions and times to suit would be offered.
2. He reminded the Group that there were lots of service areas falling under the remit of this Policy Development Group and that their area of responsibility was wide and very impactful upon the residents of Mid Devon. He encouraged colleagues to bring forward ideas to enhance service provision where the Group could.

37 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q2 (00:15:00)**

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, a slide * showing performance information in the Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement area.

Since the Dashboard was last presented to this meeting, work had been ongoing to create a glossary. This contained all the measures used as part of the Dashboards and provided a definition for each. The definitions aimed to provide a fuller understanding of what was being measured and how. This was available on the Council's website.

The following was referred to:

- There was only one Corporate Risk in relation to this Group. 'Operation of a Waste Service' and there had been no change from the previous quarter.
- Staff turnover had slightly increased over quarter 1.
- Council Tax collection was slightly behind target.
- Agency spend was slightly increased as there had been some issues with not having enough loaders on the waste lorries.

Discussion took place regarding:

- A multi-year pay settlement would need to be agreed at the right level.
- Household recycling rates were slightly above target and the Group wished for their thanks to be passed on to the Waste Team for this continuing positive statistic.

- The 'Public Survey engagement rate statistic was new and needed to be monitored closely going forwards to see what could be done to improve it.
- The leisure service were running a number of retention campaigns at the moment.

Note: * Slides previously circulated.

38 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN - GENERAL FUND (GF) (00:27:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) presenting the options to update the 2025/2026 budget for consideration / approval.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The report provided a 'refresh' of the service areas falling under the umbrella of this Policy Development Group and showed the movement to date in the process of trying to set the budget for 2025/2026 and beyond.
- The report introduced the General Fund Capital Programme which was still being refined in the background.
- Appendix 1 showed the services falling under the remit of this Policy Development Group.
- Waste & Recycling and the Leisure Service were doing really well in terms of income gains.
- The report outlined how the current budget gap may be closed given assumptions regarding the Government settlement.
- A report going to Cabinet in December 2024 would present the very latest position ahead of Council needing to agree a budget in February 2025.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

39 **NATIONAL ASSISTANCE BURIAL POLICY REVIEW (00:29:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience presenting the revised Policy for National Assistance Burials.

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

- This was a simple update to an existing policy.
- Section 1.4 listed the changes that had been made.
- In summary, the policy covered circumstances where the deceased did not have any family. On average, there were about 3 such occurrences each year.

Discussion took place regarding:

- A possible review of the Funeral Directors used in order to check that the Council was using the most suitable and local firm.
- Would the numbers be likely to increase given the number of fractured families in existence? No projections had been made but this could be looked into. There had been 36 deaths since 2006 where the policy had had to be used.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

The revised Policy for National Assistance Burials be adopted.

(Proposed by Cllr C Harrower and seconded by Cllr M Jenkins)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

40 WASTE AND RECYCLING OPTIONS (00:36:00)

To receive a report * from the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces and the Head of People, Performance and Waste building upon previous options regarding the provision of extra service provision. It also set out future options regarding the provision of the Waste and Recycling service to the residents of the District together with proposed pilots of new services.

The contents of the report were outlined and consideration was given to:

- The report set out the future plans of the Waste Service and details were provided of the proposed pilot schemes.
- Further updates would be provided to the Group regarding coffee pods and blister packs at future meetings.
- The cost of the trial for recycling nappies would be approximately £4.5k. It would cost around £280k per annum to roll this scheme out fully should it be so desired following the pilot. This needed to be made financially more viable as these were significant costs. The tonnage of waste may reduce if the number of nappies in waste collections was reduced.
- The Council had heard that the Government had made a decision such as to allow Council's to continue with 3 weekly collections. This was very positive news.
- The team were looking at breaking into the top 5% nationally for recycling rates.
- Parents needed to be encouraged to use re-useable nappies where possible and there needed to be a proactive campaign to encourage new parents in this regard. It was confirmed that this would be added into communications.
- It was recognised that there were pro's and con's for using terry nappies.
- The Council was working with 'NappiCycle' in Wales who had been recycling nappies successfully for a number of years.
- It was confirmed that there was a comprehensive Waste and Recycling Strategy for next year both in terms of Christmas and looking further ahead. All campaigns would be incorporated into this
- There was some concern that pots and pans would be put out for collection rather than taken more appropriately to recycling centres or charity shops.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

Trials be undertaken to introduce the following practices in the District:

- Nappy waste collections
- Collecting unwanted metal pots and pans
- New house builders be charged for new bins and containers to each new property.

(Proposed by the Chair)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

41 **EXTENDER PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR) (00:54:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Head of People, Performance and Waste. The report considered the potential payments the Council would receive in 2025-26 with regards to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and information regarding the Collection and Packaging Reforms and in particular the implementation and management of the EPR scheme.

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

- It was explained that legislation in the Environment Act 2021 would enable waste reforms such as Extended Producer Responsibility (which ensured producers paid the full costs of packaging in waste for both collection and disposal), a Deposit Return Scheme for single use drink containers and simpler recycling guidance, which would aim to boost recycling rates in households and businesses.
- The packaging costs and performance model calculated the 'basic payment amount' to be paid to individual local authorities for the necessary costs incurred for the collection, handling, treatment and disposal of household packaging waste. The amount was net of income from the sale of recyclate as part of the efficient and effective service, which included administration and communication.
- The Scheme Administrator (appointed by Defra) was responsible for calculating producer fees and local authority payments.
- It was hoped that more detail would be provided once the Government settlement had been received.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

42 **QUARTER 2 ENVIRONMENT AND ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT (00:57:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report from the Head of People, Performance and Waste providing a quarterly update on key environment enforcement performance data including fly tipping, littering, Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN's). It also gave a brief summary of Car Parking performance and the issuing of Parking Charge Notice's (PCN's).

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

- There had been a slight increase in income from car parking.
- The number of fly tipping instances had slightly dropped.

It was **AGREED** that the report presented a positive position at quarter 2.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

43 **COLLECTION OF COUNCIL TAX & BUSINESS RATES (00:58:00)**

The Group received, and **NOTED**, a presentation * from the Head of Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Recovery, Corporate Fraud, Welfare & Leisure explained how Council Tax and Business rates were collected. The Group had requested at their last meeting that they receive further information regarding how Council Tax and Business Rates were collected.

The following was highlighted within the presentation:

Council Tax Billing & Recovery:

- Gross Debt £ 86,733,094 million
- Net Collectable Debt £ 74,560, £170 million
- Total Dwellings 38,549k
- Reliefs/Discounts/Disregards Overall Total £ 12,172,924 million
- Council Tax Reduction £ 4,881,827million (part of the £12.9m)
- Council Tax was calculated by bands **A, B, C,D,E,F,G & H** properties were allocated those by the Valuation Office Agency.

Business Rates (also known as National Non Domestic Rates (NDR)):

- Gross Debt £ 28,654,229m
- Net Collectable Debt £ 18,066,623m
- Reliefs / Exemptions £ 10,587,606m
- Total Hereditaments 3553
- Rateable values are calculated by the Valuation Office Agency (part of HMRC)
- Some reliefs were fully funded under Section 31
- Income and costs are monitored by Government via complex returns, NDR1 & NDR3
- Income and costs were shared by
 - Government 50%

- Billing Authority 40%
- County Council 9%
- Fire Authority 1%

How is collection calculated?:

The formulae as shown below applies to Council Tax and Business Rates (NDR Example):

Net Collectable Debit	£ 18,066,623 (A)
Net Payments	£ 11,987,569 (B)
(B) divided by (A)	66.35%

Collection results were reported to the Government via a complex return at the end of the financial year (QRC4).

Collection was monitored monthly and compared to the previous years %.

Collection Methods:

- Annual Bill / Adjustments Notices / New Bills (10 or 12 statutory instalments or months as let with the financial year)
- Reminders
- Summons
- Court Order (Liability Order) - when granted further powers were granted by law, these were:
 - Attachment of Earnings
 - Attachment to Members allowances
 - Special arrangements
 - Enforcement Agents
 - Charging Orders
 - Bankruptcy
 - Committal
 - Business rates allowed for a County Court application rather than applying for a Liability Order at the Magistrates Court
 - Council Tax (SI 613)
 - Business Rates (SI 1058)

Discussion took place regarding:

- When somebody builds an extension it was not the case that the banding of the property was automatically reassessed. This would usually happen when the property was either sold or leased. A banding may not necessarily change just because an improvement had been made to a property.
- Residents had the option of paying 12 month's worth of Council Tax over 10 months.
- Mid Devon District Council had the highest collection rates in Devon and Somerset and nationally were in the top 5%.
- The last quarter of each year was the busiest for the service area as not only were they trying to collect outstanding monies for the year but also recalculating amounts due for the coming year.

- The service area worked hard to communicate with people who were suffering financial hardship and often made referrals to support agencies that could help in a number of different ways. It was important that Council Tax payers contacted the Council as soon as possible if they were beginning to experience problems regarding repayment.

Note: * Presentation previously circulated.

44 **LEISURE SERVICE - VERBAL UPDATE (01:15:00)**

The Group received a verbal update from the Operations Manager for Leisure Service regarding current activity within the Leisure Services area.

This included the following information:

- The Leisure Service was currently seeing it's highest ever membership base and was working hard on retention campaigns, customer and community engagement. Managers had clear objectives and were cascading these and the priorities for the service through the wider team as part of the appraisal process.
- Despite the positive increase in revenue, the team were in the midst of some significant challenges with staffing, particularly the swimming pools, where day time cover during the week was proving problematic. It was to the credit of the Duty Officers and Centre Managers that the impact of the shortage was not being more widely felt. Recruitment and training was an ongoing priority.
- There had been some changes to the Management Team with a new Centre Manager for Exe Valley and Culm Valley starting soon, and a new Duty Officer starting in early December 2024.
- In the community the Leisure Service were working with Active Devon to provide 'wellbeing walks' in Tiverton, Crediton and Cullumpton, those would be led by volunteers and be completely free of charge. This reinforced Leisure's commitment to providing accessible health and wellbeing for all members of the community.
- Another community driven project was with the NHS. Within the Royal Devon & Exeter area they had several community sites which retained small patient gym spaces. These were both for musculoskeletal problems (e.g back pain, knee pain etc) and wider health conditions (e.g stroke, amputees, cancer etc.) An NHS England drive was to provide care closer to home, and within local communities (vs large hospital sites). With this in mind, Leisure had donated two studio cycling bikes to be used in these community sites, again strengthening the Council's collaboration and showing how it valued the health of its communities.
- There were some significant projects coming to fruition in the coming months. The digital transformation had started with the Leisure Management System contract being awarded which would be the start of a major improvement to the way in which the service operated, offering it valuable reporting tools and dashboards to help it improve timetabling and run a more efficient service.

- Culm Valley gym, studio and squash court refreshes were underway and would greatly enhance the user experience, bringing the facility up to a more contemporary standard.
- The swimming pool sites would see a refurbishment of the wet-side changing rooms in March 2025 and the team were working on logistics of this to minimise the impact of the work, and to ensure a quality finish consistent at both sites.
- Despite the challenging resource issues, the leisure team had made some major steps forward with the service with more to come and would welcome anyone who would like to visit the sites and have a chat with the Management Team to get in touch.

Discussion took place with regard to:

- The Chair commented that the Culm Valley gym was looking 'fantastic' following the recent refurbishment.
- The Operations Manager would be looking to seek out volunteers to help with possible park runs in the future.
- The service was looking to strengthen partnership relationships in the future with regard to providing support in the mental health area. There were lots of things the Leisure Service were already doing but they had yet to be pulled together into a formalised framework.

The Chair thanked the officer for his helpful update.

45 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:22:00)**

The items already listed in the work programme for the next meeting were **NOTED**.

In addition to this, the Group requested that early in the new year a workshop be arranged for the Group to discuss their work programme for the coming year and the areas they particularly wanted to focus on. As mentioned earlier in the meeting there was a wide range of service areas falling under their remit with some key priority areas and their meetings needed to be as constructive as possible whilst always remembering the key aims and objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan.

(The meeting ended at 6.55 pm)

CHAIR

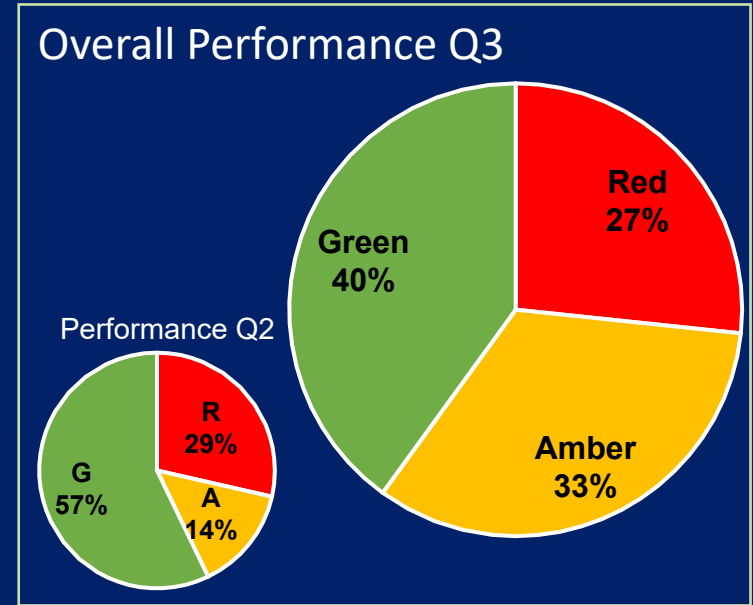
This page is intentionally left blank

Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement PDG Performance Dashboard – Quarter 3 2024/25

Performance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
Household waste collected per household (YTD)	226.8 Kg	300 Kg	A
Household recycling rate (Average YTD)	58.8 %	58.5 %	G
All council complaints resolved within timescales (Average YTD)	97 %	85 %	G
Staff turnover (YTD)	13.6%	17.0 %	A
Missed Bin Collections - All (YTD)	0.03 %	0.03 %	A
Leisure cost per visit (YTD)	Not available	£1.12	
National non-domestic rates collection rate (YTD)	79.8%	98 %	G
Council Tax collection rate (YTD)	82.0%	97.5 %	A
Public survey engagement rate (YTD)	8.7 %	15.0 %	R
Households on chargeable garden waste (Current)	11,924	12,200	A
Response to FOI/ EIR requests within 20 working days (YTD)	99.6 %	97%	G

Finance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
SD&CI PDG Projected Outturn	£4,717k	£5,447k	G
Income received from recycled material (YTD)	(£649k)	(£437k)	G
Agency Spend 'v' Budget (SD&CI; YTD)	£271k	£110k	R
SD&CI PDG – Projected Capital Outturn	£2,615k	£3,274k	R
SD&CI PDG – Capital Slippage % of projects (Current)	33%	0%	R

Corporate Risk	Risk Rating (Trajectory)
None related to PDG	



In Focus

FOI/EIR Requests: A new performance measure has been added to the dashboard. Historic data is shown in the table (YTD):

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Q1	98.5%	99.3%	99.3%
Q2	98.9%	99.7%	99.3%
Q3	99.2%	99.8%	99.6%
Q4	99.4%	99.6%	

This page is intentionally left blank

Report for: Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG

Date of Meeting:	10 March 2025
Subject:	Artificial Intelligence Policy
Cabinet Member:	CLlr David Wulff, Cabinet member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
Exempt:	n/a
Wards Affected:	n/a
Enclosures:	Appendices

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

Mid Devon District Council does not currently have a policy in place to govern and monitor the use of artificial intelligence (AI) within the organisation.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. That the committee recommend to Cabinet the approval of the draft AI policy.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Recently, there has been significant interest in Artificial intelligence (AI), due to the launch of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like ChatGPT, Gemini and Co-pilot. These GenAI tools can instantly respond to questions and prompts. However, given the opportunities and risks that AI can pose, it has become necessary to develop a policy to help staff navigate how to use AI responsibly and ethically.

1.2 In addition there are an increasing number of companies and suppliers enabling automation through the development of applications and cloud-based solutions automating business processes. Attractive as these are it is essential that appropriate governance and risk assessment is applied to the procurement and implementation of such tools.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy seeks to:

- a) Act as a starting point for MDDC to develop further detailed policy and process guidance on the safe and ethical use of AI. An information poster (see Appendix 1) will be circulated amongst staff and members.
- b) Ensure the Council's IT & Information Governance (ITIG) board account for future uses of GenAI, ensuring the necessary infrastructure and safeguards are in place for responsible use.
- c) Note that, while there are some ICT protections in place, data entered into a GenAI tool cannot be easily tracked or monitored. Confidential or personal data should not be used within GenAI tools, as information may enter the public domain.
- d) Implementation of an AI policy demonstrates the Council's commitment to digitally enabled and accessible services.
- e) Commit to the core value of being "Open and accountable," as transparency with residents on how their data is being managed, is addressed within the policy.
- f) Acknowledge that GenAI contributes to continuous improvement and efficiency by providing helpful communication suggestions, explaining complex guidance, and assisting with automating routine tasks, thereby enhancing service delivery, and supporting the Council's digital transformation and savings opportunities.
- g) Adopting a corporate policy for the use of GenAI links to the Council's need for "Resilience," by establishing a framework that reduces the risk of regulatory breaches.

3.0 Future Actions

3.1 The following activities will be required on the approval of the AI policy:

- Appropriate staff receive training in effective governance and risk management of AI
- A comprehensive risk review on AI is completed and added to the MDDC risk register
- All staff/members are aware of the opportunities and risks around AI via a training and awareness programme
- Acceptable Use guidance is created and maintained for reference for

staff/members

- Implement and communicate an effective and safe route to procurement and implementation of AI tools
- Ensure services and staff are aware of their obligations for the safe use and transparency of use of AI
- A high-level Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) be created considering the use of GenAI by officers.
- Ensure EQIAs are included with any business case for AI applications

Financial Implications: This report does not indicate any financial implications. Future investments in AI applications or licensing for MDDC will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and decided by the ITIG board in consultation with the relevant budget owners.

Legal Implications:

Inappropriate or unauthorised use of AI may expose MDDC to risks such as data breaches, copyright infringement, or biased decision-making, potentially resulting in legal proceedings. MDDC should ensure compliance with UK GDPR requirements and obligations. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) guidance on AI should be followed when utilizing GenAI. Failure to report breaches of policy, data or copyright infringements may result in disciplinary action according to MDDC's policies and procedures.

Risk Assessment: On adoption of the AI policy, a comprehensive risk assessment will be carried out and communicated to staff and members via an appropriate training and awareness programme.

Impact on Climate Change: Generative AI significantly impacts the environment by increasing energy consumption. Training and running GenAI models consume large amounts of energy, including cooling processors. As models become more complex and demand for AI services rises, energy demands will grow.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

GenAI may affect different groups due to social biases, stereotypes, or inappropriate cultural values in its training. It can also display sensitive content. For example, GenAI should not decide customer access to Council services without human supervision. Human involvement is crucial for decision-making, and an appeal process should be established for AI-related decisions.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The AI policy supports the delivery of MDDC's commitment to improve and transform our services and ensure the public have a good understanding of council services and that they are satisfied that the services are efficient and effective.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 28.2.25

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 28.2.25

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 28.2.25

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 25/02/2025

Cabinet member notified: yes

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: Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement

Email: llewis@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 234981

Background papers: Appendix 1 – SOCITM AI information poster

Using Generative Artificial Intelligence Large Language Models

Do's and don'ts



Why does it matter?

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is evolving fast and being rapidly promoted by large technology-based organisations, all competing to be first to market, yet without legal or regulatory oversight.

This technology is now appearing within tools, systems and processes used by organisations as part of upgrades or updates, but is being implemented without consideration of uncertainties and risks, and its wider implications are not well understood.

AI and Generative AI explained



Artificial Intelligence

AI is the ability of machines or software to perform tasks that would normally require human intelligence. It can process data, learn from it and make decisions or predictions based on that data.

AI encompasses many different types of systems and approaches to harnessing machine intelligence, including rule-based AI, machine learning, neural networks, natural language processing and robotics.

Generative AI and Large Language Models (LLMs)

Generative AI learns from data about existing artifacts in order to generate new variations of content (including images, video, music, speech and text).

LLMs are a type of Generative AI that use 'deep learning' techniques and massively large data sets to understand, summarise, generate and predict text-based content.

Purpose

These 'do's and don'ts' provide guidelines for the use of Generative AI LLMs (such as [ChatGPT](#), [Bard](#), [Bing](#) or similar tools) by councils, charities and any other organisations providing local public services. They apply to all stakeholders, including but not limited to: employees, contractors, developers, vendors, temporary staff, consultants, councillors and trustees.



Do...

- ✓ **Do** maintain human oversight and responsibility for making final decisions on output produced
- ✓ **Do** use to improve and refine existing content
- ✓ **Do** notify your manager and disclose that Generative AI LLMs have been used to generate output
- ✓ **Do** use to analyse publicly-available data
- ✓ **Do** use responsibly and ethically
- ✓ **Do** fact check material generated by Generative AI LLMs
- ✓ **Do** use in accordance with relevant organisation policy
- ✓ **Do** be aware of the potential for disinformation and scams being generated
- ✓ **Do** comply with relevant laws and regulations
- ✓ **Do** take care to avoid use of output that may breach copyright or intellectual property rights
- ✓ **Do** specify the definitions and scope of your prompts with care
- ✓ **Do** be aware of risks including accuracy, bias, discrimination, confidentiality and security
- ✓ **Do** use to create draft briefings, reports, presentations, customer responses, etc.

Don't...

- ✗ **Don't** use to record and process confidential data and information
- ✗ **Don't** use if you are in doubt about the security of data or information being input
- ✗ **Don't** use to store or release non-public records
- ✗ **Don't** assume that all of the output generated is factually correct
- ✗ **Don't** use for private individual records
- ✗ **Don't** use if data sovereignty practices of the Generative AI LLM supplier contravene any applicable legal and/or regulatory requirements
- ✗ **Don't** let go of moral and ethical responsibility for output



Produced in partnership with [ALGIM](#) (Association of Local Government Information Management) and [LOLA](#) (Linked Organisation of Local Authority ICT Societies)



The society for innovation, technology and modernisation.

Learn more at www.socitm.net and keep up-to-date by connecting with us via social media on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#)

© Socitm, 2023

This document, or parts of it, may be used by any non-profit or public body to support us all in ensuring our use of AI is fair, legal and safe.

You accept that Socitm, ALGIM and LOLA can have no responsibility whatsoever for any detriment or loss arising from your use of this document.

Any use of the document should be attributed and it may not be used for commercial purposes.

This page is intentionally left blank



Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

December 2024

Policy No. IM011

Version Control Sheet

Title: **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

Purpose: **To detail the Artificial Intelligence policy Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) in the protection of all Information Assets and the security of MDDC. These standards apply to all Officers, Councillors, Third Party Contractors, Suppliers, and Partner Organisations using or sharing MDDC's information.**

Owner: **Deputy Chief Executive & S151 Officer – Senior Information Risk Owner**
Date: **December 2024**

Version Number: **Draft0**

Status: **Draft**

Review Frequency: **Every six months**

Next review date: **June 2025**

Consultation **This document was sent out for consultation to the following:**
IT & Information Governance Board

Document History

This document requires/obtained the following approvals.

Title	Date	Version Approved
IT & Information Governance Board	Jan 2025	Draft
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG	Mar 2025	Draft
Cabinet	April 2025	Draft

Related Policies:

IM001 – Information Security Management
 IM002 – Information Security Incident
 IM003 – Data Protection
 IM004 – Records Management
 ICT005 – Acceptable Use
 ICT007 – Software Compliance & Legislation
 ICT009 – Internet Use
 Risk Management Policy

1	Introduction	4
2	Purpose.....	4
3	Scope.....	4
4	Responsibilities	4
5	Policy Statement	5
6	Use of AI tools.....	5
7	Data Protection implications of using AI	6
8	Ethical use of AI	7
9	Breaches of Policy	7
10	Glossary of terms	8

1 Introduction

Mid Devon District Council acknowledges that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is widely used in commercial and daily applications, with its influence expected to grow across almost all industries, including the public sector, especially with the rise of Generative AI (GenAI).

While AI was once restricted to specialists for specific tasks, GenAI is now widely accessible to non-specialists. This rapidly evolving technology can generate new writing, audio, code, images, and videos. It offers opportunities to enhance efficiency, decision-making, and service delivery for the Council and its residents but also introduces risks.

Many GenAI tools like Chat GPT, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot are freely available. The Council must ensure that AI use is organized and controlled to protect its safety, integrity, and reputation.

The Council acknowledges the fast pace of technological advancements and, like many other organisations, continually reviews and adjusts its practices accordingly. The Council is minded to explore the opportunities presented by AI technology. This policy will be regularly reviewed by the IT and Information Governance (ITIG) Board to ensure it remains relevant and practical during this period of rapid change. The Council finds it important to provide timely guidance and advice to employees, promote transparency in the use of AI, and support a culture of responsible AI use as these changes occur.

Changes to policy and guidance will occur reasonably frequently due to the rapid pace of development in AI. Any changes will be globally communicated, and all users are expected to ensure they remain up to date with the latest policy and guidance.

2 Purpose

This policy ensures users are aware of the methods the Council uses to manage AI. Users must comply with this policy to ensure appropriate use of AI tools. It links with other policies, including Corporate Data Protection, Information Security, ICT Acceptable Use, and Freedom of Information Policy. This policy supplements and should be read alongside existing policies.

3 Scope

This policy governs the use and configuration of all AI tools provided by the Council as part of general IT resources available to staff, including Microsoft Copilot and other AI tools accessible via free or subscription-based internet services. It will also apply to AI tools procured by the Council for specific purposes. These regulations are applicable when using both corporate-owned devices and personal devices used for Council business. The policy includes all employees, agency staff, elected members, contractors, suppliers, volunteers, apprentices, student/work experience placements, and partner agencies who have access to these tools, collectively called "users" in this document.

4 Responsibilities

There are several roles in the Council that form key contributors to AI policy, development, and governance:

- The Head of Digital Services & Customer Engagement leads the Council on AI technology and ensures policy compliance.
- Line managers and Data Owners will initially monitor staff use of AI.
- The ITIG Board will manage, promote, and regulate AI use, including necessary training.
- The Senior Information/Data Protection Officer (DPO) advises on data protection related to AI.
- ICT and Information Management teams provide technical support and guidance for AI operations.
- The ITIG Board governs AI and reviews related policies.

5 Policy Statement

Whilst there are many freely available GenAI tools, users must use Microsoft Copilot instead of other tools if provided as any data entered remains within the tenancy owned by the Council. This also allows the Council to have better control and oversight of the use of GenAI by users, which is key to effective governance. If Copilot is not suitable or unavailable for the task required, then users should consult ICT for further advice.

A central register of authorised AI tools in use at MDDC will be created for reference.

All users of AI will comply with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines including intellectual property, copyright, data protection and other relevant areas. There will be no unauthorised use of copyrighted material or creation of content that infringes on the intellectual property of others. Users will prioritise the safeguarding of stakeholders and will not knowingly use any AI technology that puts their safety or privacy at risk. Users will not allow or cause intellectual property to be entered into GenAI models without appropriate consent or exemption to copyright.

Users of AI technology will acknowledge its rapid evolution and adapt their methods of working as necessary according to this policy. Users will ensure transparency and accountability in the use of AI technology so that stakeholders are informed about where and how AI is used and who is responsible for it. Key documents, such as Privacy Notices, will be updated as needed to maintain transparency for the data subjects affected and clearly communicate the specific rights around such processing. Any feedback or questions from stakeholders regarding the use of AI will be considered and addressed appropriately, in accordance with Council policy and processes.

By adhering to this policy, users understand and support the Council's aim to foster a responsible and inclusive environment for the use of AI by upholding privacy, fairness, and transparency for the benefit of all involved.

By combining the benefits of AI technology with professionals' expertise, experience, and judgment, users understand that they can create a collaborative and effective service that maximises the benefits of both human and AI capabilities.

6 Use of AI tools

Users may use AI tools for tasks such as document improvements, meeting notes, report writing, data analysis, summarising complex documents, translation, drafting communications, content creation, workflow management, and reviewing accessibility. AI supports users while allowing them to apply their professional judgment and expertise.

Users will not rely on AI to replace strategic decision making or rely on it to make decisions that could have a significant impact on people.

AI tools will be used in a manner that complements professional judgement and expertise, without replacing them. Users remain responsible and accountable for the quality and content of any AI-generated output, regardless of how it is generated or used. Staff should always review and tailor any AI output based on their expertise.

AI notetakers should only be used in a meeting after completing a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) and informing all participants before the meeting begins. If a participant objects to the use of an AI notetaking app, the meeting organiser should consider the nature of their objection and, if their concerns cannot be resolved, determine whether it is appropriate to proceed without the AI. While it is challenging to control the actions of external attendees at meetings you organise, you should inform them in advance that AI notetakers should not be used and take responsibility for the taking and distribution of notes.

Users will receive training and support to integrate AI into their work effectively, including professional development opportunities focused on AI tools and their integration into working practices. Training and support will be planned as part of user personal development reviews and appraisals or on an as-needed basis.

AI generated data and decisions are subject to Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests.

Users must ensure that they complete all mandatory policies and training identified on page 2, or as determined by the ITIG board.

7 Data Protection implications of using AI

Users should be aware that any information entered into a GenAI model may no longer remain private or secure. When entering personal data or confidential information, including data with intellectual property implications or commercially or legally sensitive information such as contracts, users must utilize the Council's Copilot tool. If this tool is not available, no sensitive data should be entered into the GenAI tool. **If a user has any doubt about the confidentiality of information, they should not use GenAI.** Users intending to systematically employ AI tools must assess whether the proposed use constitutes data processing or profiling activities that necessitate a Data Protection Impact Assessment. In such cases, users are required to adhere to the Council's Data Protection Policy and follow the Data Protection Impact Assessment Procedure.

AI usage, or the use of datasets that poses high risks to personal rights and freedoms requires a DPIA. Users must not assume AI tools are not processing personal data, as it is not always obvious.

A DPIA or data protection assessment for AI may also include:

- Consideration of alternative methods (both AI and non-AI) for the planned processing, including justification for choosing this method and its fairness.

- Clear identification of where AI processing and automated decisions may impact individuals.
- Assessment of both individual and allocative harms (e.g., decisions declining services to specific persons) and representational harms (e.g., selection biases based on gender or race).
- Evaluation of the proportionality and fairness of using the AI tool by weighing benefits against risks to individual rights and freedoms, and whether safeguards can be implemented.
- Analysis of potential biases or inaccuracies within algorithms that could negatively affect individuals.
- Comparison of human and algorithmic accuracy if AI replaces human intervention, to justify the AI tool's usage in the DPIA.
- Explanation of how individuals will be informed about automated decisions and their options for challenging those decisions.
- Examination of relevant variations or margins of error in system performance that may influence the fairness of processing (including statistical accuracy), and description of any human involvement in the decision-making process.

8 Ethical use of AI

AI systems, particularly GenAI, will be used with caution and awareness of their limitations. Users should be mindful of the following considerations:

Bias – AI-generated content may reflect biases in its dataset, potentially leading to discriminatory content based on race, gender, or socioeconomic background. Users must comply with the Equality Act (2010) as outlined in the Council Equality Impact Assessment. Extra caution is necessary when using AI for profiling, such as identifying ideal job candidate characteristics.

Accuracy – information may be inaccurate when generated so any content should be fact-checked. Tools may provide highly plausible and coherent results but may still contain errors.

Human oversight – a lack of human intervention may result in AI outputs going unchecked. Staff should ensure that outputs align with MDCC values, and users should be aware that GenAI lacks flexibility, human understanding, and compassion.

Currency – some AI models only collate data prior to a certain date so content generated may not reflect the most up-to-date information.

Environmental issues – use of AI requires energy to run. Therefore, it should only be used when relevant, appropriate and proportionate, where it is the most suitable and sustainable option.

9 Breaches of Policy

Breaches of this policy or security incidents are events that could result in loss or damage to Council assets or violate the Council's security procedures.

All Council employees, elected members, partner agencies, contractors, volunteers, and vendors must report security incidents and policy breaches promptly through the Council's Incident Reporting Procedure.

This duty also applies to external organisations contracted to support or access the Council's Information Systems.

The Council will implement appropriate measures to address any policy breach and its associated procedures and guidelines through the established frameworks.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in formal disciplinary action, termination of contract, or criminal proceedings.

10 Glossary of terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to a variety of algorithm-based technologies and approaches designed to solve complex tasks. These tasks include visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.

GenAI is a type of artificial intelligence that creates new content, such as images, text, or computer code. It operates by analyzing large datasets, often sourced from the internet, to train a model on the underlying patterns and structures of that data. After extensive training, which may involve both automated processes and human intervention, the model becomes proficient in generating new content. When provided with a prompt or input, the AI assesses the probability of various potential responses based on its training data. It then selects and presents the response deemed most appropriate for the given prompt. This prompt and response can also be used to further refine the model through additional training.

This document is owned by the IT & Information Governance (ITIG) board and forms part of the Council's IT and Information Management Policy framework and as such, must be fully complied with.



Report for: Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement PDG

Date of Meeting:	10 March 2025
Subject:	Environment and Enforcement Performance Report - Quarter Three
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Josh Wright- Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement
Responsible Officer:	Matthew Page - Head of Performance, People and Waste Luke Howard - Environment and Enforcement Manager
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	N/A
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report provides a quarterly update on key environment enforcement performance data including Fly tipping, Littering, Public Space Protection Orders and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices. It also gives a brief summary of the Councils Car Parking performance and the issuing of Penalty Charge Notices.

Recommendation(s):

This report is for noting only.

Section 2 – Report

- 1.0 This report provides an overview of the Environment and Enforcement service performance during quarter three of the 2024/25 financial year.

- 1.1 The Environment and Enforcement service has taken a greater enforcement stance during quarter three, issuing FPNs to individuals responsible for placing out black bags of waste in parts of the district away from their property. This has been particularly pertinent in areas such as car parks and localised communal areas where individuals believe they can deposit waste without being identified.
- 1.2 The service has been proactively working with landlords and residents in some challenging areas. This work has focused on providing practical solutions on waste placement and storage. Results so far have been extremely positive and the service is looking to build on this progress via further engagement, education and where required enforcement.

2.0 Car Parking

- 2.1 Car parking during quarter three has been promising regarding vends and user base. The service has continued to maintain its daily patrolling of the council assets. A significant shift towards cashless parking has been notable, with approx. 50% of users now opting to use our Ringo mobile payment service.
- 2.2 The offer of free parking on Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas was widely used and well received. Crediton Town Council found the offer particularly helpful during their light switch on.

2.3 Car Parking income Q3 inclusive of VAT

	Machine	Ringo	Total
Q3 24/25	£144,780.60	£109,544.70	£254,325.30
Q3 23/24	£157,055.45	£86,374.00	£243,418.45

2.4 Penalty Charge Notice Issuance

Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec)	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
PCNs issued	387	399	738	690	728

3.0 Environmental Enforcement

- 3.1 The service focus around managing household waste placement has been positive, with residents actively engaging with officers to overcome issues. It also provides assurance that many households wish to do the right thing in respect of their waste, but occasionally require assistance and support.
- 3.2 The service is always diligent and thorough when investigating reports of fly tipping. Obtaining evidence is crucial in successfully taking enforcement action against those who continue to commit enviro crime offences.
- 3.3 The service has successfully gained accreditation for the CSAS (community safety accreditation scheme). The scheme is operated by Devon and

Cornwall Police and provides accredited officers with additional powers, most notably the power to request names and address of individuals involved in enviro crime. Failure to provide a CSAS accredited officer with these details is an offence in itself.

3.3 Performance Statistics Environmental Enforcement

Q3	2023/24	2024/25
Patrols Conducted	51	74
FPNs Issued	6	12
Dog Fouling/PSPO	0	0
Littering	3	8
Fly Tipping	3	4
Abandoned Vehicle	2	0

3.4 Strong patrolling and resource has enabled the service to be far more visible within communities, thus preventing many offences from occurring in the first instance. The service encourages engagement from individuals who are aware of enviro crime issues. This engagement enables the service to focus our resource in areas that are experiencing particular issues.

3.5 Fly Tipping Statistics

	Fly tips			
	October	November	December	Total
2024/25	37	34	37	108
2023/24	35	52	28	115
Diff	-2	-18	9	-7

3.6 Fly Tipping reports regularly fluctuate by small amounts against comparative years. Quarter three has seen a small overall decrease in fly tipping reports received. Not all fly tipping reports can be investigated as many are items that evidence cannot be retrieved from, such as fencing, waste building materials.

3.7 Abandoned Vehicle Statistics

Total Reported	83
Not Abandoned/Gone	56
Action Required	19
Moved by owner after notice	18
Removed by MDDC	1
Fixed Penalty Notices issued	0*
Outstanding reports	0

* No registered keeper on the removed vehicle

4.0 Looking Ahead

- 4.1 Our side waste statistics are showing a healthy compliance from residents across the majority of the District with the Bin-It 123 scheme. There is currently a review being carried out of unauthorised additional bins being used by some residents which can cause health and safety issues for both our crews and the public if not compatible with our vehicles lifting mechanisms.
- 4.2 Part of the above review is around getting residents to put more recycling into the appropriate containers and caddies rather than black bag residual waste. This involves getting the right balance between our need to educate residents and enforce appropriately where required. Officers are starting to compile a new strategy that brings together the best elements of communication, education and enforcement to further increase our recycling rate and reduce our residual tonnage.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

Legal Implications

The Authority has a statutory responsibility to fulfil investigation and enforcement into environmental crimes such as abandoned vehicles, littering, fly tipping and public space protection orders.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments in relation to the role of District Officer are in place. No further risk assessment is required.

Impact on Climate Change

The report is focused on advising how the service is actively working to reducing environmental crime. This will have a positive impact on climate and the corporate strategy relating to this.

Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no equality issues identified in this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The service development is designed to align with our corporate plan to reduce environmental crime issues within the district.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Date: 25 February 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 25 February 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 25 February 2025

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 26 February 2025

Cabinet member notified: (yes/no)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Luke Howard - Environment and Enforcement Manager

Email: lhoward@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers: None

This page is intentionally left blank

Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group Annual Report 2024/2025

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to chair the newly established Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group (PDG) over the past year. This inaugural year has been marked by constructive discussions, innovative ideas, and a shared commitment to enhancing services for the benefit of Mid Devon's residents. I am proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to building on this progress in the year ahead.

Over the last 12 months, the PDG has engaged in a range of activities and initiatives, with several key highlights:

- **Support for Waste & Recycling Initiatives:** We worked closely with the Waste & Recycling team and look forward to trialling innovative schemes such as nappy collections and curbside collection of pots and pans. These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to improving waste management services while promoting sustainability.
- **Ongoing Review of the Bin It 123 Scheme:** The continuous evaluation of this scheme has been a priority, including efforts by the Environmental Enforcement Team to educate residents on reducing side-waste. I would like to extend my congratulations to all staff and residents who have contributed to maintaining such strong performance in this area.
- **Leisure Centre Tours:** I had the pleasure of accompanying Cllr Wright on a visit to our leisure centres which provided valuable insights into the environmental initiatives being implemented, showcasing our dedication to sustainability across council services. A tour for all members of the PDG will also be organised in due course.
- **Policy-Shaping Workshop:** I'm excited that we will soon be organising a workshop for all members of the PDG, enabling us to collaborate on shaping future policies and ensuring that our decisions are informed by diverse perspectives.

These achievements reflect the collective effort of members and officers alike, and I am grateful for their contributions.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my fellow PDG members for their active participation in debates and discussions throughout the year. Your enthusiasm and commitment have been instrumental in driving our work forward.

Special thanks are also due to Sarah Lees for her exceptional support in organising agendas, preparing report packs, and ensuring that our meetings run seamlessly.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the officers who have provided invaluable guidance and recommendations. Your expertise has been crucial in helping us make informed decisions that benefit our community.

As we move into the next 12 months, I see significant opportunities for us to further enhance our work as a PDG. We must continue fostering open dialogue, exploring innovative ideas, and challenging ourselves to find new ways to improve services for Mid Devon residents.

I am particularly keen to focus on:

- Expanding engagement with residents to better understand their needs and priorities.
- Exploring additional environmental initiatives across council services.

- Strengthening collaboration between members and officers to ensure robust policy development.

I am confident that with continued commitment from all involved, we can achieve even greater success in the coming year. Together, we can ensure that Mid Devon remains a place where residents receive high-quality services that meet their needs.

Thank you once again for your support over the past year—I look forward to working with you all as we strive for continuous improvement next year.

Cllr Matt Fletcher

Chair, Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group