

Community, People & Equalities Policy Development Group

**Tuesday, 11 November 2025 at 12.30 pm
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton**

**Next ordinary meeting
Tuesday, 24 March 2026 at 12.30 pm**

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

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

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

Meeting ID: 318 813 302 548

Passcode: vE6rU2Ui

Membership

Cllr D Broom
Cllr S Chenore
Cllr A Cuddy
Cllr M Farrell
Cllr A Glover
Cllr C Harrower
Cllr B Holdman
Vacancy
Cllr H Tuffin

AGENDA

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

- 1 **Apologies and Substitute Members**
To receive any apologies for absence and notices of appointment of substitute Members (if any).
- 2 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 3 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions from members of the public and replies thereto.

Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for this item.
- 4 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 16 September 2025.
- 5 **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chair may wish to make.
- 6 **Performance Dashboard- Quarter 2 (Pages 11 - 12)**
To receive performance information from the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager for Quarter 1 (2025/2026).
- 7 **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Annual Report (Pages 13 - 32)**
To receive a report from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) providing an update to Members on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).
- 8 **Strategic Grant review 2025 (Pages 33 - 38)**
To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Public Health on 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)
- 9 **Resilience Strategy update**
To receive a presentation from the Resilience Officer on the Council strategy update.
- 10 **2026/27- Draft Budget (Pages 39 - 48)**
To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer presenting to Member's the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covers the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 and to discuss

initial options for cost pressures/savings or income related to the services covered by the Policy Development Group (PDG)

- 11 **Work Programme (Pages 49 - 50)**
To receive the current work plan for the Community PDG.

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive
Monday, 3 November 2025

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

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

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

1. Inspection of Papers

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

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

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

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

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

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting

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

4. Public Question Time

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

meeting. You will be invited to speak at the meeting and will receive a written response within 10 clear working days following the meeting. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

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

For those joining the meeting virtually:

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

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

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

7. Recording of meetings

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

8. Fire Drill Procedure

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

9. WIFI

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

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COMMUNITY, PEOPLE & EQUALITIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 16 September 2025 at 12.30 pm

**Present
Councillors**

D Broom, S Chenore, A Cuddy, M Farrell,
C Harrower, B Holdman, L G J Kennedy,
A Stirling and H Tuffin

**Apology
Councillors**

A Glover

**Also Present
Officers:**

Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate
Resilience) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services
Manager)

**Councillors
Online**

G DuChesne, L G J Kennedy and D Wulff.

Officers Online

Dr Stephen Carr

**Also in
Attendance**

Vicki Rowe (Chief Executive Officer for Citizens Advice)

16 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from: Councillor A Glover who was substituted by Cllr A Stirling.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

No interests were declared under this item.

Members were reminded that interests could be declared at any point during the meeting.

18 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 June 2025 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

20 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had no announcements to make.

21 COMMUNITY ALCOHOL PARTNERSHIP

The Regional Adviser for the Community Alcohol Partnership for South West England was unable to attend this meeting. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

22 CITIZENS ADVICE FOR TORRIDGE, NORTH, MID AND WEST DEVON

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED** a presentation from 'The People's Champion' giving 'Trusted Advice in Times of Change'.

The following was highlighted:

Citizens Advice – The People's Champion:

- Citizens Advice presented their role as a national charity and network of local charities offering free, confidential advice online, by phone, and in person.
- They positioned themselves as champions for the people, helping individuals navigate challenges with trusted, practical advice.

Service Overview (April 2024 – March 2025)

- Between April 2024 and March 2025, Citizens Advice had helped 3,121 people with 10,628 problems.
- Their support had increased family income by £3.6 million.
- They reported unprecedented and growing demand for their services.

Key Issues in Mid Devon:

The main issues brought forward included:

- Welfare benefits inquiries.
- Energy problems.
- Debt concerns.
- Housing issues.

Partnerships and Outreach:

- With funding from trusted partners, they provided specialist advice services.
- Outreach locations included: Crediton (Age Concern) – Wednesday mornings (pre-booked), Cullompton (Community Centre) – every other Friday, Uffculme (Square Corner) – 2nd Friday of the month and Lapford (Ark Community Café) – last Friday of the month

Impact and Value

- Volunteer contributions were valued at £947,860.
- Public value of the service was estimated at £20.5 million.

- For every £1 invested: Fiscal value: £2.37, Public value: £15.84 and value to individuals helped: £12.13
- Estimated savings included: National Health Service (NHS): £395,540, Department of Working Pension (DWP) (keeping people in work): £1.64 million and housing providers (preventing evictions): £644,352

Achievements (2024–25)

- The service had delivered 23,616 volunteer hours. Recorded 38,555 case notes. Held 4,035 in-person appointments. Responded to 1,035 simple queries and submitted 271 evidence forms for policy, research, and campaigns.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The importance of those volunteers that help the community.
- What was the cost of the grant funding that was received by Devon County Council for their service?
- The concerns and uncertainty around volunteers and funding and the impact this would have on the support in the outreach locations and other surroundings.
- Comparison costing of the funding between what the other Councils gave to the service.
- The relationship that the Citizen Advice Bureaux had with this Council?
- How would the income strategy reflect with Local Government Reorganisation on the horizon?
- Was there a training programme for the volunteers? It was confirmed that there was an ongoing programme and for the first 6 weeks this would be supervised and continued support would be provided after that.
- The main cause of the ongoing demand for the service?

It was **AGREED** that:

- A review be undertaken of the funding grants within the Council in comparison with other councils.
- Whether the grant funding that had been allocated for next year could be extended to two years to see this service through Local Government Reorganisation.
- The Vice-Chair of the Policy Development Group (PDG) would liaise with the Homes PDG about the strategic approach for homelessness.
- Discussions would take place in regards to room availability within the Council and if this could be offered to those that may wish to use it and who continued to provide a service for the community.
- Details of point of contact for this Council would be shared with Citizens Advice Bureaux Chief Executive officers to enable communication.

Notes:

- (i) Presentations previously circulated
- (ii) Councillor B Holdman declared a personal interest in that he was the Chair of Tiverton Town Council's Finance Committee.

23 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - QUARTER 1**

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED** slides showing performance information for the area of Community, People and Equalities.

The following was highlighted:

- The Dashboard aimed to give an "at a glance" understanding of how services were performing in terms of performance, finance, and risk. Any measures that were also part of the Corporate Plan were listed in yellow text.
- The indicators were presented with their current performance, the annual target, and a RAG rating to indicate whether the Council were on track to meet their target.
- Overall performance was presented in a pie chart and combined the RAG ratings from both the performance and finance measures.
- Homes made safe under the Housing Assistance Policy (Red) - performance was just below the target position at the end of Qrt 1.
- New Subscribers to Let's Talk Mid Devon (Red) and Engagement rate on Let's Talk Mid Devon (Red) the Council had moved away from focussing on registrations, as this had been fed back as a barrier to completing ongoing questionnaires.
- Support Towns and Parishes to develop their Community Emergency Plans (Red) - No new plans were developed in Q1. However in May, an event was held at Kentisbeare on Community Emergency Plans. There were seven different towns/ parishes in attendance who were updating or writing their community emergency plans.
- Food Service - Total Inspections completed (Red) - performance remained behind target, but there was an overall positive trend with performance increasing.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Clarification around Homes made safe under the Housing Assistance Policy - It was confirmed a glossary would be circulated to the group.
- How would Members find out what Parishes had completed their Community Emergency Plan? – It was confirmed this information was included in the annual report update.
- The figure difference in the performance and annual target of the Red (RAG) rating in regards to the new subscribers to Let's Talk Mid Devon.

Note: Performance Dashboard previously circulated

24 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) FOR 2026/27**

The Group had before it a *report from Head of Finance, Property and Climate Change presenting the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covered the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 and which discussed initial options for cost pressures/savings or income related to the services covered by the Policy Development Group.

The following was highlighted:

- The report was a little different to that provided in previous years. This was due to the raft of changes expected from 2026/27 and the longer term restrictions placed upon the Council by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The report did not give a forecast shortfall to be addressed. Instead it highlighted the unprecedented level of uncertainty faced by all councils in respect of funding from 2026/27 onwards and estimated a range that the shortfall could fall within.
- The Chancellor's Autumn Budget would not be available until the end of November 2025. This would have a knock on effect of delaying the detail at individual local authority level. The uncertainty regarding future funding could not be overstated.
- Given the potentially extreme reduction in funding within option 1c, and the very limited timeframe for obtaining full clarity, it was highly likely that a degree of flexibility would be required and a draw from reserves might be required.

General Fund Budget Options

- Over the summer officers had identified a range of budget options to address the budget shortfall, using the Red, Amber and Green (RAG) assessment, which were being presented to the relevant Policy Development Groups for discussion, with the recommendation to support the Green and Amber options.
- These included newly identified budget pressures in appendix 2 and savings options in appendix 3, there were options to stretch savings further, for example increasing fees beyond inflation and appendix 4 showed all savings options for context.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Concerns around the ceasing of Community Development grants and how this would impact those affected.
- Clarification around the out of date leases, these were dependent upon market conditions at the time, the income might reduce and may result in the loss of tenants.
- Clarification and confirmation of the when the funding announcement from Government would be and what methodology would be used to distribute those funds.
- How were the Council liaising with Town and Parish Councils?- it was confirmed that the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience would be attending the State of District Debate to give a presentation on Finance and Assets.
- Why this Council had been targeted as part of a minority group of around 50 authorities that would be one of the biggest losers based on their initial draft calculations on funding?

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:

- a) The updated MTFP position for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account covering the years 2026/27 to 2028/29 be **NOTED**.

- b) The budget proposals as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 and agreed to remove the Cease Community Development grants be approved.
- c) That the Cease Community Development Grant not to be included in the saving options.

(Proposed by Cllr M Farrell and seconded by Cllr H Tuffin)

Reason for the decision

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

Notes: * Report previously circulated

- (iii) Councillors: D Broom, M Farrell, B Holdman and A Stirling declared personal interests as they were members of Tiverton Town Council and budget savings were included in appendix 4 regarding CCTV.
- (iv) Councillors: B Holdman and A Stirling also declared a personal interest in that they were members of Tiverton Town Councils Finance Committee.
- (v) Cllr A Cuddy declared a personal interest in that he was business owner.

25 VOLUNTARY SECTOR NETWORKING EVENT UPDATE

The Chair advised the group that the Council would be hosting an event for local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to allow them to network and to meet potential investors and funders.

The drop-in event would take place at Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday 22 October 2025 between 3:30pm and 7:30pm.

This event was designed to create a bridge between the funders and the people funded with the knowledge and resources, and the people making things happen in our communities in order to build stronger partnerships.

26 WORK PROGRAMME

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

(The meeting ended at 2.16pm)

CHAIR

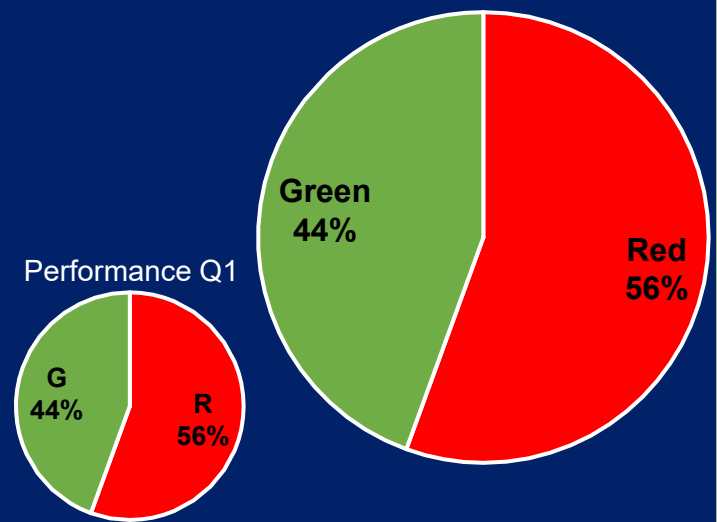
Community, People & Equalities PDG Performance Dashboard – Quarter 2 2025/26

Performance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
Homes made safe under the Housing Assistance Policy (YTD)	24	60	R
New Subscribers to Let's Talk Mid Devon (YTD)	17	400	R
Support towns and parishes to develop their Community Emergency Plans (YTD)	1	4	R
Support VCSE sector by securing external funding (YTD)	Not Available	£200,000	
Licenced vehicle inspections (YTD)	27	40	G
Food Service - Total Inspections completed (Current QTR)	82 %	100 %	R
Private water supply sampling (YTD)	91	120	G
Environmental protection service requests (Average YTD)	98.5 %	95 %	G
Engagement rate on Let's Talk Mid Devon (Current)	14.0 %	16.0 %	R

Finance Measures	Performance	Annual Target	RAG
CP&E PDG – Projected Outturn	£1,324k	£1,324k	G
CP&E PDG – Capital Slippage % of projects (Current)	N/A	0 %	
Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Current)	£4,752,912	N/A	

Corporate Risk	Risk Rating (Trajectory)
Emergency Recovery	8 (No Change)
Emergency Planning Response	8 (No Change)

Overall Performance Q2



In Focus

Meet the Funder event: This was hosted at Phoenix House in October for local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to allow them to network and to meet potential investors and funders.

Food Service – total inspections completed: 82% in the period represents the highest performance since the PDG started to monitor this and demonstrates progress towards the target of 100%.

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Report for:	Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group
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Date of Meeting:	11 November 2025
Subject:	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Maria de Leburne, 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 the Community People and Equalities PDG recommends to Cabinet 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.**

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 Leburne

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 Leburne, Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Email: mdeleburne@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 MDCC

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: Community People and Equalities PDG

Date of Meeting:	11 th November 2025
Subject:	Strategic Grants renewal 2026/27 and 2027/28
Cabinet Member:	Cllr David Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Richard Marsh, Director of Economy and Place
Exempt:	No
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Enclosures:	

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

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) with a forward recommendation to Cabinet.

Recommendation(s):

That the Community, People and Equalities PDG recommend to Cabinet that:

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

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Mid Devon District Council values the role of the community and voluntary sector in providing key services to the community, meeting the needs of Mid Devon residents, particularly the most vulnerable, and helping to deliver the Council's Corporate Objectives.

- 1.2 The Council's Strategic Grants programme has been operating since 2005. The awarding of grants to external agencies is a discretionary function of the Council. It has no statutory responsibility to provide a Strategic Grants programme.
- 1.3 The purpose of the programme is to provide grants towards core running costs to help underpin the viability and operability of not-for-profit organisations. The underpinning of strategic external partners enables these agencies/ organisations to bid for project funding from other grant providers, which continues to be more accessible than grants towards core costs.
- 1.4 Strategic grants are intended to support organisations which provide services that:
- Supplement Council service provision;
 - Demonstrably contribute to the Council's priorities (detailed by strategic alignment with the Council's aims and objectives in its Corporate Plan);
 - Offer choice to residents;
 - Bring social and economic benefit (as gauged by the level of service provided by the organisation based on their outputs and outcomes as well as any added social environmental and economic benefits of the services provided);
 - Provide best value; and
 - Cover the whole of the District.

2 Previous Grant Review (2023)

- 2.1 The Council offered a three year funding programme (2021-2024) to seven community and voluntary sector partners, whose services were seen to be of strategic importance in supporting Mid Devon's vulnerable residents and/or who contributed to the local economy through their support to the tourism sector.
- 2.2 In 2023 a full grant review took place to;
- ensure that the Council's Strategic Grant investment met the needs of its resident and business community and supported the Council's own priorities as expressed in its Corporate Plan;
 - allow strategic partners to report back to Members on what has been achieved with the previous round of funding, and;
 - ensure that funding achieves real outcomes for the District and value for money for taxpayers.
- 2.3 As part of the comprehensive review, and reflective of the continuing pressures on local government finances, it was considered necessary to cap the future total strategic grants budget at £120,000 per annum. Members agreed a two year programme to cover the financial years of 2024/25 and 2025/26. The current funding arrangement therefore comes to an end on the 31st March 2026.

- 2.4 The level of funding committed to respective organisations over the two years (24/25 and 25/26) was agreed at:

Table 1: Funding Allocations

Organisation	Grant Service Area	Grant Award (per annum)
CITIZENS ADVICE	Welfare Information and Advice (supporting Housing)	£13,950
CHAT MID DEVON	Welfare Information and Advice (supporting Housing)	£11,250
GRAND WESTERN CANAL	Economy and Tourism Support (supporting Economy)	£38,250*
INVOLVE	Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Support (supporting Community)	£10,200
TIVERTON MUSEUM OF MID DEVON LIFE	Economy and Tourism Support (supporting Economy)	£23,375
MID DEVON MOBILITY	Community Transport Services (supporting Community and Economy)	£19,800**
TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE	Economy and Tourism Support (supporting Economy)	£3,400
Total Grants		£120,225***

*The Council's contribution to the Grand Western Canal is expected to continue to be funded from New Homes Bonus. Should this be discontinued, an alternative source will be identified.

**Of which £5,600 is deducted at source to pay for rental of Shopmobility Office in MSCP

*** The additional £225 funded from the General Fund.

3 Strategic Grants Review and funding for 2025 onwards

- 3.1 While significant financial pressures continue to exert themselves upon Local Authority and public finances generally, the value of Mid Devon's Strategic Grants to beneficiaries in Mid Devon is fully recognised and understood. It is also recognised that through the services that these organisation provide, the Council is supported in achieving its own goals and objectives for residents and communities. With this in mind, no reduction to the Strategic Grant budget (£120,000 p/a) is proposed for future years.
- 3.2 Furthermore, as a comprehensive review was undertaken through the last Strategic Grant review, it is not proposed that a further review process be undertaken at this time. Instead, it is recommended that Members agree to continue to provide grants to each respective organisation as set out in Table 1. It is hoped that continuing grant levels at the previously agreed level will give certainty to beneficiary organisations and avoid a complicated and time-consuming review process.

- 3.3 Given the current programme of works relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) within Devon, it is also considered that a 3 year grant funding programme (covering 2026/2027, 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 financial years) would be appropriate. This will take the Strategic Grants into the first year after the formation of any successor Authority to Mid Devon District Council and will allow that new entity some time to consider any successor grants to the Mid Devon Strategic Grants. This will also avoid uncertainty for grant recipients at the time of the formation of the successor Authority.
- 3.2 Subject to approval by Members, and in order to give voluntary and community sector organisations sufficient notice of intended funding levels for 2026/27, the following timetable is expected to be followed:

Milestone	Date
Decision by Cabinet	02/12/2025
Grant Funding Agreements Issued	W/B 08/12/2025
Raise Grant Payments	01/04/2026

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 With the above in mind, is it recommended that:
- 1) A Strategic Grant funding programme of £120,000 p/a be approved for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29, and;
 - 2) The Grant continue to be allocated to individual organisations as set out within Table 1 (contained within the report).

Financial Implications: The funding available for the 3 year period (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29) will be £120,225, of which any grant award to the Grand Western Canal will be funded from New Homes Bonus (whilst available) and the rest/balance from General Fund.

Legal Implications: The Best Value Statutory Guidance has been updated since it was initially issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in September 2011. Setting out the Government's expectations for councils considering changing funding to local voluntary and community groups.

The guidance allows councils the flexibility to exercise appropriate discretion in considering the circumstances of individual cases, while advocating the need for authorities to:

- avoid passing on disproportionate reductions by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector as a whole, than they take on themselves;
- give at least three months' notice of any reduction or termination of funding to both the organisation and public/service users;
- make available all appropriate information in line with the government's transparency agenda.

The updated guidance also emphasizes the importance of:

- Effective communication between key officers (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer, and Monitoring Officer).
- Taking action when resources are not used effectively and when a credible workforce strategy is lacking.
- Transparency and public scrutiny of local authorities' improvement work.

Risk Assessment: The recommendation is to maintain the strategic grants at the same level of funding for each organisation.

If the Council decided to make a significant reduction/changes in established grant allocations this may risk a challenge from (a) external organisations under public law and/or (b) the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Reductions to selected agencies introduced within a short period of time may have a negative impact on the activities and services provided by those agencies to residents and could result in negative publicity/service delivery for the Council. If the Council decide to reduce the strategic grants a full review should be undertaken to mitigate this risk and this should be factored into the timetable/communications to funding beneficiaries issued asap.

Impact on Climate Change: These grants ensure residents are able to get information and advice through locally delivered services. Accessing local cultural, leisure and green space opportunities reduces travel and related environmental impact.

Equalities Impact Assessment: Ensuring that our most vulnerable residents are able to access information and advice is important to the Council and is supported through the provision of Strategic Grants. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, when making funding reduction decisions, Local Authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that the Equality Act 2010 prohibits;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between those individuals who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

This means that decision-makers must consider the impact of any proposed cuts on the needs of those with protected characteristics.

Strategic Grants are 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 has been made regarding a continuation of funding after this period. However, equality impacts should still be considered when making funding decisions.

While the recommendation is not to make any cuts to the programme itself or change any funding awards, it is important to note that rising costs (e.g., utilities, staffing, materials) may mean that organisations experience the effects of a real-terms reduction in funding.

Should any changes be sought to overall funding provision or to individual funding awards, the equalities impacts of these should be fully considered before any decision is made.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The allocation of grants provides support to external agencies delivering services that advance the Council's Homes, Community and Economy priorities.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 29.10.25

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 29.10.25

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 29.10.25

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 09.10.2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Amy Dugard – Growth and Regeneration Officer

Email: adugard@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 234276

Background papers:



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

Date of Meeting: 11 November 2025

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 – Emerging 2026/27 – 2030/31 Capital Programme

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To present to Members an update on the 2026/27 Budget and to trail the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

Recommendation(s):

That Members of the Policy Development Group:

1. Note the update on the 2026/27 Budget for the General Fund, noting there remains little clarity on the financial settlement currently and that this is likely to require additional ad hoc updates as and when greater information is known, particularly following the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement;
2. Consider and comment on the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31 within Appendix 1.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the September meeting, the first draft MTFP covering the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 for the General Fund was presented, estimating a funding shortfall for

2026/27 within the range £846k to £3,350k, due to the significant uncertainty surrounding future funding streams.

- 1.2 The PDG discussed a range of budget options that could help mitigate the budget shortfall, considering the Red, Amber, Green risk level applied to them by officers, 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.

- 1.3 The PDG recommended to Cabinet the Green and Amber budget proposals, but recommended rejection of a red saving option to cease the Strategic Grants – considered separately on this agenda.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 The 04 November Cabinet are recommended to give tacit approval as a budget planning assumption to the recommendations of PDGs – which will see further Amber savings of £10k considered and potentially agreed in principle.

2.0 2026/27 Budget Update

- 2.1 As Members are aware, there is very little clarity available on the future funding decisions for the Local Government Sector. Since the last meeting of this PDG, this position has not improved with no further announcements received. Potentially, a policy note could be published shortly that might provide more clarity on the direction of travel, but this has not been received at the time of publishing this report. This will not provide clarity on individual authority funding.
- 2.2 The Autumn Budget is set for 26 November which means any settlement announcement is going to be later than previously advised which will result in the detail at local authority level potentially being announced later than anticipated. In addition to this challenge, changes in key senior ministerial positions are also likely to potentially build further uncertainty and delay into these announcements.
- 2.3 Further updates will be brought forward as necessary and available, and further budget options will be investigated and proposed for consideration over the next few months in the run in to setting the 2026/27 budget in February 2026.
- 2.4 However, because of the lack of clarity and timeframe to react, 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.

- 2.5 There clearly remains a significant budget shortfall in 2026/27 for the General Fund. The Council has a legal requirement to set a balanced 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.

3.0 2026/27 – 2030/31 Capital Programme

- 3.1 The Capital Programme includes new bids for capital funding to support new programmes as well as updates to 'rolling' approvals from current and prior year's Capital Programmes.
- 3.2 The draft Capital Programme has been reviewed/challenged by the Corporate Strategic Asset Advisory Group (CSAG) prior to being proposed. The final programme being brought forward for approval in February.
- 3.3 Generally, the bids are restricted to replacement equipment, largely based upon health and safety requirements in the leisure centres, new ICT kit, income generation schemes, economic regeneration schemes or invest to save bids.
- 3.4 **Appendix 1** provides a summary of the new bids received for the new 2026/27 – 2030/31 Capital Programme from General Fund services reporting through to this committee. In February, Members' will be asked to approve the Year 1 programme and note the indicative future years. Members are asked to consider and comment on these bids, feeding into the programme development.
- 3.5 In terms of associated funding, a prudent forecast of capital receipts is factored into the model, with no major asset sales anticipated. Similarly, prudent assumptions are included for the availability of Capital Grant to help mitigate some of the proposed costs. If additional receipts are generated, or grant received, the capital prioritisation list could be revisited to bring forward new schemes into the programme or decrease any borrowing requirement.
- 3.6 Currently any revenue contribution to the Capital Programme is limited to funding held within Earmarked Reserves (i.e. Sinking Funds). Ultimately, any outstanding funding requirement after utilising revenue contributions, reserves and any external funding sources will need to be funded through Prudential Borrowing. This will be refined and updated as we move through the MTFP timeframe.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The potential significant General Fund budget shortfall remaining if only Green and Amber options are agreed, or if option 1c (the estimated budget gap of £3.446m as per the 7/10/25 Cabinet report) becomes reality, is a significant challenge and the identification of further budget reductions is critical to balancing the budget for 2026/27 and indeed future years.

- 4.2 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. Also, there is an extremely limited timeframe available between finalisation of the funding settlement and setting the budget for 2026/27. This may require additional information being presented to members either late or outside of the standard committee papers process.
- 4.3 The MTFP will continue to be updated to ensure it is a live document. It is subject to amendment and review by Leadership Team and Members and will provide a clear guide prior to commencing the annual budget setting process in future years.
- 4.4 To conclude the statutory budget setting process, updates to the draft budget position will be brought as and when greater clarity emerges in the run up to the budget being agreed at Full Council on the 18 February 2026. During this period Officers will continue to identify and examine further savings possibilities that can reduce the longer-term budget gap.

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: 30 October 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 30 October 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 30 October 2025

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 30 October 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

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PDG	Row number	Sub Area	Project Title	Description	Category of project	Operational Lead Officer	Total Project Budget Approval						Spend Profile for NEW Indicative Capital Programme					
							2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's
Community, People and Equalities	14	Leisure - Other	Exe Valley CCTV	Replace the current outdated system	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	35					35	35					35

NEW Bids 2026/27 - 2030/31 Capital Programme

Wider General Fund

PDG	Row number	Sub Area	Project Title	Description	Category of project	Operational Lead Officer	Total Project Budget Approval						Spend Profile for NEW Indicative Capital Programme					
							2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	1	MDDC Depots	Twiga side arm flail	Machine replacement for GM (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					30	30					30	30
	2	Other Projects	Kubota Mini Excavator (Digger)	Machine replacement for GM (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					31	31					31	31
	3	Other Projects	Wood-chipper Timberwolf	Machine replacement for GM (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					22	22					22	22
	4	Other Projects	Wood-Chipper Elite	Machine replacement for GM (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					23	23					23	23
	5	GF Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for GM (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					320	320					320	320
	6	HRA Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for HRA Fleet - New Leases (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer			50		488	538			50		488	538
	7	GF Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for Caretaking Fleet - New Leases (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					50	50					50	50
	8	GF Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for Street Cleansing Fleet - New Leases (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					64	64					64	64
	9	GF Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for Recycling Fleet - New Leases (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					2,186	2,186					2,186	2,186
	10	GF Vehicles	New Vehicle Leases (replaced every seven years)	Vehicle replacement for Property Services Fleet - New Leases (replaced every seven years)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Darren Beer					50	50					50	50
Cabinet	11	ICT Projects	Server & Storage Hardware Refresh 2030	Replacement For Servers and Storage Area Network in Phoenix house (Disk storage)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Brian Trebilcock				-	30	- 30					- 30	- 30
Cabinet	12	ICT Projects	UPS Replacements	Replacements of Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) - Battery backup for Servers and Switches. (7 in total 5 large 2 smaller)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Brian Trebilcock			- 30	30		-			- 30	30		-
Cabinet	13	ICT Projects	User Device Replacements' Refresh 30/31	On-going annual Laptop refresh program	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Brian Trebilcock					120	120					120	120
Community, People and Equalities	14	Leisure - Other	Exe Valley CCTV	Replace the current outdated system	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	35					35	35					35
Economy & Assets	15	Other Projects	Kingsmill/Simmons Industrial Units	Roof/Wall Sheets/Sky Lights/Facia/Gutter Replacement	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	150					150	75	75				150
Economy & Assets	16	Other Projects	Market Walk	Removal of paparpit overhang/new porches	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	50					50	50					50
Economy & Assets	17	Other Projects	Market Walk	Roof area replacment	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	150					150	100	50				150
Economy & Assets	18	Other Projects	Market Walk Communal Areas	Communal Area Enhancement	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	25					25	25					25
Economy & Assets	19	Phoenix House	Wall / Window Inspection & Repairs	Curtain Walling Repairs, Deep Cleaning, Sofia Repairs & Cleaning and Masonary Repairs	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		27				27		27				27
Economy & Assets	20	Phoenix House	Lift Upgrades / Replacement Panels	Replace obsolete control boards and general overhaul	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		65				65		65				65
Economy & Assets	21	Phoenix House	AHU, Extracts, Control Panel, Comfort Cooling (Split Units), Ancillary TRV Pipework	Replace associated equipment	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	330					330	180	150				330
Economy & Assets	22	Phoenix House	Lighting Upgrades	Lighting Upgrades (Internal / External), Small Power Upgrades (generator point, Distribution Boards)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	339					339	339					339
Economy & Assets	23	Phoenix House	Intruder Alarm	Replacement of current system	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	40					40	40					40

PDG	Row number	Sub Area	Project Title	Description	Category of project	Operational Lead Officer	Total Project Budget Approval						Spend Profile for NEW Indicative Capital Programme					
							2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's
Economy & Assets	24	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	Glazing, Steel Work & Timber Purlin Repairs / Treatment	Glazing, Steel Work & Timber Purlin Repairs / Treatment	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	85					85	85					85
Economy & Assets	25	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	Swimming Pool Motorised Pool Cover	Replace pool cover	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Economy & Assets	26	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	AHU x2	Bring into service / replace	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		120				120		120				120
Economy & Assets	27	Exe Valley Leisure Centre	Pool Side Assets	UV, Ballast Tank, Control Panel	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	41					41	41					41
Economy & Assets	29	Culm Valley Sports Centre	External Fabric	Fascias, Soffits, Flashing, Glazing	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	25					25	25					25
Economy & Assets	30	Culm Valley Sports Centre	Internal Fabric	Reception, Toilets, Stores & Halls	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	46					46	46					46
Economy & Assets	31	Culm Valley Sports Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Plumbing	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Economy & Assets	32	Culm Valley Sports Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Electrical	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	30					30	30					30
Economy & Assets	33	Culm Valley Sports Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Mechanical (HVAC), Split Units, Local Duct Repairs	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	25					25	25					25
Economy & Assets	34	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	External Fabric	Gutter Joint Replacement	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Economy & Assets	35	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	External Fabric	Brickwork / Masonry Repairs	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Economy & Assets	36	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric	Squash Courts & Viewing Gallery	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		44				44		44				44
Economy & Assets	37	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric	Sports Hall	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		22				22		22				22
Economy & Assets	38	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric	Main Pool (Timber Ceiling)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		35				35		35				35
Economy & Assets	39	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric	Male & Female Toilets	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Economy & Assets	40	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Pool Side Assets	UV, Ballast Tank, Control Panel	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton		65				65		65				65
Economy & Assets	41	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Plumbing	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	30					30	30					30
Economy & Assets	42	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Electrical	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	45					45	45					45
Economy & Assets	43	Lords Meadow Leisure Centre	Internal Fabric MEP	Toilets, Circulation Routes - Mechanical (HVAC)	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	62					62	62					62
Economy & Assets	44	Other Projects	Pannier Market Secure Storage	Storage and additional traders secure area	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	50					50	50					50
Economy & Assets	45	Other Projects	Pannier Market Café	Ventilation/Floor and internal walls	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	35					35	35					35
Economy & Assets	46	Other Projects	Pannier Market Roof	Parapets/roof area stone work	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		30				30		30				30
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	47	Parks & Play Areas	Cullompton Skatepark	Replacement	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton		200				200		200				200
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	48	Parks & Play Areas	Cullompton Crossparks Play Area	Refurbishment to consolidate local provision following other closures	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	50					50	50					50
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	49	General Car Parks	Cullompton Station Road Car Park	Flood defence drainage improvements	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	50	Parks & Play Areas	Crediton Newcombes Meadow Jubilee Garden	Refurbishment of 1977 Jubilee Garden enhance park and seek to discourage ASB	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	25					25	25					25
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	51	Parks & Play Areas	Crediton Queen Elizabeths Drive Play Area	Refurbishment to retain local provision	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	75					75	75					75
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	52	Other Projects	Crediton St Lawrence Green	Enhancement of western gateway to town	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	53	Other Projects	Crediton Queen Elizabeths Drive/ Avranches	Reconstruction of steps to linking path between etstates/ routes to school/ public transport	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	54	Other Projects	Crediton Cemetery Chapel	Refurbishment	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	20					20	20					20
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	55	Parks & Play Areas	Tiverton Amory Park Hardcourt	Refurbishment	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	200					200	200					200

PDG	Row number	Sub Area	Project Title	Description	Category of project	Operational Lead Officer	Total Project Budget Approval						Spend Profile for NEW Indicative Capital Programme					
							2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	2028/29 £000's	2029/30 £000's	2030/31 £000's	Total £000's
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	56	Parks & Play Areas	Tiverton Westexe Rec Paths	Improved access esp for those with reduced mobility	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	30					30	30					30
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	57	Parks & Play Areas	Parks	Replacement seating	3. Essential Asset Replacement/Enhancement	Keith Ashton	40					40	20	20				40
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	58	Other Projects	Closed Church Yards	Reconstruction of boundary walls	2. Health & Safety (Liability includes DFG)	Keith Ashton	150					150	150					150
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	59	Leisure - Other	Assisted Lifeguard Technology	Lifeguard technology at Crediton and Tiverton to improve safety and reduce cost	1. Spend to Save/Income Generation	Andy Mackie	50					50	50					50
Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement	60	Leisure - Other	Reformer Pilates equipment	Introduction of hugely popular form of pilates to grow revenue / membership sales and retention. Each reformer pilates table/unit is approx £2k, look to invest in 15 units.	1. Spend to Save/Income Generation	Andy Mackie	30					30	30					30
Economy & Assets	61	Economic Development	EUE Community Centre	Support to submit a planning application for a new community centre at the Tiverton EUE site.	4. Economic Development	Adrian Welsh	50					50	50					50
General Fund Subtotals							2,473	608	20	30	3,354	6,485	2,178	903	20	30	3,354	6,485

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COMMUNITY, PEOPLE & EQUALITIES PDG WORK PLAN 2025 - 2026

11 November 2025				
	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 2 To consider the Dashboard		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Steve Carr	
	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Annual Report To consider the report.		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Maria De Leburne	
Page 51	Resilience Strategy Update.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe Lewis Dyson	
	Strategic Grants Review 2025 To consider requests from external organisations for grants.		Director of Place and Economy Zoë Lentell	
24 March 2026				
	Performance Dashboard - Quarter 3 To consider the Dashboard		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) Steve Carr	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Theme	Officer Responsible	Comments
	Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy To consider the report.		Director of Place and Economy Simon Newcombe	
	Unauthorised Encampment Policy To consider the report		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Paul Deal	
	Community Safety Partnership Policy To consider a report on the Community Safety Partnership and the planned activities for the coming year.		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Simon Newcombe Tanya Wenham	
	Air Quality Action Plan		Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Simon Newcombe	
	Chair of Community, People and Equalities PDG Annual Report To receive the Annual report from the Chair		Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) David Parker	