

Cabinet

Tuesday, 13 January 2026 at 5.15 pm
Phoenix Chamber, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next ordinary meeting
Tuesday, 10 February 2026 at 5.15 pm

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

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

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

Meeting ID: 334 288 162 750

Passcode: Yu7UD3Ek

Membership

Cllr L Taylor	Leader of the Council
Cllr J Lock	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services
Cllr N Bradshaw	Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change
Cllr J M Downes	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk
Cllr G Duchesne	Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement
Cllr M Fletcher	Cabinet Member for People Development
Cllr S Keable	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration
Cllr J Wright	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement
Cllr D Wulff	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health

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**
To receive any apologies for absence.
2. **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public.
3. **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 24)**
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 2 December 2025.
5. **Draft Budget Report 2026/27 (Pages 25 - 36)**
To receive an update from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer on the Budget update 2026/27.
6. **Multi- Storey Solar Project (Pages 37 - 46)**
To receive a report from the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience on the Phoenix Lane Solar and Battery Energy Storage System project.
7. **Crediton GP Surgery- Additional Loan (Pages 47 - 50)**
To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer on the Crediton GP Surgery additional Loan.
8. **Green Enterprise Grants (Pages 51 - 58)**
To receive a report from the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience and the Climate and Sustainability Specialist on the Green Enterprise Grants help Mid Devon businesses to invest towards making their operations more sustainable through energy and resource efficiency.
9. **Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (Pages 59 - 66)**
To receive a report from the Strategic Manager of Growth, Economy and Delivery on the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliances.
10. **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Annual report (Pages 67 - 86)**
To receive a report from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) providing an update to Cabinet Members on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).
11. **Leisure Pricing Strategy (Pages 87 - 94)**

To receive a report from the Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure presenting proposals to change the Leisure fees and charges from 1st April 2026.

12. **Access to Information- Exclusion of Press & Public**
Discussion with regard to item the next item, will require Cabinet to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision will be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Cabinet need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Recommended that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
13. **Padel Business Case (Pages 95 - 108)**
To receive a report from the Leisure Services Manager on the proposal to convert existing tennis courts at Active Tiverton and Active Crediton into padel and pickleball facilities, working in partnership with a third-party operator under a lease.
14. **Notification of Key Decisions (Pages 109 - 120)**
To note the contents of the Forward Plan.

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

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

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

1. Inspection of Papers

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

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

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

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

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

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting

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

4. Public Question Time

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

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

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

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

For those joining the meeting virtually:

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

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

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

7. Recording of meetings

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

8. Fire Drill Procedure

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

9. WIFI

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

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 2 December 2025 at 5.15 pm

**Present
Councillors**

D Wulff (Deputy Leader), J Lock,
N Bradshaw, J M Downes, G Duchesne,
M Fletcher, J Wright and D Wulff

**Apologies
Councillors**

L Taylor and S Keable and L Taylor

**Also Present
Councillors**

L G J Kennedy and L Knight

**Also Present
Officers:**

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Matthew Page (Head of People, Performance & Waste), Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street Scene), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager) and Tia Carmichael (Democratic Services Officer)

**Councillors
Online**

J Buczkowski, F J Colthorpe, G Czapiewski and B Holdman

Officers Online

Elaine Barry, Dr Stephen Carr, Dean Emery, Tristan Peat and Adrian Welsh (Group Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery)

75. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors S Keable and L Taylor.

76. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Paul Elstone

Question 1:

It is noted that the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) Corporate Risk Report CR 18 Housing Rent Error risk score has increased by 50% or from a score of 8 to 12 over the last month. Given that the Housing Rent Error risk is deemed either reputational

or financial it would not be unreasonable to consider that it is in fact the financial risk that has increased.

It is mentioned that Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) are waiting on a national policy decision from the Department of Work and Pensions.

Research conducted leads me to believe that Department for Working Pension (DWP) are not constrained by the 6-year legal limitation when recovering overpayments. This including Housing Benefit and Universal Credit amounts. That the DWP have mechanisms available and which historically they have used to recover overpayments they have made, this irrespective of time limits.

Does the increase in risk scoring now recognise this potential?

Question 2:

The Council made a rent repayment provision of £1.545 million in the 2023/24 financial statement which was rolled forward and increased to £1.777 million as at the 31 March 2025.

What is the current amount of the rent repayment provision this including when potential Department for Working Pension (DWP) uplifts are factored in?

Question 3:

When the referenced outstanding Department for Working Pension (DWP) communication is received, will it be made available to all elected members?

Question 4:

For the purposes of full openness and transparency will this document be made public?

Question 5:

It is noted that the drawing is an old revision it shows a bike storage area that no longer exist. Additionally, the provision of the ten (10) additional parking spaces is not shown.

A parking area that was contentious and which was rejected by the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) Planning Committee and only granted on appeal.

Was using an outdated drawing an omission, a mistake, or intentional?

Question 6:

The Appendix 1 drawing is very poorly annotated, and no explanation of the intent of the bold red line is provided. What prevents someone from parking in the location of the previous bike store and unconstrained?

Question 7:

With the ten (10) parking spaces not being shown as part of the Off-Street Parking Area – what is to prevent non-residents parking at this location?

The Deputy Leader stated that Mr Elstone would receive a written response to his questions in 10 working days.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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

78. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 November 2025 were **APPROVED** as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Deputy Leader.

79. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT- QUARTER 2

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Head of People, Performance and Waste and the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager on the Quarter 2 Performance Report, presenting performance information up to September 2025.

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The accompanying dashboards were structured according to the five themes of the Corporate Plan.
- The dashboards contained 100 performance measures on how services were performing across the Council, and those indicators that were part of the Corporate Plan were highlighted in yellow text.
- Section 2 of the covering report provided performance analysis on a theme by theme basis, with the focus on Corporate Plan performance indicators.
- The Performance Dashboards had also been reviewed by the relevant Policy Development Groups (PDGs)

Discussion took place with regards to:

- The visited numbers and engagement rates for 'Let's Talk Mid Devon'. A question was raised about whether contributions had increased after the removal of the registration requirement for most interactions. It was explained that the Council had seen an increase in engagement and contribution rate on the basis of the ongoing work around Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and there was a survey about 'Let's Talk Mid Devon'.
- There was a query on how the quality of engagements was measured. It was explained that each engagement was measured on its own merit and each activity that has had engagement.
- The report stated that 3.4% of available commercial leases were vacant at the end of Quarter 2, which was ahead of the 5% target. It was acknowledged that this was a positive outcome, but a question was asked about why occupancy was higher than the target. It was explained that the dashboard reports in terms of commercial leases and there were just two spaces that were available.
- A question was asked regarding electric car charging points, noting that the target was 4, but the current figure stood at 0, marked as red on the RAG report. What factors were holding the progress back and whether it was feasible to achieve the target of four within the financial year. It was explained that the progress was behind schedule due to delays in the central contract

with Devon County Council for providing EV charging points through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme. It was confirmed that the target of four charging points would likely be achieved within this financial year.

Note: Report previously circulated.

80. CORPORATE RISK REPORT

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Head of People, Performance and Waste and the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager presenting the Council's current corporate risks with their updated position following the most recent review period.

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The risks which had been identified that may be most likely to impact the Council meeting its objectives.
- The report was produced quarterly and presented to this meeting for Cabinet Members to comment and feedback.
- At paragraph 2.1 of the report there was a summary table of the 15 corporate risks that the Council was currently managing.
- A risk matrix was presented at Appendix 1 showing the relative position of the corporate risks. Appendix 2 of the report provided further details for each risk in a standard template.
- Any significant changes to the risk register since it was last reported to Cabinet were listed in the covering report, at paragraph 2.3.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- There was no change in the risk rating trends except from CR18 that was increasing.
- The risk CR1B, which was the Culm Garden Village, the current rating was red which was currently at 15 but the target was also 15. Why was it classed as red? It was explained that any risks rated 15 or higher were shown as red on the RAG report. Reference was made to the risk matrix in Appendix 1, which outlined the different RAG ratings for various risk levels. The target risk rating represented the lowest level achievable within the Council's control. It was noted that some risks could not be fully eliminated due to external factors such as funders and project complexities, meaning a residual level of risk had to be accepted.
- Whether or not the CR7 risk was a realistic target of 12? It was explained that it was based on the level of financial reserves the Council held and where it was in terms of target rating. The Council had been very robust and sensible to keep the finances balanced.
- The week commencing 15 December 2025 and the further budget updates, would that include more clarification on infrastructure updates? It was explained that the announcement on the 15 December would be more national level, regarding funding, the Council would update Members in due course.
- The risk CR8 the quality of Planning Committee decisions, it was felt that this should be good not satisfactory. It was explained how the scoring of mitigating actions worked. A rating of "above satisfactory" indicated fully effective, which

was considered a high standard to achieve. While the term “satisfactory” was used, it was clarified that delivery on the mitigating action was taking place, and a more detailed scale would likely show a more positive assessment.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

81. ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT; THE INFRASTRUCTURE LIST

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) on the infrastructure list inviting Cabinet to approve the updated Infrastructure List for publication on the Council’s website as part of the statutory annual Infrastructure Funding Statement.

The Cabinet Member for People Development outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) must be published annually by 31 December. It included the Infrastructure List and a Section 106 report of funds received, spent and retained in the last financial year.
- The List identified projects that maybe funded wholly or partly by developer contributions. It supported delivery of the current adopted Local Plan and other evidence-based documents.
- The list was a guide to priorities, not a fixed limit. Additional infrastructure could still be secured through planning obligations where they meet legal tests, are necessary, locally relevant, and viable.
- Three changes were proposed to the list:
 - To remove the New Criminal Justice Centre – no longer identified as a priority.
 - Add Silverton Neighbourhood Plan priority: footpath link, landscaping, ecological enhancements, and public open space at the Glebe.
 - Add Willand Neighbourhood Plan priority: e-cargo and electric vehicle hub.
- These additions were drawn from Neighbourhood Plan priorities considered most suitable for inclusion at this stage.
- The Scrutiny Committee had reviewed the process in September 2025 and recommended circulating the list to Town and Parish Councils. This year’s proposed changes had also been reviewed by officers and discussed at Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) and presented to the S106 Board at their November meeting.
- While this decision was about approving the current list, the full review of infrastructure needs would come later with the new Local Plan, when Members could help shape a refreshed list that reflected the priorities in that plan.

RESOLVED that:

1. The list of infrastructure as amended (Appendix 1; the Mid Devon Infrastructure List) that the Council intends to fund, either wholly or partly, by developer contributions be **APPROVED**.
2. The Infrastructure List is included within the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) to be published on the Council’s website by

31st December 2025.

(Proposed by Cllr M Fletcher and seconded by Cllr G DuChesne)

Reason for Decision:

There was a legal requirement placed through Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy largely applicable to CIL charging authorities to publish no later than 31st December in each calendar year an annual infrastructure funding statement which comprises “a statement of the infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure which the charging authority intends will be, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL (“the infrastructure list”).

Note: *Report previously circulated

82. MID DEVON OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Head of People, Governance and Waste and the Environment and Enforcement Manager

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Risk outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The Mid Devon (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2016 (the “OSPPO”) as set out in the report through appropriate consultation. This would enable implementation of restrictions and subsequent enforcement to be conducted in the areas of St Georges Court and Wellbrook Green in Tiverton.
- Informal discussions with the Highway Authority had been undertaken and they had indicated no objection to the recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

1. On being satisfied that the statutory grounds for amending and varying the OSPPO are met, as detailed in the report, to allow and authorise the Operations Manager for Street Scene to commence statutory consultation for the following proposed amendments to the OSPPO:
 - To incorporate within the OSPPO parking restrictions, as defined in the report within the area known as ‘St Georges Court’, in Tiverton. This includes entering into a Service Level Agreement with Tiverton Town Council (TTC) to incorporate 3 permit bays currently owned by them into the OSPPO to enable enforcement by Mid Devon District Council (“the Council”) in respect of these bays.
 - To amend the OSPPO to incorporate 18 spaces within the area known as ‘Wellbrook Green’ in Tiverton for the purpose of resident only parking.
2. That Delegated Authority be granted to the Director of Legal, HR & Governance (Monitoring Officer) to draft the order amending the above OSPPO including making the necessary required minor amendments to go out to consultation.
3. In the event that there are no material objections to the proposed amendments and variations as determined by the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement, to then grant delegated authority to the Director

of Legal, HR & Governance (Monitoring Officer) to make the order amending the OSPPO as recommended in the report.

(Proposed by Cllr J Downes and seconded by Cllr J Lock)

Reason for decision:

The OSPPO was designed to accurately reflect the Council's parking service and was a legal requirement that allowed the Council to provide such services.

The Council was at risk of not being able to enforce parking contraventions within new locations and in respect of electric vehicle parking, which could result in reputational damage for not taking appropriate action against offenders.

Note: *Report previously circulated

83. CAR PARKING AND PERMIT PROPOSALS 26/27

The Cabinet had before it a report * from Head of People, Performance & Waste and the Environment & Enforcement Manager recommending proposals to be considered that have come from the Car Parking Consultative Group for future changes to both pay and display as well as permit parking within MDDC car parks for the financial year 2026/27.

The Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The proposed fees and charges for car parks and permits in the upcoming 2026/27 financial year were set out in the report.
- These proposals had been carefully considered and put forward by the Car Parking Consultative Group. The group comprised of a collection of business and community representatives across the district who provided feedback and input to ensure proposals were properly considered and reflective of community views before being sent onto the Economy and Assets Policy Development Group (PDG) for consideration.
- There were three key considerations the parking consultative group have had in mind in making these proposals for consideration;
 - That car parking fees were raised by 5%. There had been no rise in car parking fees since June 2024, during this period inflation was projected to rise by 5.7% cumulatively over the period.
 - That the Council offer a sole day permit to complement the existing day/night permit. At present, customers were only offered the day/night option, however, feedback supported a desire to expand permit options to include a sole day permit option. This to be made available to all residents right across the district.
 - Finally, representatives from Crediton and Cullompton had asked for an additional 3 days of free parking between them, during the year to support local events.
- To note future work to be carried out by the Car Park Consultative Group on how parking permits were made more attractive and accessible for residents

right across the district, as well as consider what can be offered to market traders when operating in all of the towns in the district.

- On page 86 for Westexe South Tiverton should be up to four hours, not three.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- It was great to see the group bring forward ideas and proposals to improve access to the Council's town and act on community and business feedback. This marked a real improvement in community engagement.
- Would the Car Parking Consultative Group consider extending free Saturday parking after Christmas, especially during the sales period, to attract more visitors and support local businesses? It was explained this would be feedback to the group to discuss extending the free parking whilst considering the financial impact this could have on the Council.
- Was there representation from Tiverton on the Car Parking Consultative Working Group. It was confirmed that yes there was representation from Tiverton.
- A question was asked around the recommendations that were before Cabinet. It was explained that regarding the reintroduction of a day permit option for car park users this was proposed to be available to use for all residents across the district. A report would come back to a future meeting of the PDG and Cabinet on how the permits were to be made available across the district.

RESOLVED that the following be approved:

1. It reviews the proposals initially made by the Car Parking Consultative Group regarding parking permits and consideration by the Economy and Assets PDG, and agreed the following:
 - The reintroduction of a day permit option for car park users. This to be available to use for all residents across the District.
 - To receive a further report from the Car Parking Consultative Group, to be first considered by the Economy and Assets PDG, regarding new ideas and proposals in relation to new potential parking permits that could be used in car parks across the District.
 - This to include the development of proposals around a new business permit for the Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP), Tiverton and to offer a potential reduction in the cost of permits located on level 1 of the MSCP, as highlighted in this report.
 - Future consideration be given by the Car Parking Consultative Group to extend free parking for market traders to other market towns.
2. A 5% rise for Car Parking charges to be introduced as part of the budget setting process for 2026/2027. This has been proposed by the Car Parking Consultative Group and then carefully considered by the Economy and Assets PDG.
3. The granting of additional free parking days for Crediton and Cullompton Town Councils to designate as they see fit to support their town centre activity.

(Proposed by Cllr J Downes and seconded by Cllr G DuChesne)

Reason for decision:

The report proposes measures to generate additional income to support the delivery of parking services for the Council. It also aligns with the Corporate Plan to deliver sustainable parking options within communities. Therefore, supporting economy and growth within the district.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

84. STRATEGIC GRANTS RENEWAL 2026/27, 2027/28 AND 2028/29

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) to agree the level of grant funding for external agencies under the Strategic Grants Programme for a 3-year period (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29).

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Government and Risk outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The report asked Cabinet to agree the level of grant funding for partner organisations under the discretionary strategic grants programme and approve proposed allocations.
- Members had previously stated they did not want any reduction to the strategic grants programme, despite these grants being non-statutory.
- The full £120,000 allocation with no reductions, reflecting recognition of the importance and value of these services for residents, vulnerable people, and the tourism economy.
- The report highlighted that these organisations delivered frontline support aligned with the corporate plan objectives: improving well-being, sustaining strong communities, and supporting local businesses.
- A three-year funding duration was proposed to provide stability during Local Government Reorganisation, ensuring new authorities honoured the awards.
- The Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group (PDG) recommended guaranteeing only the first year of funding and conducting a full review in 2026/27, noting the review would be a substantial undertaking.
- The 2023 review had assessed financial sustainability, strategic need, and alignment with corporate priorities.
- The strategic grants were described as targeted investments, not general community grants, due to limited resources.
- The Council continued supporting wider community and voluntary sectors through initiatives like the “Meet the Funders” event and economic development schemes.
- Cabinet was asked to consider an amended recommendation to align awards with a three-year commitment.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- Providing long-term, secure support for these initiatives, as they delivered important work for the Council economy and society was welcomed. Consistency was highly valuable and offered very good value for money.

- The strategic fund did not address the Council's net zero targets in the corporate and climate strategies. It was highlighted that the Council was exploring a similar funding scheme to support community sustainability initiatives, which were essential for achieving net zero.
- The importance of working closely with charities, including groups like Sustainable Tiverton, to recognise their contributions and it was suggested that the Council could do more to support them.
- How long the organisations had been on the list and whether other voluntary groups in Mid Devon could have an opportunity to bid for support? It was confirmed those entities had been on the list for a significant amount of time.
- The concerns about future responsibilities and funding for Town and Parishes after Local Government Reorganisation and suggested creating a comprehensive signposting list to guide them, which could serve as a valuable legacy.
- What proportion of the £38,000 contribution to the Grand Western Canal, shown in Table 1 as funded from the New Homes Bonus, was expected to come from that source? It was explained that the Grand Western Canal had been 100% funded from the New Homes Bonus for the past 5–6 years. However, the Government planned to remove this funding mechanism from April 2026. The Council still held earmarked reserves of the New Homes Bonus, which would be sufficient to cover the 2026/27 funding commitment.
- What we do to support various Charities and communities to be promoted more.

RESOLVED that:

Noting the recommendation by the Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group:

1. A Strategic Grant funding programme of £120,000 per annum be approved for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29;
2. Grants continue to be allocated to individual organisations as set out within Table 1 (contained within the report).

(Proposed by the Chair)

Reason for Decision:

The Strategic Grants were paid under Grant Funding Agreements (not Service Level Agreements). The current grants were awarded in 2024 for a period of two years, with the funding agreement ending March 2026. Therefore, no guarantee had been made regarding a continuation of funding after this period.

85. TAX BASE CALCULATION 2026/27

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer presenting the statutory calculations required to determine the Council Tax Base for the Council for the financial year 2026/27. The calculation followed the formula set out in The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The recommended Council Tax Base for 2026/27 was 31,180.16 Band D equivalent properties, representing an increase of 447.25 from the previous year.
- The collection rate was maintained at 97.5%, consistent with prior years.
- The calculation incorporated changes such as new property growth, exemptions, discounts, premiums on second homes and long-term empty properties, and the estimated cost of the Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme.
- The CTR scheme was estimated to cost £4.774 million and was fully reflected in the tax base calculation.
- The report noted that any changes announced in the Government's Autumn Budget may require a review of these calculations.
- Setting the Tax Base was a statutory requirement and formed the foundation for the Council's budget setting process for 2026/27.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Council that:

1. That the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for 2026/27 be approved in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 at 31,180.16, an increase of 447.25 Band D equivalent properties from the previous financial year.
2. That the current collection rate of 97.5% remain the same, detailed in Section 2.

(Proposed by Cllr J Downes and seconded by Cllr J Lock)

Reason for Decision:

The Council was a Statutory Billing Authority and must set its Council Tax each year. If it were not to set a Council Tax then the Authority and all Precepting Authorities would be unable to raise money to pay for all the services they provided.

Note: *Report previously circulated

86. BUDGET UPDATE 2026/27

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) and the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience on the draft Budget update on 2026/27.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- That recent Government funding changes were classified as major reforms to make the system fairer and more transparent, with greater weighting on deprivation and removal or downgrading of rural benefits like the sparsity grant.
- Transitional protections were to be phased in over three years, the Council was among 60 other councils expected to face a real-terms funding reduction of around 5% over the next settlement period.

- The New Homes Bonus, a key funding source, would not continue into 2026/27.
- A three-year financial settlement was announced, which would help planning but still posed challenges.
- Business rate changes included five new rating multipliers and adjustments for retail, hospitality, and leisure, with transitional relief expected. Local modelling work was underway, and Members would be updated.
- The loss of all business rate growth since 2013/14 was avoided.
- Overall funding reductions were closer to £1 million rather than £3 million, though still significant.
- The national budget had made a few changes for Local Government, aside from impacts like minimum wage increases, National Insurance (NI) changes, fuel duty adjustments, and small allocations for EV charging and planning capacity.
- Further details were expected in mid-December, and Members would receive more briefings as figures became available.

Discussion took place regards to:

- Clarification on the criteria used to determine the 60 authorities facing cuts due to the shift from sparsity to deprivation weighting. It was explained that areas of greatest need and deprivation were typically urban, while sparsity applied to rural parishes. As a result, most of the 60 councils affected including two-thirds of those in Devon fell into the sparsity category and were set to lose 5% of their funding.
- Concerns about how Government generated deprivation data, noting that rural deprivation was significant and compounded by isolation, which limited access to opportunities. Some families in schools did not claim the available support. It was explained that that Devon, including Mid Devon, had pockets of severe deprivation. This was why most funding was targeted to urban areas, and the Council had expressed their concerns and the allocation was based on deprivation metrics.
- How much the proposed 'mansion tax' would generate and be passported back to the Government. It was explained that Mid Devon had relatively few bands F–H properties compared to the national average, so the impact would be minimal. No modelling had been done yet, as the measure was newly announced and the Valuation Office would need to complete the work.
- The multi-year settlements in the past allowed Government to introduce targeted schemes and asked whether this would happen again or if funding would simply be cut back. It was explained that the fair funding changes were about redistributing existing resources rather than adding new money. Future departmental budgets would determine whether extra funding schemes appeared, but currently councils were told to expect a 5% cut. While multi-year settlements could help planning, core funding was still likely to reduce.

Note: *Report previously circulated.

87. ACCESS TO INFORMATION- EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

The Deputy Leader indicated that discussion with regard to the following item, may require the Cabinet to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02 (d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the

Constitution. This decision was required because consideration of this matter in public would disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting remain in Part 1.

88. WASTE DEPOT REMODELLING- UPDATE

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) on the progress update on the remodelling project at the Carlu Waste Depot, necessary to meet new Environment Agency permit regulations and requirements and enable the service to accommodate increased volumes of recycling and enable new collections to be trialled in 2026, future proofing the service.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets & Property outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The report provided a progress update on remodelling the Carlu Waste Depot to comply with new Environment Agency permit regulations effective June 2026.
- The project aimed to ensure compliance, increase capacity, and future-proof the service, supporting recycling rates vital for future Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (PEPR) funding. Recent work focused on refining specifications and planning, and the schedule of works was ready to begin, with improvements on track and on budget.
- The project also included carbon reduction measures such as solar panels, electric chargers, and energy-efficient systems. Cabinet approval was sought to award the contract for installing a weighbridge, fuel station, and washdown area, with confidential discussion required for tender details.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress made to date with the planned remodelling of the Carlu Close Depot be noted;
2. The contract award for the installation of a new Weighbridge, fuelling station and wash-down area at the Carlu Close Waste Depot, to Contractor 1 be **APPROVED**.
3. Delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services) to complete the "Civils Contract" award.

(Proposed by the Cllr J Lock and seconded by Cllr N Bradshaw)

Reason for Decision:

The EA published legal guidance that Waste and Recycling services needed to both abide to and meet for its collection services to be permitted and carried out. Recycling services that did not comply with this guidance may be disrupted

89. NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS

The Clerk identified the changes that had been made to the list since it was published with the agenda.

This included the following:

- Padel Business Case had been added to the meeting on 13 January 2026.
- Green Enterprise Grants had been added to the meeting on 13 January 2026.
- Crediton GP Surgery additional loan had been added to the meeting on 13 January 2026.
- MSCP Solar Panel had been added to the meeting on 13 January 2026.
- Mid Devon Housing Depot had been added to the meeting on 10 February 2026.

Note: * Key Decisions Report previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at 18.54pm)

LEADER

Cabinet- Public Questions and Answers

Name of person submitting	Questions
Paul Elstone	<p>Question 1: It is noted that the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) Corporate Risk Report CR 18 Housing Rent Error risk score has increased by 50% or from a score of 8 to 12 over the last month. Given that the Housing Rent Error risk is deemed either reputational or financial it would not be unreasonable to consider that it is in fact the financial risk that has increased.</p> <p>It is mentioned that Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) are waiting on a national policy decision from the Department of Work and Pensions.</p> <p>Research conducted leads me to believe that Department for Working Pension (DWP) are not constrained by the 6-year legal limitation when recovering overpayments. This including Housing Benefit and Universal Credit amounts. That the DWP have mechanisms available and which historically they have used to recover overpayments they have made, this irrespective of time limits.</p> <p>Does the increase in risk scoring now recognise this potential?</p> <p>Response from the Deputy Leader: The increase in risk score reflects the ongoing lack of decision from the DWP as referred to in the report.</p> <p>Question 2: The Council made a rent repayment provision of £1.545 million in the 2023/24 financial statement which was rolled forward and increased to £1.777 million as at the 31 March 2025.</p> <p>What is the current amount of the rent repayment provision this including when potential Department for Working Pension (DWP) uplifts are factored in?</p> <p>Response from the Deputy Leader: The current provision remains at £1.777m as per the latest set of Accounts. All provisions are reviewed on an annual basis, so this sum will be revisited when we finalise the 2025/26 Accounts.</p>

Question 3:

When the referenced outstanding Department for Working Pension (DWP) communication is received, will it be made available to all elected members?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

Yes

Question 4:

For the purposes of full openness and transparency will this document be made public?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

Yes, unless there is any legal reason to prevent us from so doing.

Question 5:

It is noted that the drawing is an old revision it shows a bike storage area that no longer exist. Additionally, the provision of the ten (10) additional parking spaces is not shown.

A parking area that was contentious and which was rejected by the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) Planning Committee and only granted on appeal.

Was using an outdated drawing an omission, a mistake, or intentional?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

The objective of these proposals is to remedy particular concerns that do not relate to the 10 spaces mentioned. For that reason, it is not felt an older version of the plan affects any part of the proposal to address the aforementioned concerns.

Question 6:

The Appendix 1 drawing is very poorly annotated, and no explanation of the intent of the bold red line is provided. What prevents someone from parking in the location of the previous bike store and unconstrained?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

The proposals are designed to specifically address concerns raised regarding access and egress. The proposed restrictions cover from the building line to the centre of the carriageway, given that this section of land is not much wider than a car width, one could not park here and not be in contravention of the restriction.

Question 7:

With the ten (10) parking spaces not being shown as part of the Off-Street Parking Area – what is to prevent non-residents parking at this location?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

These proposals were put forward to address access and egress concerns; there have been no reports made regarding parking issues related to residents and parking within these bays. Should concerns arise this can be potentially addressed at that stage.

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Report for: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	2026/27 Draft Budget Update
Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Downes – Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Exempt:	N/a
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – MDDC Core Spending Power 2026/27 – 2028/29

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To provide a further update on the progress towards balancing the budget for 2026/27 and future years.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet Members:

- 1. Note the updated General Fund budgetary position included within Section 2.**
- 2. Note the headline update from the recently announced Local Government Finance Settlement within Section 3, and that work continues to understand the implications for the Council.**
- 3. Note the updated HRA budgetary position included within Section 5, and agree the specific savings proposals contained within paragraph 5.4.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The main purpose of the MTFP is to show how the Council will strategically manage its finances to support the delivery of the priorities detailed in the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028 and years beyond that.

- 1.2 On 02 September, the first draft MTFP covering the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was presented to Cabinet. For the General Fund, this estimated a funding shortfall for 2026/27 within the range £846k to £3,350k, due to the significant uncertainty surrounding future funding streams. The HRA estimated a funding shortfall of £546k in 2026/27 rising to £1,796k by 2028/29.
- 1.3 The future years shortfall is a cumulative figure without any remedial action taken, i.e. if the shortfall is found to balance the 2026/27 position, the overall budget gap will reduce.
- 1.4 The Council has a legal requirement to set a balance budget and needs to ensure its overall costs are affordable i.e. they can be funded through income and planned short-term use of reserves.

2.0 2026/27 Budget Update

- 2.1 During the summer, Leadership Team and senior service managers have been reviewing a range of budget options that could be considered to help mitigate that remaining budget shortfall across this MTFP, with a particular focus on 2026/27. In putting forward the budget options, officers have applied a risk level to them based upon Red, Amber, Green as follows:

Red – indicates the saving could be taken, but there are higher risks/ implications associated with it and therefore officers would not recommend it;

Amber – indicates the saving could be taken, but there are risks and implications associated that members need to be aware of / accept;

Green – indicates a saving that is recommended by officers – previously approved.

- 2.2 On 07 October, Cabinet agreed the Green Budget Options summing to a net pressure of £974k (£1,325k pressures and £351k savings). Based on the original assumptions, this increases the current projected funding shortfall to a range of £1,820k to £4,324k.

Table 1

General Fund	Option 1a
Initial forecast Shortfall	£919k
Net Impact of decision on 7 October	+£974k
Current Forecast Shortfall	+ £1,893k

Following the announcement that future funding would be protected to 95% of current funding, the options have been revised back to the single option 1a.

- 2.3 Since then, work has continued to refine the budget position and the options proposed. Some of the key changes to the Green Options agreed by Cabinet include:

- Pressure – REF 9 – Agency budget with Forward Planning team no longer required, saving £70k
- Saving – REF 39 – Parking Permits, the proposed additional income has been removed and replaced with a pressure of c£30k as income is currently below target within 2025/26 – this is an overall movement of c£41k.
- There are other very minor amendments to the financial value of some of these pressures.

Combined, these amendments save a further c£35k

2.4 There has also been further refinement to some of the Amber options proposed, including these key amendments:

- Pressure – REF 17 – Reduced Maintenance costs through the transfer of assets or increased financial contributions from Town or Parish Councils – looking unlikely this will be achieved given the limited conversations – moving the £50k pressure from Amber to Green. However, conversations continue with several Town and Parish Councils on the potential transfer of assets or increased financial contributions.
- Pressure – REF 28 – Fuel Budgets – price increase looks to be less likely therefore the proposed pressure is reversed to a saving of c£65k.
- Saving – Ref 1 – Utilities spend – following a review a saving of c£125k has been identified, increasing the Amber saving by £25k and moving it to Green.
- Saving – Ref 2 – Business Rates on MDDC properties – following the revaluation, an additional saving of c£20k has been identified and moves the overall £70k saving from Amber to Green.
- Saving – Ref 40 – Extended Producer Responsibility Grant – It has now been confirmed that the provisional grant allocation for 2026/27 will be £1,412k, which is an increase of £485k over the 2025/25 budget – this amber therefore increases and has been re-categorised as Green.

2.5 The results of the latest tri-annual pension valuation have also been received. This fixes the pension costs for the three years 2026/27 to 2028/29. The valuation indicates that the fund has a funding deficit of £9.41m at 31 March 2025, equating to a funding level of 90.8%, compared to a funding deficit of £10.6m at 31 March 2022, equating to a funding level of 88%. This results in the following changes to the contribution rates:

- Primary Contribution Rate will reduce from 19% to 15.9% - reflecting the ongoing value of the contributions from the employer is sufficiently covering the future liabilities.
- Secondary Contribution Rate will increase from £780k to £859k – reflecting that the overall deficit has not materially altered, and by retaining the recovery period to 11 years, the required contribution needs to increase.

Overall, the net impact of these changes is an additional saving of c£420k from the MTFP assumption, split c£325k to the General Fund and c£95k to the HRA. There

are other minor adjustments to the salary budget, therefore the overall saving is c£329k from the original MTFP assumption.

- 2.6 Another significant movement in the budget has been for vehicle maintenance following the extension to the vehicle leasing contract which previously ended in June 2026 (the leases continued, but maintenance ended). This adds a further c£183k, although this can be offset through a draw from the relevant sinking fund if necessary.
- 2.7 Therefore, prior to the implications of the funding settlement, the budget gap for 2026/27 stands at c£1,019k.

Table 2

General Fund	Option 1a
October forecast Shortfall	+ £1,893k
Net Impact of changes to Green Savings	- £35k
Net Impact of changes to Amber Savings	- £695k
Net Impact of Salary Budget Changes	- £329k
Net Impact of adding Vehicle Servicing	+ £183k
Current Forecast Shortfall	+ £1,019k

- 2.8 There are a few corporate budgets that need to be reviewed and updated, mainly focused on the financing implications of the Capital Programme and the movements to or from earmarked reserves. Otherwise, the expenditure part of the budget is largely finalised.

3.0 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS)

- 3.1 On the 17 December, the widely anticipated LGFS was announced by the Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness (Alison McGovern MP). This is the first multi-year settlement since 2015/16 and over 10 years after a review of local government funding was originally announced, during which there has been austerity, Brexit, a global pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.2 Known as Fair Funding 2.0, the new funding mechanism is supposed to build a fairer, more sustainable system for everyone. The revised formulae attempt to curb the pressures felt in the sector particularly in respect on social care and homelessness and rebalance funding where economic growth has been slower. However, there is a clear political steer included with a greater focus on deprivation and less significance given to sparsity and rurality.
- 3.3 At a national level the settlement delivers nearly £78bn in core spending power, a 5.7% increase compared to 2025/26. This increases to nearly £85bn by 2028/29. In theory, funding allocation has become simpler with 36 funding streams being merged. However, the new formulae are extremely complex and fairly opaque therefore it remains difficult to understand how funding at a local authority level has been derived.

3.4 The core spending power assumes that the maximum increase permitted within the Council Tax referendum limits is applied by all councils (greater of 3% or £5 for MDDC). It also now assumes a level of growth in the taxbase where previously no growth assumption was included.

3.5 Alongside is the first reset of the business rates system since its introduction in 2013/14. This realigns funding driven by economic growth, again moving funding away from Mid Devon, although there is a protection mechanism within the new system to limit the overall loss to a maximum of 5% over the 3-years of the settlement. There is also the introduction of 5 new multipliers which alter the charge for businesses, meaning that the scheme is much more complex and administratively burdensome.

3.6 The Core Spending Power for Mid Devon District Council is shown within **Appendix 1**. Given the timing of this announcement, work continues to ensure we fully understand how the funding has been allocated and the implications it has for the Council's financial position. Referring to Appendix 1, this shows an overall funding reduction of 3.8% between 2026/27 – 2028/29. However, this is less than transparent as many other service grants have been merged into the core funding position. If we were to also assume a reasonable level of funding, as promised, to meet the cost of food waste collection, this may well take the funding reduction to in excess of 5%.

3.7 We will, as will many others, make these "fair funding" observations in our consultation response.

4.0 Capital programme and funding implications

4.1 The proposed capital programme was included within the November cabinet report. This largely remains unaltered, also some refinement will be required.

4.2 As trailed in paragraph 2.8 above, the funding of the capital programme and its implications for the revenue budget will be finalised in early January.

5.0 2026/27 HRA Budget Update

5.1 On 07 October, Cabinet agreed the Green Budget Options summing to £27k, thereby reducing the forecast shortfall to £514k for 2026/27 and £1,769k over the MTFP timeframe.

Table 3

Housing Revenue Account	Budget Shortfall
Initial forecast Shortfall	£546k
Net Impact of decision on 7 October	- £27k
Current Forecast Shortfall	£519k

5.2 As with the General Fund, work has continued to refine the position and the Budget Options to address the remaining budget shortfall. These include:

- A review of staffing with an additional 2 FTE included within the budget.
- Updating the base budget for the higher than forecast pay award for 2025/26 plus spinal / grade progression
- The implications of the Tri-annual Pension valuation as outlined in paragraph 2.3 above

In total, the additional pressure on the salary budget since the initial forecast is c£152k.

5.3 The following amendments have also been applied:

- +£85k additional budget included for insurance premiums – as highlighted within the quarterly budget monitoring report
- +£26k increase in the budget for Council Tax on void properties
- +£20k increase in vehicle maintenance as outlined in paragraph 2.6 above.
- - £65k various minor reductions to budgets reflecting historical trends and the latest forecasts from 2025/26 budget monitoring.

Overall, this leaves the HRA with a current shortfall of £737k.

Table 4

HRA	2026/27
October forecast Shortfall	+ £519k
Net Impact of Salary Budget Changes	+ £152k
Net Impact of other changes	+ £66k
Current Forecast Shortfall	+ £737k

5.4 The following proposals will reduce this position to a balance of **£237k**, with the outcome of the Government's proposal on Rent Convergence being the other element to resolve the 2026/27 budget (see 5.5 and 5.6).

- - £40k – reduction in planned maintenance
- - £50k – reduction in repairs management.
- - £50k – additional income from non-tenant adaptations (funded from Disabled Facilities Grant).
- - £360k draw from a combination of HRA Earmarked Reserves.

5.5 Convergence would allow rents for social rent properties that are currently below 'formula rent' to increase by an additional amount each year, over and above the CPI+1% limit, until they 'converge' with formula rent. Convergence is expected to commence in April 2026 over a 10-period and follows a consultation last year on a £1 or £2 per week increase. Details of how this mechanism will be implemented are expected to be announced in January.

5.6 Currently over 50% of Mid Devon council homes have a rent below formula rent. Should the Government allow a rent convergence of £1 per week, the remaining shortfall will reduce to c£100k, with the final balance proposed to come from the HRA Reserve. If the convergence is set at £2 per week, the full shortfall will be addressed and a small contribution back into the HRA Reserve will be possible.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 There clearly remains a significant budget shortfall in 2026/27 for the General Fund. Once the settlement is better understood, it will be possible to finalise the 2026/27 budget position and consider how to resolve any remaining shortfall.

6.2 We have also received the initial feedback from our Resident Survey. This has indicated a similar level of budgetary prioritisation as in previous surveys but has also indicated a very positive direction of customer satisfaction with waste services. Further consideration of the responses will be undertaken and used in the decision making in finalising the 2026/27 budget. A detailed report on this will be included on the March Cabinet agenda.

6.3 Further updates will be brought forward as necessary and available, and further budget options will be investigated and proposed for consideration in February 2026. Whilst every effort will be made to identify efficiency savings, given the scale of the likely funding reductions it is unlikely that a sufficient level can be identified to fully balance the 2026/27 budget without significant implications on service provision. Therefore, because of this combination of issues, it is highly likely that some level of draw from reserves may be required, and a full review of Earmarked Reserves will be necessary to see what can be realigned, and whether a minimum balance of £2m in General Reserves can be maintained.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

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

Risk Assessment

The MTFP makes several key financial assumptions based on a sensible/prudent approach, taking account of the most up to date professional advice that is available. These continue to be kept under review and updated where necessary.

Impact on Climate Change

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

Equalities Impact Assessment

No implications arising from this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

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

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 23 December 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 23 December 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 23 December 2025

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 23 December 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)

Email: ajarrett@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 234242

Background papers:

- 2025/26 Budget
- 2025/26 Qtr. 1 Budget Monitor
- 2025/26 Qtr. 2 Budget Monitor
- 2 September Cabinet report – 2026/27 – 2028/29 MTFP
- 7 October Cabinet report – 2026/27 Budget Update
- 4 November Cabinet Report – 2026/27 Budget Update
- 2 December Cabinet Report - 2026/27 Budget Update

Appendix 1 – Mid Devon District Council Core Spending Power 2026/27 – 2028/29

Illustrative Core Spending Power of Local Government:

	2024-25 £ millions	2025-26 £ millions	2026-27 £ millions	2027-28 £ millions	2028-29 £ millions
Fair Funding Allocation¹	0.000	0.000	6.923	6.002	5.042
of which: Baseline Funding Level	0.000	0.000	2.304	2.357	2.405
of which: Revenue Support Grant ²	0.000	0.000	4.619	3.645	2.637
of which: Local Authority Better Care Grant ³	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	-
Legacy Funding Assessment	7.440	7.461	0.000	0.000	0.000
of which: Legacy Business Rates ⁴	5.640	5.933	0.000	0.000	0.000
of which: Legacy Grant Funding ⁵	1.800	1.528	0.000	0.000	0.000
of which: Local Authority Better Care Grant	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council tax requirement^{6,7}	7.016	7.349	7.707	8.082	8.476
Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse^{8,9}	0.318	0.377	0.504	0.524	0.542
Families First Partnership¹⁰	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Transitional Protections¹¹	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.247	0.814
of which: 95% income protection	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.247	0.814
of which: 100% income protection	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
of which: Fire and Rescue Real-terms floor	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Grants rolled in to Revenue Support Grant¹²	0.216	0.279	0.000	0.000	0.000
Recovery Grant	0.000	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057
Recovery Grant Guarantee¹³	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mayoral Capacity Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Core Spending Power	14.991	15.523	15.191	14.913	14.931
Core Spending Power year-on-year change (£ millions)	0.532	-0.332	-0.278	0.018	
Core Spending Power year-on-year change (%)	3.5%	-2.1%	-1.8%	0.1%	
Core Spending Power change since 2024 (£ millions)	0.5	0.2	-0.1	-0.1	
Core Spending Power change since 2024 (%)	3.5%	1.3%	-0.5%	-0.4%	
Core Spending Power change since 2025 (%)		-2.1%	-3.9%	-3.8%	

Footnotes

Please see the Core Spending Power Explanatory note for details of the assumptions underpinning the elements of Core Spending Power.

¹The figures presented in Core Spending Power do not reflect the changes to the Fair Funding Allocation made for authorities with increased Business Rate Retention arrangements. For information about authorities with increased Business Rates Retention Arrangements see the Explanatory Note. For Fair Funding Allocation figures after adjustments for increased Business Rate Retention authorities please see the Key Information for Local Authorities table.

²From 2026-27, Revenue Support Grant includes: funding streams which are all being added to Core Spending Power for the first time, as set out in footnote 12 below; Legacy Grant Funding in 2025-26, as outlined in footnote 5 below; Historic business rates grant compensation for under-indexation of tax rates; Green Plant and Machinery exemptions; and Small Business Rates Relief lost supplementary income.

³The 10 Year Health Plan announced reform to the Better Care Fund to focus on integrated services, DHSC and MHCLG will shortly set out further detail on our approach to reform. Where this involves any changes to NHS and local authority minimum contributions to pooled funding, we will not introduce those changes before 2027-28. The 2026-27 local authority allocations of the LABC will be the same as the grant allocations in 2025-26. Indicative allocations of the Local Authority Better Care Grant for 2027-28 and 2028-29 have not been published. LABC funding is included within the Fair Funding Assessment, and presented within the Revenue Support Grant for 2027-28 and 2028-29.

⁴Legacy Business Rates notionally includes: Historic business rates grant compensation for under-indexation of tax rates; Green Plant and Machinery exemptions; and Small Business Rates Relief lost supplementary income in 2025-26 and 2024-25. This funding becomes part of Revenue Support Grant from 2026-27.

⁵Legacy Grant Funding includes funding streams that were already within Core Spending Power in 2025-26, including: Social Care Grant; Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund; Employer National Insurance Contributions; New Homes Bonus; and 2025-26 Funding Floor. This funding becomes part of Revenue Support Grant from 2026-27.

⁶Council tax projections for 2026-27 to 2028-29 assumes local authorities increase their Band D council tax in line with the maximum allowable level set out by the council tax referendum principles published alongside the settlement. That is: a 3% core principle; a 2% adult social care precept; the greater of 3% or £5 cash principle for shire districts; a cash principle of £5 on Band D bills for Fire Authorities; and a cash principle of £14 on Band D bills for the police element of the Greater London Authority.

⁷ The government will not set council tax referendum principles for six local authorities (Westminster, Windsor and Maidenhead, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham, City of London, and Wandsworth) in financial years 2027-28 and 2028-29. For these authorities, the government has made an assumption on the Council Tax Requirement within the CSP tables.

⁸Provisional allocations for the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Duty are based on flat cash value of £480m. The final Settlement will reflect the £19m uplift that the Government has announced on Monday 15 December.

⁹Numerous grants have been given out to local authorities in recent years linked to homelessness and rough sleeping. In order to provide, as far as possible, a direct comparison with predecessor grants, we have limited our data to 24/25 and 25/26 and to include:

- a) For Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG): funding that was issued under the payment code for RSPARG, Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI), and Accommodation for Ex-Offenders. This includes the £69.9m uplift to RSPARG in 2025/26. Payments data to local authorities does not reflect local arrangements on the distribution of funding. For example, where pooled partnerships exist through joint-bidding or sub-regional arrangements, these have not been apportioned out.
- b) For Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP): funding that was issued under the payment code for RSAP only (reference Rough Sleeping Accommodation Project). This does not include payments made by MHCLG to Homes England, which was then issued to Registered Providers and local authorities outside London. Payment data does not reflect local arrangements on the distribution of funding. For example, in London, where funding is issued to the Greater London Authority (GLA) to manage, these payments have not been apportioned out.
- c) For Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG): funding that was issued under the payment code for Homelessness Prevention Grant. We have backdated an assumed split between (i) temporary accommodation and (ii) prevention, relief and staffing funding in 2024/25 and 2025/26. This is a proxy only. This ensures that Core Spending Power is not artificially inflated or deflated and reflects that, from 2026/27, the temporary accommodation element of the HPG will be rolled into the Revenue Support Grant and the prevention, relief and staffing element of the HPG will be consolidated into the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant. This baseline split in both years assumes 51% of the HPG was for temporary accommodation and 49% was for prevention, relief and staffing. This mirrors the HPG grant conditions in 25/26. On top of this, the prevention, relief and staffing element also includes the £10.9m one-off top up made to some local authorities in 2025/26. It does not include the further £50m top up announced on 11 December as this was not confirmed in time for Settlement modelling and analysis. The government does not intend to retrospectively include the further £50m top up in backdated numbers.
- d) Payments data used may include additional payments that we have not identified in the scope, but were paid under the same payment code and equally may exclude payments such as top-ups where they are not associated with the main grant payment code.

Figures are based on MHCLG payment record. Payments data has been taken from August 2025 – therefore, some forecasting was required for financial year 25/26. The delivery of programmes is still on-going and therefore these forecasted figures may be subject to change. Payments data is representative of the funding that was paid to an authority. This may not match published data on allocations as it may account for underspends from a previous year, recoveries from incorrect payments or rounding

¹⁰This is part of the new Children, Families and Youth Grant. Further information can be found in the Funding Simplification explanatory note published alongside the Settlement. Funding for the Families First Partnership (FFP) programme is allocated using the latest Children and Young People's Services Relative Needs Formula (CYPs RNF) and the Children's Social Care Area Cost Adjustment (ACA). A minimum allocation level ensures that no authority receives less than its 2025–26 Children's Social Care Prevention Grant and Family Help funding. To calculate these minimum levels, a proxy split based on the mid-2024 population aged 0–17 has been applied to North Northamptonshire's 2025–26 Family Help grant allocation, reflecting that this funding was used for both North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire councils.

¹¹ Details of the eligibility for and operation of 95% income protection, 100% income protection, real-terms protection are set out in the consultation and technical note published alongside the settlement.

For the small number of local authorities who would otherwise fall below 100% or 95% income protection because of the redistribution of grant within the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant, we will allocate transition funding to ensure they continue to benefit from the level of income protection they are eligible for.

¹² For 2024–25 and 2025–26, Grants rolled in to Revenue Support Grant includes the following funding streams, which are all being added to Core Spending Power for the first time: Social Housing new burdens; Awaab's Law new burdens; Enforcement of OOH Calorie Labelling Regulations; Enforcement of Location and Volume Price Promotions Restrictions; LGF Data Review; Local Reform and Community Voices: Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Funding; Biodiversity Net Gain Planning Requirement; War Pensions Disregard; Social Care in Prisons; Virtual School Heads for children with a social worker and children in kinship care; Virtual School Heads (VSH) Extension of the VSH role to previously looked after children; Supported Accommodation Reforms (New Burdens); Personal Advisors Extended Duty; Leaving Care Allowance uplift; Staying Put; and the temporary accommodation element of the former Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). For HPG, we have backdated an assumed split between (i) temporary accommodation and (ii) prevention, relief and staffing funding in 2024/25 and 2025/26. This is a proxy only. Please see footnote 6 above for further details. From 2026–27, all funding in Grants rolled in to Revenue Support Grant becomes part of Revenue Support Grant.

¹³Details of the eligibility for and operation of the Recovery Grant Guarantee are set out in the consultation and technical note published alongside the settlement.

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Report for:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	Phoenix Lane Solar and Battery Energy Storage System
Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Downes - Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk.
Responsible Officer:	William Styles - Corporate Projects Officer. Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist. Paul Deal - Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience.
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:	None.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

The Phoenix Lane Solar and Battery Energy Storage System project would install a solar photovoltaic (PV) array on the top levels of the Phoenix Lane multi-storey car park at Tiverton supported by a battery energy storage system (BESS).

Recommendation(s):

1. **That Cabinet approves the Phoenix Lane Solar and Battery Energy Storage System project as outlined within Option 3.**
2. **That delegated authority be granted to the Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk - in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive s151**

and the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience - to deliver the Phoenix Lane Solar and Battery Energy Storage System project.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The project is to install a solar PV array on the top levels of the Phoenix Lane multi-storey car park in Tiverton with a battery energy storage system (BESS). This installation would provide the Council's premises at Phoenix Lane with renewable power in line with its Corporate Plan and Climate Change Strategy.
- 1.2 The aim is to meet most of the electricity needs at Phoenix House with renewable power, which would achieve considerable cost savings, whilst reducing climate impacts (greenhouse gas emissions) linked to electricity purchase / import. This improved self-sufficiency also lends financial resilience in the longer term.
- 1.3 This report provides project details to enable a Cabinet decision to implement it. A business case has been approved at the corporate Programme Board and at Leadership Team. The business case considered 3 design options (outlined later) with a recommendation to approve 'option 3' as it would maximise the potential solar energy generation.
- 1.4 Project cost is estimated at £640k. Cabinet has approved £600k funding in the Capital Programme for this project. The £40k remainder (e.g. site preparation measures plus £10k contingency provision) can be covered by earmarked reserve capital (£50k) for maintenance of the multistorey car park.
- 1.5 Greenhouse gas emissions referred to in this report are measured in tonnes, or kilograms, of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) (kgCO₂e).
- 1.5.1 The project (option 3 as recommended) is expected to achieve estimated savings annually of £67,500 in electricity costs by year 5 (please refer to 3.4, Benefits) and 215 tCO₂e in greenhouse gas emissions. The payback period for the investment is estimated as circa 9 years.

1.6 Successful delivery and implementation

- 1.6.1 Measures to ensure successful delivery and implementation of this project (if approved) being arranged or already in place include:
 - Project management by the Corporate Projects Officer (Property Services).
 - Oversight by the corporate Programme Board and support from the Climate and Sustainability Specialist.
 - Close working and consultation with key stakeholders including the ICT Operations Manager and Property Services Operations Manager with regard to specifications, fire prevention systems, operational needs, etc.
 - A detailed design process that will be informed by the solar potential modelling data (completed), analysis of power consumption patterns, installation cost efficiency, maintenance, insurer requirements, etc.

- Support from the South West Net Zero Hub to include e.g. procurement of a system design process, engagement with the District Network Operator (DNO) National Grid, the benefit of their experience of similar projects.

1.6.2 Commencement and progression after sign-off by the Deputy Chief Executive (s151) would be subject to such measures being in place and satisfactory project management 'gateway' checks e.g. further feasibility detail.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Phoenix Lane solar project would support achievement of the Council's corporate objectives and its climate change strategy. The ambition to carry out this project was expressed in the Council's carbon reduction plan (climate action plan). Capital funding has been allocated as part of approved budget plans.

2.2 The Council has a track record of investment in solar power, such as at its leisure centres. This would be its first bespoke solar PV and BESS installation, and the project provides an opportunity to act as a model for other sites in future.

3.0 Proposal

3.1 Design Options

3.1.1 A feasibility study has been carried out to explore 3 design options, informed by solar yield modelling data, along with assessment of the site characteristics, operational requirements and power consumption needs.

3.1.2 Battery storage - part of all design options - will enable the Council to achieve the best value from the power (using solar energy to replace imported 'grid' electricity is worth more than the reward for exported surplus power). Location of battery storage will be confirmed in line with fire safety requirements.



Figure 1 - a plan view diagram showing levels 9, 10 and 11 of the car park.

3.1.3 Detailed modelling was carried out to evaluate solar energy potential on the top levels (9, 10, 11) of the car park. Level 9 is the northernmost section, Level 11 is the central section, and Level 10 is the southernmost section.

3.1.4 Solar potential diagrams provided below for design options 1, 2 and 3 are representative of the potential yield at an equinox.

3.1.5 The Legend below explains the colour coding for the solar potential diagrams.

Legend: Colours used in solar potential diagrams	
	High Solar Potential. No or minimal shade during daylight hours.
	Moderate Solar Potential. Shade for 40-50% of daylight hours.
	Poor Potential. Shade for 50-100% of daylight hours.

3.1.6 OPTION 1: Existing Roof Structure

Retain existing car ports and use all available surfaces.



Figure i - Solar Potential for Option 1.

3.1.7 This option has a very low solar potential efficiency compared to the other options, due to the suboptimal configuration of slopes. This option would have the shortest on-site construction timeline as there would be fewer enabling works, but the array would be more expensive per panel, due to the differing slopes and access needs for installation e.g. scaffolding. Permitted Development (PD) may be used instead of a full Planning Application which could reduce the project timeline significantly.

3.1.8 OPTION 2: Existing Floor Surface

Remove the existing car ports and utilise the fully opened floor surface.



Figure ii - Solar Potential for Option 2.

3.1.9 Option 2 would also be achievable through PD but has a much higher solar potential than Option 1. Whereas previously level 9 (northernmost) was near unusable due to shading – car port removal would achieve high solar potential across ~50% of its surface. Similarly, it would make a massive difference on level 10 (southernmost) improved from ~30% to ~90%.

3.1.10 OPTION 3: New Car Ports

3.1.11 This option proposes to remove the existing car ports, and add a raised surface e.g. a bespoke car port roof on level 9 (northernmost roof level). A new structure would be designed to maximise solar gain and solve the issue of shading across large parts of level 9 by the higher, central level 11. (On levels 10 and 11, works would be the same as for Option 2.)



Figure iii - Solar Potential for Option 3.

3.1.12 Option 3 would enable use of level 9 for secure storage e.g. vehicles or supplies. Potentially this area is suited for the energy battery storage system (to be confirmed in the detailed design phase). The car port component would require planning permission, but achieves the highest solar potential and therefore best energy output and financial benefit. Staging could be achieved by delivering the panels on level 11 and 10 while awaiting planning permission to commence the works on level 9 which could then be plugged into an already running system.

3.1.13 The new car port would achieve greater yield on level 9 to transform the situation from ~50% surface area being high solar potential to ~80%, raising the overall site potential from ~75% for Option 2 to ~90% for Option 3.

3.2 The Recommended Option

3.2.1 Option 3 is the recommended option as it would achieve the best yield and the best financial rewards over the 25-year array lifetime (despite higher initial costs). Additional benefits of Option 3 include sheltered storage and parking.

3.2.2 While having a greater cost than Option 2 and only a slightly higher yield, this yield improvement is still enough to give the shortest payback period and the largest financial yield over the 25-year project lifetime. For an investment difference of circa £55k (projected), there is a 25-year increased return of £300k;

(an extra £10k-15k per year). This additional value would almost pay for a full reinstatement of solar panels (in future) once degradation makes the efficiency and yields sub-optimal.

3.2.3 Cost estimates for 3 design options.

- Option 1: £425,000
- Option 2: £595,000
- Option 3: £640,000

3.2.4 It is important to identify that there is a greater cost involved for Option 2 and 3 than Option 1. There is confidence in current Option 3 estimate of £640k on an informal basis, however this does not factor in any heavy-duty surface preparation such as demolition or construction, which on the high end may be £50k-£100k to include unforeseen risk allocation.

3.2.5 Option 2 requires demolition of the existing car ports which will incur a cost. This may be circa £45k but there would be material receipts from the sale of slates and the scrap value of the galvanised steel structural elements and sheeting leading to a non-negligible reduction perhaps as high as £10k-£30k for both sales. (Potential receipts are not reflected in direct comparison, only costs.)

3.2.6 Further to this, there would need to be some surface treatment to plug the attachment points of the former car ports to prevent water penetration and structural damage which has been factored into the Car Port Costs.

3.2.7 On top of this, with Option 3, there is then the additional cost of creating a new raised non-structural platform for the solar panels on level 9 indicated at ~£55k. Despite this, Option 3 is found to be the most cost-effective proposal.

3.3 Other options considered

3.3.1 Sale of energy to neighbouring businesses. This presented potential complexity versus the immediate value of solar power for the Council's use.

3.4 Benefits

3.4.1 The project (option 3 as recommended) could achieve annual savings of £67,500 in electricity costs and 215 tCO₂e in emissions by year 5.

3.4.2 Projected annual value from energy bill savings at year 5 (possibly including some export):

- Option 1: £30,000
- Option 2: £60,000
- Option 3: £67,500

3.4.3 The total 25-year values.

- Option 1: £1.1m
- Option 2: £2.2m
- Option 3: £2.5m

3.4.4 Projected values across the 25-year project lifetime:

Year	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	£25,500.00	£51,000.00	£57,375.00
2	£26,587.58	£53,175.15	£59,822.04
3	£27,721.54	£55,443.07	£62,373.45
4	£28,903.86	£57,807.72	£65,033.68
5	£30,136.61	£60,273.22	£67,807.37
6	£31,421.93	£62,843.87	£70,699.35
7	£32,762.08	£65,524.16	£73,714.68
8	£34,159.38	£68,318.77	£76,858.61
9	£35,616.28	£71,232.56	£80,136.63
10	£37,135.31	£74,270.63	£83,554.46
11	£38,719.14	£77,438.27	£87,118.06
12	£40,370.51	£80,741.01	£90,833.64
13	£42,092.31	£84,184.62	£94,707.70
14	£43,887.55	£87,775.09	£98,746.98
15	£45,759.35	£91,518.70	£102,958.54
16	£47,710.99	£95,421.97	£107,349.72
17	£49,745.86	£99,491.72	£111,928.18
18	£51,867.52	£103,735.04	£116,701.92
19	£54,079.67	£108,159.34	£121,679.26
20	£56,386.17	£112,772.34	£126,868.88
21	£58,791.04	£117,582.08	£132,279.84
22	£61,298.48	£122,596.95	£137,921.57
23	£63,912.86	£127,825.71	£143,803.93
24	£66,638.74	£133,277.48	£149,937.16
25	£69,480.88	£138,961.76	£156,331.98
Total	£1,100,685.62	£2,201,371.23	£2,476,542.63

3.4.5 Projected annual carbon savings (tCO₂e):

- Option 1: circa 77 tonnes.
- Option 2: circa 185 tonnes.
- Option 3: circa 215 tonnes.

3.4.6 Projected Payback Period:

- Option 1: circa 12.4 years.
- Option 2: circa 9.2 years.
- Option 3: circa 9.1 years.

3.4.7 The difference in the carbon saving between options 2 and 3 (circa 30 tonnes, equivalent to 30 transatlantic flights) is a cost-effective gain when comparing the payback period. This reinforces the recommendation of Option 3, particularly in the context of strategic objectives.

3.5 Strategic objectives

- a) Leadership and Engagement: provide a tangible demonstration of climate action to residents, businesses, and partners.
- b) Carbon Reduction: deliver measurable reductions in operational emissions.
- c) Financial Efficiency: lower energy costs (immediate) and long-term cost volatility (over the medium to long term).
- d) Resilience: improve self-sufficiency by generating green energy on site.
- e) Replicability: establish a benchmark model for solar installation projects that can be adapted for other council-owned assets.

3.6 Realisation and optimisation of benefits, and potential wider benefits

- 3.6.1 To realise the full benefit of the project, energy production and supply will be recorded and closely monitored. The role of the BESS will be to optimise the solar power supply directly to the Council buildings and to store surplus electricity in a timely manner.
- 3.6.2 BESS system design could support business resilience by improving ICT power backup. (ICT engaged a stakeholder and will be consulted on design details.)
- 3.6.3 The timing of electric vehicle recharging at Phoenix House can also be managed to make the most of solar power and to fit in with energy demand patterns. Effectively, the car batteries could add flexible storage capacity to the system.
- 3.6.4 Option 3 offers the opportunity to have covered, secure storage and parking or storage for MDDC.
- 3.6.5 This project would achieve a valuable and productive use of the top levels (9, 10, and 11) which have not been used for parking for several years, and demand trends suggest it is not worth reopening them for car parking.
- 3.6.6 These areas have often been the target of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Potential vandalism and theft are key risks, so the upper levels must be secured to protect the installations. A renewable energy system with sound financial benefits therefore adds further justification for the pre-existing security decision to exclude the public, already identified as vital for safety reasons. Removal of the slate roof is also seen as a positive step in that regard.
- 3.6.7 Long term demand for the on-site power generation will provide ongoing benefit, being adaptable to changing needs. Trends show reducing levels of demand for power at Phoenix House due to improvements in electrical efficiency. However, we expect growth in demand for electricity to recharge vehicles and to enable future moves to decarbonise heating.

3.7 Delivery Timescales

- 3.7.1 Each option will have a different delivery timeframe with Option 1 being the shortest due to limited enabling works being required. This anticipates a completion for Q3 2026. On site works commencing in earnest Q1 2026.
- 3.7.2 The most significant impacts to the timeframe for the other two options are demolition time for the existing car ports and the subsequent weatherproofing works for Option 2. For Option 3 this will also be a factor though so too will the construction of a new car port type structure on level 9 and the relevant planning permission period for this.
- 3.7.3 Option 3 may also benefit from a phased approach, delivering level 10 and 11 in the first instance while constructing the car ports on level 9.

Financial Implications

The project would be funded by existing approved budgets.

Legal Implications

The appropriate Consents will need to be obtained and in place, such as with the District Network Operator (supply agreements, system compliance) and Planning Permission if required. There are no legal implications associated with this proposal.

Risk Assessment

Key risks include: vandalism; theft; structural engineer-imposed limitations; supply-chain delay; grid-connection timing. Early surveys and DNO liaison have already begun. Contract terms must include retention payments and performance benchmarks to safeguard delivery quality, timings, and a suitable defects period.

Impact on Climate Change

Based on the demonstrable ability for this form of grant scheme to create or accelerate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, this proposal should contribute positively towards reducing climate impact. The project could achieve emissions savings / impact avoidance of up to 215 tCO₂e annually.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Projects and policies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. (Assessing the equality impacts of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is not only a legal requirement, but also a positive opportunity for authorities to make better decisions based on robust evidence.) There are no equality impacts associated with this proposal.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The Council's [Corporate Plan](#) 2024-2028:

- Priority 1.1: Demonstrate climate leadership through achieving ambitious net zero targets
- Measure 1.1: Council carbon footprint
- Measure 1.1: Carbon emissions avoided (renewables and green transport)

The Council's [Climate Change Strategy](#) 2024-2028

- reduce areas of the operational carbon footprint where we have direct control
- renewable energy and flexible energy storage
- project included in the Climate Action Plan

Section 3 - Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 23 December 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 23 December 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 23 December 2025

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 15 December 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: William Styles - Corporate Projects Officer. Email wstyles@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 255255 (switchboard).

Background papers: None.

Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 13 January 2026

Subject: **Additional loan to Crediton NHS Hub**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gwen Duchesne – Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement

Responsible Officer: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)

Exempt: N/a

Wards Affected: Crediton Lawrence and Crediton Boniface

Enclosures: N/a

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To consider an additional long-term loan to the Redlands Primary Care in Crediton.

Recommendation(s):

1. **To delegate approval to the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) to top-up c£70k of the original loan taking the outstanding balance back to the original £2.175m.**
2. **To approve an additional loan to the GP Practice of £150k.**
3. **Both loans are repayable by June 2048 on an annuity basis at a commercial fixed interest rate, subject to the completion of legal due diligence and documentation.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council has an existing loan with the GP Practice of £2.175M for the construction of the new integrated health hub at the Chiddenbrook Surgery in Crediton. That building is mostly funded by the NHS, but the GPs sought funding from the Council on a commercial basis.

1.2 In June 2024 the GP Practice subsequently approached the Council for an additional loan of £126k to top-up back to the original £2.175m from the balance paid to that point to build a new pharmacy building attached to the practice. In addition to the

benefits to the residents of Crediton and the surrounding area, the Council considered this an opportunity to lend funds to a suitable stakeholder that will provide a good rate of return on our money with a relatively low risk profile, over and above that currently achievable in the current economic conditions.

- 1.3 All loans are very much on the commercial basis. The Council secured a first charge over the property, ensuring low risk for the Council.

2.0 Latest Request

- 2.1 Recently, the surgery approached the council again with a two-fold request; one to again re-borrow the amount that has been repaid to date (c£70k) enabling the repayment of personal loans from retiring partners of the GP practice, and secondly to borrow an additional £150k citing additional costs for the pharmacy building (£350k).
- 2.2 The additional loan has been agreed by NHS England, enabling the council to secure the first charge on the pharmacy building too.
- 2.3 Once again, the top-up and additional loan will be made on commercial terms with a mark-up above the rates the Council is able to borrow at. Legal amendments are underway to reflect the new loan value and partner changes.
- 2.4 The view of officers is that, as an NHS body, the creditworthiness is at least Good and the Collateral is High, which will inform the appropriate interest for the loan.
- 2.5 The Council, as part of its daily Treasury decisions, may decide to fund the advance from internal borrowing, if possible. This then increases the surplus made as we would not be paying an external lender. The cost to the Council would be the opportunity cost of not investing those funds. With our average return on investment of around 3.75% at this time, this would be a prudent approach. Therefore, this should be considered as an attractive proposition.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Supporting a public service body, at low risk, with a sensible commercial rate of return in order to facilitate key health provision within our district is a sensible proposal.

Financial Implications

The proposed loan is to be undertaken on a commercial basis with the Council due to earn a higher return than if this sum was lent on the market. All costs incurred, although minimal due to the existing relationship, will be met by the Surgery.

A summary of the loan requirements are included within the report. The details are commercially sensitive and therefore there will be a requirement to move into confidential session to discuss the details.

Legal Implications

Michelmores LLP have been engaged to advise and draft the loan agreement, heavily based upon the existing Umbrella Agreement and the current loan agreement entered into by the GP's.

Risk Assessment

The Council consider this loan a low risk of default given it is to an NHS body. The legal agreement will fully protect the Council's interest.

This loan forms part of a diversified treasury portfolio and therefore further spreads the risk and increases the overall portfolio yield.

Impact on Climate Change

Providing a local pharmacy solution will reduce the need for residents to travel to get their medical supplies.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Similarly to the climate change benefit, all protected characteristics will benefit from a more localised pharmacy solution.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The financial resources of the Council impact directly on its ability to deliver the Corporate Plan, therefore achieving a greater return on investments enable additional service provision.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 23 December 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 23 December 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 23 December 2025

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr

Agreed by the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 23 December 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience

Email: pdeal@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 23(4254)

Background papers:

- Previous Cabinet reports regarding the original loan, dated 25 July 2019 and 26 March 2020.
- Top-up Loan request – June 2024

Report for:**Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	Green Enterprise Grants
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Natasha Bradshaw - Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change.
Responsible Officer:	Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist. Paul Deal - Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience.
Exempt:	None.
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	None.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

Green Enterprise Grants help Mid Devon businesses to invest towards making their operations more sustainable through energy and resource efficiency. This proposal is to continue and improve the current scheme, to build on its success whilst learning from experience thus far.

Recommendation(s):

1. **That Cabinet approves the Green Enterprise Grant scheme to continue to run for a new phase April 2026 to December 2028 inclusive.**
2. **That delegated authority be granted to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, in consultation with the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience, to deliver the Green Enterprise Grant scheme.**
3. **That Cabinet require an interim performance review report after the 2026-2027 financial year and a final review report when the scheme ends.**

Section 2 – Report**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council's scheme of [Green Enterprise Grants](#) (GEG) ran as a 2024 pilot and a new phase launched in April 2025, due to conclude at the end of March 2026.
- 1.2 The purpose of the grants is to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) based in Mid Devon to invest in improved efficiency, for resource and energy savings and cost savings, to achieve reduced environmental impact and particularly climate impacts (carbon footprint).
- 1.3 Reducing resource and energy requirements can achieve considerable cost and efficiency savings, which lends financial resilience at a time of price volatility.
- 1.4 An annual Carbon Footprint - an assessment of emissions of greenhouse gases linked to the activities of an entity within any given year - is measured in tonnes, or kilograms, of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) (kgCO₂e).
- 1.5 The key performance indicator of the grant scheme is the estimated reduction in emissions from the annual Carbon Footprint of the enterprises supported.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Economy Team, working with the Climate and Sustainability Specialist developed the [Green Enterprise Grants](#) scheme for Mid Devon SMEs.
- 2.2 The scheme has offered capital grants covering up to 50% of eligible costs, with individual grants ranging from £500 to a maximum of £5,000 (for projects with total costs up to £30,000 inclusive of VAT).
- 2.3 This complemented the [Prosper business support programme](#) that provides SMEs with advice and support to identify and reduce their carbon footprint.
- 2.4 The original 2024 funding was from a bid to the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (Local Growth Fund, £24,245). LEP functions transferred to principal local authorities in Devon and Somerset, 01 April 2024.
The next £30,000 phase was funded from the Council's climate and sustainability budget. Further external funding was sought out but none identified.
- 2.5 The scheme has been promoted with social media posts, a press release, emails sent out to known business contacts, as well as a targeted email to enterprises that had previously enquired about funding for energy saving renewables (latent demand). Outreach was undertaken via partner organisations and networks, and the team attended the Council's autumn 2025 'meet the funder' event.
- 2.6 Businesses send in Expressions of Interest via letstalk.middevon.gov.uk where the scheme guidance is provided. Each enquiry is acknowledged, and application forms are sent to all eligible businesses. Applicant liaison is managed through a dedicated business grants email address.
- 2.7 [Due diligence and assessment of applications](#)
- 2.7.1 Applications are subject to due diligence that included (as applicable) Companies House, Non-domestic rates and VAT registration checks.

- 2.7.2 Requiring three quotes is necessary as part of the due diligence process to ensure that applicants / potential grant recipients explore options for project delivery and obtain good value. Advice is available in circumstances where the applicants best endeavours to obtain prices / quotations has not been successful.
- 2.7.3 Our due diligence reflects Procurement regulations, as this is public expenditure.
- 2.7.4 Proposals and items of supporting evidence are assessed and scored in-house. Each completed application is evaluated and scored by officers, then a summary and an award recommendation is provided to the Decision Panel, comprising three Elected Members.

2.8 Performance

- 2.8.1 Overall, the latest phase of the Green Enterprise Scheme has engaged more businesses than the pilot scheme. The number of grant applications approved in 2025 was equal to the 2024 pilot, but the total value of the grants offered in 2025 was lower than in 2024, Table 1.
- 2.8.2 During 2025 the current scheme produced five grant bids, all approved, worth over £17,000 in total.
- 2.8.3 As the grants are always 50% or less of the total project value, the match funding from successful applicants (50% or more) is always equal to or more than the grant value awarded.
- 2.8.4 The estimated reduction in emissions from the annual Carbon Footprint of the enterprises supported is more than 9,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent per year (kgCO₂e / year).
- 2.8.5 Table 1: Green Enterprise Grant scheme performance in 2024 and 2025.

Year	Enquiries	SMEs advised	Eligible Bids	Grants Approved	Funds Offered	Emissions Reduction (kgCO ₂ e/year)
2025	50	30	5	5	£ 17,248	9,419
2024	40		5	5	£ 24,485	13,402

- 2.8.6 The next Decision Panel is scheduled for 20 January 2026 (date may be subject to change). Only applications that have been received in full and fully assessed in advance will be considered at the next panel meeting.

3.0 **Learning from the experience of the current phase and the earlier pilot.**

- 3.1 A scheme review report will inform a decision point for the project team prior to the launch of the next phase (if approved). Applicants who receive grant offers for the current scheme have until 31 March 2026 to complete their claims. Therefore a review report can be initiated after this date.
- 3.2 Engaging with businesses
 - Businesses that proactively engaged with the programme team (asking questions and seeking advice) were more likely to apply for a grant.

3.3 Timescales and lead-in times

- Businesses need considerable time to bring together the required information for their application as well as to schedule in delivery / works at a time that is convenient for the business and their supplier / installer.
- Obtaining 3 quotes from contractors can be difficult and time-consuming.

3.3.1 An established longer-term scheme, run for longer than 1 year, would allow us to build deeper awareness across the area, thorough publicity, case studies and business visits. This would also allow us to target businesses / sectors with high carbon emissions and, if needed, look to provide specific support. This would ease the time pressure on businesses; currently they must apply, develop and deliver a project within the same financial year.

3.4 Planning

3.4.1 Scheme guidance and criteria make it clear that consents must be obtained prior to submitting an application.

3.5 Mandatory quality standards

3.5.1 Recognised standards are essential for certain projects e.g. [Microgeneration Certification Scheme](#) (MCS) certified installers for solar panels.

3.6 Scale and focus of the scheme

3.6.1 The team considers that the GEG scheme works well as a Capital small grant scheme, with a clear focus. Fair / comparable project evaluation could become a challenge if the remit were made too broad.

3.6.2 The maximum grant size and percentage support seem appropriate to this small-scale scheme, particularly given that businesses are likely to make energy / cost savings and there are other grant schemes that could potentially match-fund.

3.6.3 At the current scale, we felt able to assess the applications received. Larger, more complex projects could be challenging to assess in-house. Additional support such as technical expertise or a project partner could be a way to add capacity, add value and expand impact but would come at a cost.

3.7 Commercial property ownership

3.7.1 The majority of the applicants to date either own or are in the process of purchasing their properties.

3.8 Commercial Landlords

3.8.1 The grant can potentially incentivise a landlord investing to provide a greener 'offer' of premises with lower energy bills.

4.0 **Proposal**

4.1 To continue to run the Green Enterprise Grants scheme in Mid Devon for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs).

4.2 Delivery. Key details:

- Grants budget £20k per annum. (Grant award values from £500 to £5k.)
- Timeline: refresh engagement in March 2026 to promote the scheme; bid support workshops in spring 2026 and spring 2027.
- Grant claims submission deadline: 31 March 2028.

4.3 Changes to improve the scheme

4.3.1 Reduce the annual target budget for Green Enterprise Grants.

- Given the demand seen in 2025, a target annual budget of £20,000 seems realistic (£30,000 was allocated). The change would free up funds to support sustainability work.

4.3.2 Enable more bids

- We propose to extend the scheme timeline to allow applicants more time to develop a project and plan ahead. This could make bid preparation more realistic for small businesses and social enterprises.

4.3.3 Community benefit

- We will seek to expand eligibility and make it easier for community halls to apply (village halls, parish halls, church halls). Community bodies that run buildings for the benefit of their local community often cannot satisfy the threshold of over 50% income from trading, which is part of the definition of a Social Enterprise. We would not apply that threshold test to village halls.

4.3.4 Sharpen the focus on enabling transition to a greener economy

- The scheme will exclude bids for fossil fuel technology solutions (such as replacement fossil-fuel boilers).
- We will look into the potential to offer small grants for workplace EV (electric vehicle) chargepoints, which are currently excluded from GEG scheme. The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) [Workplace Charging Scheme](#) offering £350 per charger will close after March 2026. The GEG scheme could provide a similar offer (£350 rather than a 50% grant) and apply the same requirements i.e. proper consents in place and OZEV approved chargepoints which must be installed by an [OZEV authorised installer](#).

4.4 Administration - key details:

- The decision panel awarding grants will comprise 3 Elected Members.
- The administrative team will evaluate the completed eligible bids using a standardised process with a scoring protocol and assessment framework.
- Evaluation will consider quality of evidence (e.g. carbon footprints estimated savings and outputs) around the forecast benefit / impact and the match funding value of each project.
- Due diligence checks will be carried out as before.

- The administrative team will make recommendations to the decision panel and provide support to enable decisions, including research and specialist advice where required.
- Decisions on grant awards will be considered on a monthly cycle of emails circulated to the decision panel; those for which decision panel members request debate or discussion will be considered at (usually online) panel meetings, on a quarterly / responsive cycle.

4.5 Scope and eligibility. Key details:

- SMEs based in Mid Devon only.
- Eligible SME types will include Community Interest Companies (CIC).
- The scheme will be fairly administered to all eligible enterprises. However, bids will not be accepted from certain business categories for specific reasons.
- For the avoidance of bias and any risk of overlap with the Council's operations and climate action investments, business tenants based at Council assets will not be eligible to apply.

4.6 Review

4.6.1 An interim review report for the new scheme can be produced for late April 2027. The final deadline for grant claims will be 31 March 2028 and a final evaluation report would be produced thereafter. (For review by the new vested Authority.)

Financial Implications

The grants would be funded by existing approved budgets. External funding will also be sought, in order to support or extend the grant scheme.

Legal Implications

Any grant scheme would be subject to the current law around operational requirements and standards in public service. There are no legal implications associated with this proposal.

Risk Assessment

The main risks to the project (mitigating actions in brackets) are: lack of uptake by enterprises (promotion will build on a well-established relationship with the local business community); non-delivery of approved projects (guidance, agreements and deadlines will help to manage timely delivery); applicants lack sufficient project management time or investment capital to achieve their projects (the small grant scale is suited to small, manageable projects).

Impact on Climate Change

Based on the demonstrable ability for this form of grant scheme to create or accelerate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, this proposal should contribute positively towards reducing climate impact. The funding could achieve a range of impact avoidance / savings annually between circa 1 and 10 tCO₂e.

Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no equality impacts associated with this project proposal; the scheme would serve a target segment of enterprises and a specific geographical location but would be open to all eligible. Documentation will be available in accessible formats. The scheme will be promoted through a range of channels and community networks. Projects and policies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. (Assessing the equality impacts of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is not only a legal requirement, but also a positive opportunity for authorities to make better decisions based on robust evidence.)

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Corporate Plan 2024-2028, priority 1.2: Support the district's response to the climate emergency.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 16 December 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 16 December 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 16 December 2025

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 15 December 2025

Cabinet member notified: (yes/no)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist. Email: jball@MidDevon.gov.uk; Telephone: 01884 255255.

Background papers: The 07 January 2025 Cabinet [decision and supporting paper](#).

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Report for:**Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Steve Keable, Planning & Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager Growth, Economy & Delivery
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	Crediton Boniface, Crediton Lawrence, Sandford & Creedy, Taw Vale, Upper Yeo & Taw, Yeo
Enclosures:	N/A

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report introduces to Members the work of the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA) to develop a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for significant capital investment in the North Devon Line (NDL) between Exeter and Barnstaple.

The report requests consideration of The Council becoming a member of this alliance (NDRDA), and for Cabinet to consider a financial contribution towards the cost of the next NDRDA Annual Convention to be held in Mid Devon.

Recommendation(s):

The Planning Environment and Sustainability PDG recommends to Cabinet:

- 1. That Mid Devon District Council supports the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA) by officially joining the alliance to achieve delivery of a modernisation programme for the North Devon (Tarka) Line passenger rail services between Exeter and Barnstaple, to achieve the associated economic, social and environmental benefits for our local communities and businesses.**

2. To consider a financial contribution of £1,000 to support the third annual convention of the NDRDA scheduled for March 2026 at a location in Mid Devon.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The North Devon Line, which is also known as the Tarka Line, opened in 1851 and operates between Exeter and Barnstaple. It serves settlements between these towns including Newton St Cyres, Crediton, Yeoford, Copplestone, Morchard Road, Lapford and Eggesford in Mid Devon (as shown on the map in Appendix 1). The service is operated by Great Western Railway and in recent years patronage numbers have been increasing significantly. The service is approximately hourly, although currently not all stations are served on an hourly basis. In recent years the rolling stock has been upgraded to Class 158 diesel multiple units.
- 1.2 The Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA) was founded in late 2023 and formally established in 2024 at the first Annual Convention held in Bideford. Aspirations of the alliance include upgrading the current line and to investigate potential for extension of services to Bideford. Current members of the alliance include:
 - Torridge District Council
 - North Devon Council
 - Devon County Council
 - Devon & Torbay Combined County Authority
 - Various Parish & Town Councils on the line
 - Great Western Railway (GWR)
 - Network Rail
 - RailFuture (Devon & Cornwall)
 - Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership
 - Friends Of Barnstaple Railway Station
 - North Devon Line Rail Promotion Group
- 1.3 In addition to the organisations listed above there are a wide range of other active partners and stakeholders in support of the improvements to the line.
- 1.4 A second 2025 Annual Convention ([link here](#)) hosted in Barnstaple brought together local government representatives, rail industry leaders, and transport planners. Each contributed insight into the progress made, challenges encountered, and future priorities for a region whose transport infrastructure is increasingly under strain from rising demand and constrained capacity.

2.0 Strategic Outline Business Case

2.1 The alliance is committed to developing a Strategic Outline Business Case to assess the viability and scope of proposals. A Preliminary Strategic Business Case is being finalised by the Alliance, in alignment with a Network Rail report following the same approach as for the successful Dartmoor Line reopening. Both workstreams are targeting the Alliance's next annual Convention for presentation and discussion. The business case will be prepared to align with the requirements under the Department of Transport's Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP). This business case will also have a strategic fit with the Devon & Torbay Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) 2025-2040, adopted by Devon & Torbay Combined County Authority in July 2025, ([link here](#)) and Peninsular Transport Strategic Transport Priorities to 2050 ([link here](#)).

2.2 It should also be noted that the future role of the rail line has significance with regard to the review of the Mid Devon Local Plan. The Local Plan, in line with national planning policy, will be looking to encourage sustainable travel patterns wherever possible. Work is currently underway with regard to developing a settlement hierarchy for the emerging new plan, which is being informed by the recently published Government accessibility tool. This tool recognises the accessibility benefits of this rail corridor.

2.3 The business case objectives include:

- Increased capacity and double hourly frequency to two trains per hour;
- Reduced Exeter- Barnstaple journey times from 75 minutes to 60 minutes;
- Enhanced green travel and journey time competitiveness with roads;
- Boost line reliability, resilience and reduce disruption;
- Support to economy, jobs, tourism, housing and unlock development;
- Improved active travel and connectivity corridors of the Taw Torridge Estuary, Okehampton, Exeter city region, Cullompton, Tiverton, Exmouth, Newton Abbott and beyond.

2.4 The Alliance also identifies other benefits of improving the rail line which include:

- Reducing congestion on A377 and A361;
- Increasing labour market and skills training access;
- Time savings valued at £11m per annum;
- Enhances tourism and inward investment with connectivity improvements;
- Carbon reduction through transport mode shift.

- 2.5 Key partners of the Alliance are the rail industry, as delivery will be through Great British Railways (GBR), who will replace Network Rail, bringing together the management of the rail network and passenger services under one public body. GBR will be responsible for infrastructure, planning, and operations, setting fares and timetables, and will own the network infrastructure.
- 2.6 The key interventions currently being considered are:
 - Reinstatement of double track between Newton St. Cyres and Coleford Junction, via Crediton;
 - Additional passing loops between Coleford Junction and Barnstaple;
 - Signalling modernisation; and
 - Station improvements and rolling stock enhancements.

3.0 2026 Annual Convention

- 3.1 A third Annual Convention is at the planning stage with a proposal for this to be held within Mid Devon on Friday 6th March 2026. The purpose of this convention is for all the Alliance to meet as stakeholders and be updated on the progress of the business case preparation. It is anticipated that any subsequent submission to Government for funding would be in close collaboration with the Local Transport Authority.
- 3.2 An appropriate resolution to join membership of NDRDA is sought through this report. Whilst membership is free, MDDC is being requested to help fund the NDRDA, to the value of £1,000, to host the next annual convention in Mid Devon. The proposed venue is the Eggesford Fox & Hounds Hotel in Taw Vale Ward.

Financial Implications

Membership of the alliance is free; however this report recommends that a financial contribution of £1,000 to support the third annual convention of the NDRDA at a location in Mid Devon, be found from existing budgets.

Any future capital funding for proposals identified through the business case work will be sought from Government by the NDRDA, Devon County Council and Network Rail through the DfT Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline major schemes fund.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant negative risks identified with regard to joining the alliance; however there is potentially a risk, should the District Council not formally join the alliance, that the District's interests and those of its residents and businesses could be marginalised.

As projects develop through the Alliance they will be subject to their own risk management processes.

Impact on Climate Change

Climate change will be an underlying theme through the future work streams of the NDRDA and an important part of the Strategic Outline Business Case.

Equalities Impact Assessment

No equality issues are identified for this report at this stage. As the project goes forward it will need to consider the views from representatives from protected groups that the project has the potential to impact upon. Equality issues, such as the importance of accessibility provision for the mobility impaired will form part of the Strategic Outline Business Case.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Improvements to the North Devon rail line are relevant to the following corporate themes:

- Planning, Environment & Sustainability
- Community, People & Equalities
- Homes
- Economy & Assets

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Date: 12.11.25

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 12.11.25

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 12.11.25

Performance and risk: Dr Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 12 November 2025

Cabinet member notified: (yes)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy & Delivery

Email: awelsh@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 234398

Background papers:

Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline 'A New Approach for Rail Enhancements'. DCLG prospectus locally led garden villages, towns and cities (2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-network-enhancements-pipeline>

Railfuture Website – Promotion of NRDRA 2nd Convention and supporting information (March 2025)

[NRDRA 2nd Annual Convention Promotion](#)

Map of the North Devon (Tarka) Line



(Source: Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership: Great Scenic Railways Website)

[Tarka Line](#)

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Report for:**Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Maria de Leiburne, Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Exempt:	There are no exemptions within the documents
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - RIPA Policy

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To update Members on RIPA following receipt of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) Audit and in accordance with IPCO's recommendation that the Policy is presented to Members annually.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet agree that

- (a) The Council's policy for ensuring compliance with Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) is appropriate and shall remain as currently drafted;**
- (b) To note that the Council has not used its powers under RIPA since March 2014.**

As recommended by the Community, People and Equality PDG

Section 2 – Report**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Everyone has a fundamental right to privacy. This right is contained in Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights enshrined in the Human

Rights Act 1998 (HRA 1998): “Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”.

- 1.2. This means, for example, a right not to be watched, have your mail opened or have your personal space invaded including by a public authority. Accordingly, a local authority is required to respect the private and family life of each citizen, their homes and correspondence. However, this right is qualified such that it can be interfered with where it is necessary and proportionate and carried out in accordance with the law. If these requirements are not met and an investigation undertaken that interfered with these rights then it would be unlawful interference.
- 1.3 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) is one such law that permits interference – it details ways in which public bodies can lawfully carry out investigations when there is a wish to use surveillance techniques. For local authorities these comprise:
 - Directed surveillance (covert surveillance of individuals outside of residential premises and vehicles);
 - Covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) (such as the deployment of undercover officers); and
 - The acquisition and disclosure of communications data (such as telephone billing information or subscriber details)
- 1.4 Where a local authority carries out overt investigation (e.g. enforcement officers on patrol, signposted CCTV cameras in normal use) then this does not fall within the scope of RIPA. Equally, obtaining information that is not private information about an individual but which is obtained without someone's immediate knowledge is in most cases not caught (e.g. including recording noise levels from outside a property where the occupier has been warned this will happen if the noise continues or Food Safety or Health and Safety inspections).
- 1.5 The general guiding principle is that if surveillance is overt, or is not obtaining private information it does not need to follow RIPA requirements. Where there is directed surveillance or use of a covert human intelligence source then the requirements of RIPA must be followed.
- 1.6 Following criticism of local authorities' use of covert surveillance powers additional safeguards were put in place including:
 - The need to obtain magistrate approval
 - Only be used to investigate offences which attract sentences of six months or more or relate to the underage sale of alcohol or tobacco.
- 1.7 The Council's RIPA Policy as currently published is attached as Appendix 1. As it provides and as is appropriate, the Council's policy is to not use these covert surveillance powers save where absolutely necessary and the

procedure is set out for what should be done where it is felt that it is necessary, including requiring the authority of named Authorised Officers.

1.8 Adopting this practice has not been to the detriment of carrying out the Council's functions and the Council has not used these powers of surveillance since 2014, providing an annual nil return to the IPCO, which requests statistics of how these powers are being used by public authorities across the country.

2.0 The Council and RIPA in the last 12 months

2.1 The Council has not used its RIPA surveillance powers in the last 12 months. The last time such powers were used dates back to 2014.

2.2 In August 2024, the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) conducted its 3 year review/inspection of the Council. The inspector appointed by the IPCO conducted a "remote" inspection. This was reported to the Community, People and Equalities PDG in December 2024, where it was recommended no amendments to the policy.

2.3 The RIPA policy is attached at Appendix 1. This was last approved at the February 2025 Cabinet meeting.

2.4 On 24 February 2025, the Council arranged RIPA training for officers, and in particular for front-line practitioners. The training was provided by an experienced external trainer in RIPA and was well attended. The training included social media surveillance, and this has been cascaded down to their teams. Training is appropriate to avoid inadvertently carrying out directed or other form of covert surveillance in breach of the Procedures in place.

Financial Implications: None directly arising from this report.

Legal Implications: The use of RIPA powers is heavily regulated and scrutinised by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office ("IPCO"). The legislation, combined with Codes of Conduct, sets the framework for the use of RIPA powers. Statutory guidance requires the Council to review the use of RIPA and the RIPA policy annually.

Risk Assessment: There are no risks directly arising from this report. The Council has the necessary policy and procedures in place with appropriate training have been given to officers.

Impact on Climate Change: None.

Equalities Impact Assessment: None directly arising from this report, but human rights, including equalities matters, are central to RIPA.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: None.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 28.10.25

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 23 October 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

Agreed by Chief Executive

Date: 28.10.25

Performance and risk: Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 24 October 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Maria de Leiburne, Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Email: mdeleiburne@middevon.gov.uk

Background papers:

None

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY ON THE USE OF COVERT INVESTIGATION TECHNIQUES (Application of the Regulation of Investigative Powers Act (RIPA) 2000)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (hereafter referred to as 'the Act' or 'RIPA') regulates the use of covert investigative techniques by public authorities. It provides for the application for, and granting of, lawful authorisations for those surveillance techniques covered by the Act.
- 1.2 The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is enshrined in UK law through the Human Rights Act 1998.

Article 8 of the ECHR provides a right to private and family life. This is not an absolute right; it may be infringed in certain circumstances. The RIPA is designed to provide a statutory regulatory framework, which will meet the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of RIPA (and the overarching human rights and freedoms) - and that appropriate authorisations are given for covert surveillance, the use of covert human intelligence sources and, even rarer still, the acquisition and disclosure of communications data.

3.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

3.1 Background documents

Report to the Council's Policy and Development Committee –15.02.01

3.2 Statutes and Statutory Instruments

- (a) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- (b) Human Rights Act 1998
- (c) Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- (d) Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010
- (e) Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- (f) Investigatory Powers Act 2016
- (g) General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- (h) Data Protection Act 2018

3.3 Guidance

- (a) Explanatory Notes to RIPA
- (b) Code of Practice for covert surveillance and property interference
- (c) Code of Practice for the use of covert human intelligence sources

All Codes of Practice are currently available on the Home Office Web Site
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ripa-codes>

4.0 SCOPE

4.1 The Act provides a regime of primary legislation and Codes of Practice, which divide covert investigation techniques into categories distinguished (to an extent) by the degree of intrusion involved. This procedure applies to all investigation and surveillance that require an authorisation under RIPA.

4.2 This policy document relates to the **use of directed surveillance and covert human intelligence sources (CHIS)**. It does not cover the acquisition and disclosure of Communications Data (CD) as this engages an entirely separate procedure under The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) which governs how law enforcement agencies use the investigatory powers available to them, in relation to the lawful acquisition of CD. Independent Authorisation for the acquisition of CD is through the new Office for Communications Data Authorisations (OCDA). All applications for CD must be made via an Accredited Officer known as a Single Point of Contact (SPoC) who has passed a Home Office approved course. All Councils must use the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) as their SPoC. All applications to access CD will be made through NAFN via their online application service. The introduction of OCDA means the acquisition of CD by Council officers no longer requires judicial approval.

Guidance must be sought from Legal Services before any decision is taken to seek authority for the acquisition of CD.

4.3 This policy does not cover intrusive surveillance, because local authorities are not allowed to do this. Intrusive surveillance is the covert (i.e. secret) surveillance of anything taking place:

- in residential premises or
- a private car and
- involves the presence of an individual on the premises, or in the vehicle, or
- is carried out by means of a surveillance device.

4.3 RIPA sets out the purposes for which directed surveillance and CHIS may be used, and who should authorise the use.

Authorisation under RIPA gives lawful authority for the use of covert methods of obtaining information, provided there is compliance with the statutory requirements and procedures. Obtaining an authorisation will ensure that the action is carried out in accordance with law and subject to stringent safeguards against abuse. It will also make the action less vulnerable to challenge under the Human Rights Act 1998.

4.4 For district councils, RIPA does not allow directed surveillance or CHIS at all, except for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or preventing disorder. For example, this means that you cannot carry out these covert activities prior to the service of a statutory notice, unless you believe an offence

- may have been committed,
- may be about to be committed, or
- there could be public disorder.

The only option in any other cases will be to carry out overt – open, non-secretive – surveillance.

4.5 Services likely to conduct investigations covered by RIPA are Planning, Environmental Health, Housing and Audit, however, any officer of the Council (if he or she conducts an investigation using methods or techniques covered RIPA) is required to seek the necessary authorisation, provided always that the purpose of the investigation is one which RIPA says can justify covert surveillance – see 4.4 above.

5.0 ACTIVITY REQUIRING AUTHORISATION

5.1 The following types of activity will require authorisation:

- directed surveillance
- the conduct and use of a CHIS

5.2 Directed surveillance is, in essence, any activity undertaken covertly for the purpose of a specific investigation, in such a way that is likely to result in obtaining information about a person's private life.

5.3 A covert human intelligence source (CHIS) is effectively, an inside informant or undercover officer, (i.e. someone who develops or maintains their relationship with the surveillance target), having the covert purpose of obtaining or accessing information, for the investigator.

6.0 APPLYING FOR AUTHORISATIONS

6.1 Subject to the provisions of paragraphs 6.3 and 8.7 the Directors are Authorising Officers for the Council.

In the absence of an Authorising Officer, applications for authorisation should be submitted to Chief Executive, who also has the delegated authority to issue authorisations in relation to any service of the Council.

Authorising Officers may authorise for any service within the Council.

6.2 Any officer intending to use directed surveillance or a CHIS must apply for authorisation from an Authorising Officer by completing the appropriate application form as set out at **Appendix DS/1 or CHIS/1**.

6.3 Special care needs to be taken with **confidential personal information**. This is information held in confidence, relating to the physical or mental health or spiritual counselling concerning an individual (whether living or dead) who can be identified from it.

Such information, which can include both oral and written communications, is held in confidence if it is held subject to an express or implied undertaking to hold it in confidence or it is subject to a restriction on disclosure or an obligation of confidentiality contained in existing legislation. Examples might include consultations between a health professional and a patient, or information from a patient's medical records. This also includes legally privileged material, journalistic materials and information given to a Member of Parliament.

Owing to the very sensitive nature of this type of information authorisations potentially involving confidential personal information must always be made by the **Chief Executive** or in his/her absence the person who is formally nominated to act on behalf of the Chief Executive.

6.4 When completing the application, always include a full account of the steps to be taken in the investigation, which require authorisation.

7.0 GRANTING OF AUTHORISATIONS FOR DIRECTED SURVEILLANCE

7.1 Section 28 of RIPA provides that '*a person shall not grant authorisation for directed surveillance unless he believes that the authorisation is:*

(a) necessary for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime, or of preventing disorder involving a crime; and

the authorised surveillance is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by it. '

There is a **crime** threshold to be reached, i.e. the criminal offence:

- is or would be punishable (whether on summary conviction or on indictment) by a maximum term of at least 6 months of imprisonment, or
- it arises from the underage sale of alcohol, tobacco, or nicotine inhaling products.

Authorising Officer

7.2 The Authorising Officer, in determining whether the surveillance is proportionate, will give particular consideration to any collateral intrusion on, or interference with, the privacy of persons other than the subject(s) of the surveillance.

Such consideration of proportionality must involve:

- **balancing** the size and scope of the proposed activity against the gravity and extent of the perceived crime or harm;
- **explaining** how and why the methods to be adopted will cause the least possible intrusion on the subject and others;
- **considering** whether the activity is an appropriate use of the legislation and a reasonable way, having considered all reasonable alternatives, of obtaining the information sought;
- **evidencing**, as far as reasonably practicable, what other methods had been considered and why they were not implemented, or have been implemented unsuccessfully.

The Home Office Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference has the following to say on the issue of proportionality:

"4.5 if the activities are deemed necessary on...the statutory grounds, the person granting the authorisation... must also believe that they are proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by carrying them out. This involves balancing the seriousness of the intrusion into the privacy of the subject of the operation (or any other person who may be affected) against the need for the activity in investigative and operational terms.

4.6 The authorisation will not be proportionate if it is excessive in the overall circumstances of the case. Each action authorised should bring an expected

benefit to the investigation or operation and should not be disproportionate or arbitrary. The fact that a suspected offence may be serious will not alone render intrusive actions proportionate. Similarly, an offence may be so minor that any deployment of covert techniques would be disproportionate.

No activity should be considered proportionate if the information which is sought could reasonably be obtained by other less intrusive means.”

7.3 Authorisations must be given in writing.

It is possible that Authorising Officers may face cross-examination in court about the authorisation sometime after it is granted, and memories fade. It is therefore important that a full written record of what they are being asked to authorise, appears on the application form. If in doubt, Authorising Officers should ask for more detail.

7.4 Authorising Officers should not be responsible for authorising their own activities.

7.5 All RIPA authorisations must be approved by a Magistrate before an authorisation becomes effective and directed surveillance is undertaken, or a CHIS deployed. .

7.6 **Duration of Authorisations and Reviews**

An authorisation in writing ceases to have effect at the end of a period of 3 months beginning with the day on which it took effect, e.g. an authorisation starting 1st January would come to an end on 31st March.

Regular reviews of authorisations should be undertaken. The results of the review should be recorded on **Appendix DS/2** and a copy filed on the central record of authorisations. If the surveillance provides access to confidential information or involves collateral intrusion, more frequent reviews will be required. The authorising officer should determine at the time of giving the initial authorisation, how often a review should take place (and this may also be subsequently reviewed).

7.7 **Renewals**

7.7.1 While an authorisation is still in force, the Authorising Officer can renew it if he considers this necessary for the purpose for which the authorisation was originally given. The authorisation will be renewed in writing for a further period, beginning with the day when the authorisation would have expired, but for the renewal, and can be for a period up to 3 months.

7.7.2 Applications requesting renewal of an authorisation are to be made on the appropriate form as set out at **Appendix DS/3** and submitted to the Authorising Officer.

The renewal must be granted before the original authorisation ceases to have effect.

7.7.3 Applications for renewal will record whether it is the first renewal; and if not, every occasion on which the authorisation has previously been renewed. Applications must also detail:

- the significant changes to the information in the initial authorisation
- the reasons why it is necessary to continue with the surveillance

- the content and value to the investigation or operation, of the information so far obtained by the surveillance
- The results of regular reviews of the investigation or operation.

7.7.4 When a directed surveillance authorisation requires renewal, the renewal must be approved by a magistrates' court in the same manner as an initial authorisation.

7.8 Cancellations

The person who granted or last renewed the authorisation (or other person with Authority under this policy) **MUST** cancel it if he is satisfied that the directed surveillance no longer meets the criteria for authorisation.

Requests for cancellation will be made on the appropriate form as set out at **Appendix DS/4** and submitted to the Authorising Officer for authorisation of the cancellation. All directed surveillance cancellations must include directions for the management and storage of any surveillance product.

8.0 GRANTING OF AUTHORISATION FOR THE CONDUCT AND USE OF COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES (CHIS)

8.1 The same requirements of necessity and proportionality exist for the granting of these authorisations as with directed surveillance.

8.2 Additionally, the Authorising Officer shall not grant an authorisation unless he /she believes that arrangements exist which satisfy the following requirements:

- there will at all times be an officer with day to day responsibility for dealing with the source and the source's security and welfare
- there will at all times be an officer who will have general oversight of the use made of the source
- there will at all times be an officer with responsibility for maintaining a record of the information supplied by the source
- records which disclose the identity of the source will not be available to persons except to the extent that there is a need for access to them to be made available

8.3 Similarly, before authorising the use or conduct of the source, the Authorising Officer must be satisfied that the conduct/use is proportionate to what the use or conduct of the source seeks to achieve, taking into account the likely degree of intrusion into the privacy of those potentially effected, and for the privacy of persons other than those who are directly the subjects of the operation or investigation.

Measures should be taken, wherever practicable, to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those not directly connected with the operation.

8.4 Particular care is required where people would expect a high degree of privacy, or where, as a consequence of the authorisation, 'confidential material' is likely to be obtained.

- 8.5 Consideration is also required to be given to any adverse impact on community confidence that may result from the use or conduct of a source or information, obtained from that source.
- 8.6 Additionally, the Authorising Officer should make an assessment of any risk to a source, in carrying out the conduct in the proposed authorisation.
- 8.7 Authorisation for the use of a CHIS must be given in writing.

Only the Chief Executive (or in his/her absence the person who is formally nominated to act as the Chief Executive) may authorise the use of a juvenile or vulnerable CHIS.

- 8.8 Ideally, the Authorising Officers should not be responsible for authorising their own activities e.g. those in which they themselves are to act as a source, or in tasking a source. However, it is recognised that this will not always be possible, especially in the case of small departments. Authorisations must be approved by a Magistrate (see paragraph 7.5).

The Solicitor employed by the Council will arrange the appointment before the Magistrate(s) and explain the procedure to the Authorising Officer. The Solicitor employed by the Council and the Authorising Officer will be required to attend before the Magistrate(s) to seek the Magistrate's approval to the authorisation.

- 8.9 An application for authorisation for the use or conduct of a CHIS will be made on the appropriate form, as set out at **Appendix CHIS/1** and must record:
 - Details of the purpose for which the source will be tasked, or deployed.
 - The reasons why the authorisation is necessary in the particular case and the grounds on which authorisation is sought (e.g. for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or disorder).
 - Where a specific investigation or operation is involved, details of that investigation or operation.
 - Details of what the source would be tasked to do.
 - Details of potential collateral intrusion and why the intrusion is justified.
 - Details of any confidential material that might be obtained as a consequence of the authorisation.
 - The reasons why the authorisation is considered proportionate to what it seeks to achieve.
 - The level of authorisation required.
 - A subsequent record of whether authorisation was given or refused by whom and the time and date.

8.10 **Duration of Authorisations**

A written authorisation, unless renewed, will cease to have effect at the end of a period of twelve months beginning with the day on which it took effect except in the case of a juvenile CHIS which has a duration of 4 months . Oral authorisations will, unless renewed, last 72 hours.

8.11 **Renewals**

As with authorisations for directed surveillance, authorisations for the conduct and use of CHIS can be renewed, the same criteria applying. However before an Authorising Officer renews an authorisation, he must be satisfied that a review has been carried out of the use of a CHIS and that the results of the review have been considered.

Applications for renewal must be made on the appropriate form as set out at **Appendix CHIS/3** and submitted to the Authorising Officer. However, an application for renewal should not be made until shortly before the authorisation period is coming to an end.

8.12 An authorisation may be renewed more than once – provided it continues to meet the criteria for authorisation.

8.13 When CHIS authorisation requires renewal, the renewal must be approved by a magistrates' court in the same manner as an initial authorisation

8.13 **Reviews**

Regular reviews of authorisations should be undertaken. The results of the review should be recorded on **Appendix CHIS/2** and a copy filed on the central record of authorisations.

If the surveillance provides access to confidential information, or involves collateral intrusion, frequent reviews will be required. The Authorising Officer should determine how often a review should take place.

8.14 Before an Authorising Officer renews an authorisation he must be satisfied that a review has been carried out of:

- The use made of the source during the period authorised
- The tasks given to the source
- The information obtained from the use or conduct of the source

8.15 If the Authorising Officer is satisfied that the criteria necessary for the initial authorisation continue to be met, he may renew it in writing as required.

When CHIS authorisation requires renewal, the renewal must be approved by a magistrates' court in the same manner as an initial authorisation

8.16 **Cancellations**

The officer who granted or renewed the authorisation **MUST** cancel it if he/she is satisfied that

- the use or conduct of the source no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation, or

- that the arrangements for the source's case no longer exist

8.17 Requests for cancellation will be made on the appropriate form, as set out at **Appendix CHIS/4** and submitted to the Authorising Officer for authorisation of the cancellation.

All CHIS cancellations must include directions for the management and storage of any surveillance product.

8.18 Management Responsibility

The day to day contact between the Council and the source is to be conducted by the handler, who will usually be an officer below the rank of the Authorising Officer.

No vulnerable person or young person under the age of 18 should be used as a source.

8.19 Security and Welfare

Account must be taken of the security and welfare of the source. The Authorising Officer, prior to granting authorisation, should ensure that an assessment is carried out to determine the risk to the source of any task and the likely consequences should the target know the role of the CHIS.

8.20 Confidential Material

Where the likely consequence of the directed surveillance or conduct of a source would be for any person to acquire knowledge of confidential material, the deployment of a source should be subject to special authorisation. In these cases , the proposed course of conduct must be referred to the Head of Paid Service or (in his absence) a Director for a decision as to whether authorisation may be granted.

8.21 Monitoring of personal information online

The study of an individual's on-line presence may engage privacy considerations requiring RIPA authorisation. The attached annex gives guidance on the monitoring of information online, such as social media.

9.0 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

9.1 Each Service shall keep in a dedicated place

- a record of all authorisations sought
- a record of authorisations granted and refused
- applications for the granting, renewal and cancellation of authorisations

9.2 The records will be confidential and will be retained for a period of 3 years from the ending of the authorisation.

9.3 Each Authorising Officer shall send original copies of all applications/authorisations, reviews, renewals and cancellations to the RIPA Co-ordinating Officer, who will maintain a central record of all authorisations. The report will include details of the level of compliance with the requirements for authorisation.

9.4 Authorising Officers will ensure compliance with the appropriate data protection requirements and any relevant codes of practice produced by individual authorities in the handling and storage of material.

9.5 Where material is obtained by surveillance which is:

- wholly unrelated to a criminal or other investigation, or
- to the person subject of the surveillance, and
- there is no reason to believe it will be relevant to future civil or criminal proceeding

it should be destroyed immediately. The decision to retain or destroy material will be taken by the relevant Authorising Officer.

10.0 AWARENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THE ACT AND TRAINING

It shall be the responsibility of each Service Manager, or an Authorised Officer for that service, to ensure that all staff involved or likely to be involved in investigations, are adequately trained so as to be aware of the requirements and implications of the Act.

It shall be the responsibility of the Senior Responsible Officer with the assistance of the RIPA Co-ordinating Officer to ensure that all relevant officers have received appropriate training and are aware of the requirements and implications of the Act.

11.0 SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER AND RIPA CO-ORDINATING OFFICER

The Monitoring Officer is the Senior Responsible Officer for the Council whose role is:

- (i) to be responsible for RIPA training throughout the Council;
- (ii) to ensure that all Authorising Officers are of an appropriate standard; and
- (iii) to be responsible for raising RIPA awareness throughout the Council.

The Senior Responsible Officer will nominate a suitable officer employed by the Council as the RIPA Co-ordinating Officer, whose role is:

- (i) to collate all original applications and authorisations, reviews, renewals and cancellations;
- (ii) to keep the Central Record of Authorisations; and
- (iii) to notify the Leader of the Council of the receipt of authorisations from Authorising Officers.

12.0 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Cabinet will consider reports from the IPCO. The Cabinet should also consider reports on the use of the powers under the Act on a regular basis, which shall be at least every year, to ensure that it is being used consistently with this policy.

Members of the Council will not however be involved in making decisions on specific authorisations.

Inventory of Surveillance Equipment held by MDDC

None as at 1 December 2020

Standard Operating Procedure for use of Surveillance Equipment

The Equipment should be stored, when not in use, in a locked cabinet under the control of the Senior Responsible Officer.

Any Officer of the Council considering using the Equipment for covert surveillance in a public place must make a written request to the Senior Responsible Officer or the RIPA Co-ordinating Officer, who will consider and decide whether the proposed use of the Equipment is appropriate, bearing in mind the provisions of RIPA and the associated codes of practice.

Any Officer who uses the Equipment to record digital images may only view such images once captured, and shall not download them on to a computer or other electronic storage facility unless this is first agreed by the Senior Responsible Officer and/or the RIPA Co-ordinating Officer.

Mid Devon District Council

Annex 1 to the Council's RIPA Policy

Open Source Internet Research (OSIR) and RIPA

Background

The internet enables access to a vast amount of information which can be useful to the Council in carrying out its statutory functions as well as engaging with the public.

Open Source Internet Research (OSIR) is the name given to viewing, collecting processing, and analysing publicly available personal information stored on the internet, including on Social Media. Social Media in this Annex means social networking websites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, online communities, and blogs.

This Annex to the Council's RIPA Policy covers the use of OSIR in investigations. Advice should be taken from HR should an investigation involve a member of staff. Where officers are carrying out OSIR they must be aware of the Council's RIPA Policy and the information contained in this annex.

Using OSIR raises the issue of whether RIPA authorisation must be obtained. This policy indicates when RIPA authorisation should be obtained.

If RIPA authorisation is required the Council's RIPA policy must be complied with.

1.0. Open Source Internet Research (OSIR)

- 1.1 OSIR is the collection, evaluation and analysis of materials from sources available to the public, whether on payment or otherwise, to use as intelligence or evidence, within investigations.
- 1.2 OSIR is a powerful tool against crime. MDDC needs to ensure that any collection of information from the internet for an enforcement purpose is conducted in such a way that the integrity of any evidence gained is maintained.
- 1.3 MDDC staff must consider whether their evidence or intelligence gathering is likely to interfere with a person's right to respect for their family life (Human Rights Act 1998 - Article 8) and, if so obtain appropriate authorisation under the RIPA for their research. Where RIPA does not apply, a privacy impact statement may still be required.

2. General principles

- 2.1 Online communication via the internet has become the preferred method of communication between individuals, within social groups or indeed with anyone in the world with internet access.
- 2.2 Such communication may involve web sites, social networks (e.g. Facebook), chat rooms, information networks (e.g. twitter) and/or web based electronic mail.
- 2.3 Just because other people may also be able to see it, does not necessarily mean that a person has no expectation of privacy in relation to information posted on the

internet. Think of it as similar to a private conversation between diners in a restaurant – you would not expect other diners to listen too closely or to make recordings.

2.4. Online research and investigative techniques capable of interfering with a person's Article 8 rights should be used only when necessary and proportionate.

3.0 Categories of OSIR

This Annex focuses on four broad categories of OSIR, to give an indication when RIPA authorisation is required.

Category 1

Category 1 is viewing publicly available postings, or websites where the person viewing does not have to

- register a profile,
- answer a question, or
- enter correspondence

in order to view the posts, e.g. a trader's website.

There must be a low expectation of privacy and no RIPA authorisation would normally be required to view or record these pages. However, repeated visits over time, which amount to monitoring an individual's on-line presence, will require RIPA authorisation.

How a person runs his/her business can be private information even if they do so in the public domain.

No monitoring of a person's online presence can take place without RIPA authorisation. The exception to this is where prior notification is given to the person that the Council is monitoring that person's online presence; this would then be overt monitoring and would not require RIPA authorisation.

All visits to such websites for the purposes of any investigations must be recorded and be available for inspection by the Senior Responsible Officer and/or the Co-ordinating Officer - see Part 12 of the RIPA Policy for more details about these roles.

Guidance approved by the Senior Responsible Officer on record keeping of viewings will be distributed by the Co-ordinating Officer and must be adhered to.

Using test purchases in an investigation does not necessarily trigger the need for RIPA authorisation but in each case advice must be sought beforehand from the Co-ordinating Officer

Category 2

Category 2 is viewing postings on social networks where the viewer has to register a profile, but there is not otherwise a restriction on access. This would include Facebook where there is no need to be accepted as a “friend” to view. E.g. a trader has a “shop window” on Facebook advertising business and products

There are differences between this and Category 1.

The person who posts information or runs such a website may reasonably expect viewers to work within the terms and conditions of the website. Viewings using a fictitious identity, or a “covert account” require RIPA authorisation. No such viewings may take place without RIPA authorisation. Viewing conducted in an overt manner do not require RIPA authorisation.

Viewings can be conducted in an overt manner via an account profile which uses the officer’s correct name and email address (which should be a middevon.gov.uk).

All viewings for investigations, regardless of whether RIPA authorised or not, will need to be recorded and available for inspection by the Senior Responsible Officer and/or the Co-ordinating Officer.

Guidance approved by the Senior Responsible Officer on record keeping of viewings will be distributed by the Co-ordinating Officer and must be adhered to.

Category 3

Category 3 is viewing postings on social networks which require a “friend” or similar status to view.

Viewings using a covert account or fictitious identity will require RIPA authorisation. No such viewings may take place without RIPA authorisation.

Viewing conducted by using the officer’s correct name and email address (which should be a middevon.gov.uk) to acquire “friend status” may still require a RIPA authorisation.

Officers will need to be sure that their access is being granted as a representative of the Council.

If officers are not sure that access is being granted to the officer as a representative of the Council, then RIPA authorisation **must** be obtained before such viewings take place.

All viewings for investigations, regardless of whether RIPA authorised or not, will need to be recorded and available for inspection by the Senior Responsible Officer and/or the Co-ordinating Officer.

Guidance approved by the Senior Responsible Officer on record keeping of viewings will be distributed by the Co-ordinating Officer and must be adhered to.

Category 4

Category 4 is the use of sophisticated OSIR tools and techniques including active search, reverse engineering and/or tools or filters, etc., to obtain information on an individual on the wider web. The use of such tools is likely to involve monitoring an individual and RIPA authorisation **must** be obtained before use

Covert Facebook accounts and similar covert social media accounts

Use of such covert accounts requires RIPA authorisation. Even with RIPA authorisation, use of such covert accounts may be judged to be unlawful because the companies' terms and conditions do not allow such covert accounts.

RIPA authorisation is not in itself sufficient to legally permit breaching a company's terms and conditions. Advice must be sought from the Co-ordinating Officer.

Procedures/instructions

Senior managers may issue instructions and procedure notes to provide further safeguards in using OSIR

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Report for:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	13 January 2026
Subject:	Leisure Pricing Strategy 2026
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Josh Wright
Responsible Officer:	Dean Emery – Head of Service Revenues, Benefits & Leisure
Exempt:	
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	None
Reason for Report:	Proposals to change the Leisure fees and charges from April 1 st , 2026
Recommendation:	<p>That Cabinet approve a freeze on membership prices for the forthcoming year to support affordability and encourage sustained participation, while increasing pay as you go tariffs in line with inflation and market rates. The charges proposed are in section 3.10 of this report.</p>
<p>This report was noted by the Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement PDG</p>	
1.0	Introduction/Background
1.1	Active Mid Devon is a non-statutory service, operating centres in; Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton. The assets include Artificial Turf Pitches, Fitness Studios, Multipurpose Studios, Sports Halls, Squash Courts, Swimming Pools, Teaching Pools, Tennis Courts, Training Rooms and Saunas.
1.2	In July 2025, Leisure consultants, TA6 (part of Alliance Leisure), were appointed to undertake an independent pricing review for our Leisure service. This report reviews the pricing strategy for 2026. TA6 services are utilised annually to maintain consistency. Active Mid Devon was keen to

understand how current pricing compares to the wider public leisure sector and its offer against local competition.

- 1.3 2025/26 has been successful as was 2024/25, The leisure service has reduced it operating cost by £ **543K**.
- 1.4 The service to date has circa 4,500 adult members and 2,200 junior members, in addition to walk-in pay and play customers.
- 1.5 In 2024/25, more than 600,000 visits were recorded primarily attending the fitness, swimming pool and outdoor activities. The service also works with more than 60 schools, clubs and organisations that access the swimming pools and 'dry' areas such as sports halls, studios, racquet courts and artificial-turf pitches. In the financial year 2025/26 targeted an annual income of circa £3.7m operating with an establishment of 60 full-time equivalent roles deployed across approximately 162 team members.
- 1.6 A Latent demand report was commissioned from Integratis consultants. Their report confirmed active members within a 10-mile radius of our facilities, highlighting the strong potential for engagement and growth in the area, particularly Active Tiverton. The report measures how many people are present in each location and how likely they are to participate in or use our services. This data helps us see not just the size of the market, but also the strength of local demand. Having this level of insight provides confidence in our pricing decisions, ensuring we are aligning our offer with genuine customer interest and positioning ourselves to capture market opportunities effectively.

2.0 Pricing Review and Future Strategy

- 2.1 The current Active Mid Devon monthly membership price of All-Inclusive membership £41/ Gym or Swim membership £35, is broadly comparable to those shown in the table (paragraph 2.2).

2.2

Leisure Service	All Inclusive Membership Price
Local Authority	
LED Honiton	£44.00
Exeter Leisure, St Sidwell's Point, Exeter	£39.00
Everyone Active, Taunton	£47.99
Local Competitors	
SNAP Fitness, Tiverton	£37.99
OJ Gyms, Tiverton	£35.00
HD Fitness, Cullompton	£50.99

*The prices of these leisure providers may see an increase in either January or April 2026.

2.3 Current Membership Base.

Membership Type (Direct Debits)	Totals (based on August 2025 figures)
Lifestyle - All Inclusive	2,414
Lifestyle – All Inclusive Concessionary	193
Lifestyle - Gym	878
Lifestyle – Aqua	388
Lifestyle - Junior	2,273
Lifestyle – Junior Concessionary	116

*this only refers to our primary membership types, not all of the memberships we offer.

3.0 Proposed Leisure Service Pricing Changes.

- 3.1 **Membership Fees.** Membership fees to be frozen at current rates for 2026/27. Active Mid Devon recognises the competitive threat posed by new entrants to the market and to support affordability. Freezing fees reflects a retention-first approach and demonstrates value for members.
- 3.2 **Concessionary memberships Fees.** Membership fees will be frozen at current rates. Active Mid Devon will maintain its commitment to concessionary discounts, ensuring affordability for priority groups, while aligning with the broader strategy to standardise percentage reductions.
- 3.3 With membership prices remaining unchanged, our primary growth driver will be to improve retention. To support this, we are exploring the introduction of AI solutions to streamline customer interactions, particularly around cancellations and enquiries. By enhancing responsiveness and reducing friction in these processes, we aim to improve member satisfaction, minimise churn, and create more sustainable growth without relying on the membership price increases.
- 3.4 **Pay As You Go.** Pay as you go fees will rise this year, as advised by consultants. Evidence shows there is scope for increases without negatively impacting casual participation. This provides a revenue boost while protecting core membership pricing.
- 3.5 **Concessionary Discounts.** We are pleased to confirm that we will continue offering concessionary discounts to make our services more accessible for individuals on lower incomes. This includes 20% off memberships and 25% off pay as you go sessions, ensuring that everyone can enjoy and benefit from what we provide. Our aim is to keep our facilities and activities open to as many people as possible, supporting affordability and inclusivity within our community.
- 3.6 **Memberships.** All Adult and Junior membership fees will be frozen at current rates.

3.7 **Pay As You Go Fees.** Charges will be increased by 3% on 01/04/2026, (paragraph 3.10).

3.8 **Concessionary Pay As You Go Fees (25% Discount).** Charges will be increased by 3% on 01/04/2026 (paragraph 3.10).

3.9 **Table of Proposed Pay As You Go Fees.**

3.10 **Table.**

Activity	Current Price 25/26	Percentage Increase %	Proposed Price 26/27	Price	LED 25/26 Prices
Adult					
Fitness Studio	£8.40	3.00%	£8.65	£8.65	£8.75
Fitness Studio Concession	£6.80	3.00%	£7.00	£7.00	£6.60
Fitness Class	£7.90	3.00%	£8.14	£8.15	£8.50
Fitness Class Concession	£6.30	3.00%	£6.49	£6.50	£6.40
Swim	£6.30	3.00%	£6.49	£6.50	£6.50
Swim Concession	£5.10	3.00%	£5.25	£5.25	£4.90
Junior					
Teen Gym	£5.80	3.00%	£5.97	£6.00	£5.50
Teen Gym Concession	£4.70	3.00%	£4.84	£4.85	N/A
Teen Fitness Class	£5.80	3.00%	£5.97	£6.00	£5.50
Teen Fitness Class Concession	£4.70	3.00%	£4.84	£4.85	N/A
Swim	£3.70	3.00%	£3.81	£3.85	£3.90
Swim Concession	£3.00	3.00%	£3.09	£3.10	£2.95

* LED will see an increase in April 2026.

3.11 **Pay As You Go Pricing Income.** In 2024/25, income from pay as you go activity, including fitness studio, classes, and casual use totalled £214,588. Based on last year's income, applying a 3% price increase across these activities would generate approximately £6,500 in additional income. This modest adjustment would help offset inflationary pressures while maintaining affordability and accessibility for casual users.

3.12 **Care Leavers.** We will continue to offer care experienced young people (up to the age of 25) a leisure membership at an effective 100% discount rate as part of a wider package of support intended to provide them with the best possible start in their adult lives. This concession will be applicable to a relatively small number of people, and identification will be possible via existing channels linked to other support mechanisms provided by DCC and MDDC in collaboration. However, the implementation of these accords with

advice given by the national adviser on behalf of the Department for Education, and it is considered vital to ensure we meet our corporate parenting duties that we provide access should they be able to make use of our facilities. We currently have 6 care leavers' memberships.

3.13 **Unpaid Pilot for Devon Carers.** To ensure that unpaid carers are supported and recognised for the vital role they play, we will continue to offer a discounted membership scheme for adult unpaid carers and offering free memberships for unpaid carers under the age of 18. This initiative will help reduce financial barriers, promote inclusion, and provide opportunities for carers to access services, activities, and wellbeing support. By offering this concession, we acknowledge the significant contribution unpaid carers make to their families and communities, while also encouraging them to take time for themselves and benefit from the resources available through membership. We currently have 38 adult unpaid carer memberships and 41 under 18 unpaid carer memberships.

3.14 **Commercial Hire and Series of Lets.** Groups, clubs, schools and organisations access the leisure facilities to operate their own activities. Charges are subject to supply and demand considering commerciality offering of the hirer, commercial programming, and local alternatives for activities such as external pitches. Charges are implemented considering cost of provision and times of access, and potential for increases are considered at the end of each contract period. Individual agreements will be reassessed for the most favourable revenue opportunity considering competition and commercial potential to use our facilities.

3.15 **Financial Position - 2026/27 Budget.** Whilst some additional growth is possible, and this is noted in the latent demand report. Our main priority moving forward will be to sustain current performance while working towards gradually reducing attrition rates across membership base.

To support the proposed price freeze, success will be quantified through measurable improvements in member engagement and retention. The key performance indicators will focus on increasing total membership and reducing member attrition. This will be targeted through an extended length of stay by at least one month.

Targets will be set against current membership numbers, increase in total membership by 5%, based on current yield of £33.00 to generate circa £52k by targeting 7 month length of stay. Targeting an increased length of stay from an average 6 months to 7 months would see an additional £148k based on circa 4500 adult members staying one month longer at a yield of £33.00.

Performance will be managed through Power BI, which will take membership data from our new management system to provide us with a live dashboard on key metrics such as joiners, leavers, average membership duration, and attendance frequency. This will enable us to look at real time monitoring. The monthly Power BI report will summarise our progress against targets, with

quarterly reviews to evaluate the impact of actions taken and refine strategies as needed.

3.16 This pricing strategy for Leisure Services was based on membership figures from September 2025.

Financial Implications: The commercial nature of the industry means Leisure is vulnerable to threats from; competition, substitutions and price sensitivity considering the national current cost of living challenge. Implementation of the changes to fees and charges will drive membership retention and grow income into the organisation for 2026 onwards, whilst marketing strategies strive to increase market share.

Legal Implications: There is a legal obligation to notify customers with direct debits of any changes to their payments with at least 10-day notice. However, we are not increasing these. We are partnering closely with our Communications team to make sure members are fully informed about our pay as you go prices. The good news is that we will be holding prices, giving our members continued value and peace of mind. Together, we are ensuring clear, consistent messaging so everyone understands what this means and can feel confident that their costs won't be changing.

Risk Assessment: The commercial nature of the industry and the cost-of-living crisis means that Active Mid Devon can be vulnerable to threats from; competition, substitutions and price sensitivity. It could also exclude certain priority groups the service is trying to encourage to use the facilities and get active, however the pricing strategy is trying to minimise the impact on these groups as much as possible. The service plans to ensure the marketing message around any price increases showcases the value attached to the service with the service's unique selling points to ensure we continue to grow, and maintain, participation levels at Active Mid Devon.

Impact on Climate Change: None with regards to price increase, however our centres are run on 100% renewable energy supported by solar panels.

Equalities Impact Assessment: Active Mid Devon continues to support those members of the community accessing means tested benefits via Concessionary discounting to pay and play fees and charges, in addition to discounted membership opportunities. Corporate parenting is a legal obligation. The inclusion of a product for care leavers reflects advice given by the national adviser currently working alongside the Devon system to help move our offering to care experienced young people out of its current 'inadequate' rating.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The details of this report and the delivery of the Active Mid Devon service directly contributes to Corporate Plan objectives: "2.3: We will support the health, wellbeing, and safety of our residents"; "We will maintain our leisure services and ensure they are fit for the future."

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Date: 12.11.25

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 12.11.25

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 12.11.25

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 14 November 2025

Cabinet member notified: (yes)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Andy Mackie (Operations Manager)

Email: amackie@middevon.gov.uk

Background papers: TA6 part of Alliance Leisure Membership Pricing Review 2025
(based of membership figures for July 2025) – Confidential report

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**Report for:****Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 13 th January 2026
Subject:	Tennis to Padel Court
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Josh Wright
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Exempt:	Appendix B – Part II Part 2- Commercially sensitive
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix A – Part 1 (images and description). Exempt Appendix B – Part II (Financials. References of prospective lease holder

Reason for Report:

Proposal to convert existing tennis courts at Active Tiverton and Active Crediton into padel and pickleball facilities, working in partnership with a third-party operator under a lease. This includes a proposal to relocate the tennis courts to Amory Park, maintaining provision while modernising facilities.

Recommendation:**That Cabinet approves:**

1. To convert all three tennis courts at Active Tiverton to Padel courts.
2. To convert one tennis court at Active Crediton to one Padel court and one Pickleball court.
3. To relocate the Tennis courts to Amory Park.
4. To finalise any due diligence/obtaining of references deemed necessary before the legal agreement is finalised.

5. That Delegated Authority be granted to the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) officer and Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to sign and approve the legal agreement.

1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Active Mid Devon is a non-statutory service, operating centres in; Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton. The assets include Artificial Turf Pitches, Fitness Studios, Multipurpose Studios, Sports Halls, Squash Courts, Swimming Pools, Teaching Pools, Tennis Courts, Training Rooms and Saunas.
- 1.2 2025/26 has been successful to date, as was 2024/25. The leisure service has reduced its operating cost by £543K.
- 1.3 The service to date has circa 4,500 adult members and 2,200 junior members, in addition to walk-in pay and play customers.
- 1.4 In the financial year 2024/25, more than 600,000 visits were recorded primarily attending the fitness, swimming pool and outdoor pitches. The service also works with more than 60 schools, clubs and organisations that access the swimming pools and 'dry' areas such as sports halls, studios, racquet courts and artificial-turf pitches. The financial year 2025/26 targeted an annual income of circa £3.7m operating with an establishment of 60 full-time equivalent roles deployed across approximately 162 team members.
- 1.5 Mid Devon District Council (the Council) is committed to reducing the level of subsidy required to operate its leisure services while continuing to improve and expand the offer available to residents. To achieve this, we must explore innovative ways to diversify our sporting provision and introduce activities that appeal to a broader audience. By embracing alternative sports and developing new revenue streams, the Council can generate sustainable income, enhance community wellbeing, and ensure our facilities remain relevant and financially resilient for the future.

2.0 Padel

- 2.1 According to the *Global Padel Report 2025* by Playtomic and Price WaterHouse Cooper (PwC), padel is one of the fastest-growing sports worldwide, with over 35 million players and court numbers projected to reach 70,000 globally by 2026. In the UK, growth has accelerated significantly, with hundreds of new courts installed and strong demand from operators and investors. This surge reflects padel's broad appeal and social nature, making it a key opportunity for modernising facilities and attracting new users.
- 2.2 In June 2025 officers met with a third-party investor to explore options to convert all three Tennis courts at Active Tiverton to seven padel courts, with further plans to create a cover structure for all year-round use. One tennis

court at Active Crediton was reviewed with this proposal and would see a conversion to incorporate one padel court and one pickleball court. The proposal would be under a lease agreement.

2.3 Padel has been adopted by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and as such is governed by them. This is testament to the growing popularity of the sport.

3.0 Relocation of Tennis facilities

3.1 The Operations Manager and Centre Manager from Active Mid Devon met with the Tiverton Tennis Club Chair and Secretary for introductory discussions on the topic of relocation of Tennis to Amory Park and to establish how we might best accommodate their needs in the event we move forward with the proposal. This discussion was positive and there is an appetite to work together to ensure the best outcome for all. Provisional talks with a representative from Crediton Tennis Club was also positive, with real support for an extended racquet sport offer.

3.2 Amory Park has a hardcourt area currently underutilised and in need of work. It sits adjacent to the football fields and clubhouse, and both need investment. The investment is estimated at up to £300k for the entire area, including fencing, lighting and club house improvements. Whilst the relocation of three tennis courts alone does not amount to this, it could be considered a positive opportunity to revitalise the entire area as part of one project. The estimated costs of which are below and are based on prudent estimates and soft market research. Working alongside other stakeholders will determine a refined scope of work

Table of estimated costs	
Prep, pierce and chase existing macadam, overlay with new porous macadam surface to achieve better levels of porosity	£108,000
colour spray with acrylic standard colour options including line marking	£31,000
Floodlight improvements	£40,000
Fencing - secure & gates improvements	£30,000
Pavillion changing room improvements and separation	£40,000
CCTV	£10,000
Contingency	£40,000
	£299,000

3.3 The key item to address was parking facilities at Amory Park for which further exploratory work should be undertaken.

3.4 There is approx. £150k in Ear Marked Reserves for Amory Park. This figure is not included in the table found in 3.1.

4.0 Proposal

- 4.1 To convert all three tennis courts at Active Tiverton to padel courts.
- 4.2 To convert one tennis court at Active Crediton to one padel court and one pickleball court.
- 4.3 To relocate the tennis courts to Amory Park.
- 4.4 To finalise any due diligence/obtaining of references deemed necessary before the legal agreement is finalised.
- 4.5 That Delegated Authority be granted to the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) officer and Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to sign and approve the legal agreement.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The tennis courts are underutilised and generate little revenue. They are not well booked by existing members and club use brings in little revenue
- 5.2 Both Active Tiverton and Crediton's courts need resurfacing which alone represents a large capital outlay. Active Crediton's remaining three courts can be resurfaced at a lower cost and better quality as part of a maintenance cycle, improving the provision of Tennis at Crediton, with a much improved and unique racquet sport offering. Active Tiverton would avoid any resurfacing cost for the duration of the lease.
- 5.3 Padel stands out as a sociable and inclusive sport that brings people together across ages and skill levels. Its accessible format and emphasis on teamwork make it easy for newcomers to join and enjoy. With rapid global growth and increasing popularity, padel is more than just a game—it's a gateway to an active, healthy lifestyle, fostering community, fitness, and fun in equal measure.
- 5.4 A commercial lease agreement offers a guaranteed income for the Council, reduced resurfacing costs over the term of the lease and more protection from competition.
- 5.5 Amory Park is underused and in need of work to lift the area. It generates no income from the hard court. A LTA 'Club Spark' system could be adopted to enable bookings online with access granted by a code, supporting year-round revenue generation with the ability to open it up for free of charge for community use times.
- 5.6 There will be joint working with all parties to ensure a smooth transition to Amory Park, to mitigate any down time in Tennis play, and this has already been considered in early discussions with the Tennis Club at Tiverton.

- 5.7 This proposal offers a unique opportunity to grow the leisure offering in Mid Devon, delivering an innovative new and popular sport, securing a significant guaranteed income annually, raising the profile of Active Mid Devon and the Council and reducing the subsidy of the leisure services.
- 5.8 The investment in Amory Park represents an opportunity to do something meaningful with a piece of land designed for sport, but underused, while helping to generate revenue.

Financial Implications:

The full up-front costs of court conversion would be met by the lessee, with the annual lease being agreed as part of the proposal that would see a significant revenue amount being returned to the council each year. This will continue to maximise the cost-effectiveness of the leisure service, alongside opening up a popular new activity for local communities.

The associated Amory Park projected spend would be £300k. Whilst the relocated Tennis provision alone only accounts for approximately £80k, the opportunity should be seized to regenerate the entire area, introducing other revenue streams and activities.

We would likely see an increase in footfall at both sites, secondary sales and membership revenue of being home to the fastest growing sport in Europe. This additional revenue from secondary sales and membership has not been factored into the return on investment (ROI) table (found Appendix A) in order to give a prudent ROI based on known rental income and conservative Tennis income.

Annually the Council generates circa £12k in revenue from the tennis courts at Active Tiverton and Active Crediton combined. Based on booking numbers from April 2025 to December 2025, only 1.85% of the total membership base had played Tennis at Active Tiverton.

Amory Park currently generates no revenue from its hard standing, it is open for access but has no line markings or equipment and can be subject to abuse. The relocation of tennis courts there, if income remained, would contribute circa £9k pa of revenue with room for growth. Other areas if let out on a similar operating model could generate an additional circa £10-£15k per year.

Legal Implications:

Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires us to advertise the proposed disposal of public open space and to consider any objections. The revised proposal anticipates that the Executive will authorise the Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience to advertise the disposal and, if no objections are received, to complete the lease. The Council must also be satisfied that the rent and revenue

share represent the best consideration reasonably obtainable. A formal valuation and social-value assessment will be required.

A planning application will be required because padel courts have 6 m-high end walls. Any canopy structure in the future will also require planning consent. The Council retains responsibility as planning authority for determining the application and must act impartially. If the project proceeds, conditions may be imposed concerning lighting, noise, access and community use. The Council should ensure that design complies with Building Regulations, and Sport England guidance.

Repair and maintenance – Consideration will be given to including a full repairing clause into the lease so that the investor / tenant is responsible for repair and maintenance.

The proposal indicates that the investor / tenant seeks a 20-year lease and consideration will also be given to the paying of utilities, obtaining of relevant public liability insurance and meeting of the lifecycle costs.

Equality Act 2010 – The project must ensure reasonable adjustments for disabled users. The proposal promises step-free access and wheelchair padel; these commitments should be binding.

Data protection –The tenant will use the Playtomic booking platform. We will need a data-processing agreement and assurances that Playtomic complies with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data collected from users must not be used for marketing without consent.

Risk Assessment:

The risk is considered low because the conversion costs and operational responsibilities will be borne by the third-party operator under a full repairing and insuring lease. This means the Council is not exposed to financial risk if participation levels do not meet expectations, as rental income is guaranteed regardless of usage. The primary risks relate to potential disruption for existing tennis users and reliance on a third-party operator, which will be mitigated through robust lease terms and relocation of tennis provision to Amory Park. Conversely, the risk of not adopting the proposal is significant: the Council would continue to incur high maintenance and resurfacing costs for underutilised courts, while missing the opportunity to introduce a fast-growing sport, increase participation, and secure a substantial uplift in income.

Impact on Climate Change:

Minor or moderate impact in terms of materials.

No loss of habitat. (No impact.)

Negligible change to rainwater drainage regime. (No impact.)

Currently the courts are hard-standing surfaces with negligible habitat value. There will be conversion / construction to create padel courts on the same areas, comprising sand-dressed artificial turf. We will take steps to make sure the conversion process avoids / minimises waste e.g. removal and disposal of material.

New signage and plastic / Perspex frames will be needed at the courts. This is minor given the scale of leisure service maintenance such as usage and frequency of replacements of signage.

Opportunity to reduce the annual footprint of energy and emissions linked to leisure services. Minor benefit.

No change to the lighting is required at this stage, although in year 2 a planning application for a cover would be sought and at that stage a change of floodlights to install a lower, more efficient LED lighting array would be pursued.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

The introduction of padel courts at Active Tiverton and Active Crediton is expected to have a positive equality impact, supporting Active Mid Devon's commitment to inclusivity and community wellbeing.

Relationship to Corporate Plan:

Creating padel courts in Mid Devon could align strongly with several themes and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2024–2028, particularly around innovation, economic growth, community wellbeing, and sustainable development.

Economy & Assets

Objective: Grow the district economy and increase returns from our assets.

Fit: Padel courts represent a new and growing sport in the UK, offering potential for increased participation, tourism, and income generation. By investing in this innovative facility, the Council could attract new users to leisure centres, increase memberships, and generate revenue through bookings, events, and coaching.

Planning, Environment & Sustainability

Objective: Be a leader and pioneer of best practice so innovation and thinking is at the heart of the services we deliver.Fit: Introducing padel courts demonstrates forward-thinking and responsiveness to emerging trends in leisure.

Community, People & Equalities

Objective: Support health, wellbeing, and safety of residents.

Fit: Padel is inclusive and accessible, appealing to a wide demographic including families, older adults, and those new to sport. It fosters social interaction and physical activity, contributing to community wellbeing.

Strategic Support from Leisure and Sports Planning

The Mid Devon Playing Pitch Strategy (2022) provides a framework for assessing and developing sports facilities. While it currently focuses on traditional sports, it encourages innovation and collaboration with national governing bodies and Sport England.

Financial and Operational Fit

Given the Council's projected budget shortfalls, projects that generate income, attract external funding and increase social value are particularly attractive.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 05.01.2026

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 05.01.2026

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 05.01.2026

Performance and risk: Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 05.01.2026

Cabinet member notified: (yes)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Andy Mackie (Operations Manager)

Email: amackie@middevon.gov.uk

Background papers: Business case and summary paper

Appendix A Part 1

1.0 What is a Padel Court?

2.0 Padel is a fast-growing racket sport that blends elements of tennis and squash.

It's played on an enclosed court about one-third the size of a tennis court, with glass or solid Perspex walls that allow the ball to rebound, adding a unique tactical dimension. Players use solid, stringless paddles and a low-compression tennis ball, typically in doubles format. The game is easy to learn, highly sociable, and appeals to all ages and skill levels, which has driven its popularity worldwide.

2.0 Concept visuals of Padel Courts



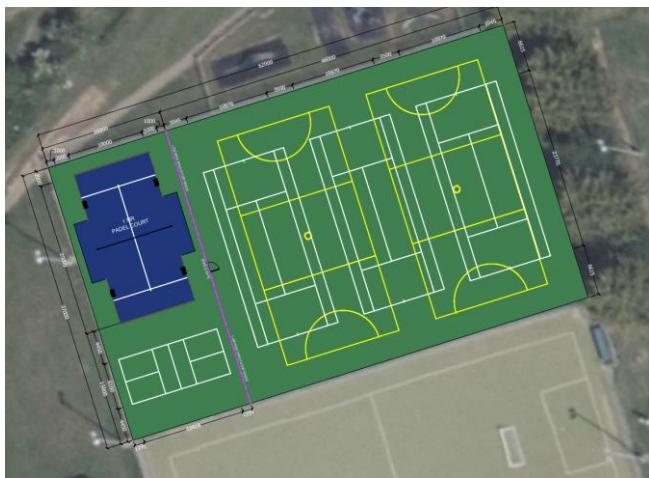
3.0 What is Pickleball?

Pickleball is a paddle sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. It's played on a smaller court with a low net, using solid paddles and a perforated plastic ball. The game is easy to learn, suitable for all ages, and emphasizes quick rallies and social interaction, making it popular for both recreational and competitive play.

3.1 Visual of Pickleball court – Proposed for Crediton



3.2 Approximate aerial plans



***Depiction of court layout, subject to change depending upon design drawings**

4.0 Concept visuals of roof structure in Year 2 (architects visuals from Taunton).



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL – NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS

January 2026

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

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
January 2026					
MSCP Solar Project	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Crediton GP Surgery - Additional loan	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Padel Business case	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Andy Mackie, Leisure Services Manager	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
Green Enterprise Grants	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist	Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
North Devon Railway Development Alliance To consider the report	Planning, Environment & Sustainability Policy Development Group Cabinet	25 Nov 2025 13 Jan 2026	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Annual Report To consider the report.	Cabinet Scrutiny Committee	13 Jan 2026 26 Jan 2026	Maria De Leiburne, Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
Leisure Pricing Strategy To receive a revised draft leisure Pricing Strategy for 2026.	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group Cabinet	24 Nov 2025 13 Jan 2026	Dean Emery, Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Fully exempt Contains commercially sensitive information.
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet	13 Jan 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
February 2026					
Fees and Charges Report	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Mid Devon Housing Depot	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Part exempt
Gas Servicing and Maintenance	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Mike Lowman, Operations Manager for Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Replacement Roofing Programme 2026-2030	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Mike Lowman, Operations Manager for Housing	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan SPD	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Bow Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Pay Policy Report 2022	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	James Hamblin, Operations Manager for People Services	Leader of the Council	Open
Draft Budget Report 2026/2027	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
2025/26 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet	10 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
2026/2027 Capital Strategy and 2026/2027 Capital Programme	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open
Establishment Report	Cabinet Scrutiny Committee	10 Feb 2026 23 Feb 2026	James Hamblin, Operations Manager for People Services	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open
Policy Framework	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Laura Woon, Democratic Services Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Business Rates Tax Base	Cabinet Council	10 Feb 2026 18 Feb 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
March 2026					
Mid Devon Resident Survey	Cabinet	3 Mar 2026	Andrew Jarrett, Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer	Leader of the Council	
Draft Vision and Spatial Options	Cabinet	3 Mar 2026	Tristan Peat, Forward Planning Team Leader	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
April 2026					
Destination Management Plan for Mid Devon	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	12 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Economic Strategy 2024 - 2029	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	12 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Adrian Welsh, Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Shopfront Enhancement Schemes To receive a report setting out the Shopfront Enhancement Scheme for approval.	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	12 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Motion 608- Anaerobic Digester Plants Page 115	Planning, Environment & Sustainability Policy Development Group Planning, Environment & Sustainability Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	23 Sep 2025 10 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026 22 Apr 2026	Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Open
Asset Management Plan To receive the revised Asset Management Plan.	Economy & Assets Policy Development Group Cabinet	12 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Housing Strategy To receive the revised Housing Strategy.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	17 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy To consider the report.	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	24 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health	Open
Unauthorised Encampment Policy To consider the report	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	24 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Paul Deal, Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Corporate Safeguarding Policy	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	Not before 1st Mar 2027 Not before 1st Apr 2027	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health Cabinet Member for People, Development and Deputy Leader	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Tenancy Strategy To receive the revised Tenancy Strategy	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	Not before 1st Jun 2026 Not before 2nd Jun 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Domestic Abuse Policy (NEW) To receive a new policy in relation to Domestic Abuse in MDH properties.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	17 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026 22 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health Tel: 01884 244615	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Knowledge & Information Strategy 2026 - 2030 (NEW) for MDH To receive the new Data Policy for Mid Devon Housing	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	17 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026 22 Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective To consider the report.	Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group Cabinet	24 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager, Matthew Page, Head of People,	Cabinet Member for People, Development and Deputy Leader	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
			Performance & Waste		
Corporate Recovery Policy	Audit Committee Cabinet	31 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Dean Emery, Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure		Open
Corporate Risk Report	Cabinet	7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Corporate Performance Q3	Cabinet	7 Apr 2026	Dr Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager	Leader of the Council	Open
Customer Care Policy To received the revised Customer Care Policy.	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group Cabinet	23 Mar 2026 7 Apr 2026	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement	Open

Title of report and summary of decision	Decision Taker	Date of Decision	Officer contact	Cabinet Member	Intention to consider report in private session and the reason(s)
Aids and Adaptations policy To receive a report updating and reviewing the Aids and Adaptations Policy.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet	Not before 1st Apr 2026 Not before 2nd Apr 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
May 2026					
June 2026					
Tenancy Fraud (NEW) To receive and approve a new policy in relation to Tenancy Fraud.	Homes Policy Development Group Cabinet Council	Not before 1st Jun 2026 Not before 2nd Jun 2026 Not before 3rd Jun 2026	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing & Health	Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property and Deputy Leader	Open
July 2026					

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