

A MEETING of the **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday, 17 December 2025 at 6.00 pm

ALL MEMBERS of the **COUNCIL** are summoned to attend for the purposes of transacting the business specified in the agenda which is set out below:

[The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Tiverton on Wednesday, 18 February 2026 at 6.00 pm]

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

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

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

Meeting ID: 368 993 911 335

Passcode: AJ7Q9hp9

STEPHEN WALFORD

Chief Executive

09 December 2025

AGENDA

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

- 1 **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions and or statements relating to any items of the Council powers/ duties or which otherwise affects the District and items on the agenda from members of the public.
- 3 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 4 **Minutes (Pages 9 - 28)**
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 29 October and the extraordinary meeting on the 26 November 2025.
- 5 **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements which the Chair of the Council may wish to make.
- 6 **Petitions**
To receive any petitions from members of the public.
- 7 **Notices of Motions**
To receive any notices of motions.
- 8 **Cabinet- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November and 2 December 2025 (Pages 29 - 94)**
To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

4 November 2025
(Recommendation to Full Council)

1. 2025/26 Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report

Cabinet **RECOMMENDS** to Full Council the increase to the Capital Programme of £526k in respect of additional Grant funding received (£276k – see par 5.3) and extra budget to further increase the HRA Housing Stock (£250k – see para 5.5)

2. Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26

Cabinet **RECOMMENDS** to Full Council to **APPROVE**

- a. A continuation of the current policy outlined at paragraphs 4.0 – 4.5 be agreed;
- b. The changes to the Capital Financing Requirement, Operational Boundaries and Authorised Limits for the current year at paragraphs 5.4 – 5.5

2 December 2025

1. Tax Base Calculation 2026/27

Cabinet **RECOMMENDS** to Full Council

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

9 **Scrutiny Committee- Report of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2025 (Pages 95 - 98)**

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

20 October 2025

10 **Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025 (Pages 99 - 106)**

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

11 November 2025

11 **Economy and Assets Policy Development Group- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2025 (Pages 107 - 116)**

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

20 November 2025

12 **Homes Policy Development Group- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025 (Pages 117 - 126)**

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

18 November 2025

- 13 **Planning, Environment and Sustainability Policy Development Group- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2025** *(Pages 127 - 136)*
To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

25 November 2025
- 14 **Service Delivery and Continuous Improvements Policy Development Group- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2025** *(Pages 137 - 144)*
To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

24 November 2025
- 15 **Planning Committee- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on the 12 November 2025** *(Pages 145 - 152)*
To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

12 November 2025
- 16 **Standards Committee- Reports of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2025** *(Pages 153 - 156)*
To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

15 October 2025
- 17 **Schedule of Meeting for 2026/27** *(Pages 157 - 158)*
To receive a report on Schedule of meeting 2026/2027 from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer).
- 18 **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 11**
To deal with any questions raised pursuant to Procedure Rule 11 not already dealt with during the relevant Committee reports.
- 19 **Special Urgency Decisions**
To note any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency.
- 20 **Questions to Cabinet Members**
To receive answers from the Cabinet Members to questions on their portfolios from other Members.
- 21 **Members Business**
To receive any statements made and notice of future questions by Members.

Note: the time allowed for this item is limited to 15 minutes.

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

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

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

1. Inspection of Papers

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

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

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

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

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

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting

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

4. Public Question Time

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

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

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

For those joining the meeting virtually:

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

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

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

7. Recording of meetings

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

8. Fire Drill Procedure

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

9. WIFI

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

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 29 October 2025 at 6.00 pm

**Present
Councillors**

G Czapiewski, C Adcock, M D Binks,
N Bradshaw, E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski,
J Cairney, S J Clist, L J Cruwys, G Cochran,
C Connor, F J Colthorpe, A Cuddy,
G Duchesne, J M Downes, B Fish,
M Fletcher, A Glover, C Harrower,
B Holdman, M Jenkins, S Keable, L Knight,
J Lock, J Poynton, R Roberts, S Robinson,
T Stanford, A Stirling, M Stratton, L Taylor,
N Woollatt, G Westcott, A White, J Wright
and D Wulff

**Apologies
Councillor(s)**

D Broom, S Chenore, M Farrell, L G J Kennedy, N Letch
and H Tuffin

**Also Present
Officer(s):**

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Maria De Leburne
(Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring
Officer)) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager)

Officers Online

Dean Emery (Head of Revenue and Benefits) and Andrew
Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer)

41 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: D Broom, S Chenore (online), M Farrell, L Kennedy (online), N Letch and H Tuffin.

42 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Barry Warren

My contribution to this section of the meeting is concerned with the work of the Council and the way some of it affects members of the public and the potential standing of the Council.

On the 6 of February 2024, I asked questions at Cabinet which had been submitted in advance.

One question asked was if the Cabinet Member was satisfied that a complete independent structural survey has been carried out and report prepared before the purchase of St. George's Court. Councillor Clist replied - "yes."

I also asked if he had a complete survey report prepared, with costings, which detailed all the necessary alterations and adaptations required to make the properties suitable for HRA use? He replied – *"The Operations Manager for Building Services has surveyed the property and provided a conservative estimate of costings to undertake the required adaptations."* This did not answer the question.

He further responded to another question – *"It's not our intention to make these documents publicly available."*

Subsequent Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and intervention by the Information Commission Office (ICO) have revealed no independent structural survey was commissioned and an officer responded that when Councillor Clist answered "yes" he was referring to the legal document provided. That legal document was dated the 21 of March 2024 – 6 weeks after Councillor Clist had said "yes". That document also recommended a structural survey be carried out.

At Cabinet on the 8 of July 2025 I listed seven payments which had been paid to Zed Pods in May 2025 and asked – *"What is the detail of each of these payments please?"* The written answer from Councillor Lock was *"It is not possible to disclose the detail of individual amounts as itemised within specific invoices as these are commercially sensitive,"*

I also asked who had 'signed off the payments and got the answer from Councillor Lock – *"The Council constitution sets out the financial approval limits for approval of orders and payments by different officers."*

Subsequent FOI requests had resulted in the release of all the relevant invoices and named the officer who issued the orders and authorised the payments – the Head of Housing and Health.

These are just a couple of examples of where Cabinet Members or Chairs have put their names to responses which have been found to be incorrect or at least trying to avoid the issue. Are elected Members aware of this as in some cases there are clear breaches of the Nolan Principles or a potential to place the Members in jeopardy of legal action?

M Warren advised the Chair that the question was to Members to consider and would not need a response.

Paul Elstone

Question 1:

At the Full Council Meeting of the 24 September 2025, I asked about the sales marketing being stopped at Haddon Heights in July of this year. Within a very few days of asking that question a couple of Fox & Sons sale boards appeared randomly on site. On examining the Fox & Sons website it shows no details for these properties being marketed. Additionally, nothing is posted on Rightmove or Zoopla etc.

What is really happening, why are these properties not being visibly and aggressively marketed and given the major financial losses being incurred by this Council?

Question 2:

When I advised both Ashford Council and this Council that the energy certificates published for their individual ZED PODS developments failed to comply with statutory requirements I received two very different responses.

Ashford Council thanked me and addressed the concerns by having their certificates reissued to be compliant.

This Council instead once again showed disdain to the messenger and have not remedied the non-compliant energy certificates. Even worse seriously misrepresenting to Council Members the true facts involving the Ashford Council certificates changes. Misrepresenting facts has become a common theme regarding this Councils housing developments.

Would both the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Scrutiny Committee Chair like to reconsider their written and public responses to my Energy Certificate questions?

Question 3:

I have provided Council Members with an email plus attachments, this in full support of the following question.

At the Scrutiny Committee Meeting of the 29 September 2025 an MDDC Officer told the Committee that 6 out of the 8 Beech Road properties were complete - a statement that was totally untrue.

When saying the delay is due to unmapped utility supply, the officer was attempting to project that the blame for the delay in completing the Beech Road properties sits with the utility provider. A statement it is believed which misrepresents the truth and was intended to once again deflect from ZED PODS and MDDC Officer failings – which some may call professional negligence.

Given the catalogue of untruths and misleading information which has been presented to Council Members, and the public, what will it take to have this administration conduct a full and independent investigation into its modular build social housing program?

Question 4:

Any misrepresentation of the facts brings this Council into disrepute. Does telling proven untruths and knowingly misrepresenting important facts to Council Members and the public constitute gross misconduct?

Question 5:

In the last 4 years how many Council Officers have been dismissed for gross misconduct?

The Chair explained that as the questions had not been provided in writing in the required period in advance of the meeting that a written response would be provided in 10 working days.

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

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

None Received.

44 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2025 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

45 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair had the following announcements to make:

The Chair had the following announcements to make:

- On Remembrance Sunday, 9th November, in the morning, he would be attending Crediton's Remembrance Sunday event and in the afternoon, he would be attending Devon County Remembrance Sunday event at Exeter Cathedral to lay a wreath on behalf of the Council.
- On the same day Cllr C Harrower, the Council's Armed Forces Champion, would be attending the Tiverton Remembrance Sunday to lay a wreath on behalf of the Council.
- He stated that all Members were welcome to attend the Remembrance Sunday event in Cullompton.
- On Armistice Day, 11th November, at 7.45am, he would be passing a wreath onto the Poppy Train heading to Paddington Station in London, along with all other local authorities along the route on behalf of the Council. He would also preside over the Armistice Day Ceremony in Tiverton at 11.00am.
- On the same day the Deputy Leader, Cllr D Wulff, would attend in Cullompton, and the Vice Chair of Council, Cllr S Chenore, would attend in Crediton and both will lay a wreath on behalf of the Council.
- The Council's thoughts were with Cllr D Broom at this time and Council wished him well.

46 **PETITIONS**

None received.

47 **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

None received.

48 **CABINET- REPORTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2025**

The Leader presented the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 7 October 2025.

1. Mid Devon Housing (MDH) Mobility Scooter Policy*

The Leader **MOVED** and seconded by Cllr G Duchesne:

That the recommendation of Cabinet as set out in minute 56 be **APPROVED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

2. Memorial Tree and Seat Policy*

The Leader **MOVED** and seconded by Cllr B Holdman:

That the recommendation of Cabinet as set out in minute 58 be **APPROVED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

49 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE- REPORTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 8 SEPTEMBER AND 29 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee presented the reports of the meetings held on 8 and 29 September 2025.

50 AUDIT COMMITTEE- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the report of the meeting held on the 30 September 2025.

51 COMMUNITY, PEOPLE AND EQUALITIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 16 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair of the Community, People and Equalities Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on the 16 September 2025.

52 ECONOMY AND ASSET POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 18 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair of the Economy and Asset Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 18 September 2025.

53 HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair of the Homes Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 9 September 2025.

54 **PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 23 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The Chair of the Planning, Environment and Sustainability Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 23 September 2025.

55 **SERVICE DELIVERY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 15 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The Chair of the Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 15 September 2025.

56 **PLANNING COMMITTEE- REPORT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 8 OCTOBER 2025**

The Chair of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 8 October 2025.

57 **APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBERS**

The Council had before it a *report of the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) seeking approval of the recommended appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Members' Allowances in Mid Devon.

Consideration was given to:

- Clarification about who were the Members that the Council were asked to appoint to the panel. It was explained that this was within the report which included their experience.
- Questions were raised regarding travel expenses and whether the Panel Members were local residents.
- The report contained a significant amount of information, with additional details provided. It was generally regarded as a comprehensive and well-prepared document.
- The legal requirements were acknowledged, and the extensive experience of the volunteered Panel Members was recognised and appreciated.
- Clarification was sought on how frequently the panel were meeting.
- Concerns were expressed about the recruitment process, particularly regarding the lack of transparency and the absence of opportunities for local residents to apply.
- The lack of advertising on social media platforms and the importance of providing a platform for all to express their interest.

The Chair **MOVED** that:

1. Kelly-Anne Phillips, Graham Russell and David Hindle be appointed to the Mid Devon Independent Remuneration Panel to join John Smith.

2. When necessary, that the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel be paid travelling expenses for attendance at meetings of the Panel at the same rates as those paid to Councillors and officers from time to time, mindful that the majority of meetings would be held online.

Upon a vote being taken, the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those voting **AGAINST** Councillors: M Binks, J Buckowski and R Roberts.

Those **ABSTAINED** from voting: Councillors F J Colthorpe and A Stirling.

Note: *Report previously circulated.

58 **QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 11**

There were no questions raised which were pursuant to Procedure Rule 11 and which had not already been dealt with during the relevant Committee reports.

59 **SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS**

With regard to any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency taken since the last meeting, the Chair informed the meeting that no such decisions had been taken in that period.

60 **QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS**

Cllr J Cairney asked Cllr J Wright the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery and Continuous Improvement:

- How the collection of pots and pans was going and the percentage of recycling?

Cllr J Wight informed Members, since the 13 October 2025, the equivalent of six wheelie bins of pots and pans had been collected. The recycling rate had reached 57%, still placing the Council among the top five in the country. Members were reminded to continue encouraging the use of food waste caddies and to promote the recycling of pumpkins during this time of year.

61 **MEMBERS BUSINESS**

- Cllr B Holdman highlighted to Members that he attended the “Meet the Funders” event, this was held to connect local community groups, charities, and social enterprises with key funding bodies and grant providers. The event brought together over 50 attendees from across the district, it offered a unique opportunity to engage directly with representatives from national and regional funding organisations.
- Cllr B Fish highlighted to Members he had been approached by a number of Tiverton residents who were deeply concerned about the deteriorating state of pharmaceutical services in this town. While this issue did not fall directly within the remit of this Council and this was a widespread national issue, he wanted residents to know that this Council stood with them. This was important to be raised as a representative of the community. Members would be aware that

following the closure of the Superdrug Pharmacy at Clare House Practice, Jhoots Pharmacy in Market Place had stepped in to fill the gap. This situation had placed immense pressure on the staff at the remaining pharmacies. The teams were doing their utmost to support residents but were stretched to their limits. Many had reached the front of the queue after queueing for some time only to be told that their prescription had not arrived from the GP surgery or that the item was out of stock. This situation was unacceptable and required urgent attention. The local MPs, Richard Foord and Rachel Gilmour, had raised concerns with the Care Minister, Stephen Kinnock. Rachel Gilmour had met with the Devon Integrated Care Board. Tiverton's pharmaceutical provision required immediate action.

- Cllr J Buczkowski raised an issue concerning the construction vehicles passing through Cullompton, heavy lorries thunder past small children that walked to school. Pavements shake, engines roar, and anxious parents try to guide their children safely along roads never designed for such traffic. These huge vehicles line the residential streets, parked nose to tail, leaving no room for pedestrians to cross safely. The treading of mud onto the roads that endanger cyclists and those on two wheels and the possibility of one of these construction vehicles losing control. The Construction Environmental Management Plan was meant to prevent this issue. This was not nimbyism. This was not opposition to housing or growth. It was about ensuring development was safe, responsible, and lawful. It was about holding developers to account for the conditions they agreed to and for the standards they promised to meet. The consideration of this plan was agreed by this Council and the developers continued to ignore it.
- Cllr S Keable highlighted the following:
 - On the 26 September he attended the Devon and Somerset Metro board that discussed the Cullompton and Wellington train station. There was still no formal announcement from Government about the funding. National Rail were keen and had allocated a budget for 2026/27 for the development.
 - On the 3 October he attended Devon County Council Honorary Alderman ceremony where the former Chair of this Council and County Councillor, Frank Letch MBE, received a posthumous award.
 - He attended a North Devon Line Rail Promotion Group Annual General meeting.
 - He thanked Cllr B Holdman and Cllr G DuChesne on organising the 'Meet the Funders' event.
 - He attended the Grand Western Railway Transport forum on the 20 October.
- Cllr S Robinson thanked Cllr N Bradshaw on the work she had done for the Impact Sustainable Tiverton.
- Cllr S Clist attend the Housing Task Force Group and highlighted the statistics for Social rented houses and affordable homes.
- Cllr J Downes highlighted to Members that the barriers were now installed at the Leisure Centre in Crediton?
- Cllr G Cochran highlighted that the Crediton Launderette had reopened after 8 years.

(The meeting ended at 18.58)

CHAIR

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Full Council 29 October Public Questions and Answers

Name of person submitting	Questions
<p>Barry Warren</p> <p>Page 19</p>	<p>My contribution to this section of the meeting is concerned with the work of the Council and the way some of it affects members of the public and the potential standing of the Council.</p> <p>On the 6 of February 2024, I asked questions at Cabinet which had been submitted in advance.</p> <p>One question asked was if the Cabinet Member was satisfied that a complete independent structural survey has been carried out and report prepared before the purchase of St. George's Court. Councillor Clist replied - "yes."</p> <p>I also asked if he had a complete survey report prepared, with costings, which detailed all the necessary alterations and adaptations required to make the properties suitable for HRA use? He replied – <i>"The Operations Manager for Building Services has surveyed the property and provided a conservative estimate of costings to undertake the required adaptations."</i> This did not answer the question.</p> <p>He further responded to another question – <i>"It's not our intention to make these documents publicly available."</i></p> <p>Subsequent Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and intervention by the Information Commission Office (ICO) have revealed no independent structural survey was commissioned and an officer responded that when Councillor Clist answered "yes" he was referring to the legal document provided. That legal document was dated the 21 of March 2024 – 6 weeks after Councillor Clist had said "yes". That document also recommended a structural survey be carried out.</p> <p>At Cabinet on the 8 of July 2025 I listed seven payments which had been paid to Zed Pods in May 2025 and asked – <i>"What is the detail of each of these payments please?"</i> The written answer from Councillor Lock was <i>"It is not possible to disclose the detail of individual amounts as itemised within specific invoices as these are commercially sensitive,"</i></p> <p>I also asked who had 'signed off the payments and got the answer from Councillor Lock – <i>"The Council constitution sets out the financial approval limits for approval of orders and payments by different officers."</i></p>

	<p>Subsequent FOI requests had resulted in the release of all the relevant invoices and named the officer who issued the orders and authorised the payments – the Head of Housing and Health.</p> <p>These are just a couple of examples of where Cabinet Members or Chairs have put their names to responses which have been found to be incorrect or at least trying to avoid the issue. Are elected Members aware of this as in some cases there are clear breaches of the Nolan Principles or a potential to place the Members in jeopardy of legal action?</p> <p>Mr Warren advised the Chair that the question was to Members to consider and would not need a response.</p>
<p>Paul Elstone</p> <p>Page 20</p>	<p>Question 1: At the Full Council Meeting of the 24 September 2025, I asked about the sales marketing being stopped at Haddon Heights in July of this year. Within a very few days of asking that question a couple of Fox & Sons sale boards appeared randomly on site. On examining the Fox & Sons website it shows no details for these properties being marketed. Additionally, nothing is posted on Rightmove or Zoopla etc.</p> <p>What is really happening, why are these properties not being visibly and aggressively marketed and given the major financial losses being incurred by this Council?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Asset and Property Services: The Council are in the process of changing sales marketing agents. In consultation with the new sales marketing agents, the advice received was to remove the properties from the market for a period to allow the market to refresh. During the interim period, the properties have been refreshed in terms of refreshed ready for the relaunch. Marketing will recommence in due course.</p> <p>Question 2: When I advised both Ashford Council and this Council that the energy certificates published for their individual ZED PODS developments failed to comply with statutory requirements I received two very different responses.</p> <p>Ashford Council thanked me and addressed the concerns by having their certificates reissued to be compliant.</p> <p>This Council instead once again showed disdain to the messenger and have not remedied the non-compliant energy certificates. Even worse seriously misrepresenting to Council Members the true facts involving the Ashford Council certificates changes. Misrepresenting facts has become a common theme regarding this Councils housing developments.</p>

Would both the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Scrutiny Committee Chair like to reconsider their written and public responses to my Energy Certificate questions?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Asset and Property Services: No.

The Council is not party to the communications between the questioner and another local authority, therefore we cannot comment further on those. We nonetheless reiterate it is evident that the EPC scores for the Zed Pod properties in Ashford remain unchanged following apparent reassessment.

As per the previous response to the same question at Scrutiny on 29 September, we have no evidence to suggest any concerns with the EPC certificates provided for our schemes. Nonetheless, if the questioner has particular concerns about an Elmhurst accredited EPC assessor/scheme member then Elmhurst have a specific complaints resolution process which can be assessed at [Complaints Resolution - Elmhurst Energy](#).

There is no misrepresentation by officers on this matter as is erroneously alleged.

Question 3:

I have provided Council Members with an email plus attachments, this in full support of the following question.

At the Scrutiny Committee Meeting of the 29 September 2025 an MDDC Officer told the Committee that 6 out of the 8 Beech Road properties were complete - a statement that was totally untrue.

When saying the delay is due to unmapped utility supply, the officer was attempting to project that the blame for the delay in completing the Beech Road properties sits with the utility provider. A statement it is believed which misrepresents the truth and was intended to once again deflect from ZED PODS and MDDC Officer failings – which some may call professional negligence.

Given the catalogue of untruths and misleading information which has been presented to Council Members, and the public, what will it take to have this administration conduct a full and independent investigation into its modular build social housing program?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Asset and Property Services:

The officer correctly stated that 6 of the 8 modules have been installed and were complete. They did not state they were attached to the remaining modules or that works require to complete the external finishing of the development as a whole were complete.

With two remaining modules to be installed in what is a terraced development it is straightforward for the questioner to understand that some works will be required to complete this scheme. Consequently, there has been no misrepresentation as to progress with completing this scheme and the statement from the officer is being interpreted in a way that may suit a specific viewpoint.

Regarding utility delays at this development, the Council can provide documentary evidence as to the nature of the issue, efforts and legal processes required to resolve the mis-mapped utility and numerous rescheduled appointments by utility company representatives on-site all of which directly contributed to delays.

Consequently, there is no 'catalogue of untruths and misleading information' as is again being erroneously alleged.

Question 4:

Any misrepresentation of the facts brings this Council into disrepute. Does telling proven untruths and knowingly misrepresenting important facts to Council Members and the public constitute gross misconduct?

Chair of the Council:

The principles of public life include both honesty and integrity. These should apply to all aspects of public debate.

Question 5:

In the last 4 years how many Council Officers have been dismissed for gross misconduct?

Chair of the Council:

19.

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 26 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

**Present
Councillors**

G Czapiewski, C Adcock, M D Binks,
E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, J Cairney,
S Chenore, S J Clist, G Cochran, C Connor,
F J Colthorpe, G Duchesne, J M Downes,
M Farrell, B Fish, M Fletcher, A Glover,
C Harrower, B Holdman, S Keable, L Knight,
J Lock, J Poynton, R Roberts, S Robinson,
T Stanford, A Stirling, M Stratton, L Taylor,
H Tuffin, G Westcott, J Wright and D Wulff

**Apologies
Councillors**

N Bradshaw (online), D Broom, L J Cruwys, M Jenkins,
N Letch and A White and N Woollatt (online)

**Also Present
Officer(s):**

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy
Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leburne (Director of
Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Laura
Woon (Democratic Services Manager), Sarah Lees
(Democratic Services Officer) and Angie Howell
(Democratic Services Officer)

62 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: N Bradshaw (online), D Broom, L J Cruwys, M Jenkins, N Letch and A White and N Woollatt (online).

63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chair reminded those present that all Members of the Council had been granted a dispensation to allow them to speak and vote in any debate on any matter that related to devolution or Local Government Reorganisation in Devon.

The Director for Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) stated the following:

- Members were reminded that under the Localism Act 2011, councillors may express views or campaign on issues without automatically being deemed to have predetermined their position. However, it was essential that all Members

approached this matter with an open mind and were ready to consider all relevant information and debate before voting.

- In relation to allowances received from another authority involved in the reorganisation, which could constitute a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI), there was a dispensation to allow participation. However, Members were reminded that the dispensation did not override the legal requirement to avoid bias or predetermination.

64 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None received.

65 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION SUBMISSION

The Council had before it a *report from the Leader of the Council on the full Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) submission document and to discuss any issues that arise. The report was presented to ensure that the Council responded to the invitation to submit proposals for a single tier of local government and continued to influence future LGR in Devon.

The Leader of the Council outlined the contents of the report on the Local Government Reorganisation submission.

- His report was self-explanatory and outlined local government reorganisation in Devon and the shared vision of 'Reimagining Devon'.
- The process began following the publication of the Government's White Paper in December 2024, which required councils to explore creating a single tier of local government for areas of approximately 500,000 people, aiming to demonstrate value for money, community cohesion and improved service delivery.
- From early 2025, the Leader and other district leaders, along with Torbay unitary authority, worked intensively to respond to this directive. Over the past year, they collaborated to develop the "4-5-1 model," excluding Exeter (which pursued its own proposal) and Torbay (which ultimately focused on a Torbay-first model). He noted that this was a pragmatic response to national pressure rather than a locally initiated process.
- Concerns were raised about democracy and local representation, particularly regarding the government's insistence that any proposal must not exceed 100 councillors. He highlighted that Mid Devon currently had 42 District Councillors including a further 5 that were County Councillors and even under the 4-5-1 proposal, representation would be reduced by two-thirds, risking a democratic deficit and weakening local accountability.
- The Leader stated that Mid Devon residents valued local decision-making and direct representation, and any reorganisation must protect that link. The past year had been challenging, with disagreements and national agendas dominating, but this council engaged constructively and collaborated with neighbouring districts while maintaining local values.
- He acknowledged the significant impact on staff and expressed gratitude for their work, as well as thanking Councillor Wulff for preparing printed copies of the 'Reimagining Devon' document. He urged Members to consider the 4-5-1 proposal with an open mind, noting that while the reform was not sought, it met government criteria and could shape Devon for the next 50 years. He

concluded by calling for continued collaboration across councils and reaffirmed the commitment to championing Mid Devon's communities, services and democracy. The Leader indicated that recommendations would be moved after discussion and debate.

The Deputy Leader highlighted the following:

- He had attended several meetings on behalf of the Leader and stated that cooperation between districts had been exemplary. It was noted that although councils had not chosen this position, they had all worked purposefully to shape a proposal reflecting Devon's diverse needs. He shared concerns about democracy and representation, highlighting that the current breadth of councillors' backgrounds was a strength that could be lost under a large unitary authority. Such a move could make it harder for people from ordinary working backgrounds to stand, risking a shift towards career politicians.
- He emphasised that decision-making should remain close to communities and stated that the 4-5-1 proposal achieved this balance while meeting ministerial criteria.
- The proposal was described as a forward-looking vision and a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve services and preserve democratic accountability. He concluded by expressing support for a future that reflected local identity and ambitions and confirmed he would listen with interest to the discussion.

Consideration was given to:

- Clarification on the purpose of the meeting, noting that the Leader's statement had caused some confusion. The two recommendations in the paper were briefly discussed. These were:
 - That Council note the report and the LGR submission document.
 - That Council endorse the submission as being in accordance with previous Council decisions to develop its reorganisation proposal.
- Concerns were expressed that the Leader had suggested the need 'to support' the proposal this evening, which was not explicitly stated in the recommendations. It was explained that it would be up to the Leader to move the recommendations, but the recommendations stood as written. In response to the query, it was clarified that voting on Recommendation 2 did not constitute express support for the proposal; rather, it endorsed the submission as being in accordance with previous Council decisions.
- Appreciation for the work undertaken to develop the proposal, acknowledging that it was not a choice of the Council but a response to imposed criteria. Concerns were also raised on the long travel times particularly in summer which could discourage councillors with full-time jobs from participating. It was noted that while the proposal aimed at cost savings, it could impose greater financial and personal costs on councillors and potentially residents. It was explained that the Leader sympathised with the concerns of travel and that the Standards Committee had responded to the Government Consultation enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at Council meetings. The Council were now awaiting a White Paper to introduce voting rights for those online at meetings.

- Clarification on neighbourhood area committees referenced in the document, specifically what decisions these committees would make and what role communities would have in designing them? It was explained that any decision-making powers for neighbourhood area committees would need to be delegated by the new unitary council. The proposal suggested that decisions most relevant to local areas such as local planning management and licensing could be handled by these committees. However, it was noted that it was unrealistic to expect neighbourhood area committees to assume all functions previously held by district councils.
- The Leader's request to keep an open mind on the quality of the 4-5-1 proposal was acknowledged, while noting disagreement with some aspects. The 4-5-1 model was only one of several proposals to be considered by Government, including Devon County Council's "9-1-1" model and other submissions from Torbay, Exeter, and Plymouth. Concerns were raised that none of the proposals might fully meet the six criteria set out in the December 2024 White Paper, and that approach could lead Government to impose its own solution. The worry that the 4-5-1 model appeared oversold, lacked acknowledgment of negative impacts, and could undermine community engagement particularly for areas falling between proposed boundaries was expressed. The importance of community hubs was highlighted as fundamental to maintaining local voice and influence. Which of the representations was most likely to satisfy the Government's six criteria? It was noted that different proposals could place areas such as Crediton and Yeo under different councils, depending on which bids were accepted. The Government would ultimately decide the outcome. Members expressed a preference for a referendum, although this was not within the Council's control. Council's would naturally prioritise their own interests, making agreement difficult, and examples were cited from other regions where multiple proposals were submitted but the Government ultimately chose its preferred option following consultation.
- This was merely the end of the beginning. The Council had a long way to go once the Government make their decision and that could take a while. That was when the negotiations would start as to how the new unitary authority would actually be created and formed.
- It was felt the document contained oversimplifications and marketing language, such as claims of a "safe and seamless transition" and "quick financial payback", which overlooked major complexities. It was highlighted issues such as boundary overlaps and long travel distances, noting that these contradicted the concept of hyper localism. Concerns were expressed that whichever plan was adopted, significant challenges might arise that had not been fully addressed. It was clarified that all proposals submitted to Government projected similar payback periods of approximately two to three years. Therefore, the 4-5-1 proposal was not a financial outlier, as the assumptions and financial assessments across Devon were broadly comparable, despite some differences in detail. The geographical areas were challenging due to the need to satisfy government criteria particularly financial resilience while accommodating diverse political and local interests. The rural nature of Devon meant that any proposal would involve large areas, and this was true across all submissions.

- Whether the costings and savings in the proposal accounted for additional costs that might fall on parish councils, such as the need for full-time clerks, which could lead to higher precepts and staffing challenges. The Government's lack of reference to the south west in the Chancellor's budget statement should influence the Council's approach to reorganisation. It was explained that the Leader acknowledged the potential impact on parish councils was a valid concern. It was noted that similar responsibilities had already shifted to parishes over the past 20 years. While the future was uncertain, it was considered likely that parishes would need to take on additional responsibilities such as maintaining services if they wished to preserve them.
- Did the submission accord with previous Council resolutions from 8 January 2020? Members were reminded of the three key resolutions:
 - To commission legal advice and independent, evidence-based analysis to underpin any future proposals, ensuring they were credible, transparent, and robust to ensure the Ministerial deadlines were met with well-prepared, fact-driven, and scrutinised submissions.
 - To commission legal advice and independent, evidence-based analysis to underpin any future proposals, ensuring they were credible, transparent, and robust to ensure the Ministerial deadlines were met with well-prepared, fact-driven, and scrutinised submissions.
 - In proposals for new regional and unitary local authorities, to advocate for a proportional voting system in order to move fairly to reflect the preferences and views of the electorate and to enable every vote to count.
- There was no evidence of Member scrutiny, nor references to a referendum or proportional representation in the submission and therefore believed it did not align with those resolutions. It was explained that from the outset, the Leader had sought to engage with other district councillors and had taken forward views on issues such as a referendum and proportional representation. However, these were not unanimously supported and it was considered unlikely that the Government would agree to them.
- Would the Cabinet decision be subject to call-in as a key decision and that the Cabinet recommendations did not require consideration of views expressed at this meeting, querying whether that was intentional. It was explained that the purpose of holding the full Council meeting immediately before the Cabinet meeting was to ensure all Members had adequate opportunity to discuss, debate, and influence the decision. The timing was necessary to meet the submission deadline of 28 November 2025, consistent with other Devon councils making decisions that week.
- The Leader reminded members of subsequent decisions of council on this subject that took place after the January meeting being referenced.
- The hard work of councillors and officers over the past year was acknowledged but concerns were shared about reduced local accountability and loss of the wider skill set currently available in district councils under the proposed system. Comments were asked for on the positions of Torbay and Exeter regarding their preferred options for unitary authorities and whether they would support and work to make the 4-5-1 model effective if adopted? Members also queried whether there was any commitment to reducing costs for local residents under the new system? The Leader stated that it would be

inappropriate to comment on other proposals at this meeting, as they were not on the agenda. He emphasised that whichever proposal was ultimately selected whether the 4-5-1 model, the 9-1-1 model, or another, all councils would need to work together to achieve the best outcome for residents. The Leader reiterated that the final decision rested with central government but expressed confidence that collaboration would follow once a decision was made.

- Whether consideration had been given to the possibility of the Government rejecting all submitted proposals and imposing its own solution, such as requiring Plymouth to be included. What contingency planning had been done for such scenarios and expressed concern that Government changes or budget decisions could significantly alter the process. It was stated that potential Government “curveballs” were unknown, though concerns such as significant budget cuts were expressed. The Leader noted as an example that delays to the White Paper on SEND provision could have major financial implications.

The Leader **MOVED** and seconded by Cllr D Wulff:

1. That Council notes the report and LGR submission document.
2. That Council endorses the submission, as being in accordance with previous decisions of this Council to develop its reorganisation proposal.

Upon a vote being taken, the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those voting **AGAINST** Councillors: H Tuffin and G Westcott.

Those **ABSTAINED** from voting: Councillors M Binks, J Buczkowski, S Clist, F J Colthorpe and R Roberts.

Note:

- i. *Report previously circulated.
- ii. Councillors: H Tuffin and G Westcott supported recommendation 1 and was against recommendation 2.

(The meeting ended at 19:20pm)

CHAIR

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 4 November 2025 at 5.15 pm

Present

Councillors: L Taylor (Leader), D Wulff (Deputy Leader),
J M Downes, G Duchesne, M Fletcher, J
Lock, S Keable and J Wright

Apology

Councillor: N Bradshaw

Also Present

Officers: Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy
Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leburne (Director of
Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Simon
Newcombe (Head of Housing & Health), Paul Deal (Head
of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Jason Ball
(Climate and Sustainability Specialist), Laura Woon
(Democratic Services Manager) and Carole Oliphant
(Housing Policy Officer)

Councillors

Online J Buczkowski, J Cairney, S Clist, G Czapiewski, L G J
Kennedy, C Harrower and B Holdman

Officers Online Carole Oliphant (Housing Policy Officer)

60. **APOLOGIES (00:04:33)**

Apologies were received from Councillor N Bradshaw.

61. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00:04:44)**

None received.

62. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:04:50)**

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

63. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:05:10)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 October 2025 were **APPROVED** as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Leader.

64. **VARIATION OF TENANCY AGREEMENT (00:05:25)**

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Head of Housing and Health on the Variation of the Tenancy Agreement.

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

- The Council had been undertaking a thorough process over the last 12 months to update the Council's standard Tenancy Agreement for all its secure and introductory tenants. To update such an agreement was a major exercise as it impacted most of the Council's residents living in a Council home both current and new.
- The current Tenancy Agreement was last updated in 2016, since then there had been significant changes in legislation and the wider regulatory landscape in addition to major events such as the fire at Grenfell Tower and the Covid pandemic. These had impacted on the Council's operating environment as a social landlord whereby the Tenancy Agreement needed to be updated to reflect the change and numerous recent policy updates.
- Following on from Cabinet approval on 1 April 2025 to commence statutory consultations with tenants under the Housing Act to vary the terms of the Council's Tenancy Agreement, the report presented the results of the consultation and the final draft Tenancy Agreement for approval.
- The consultation and the draft agreement were produced in close partnership with the Council's Legal Services and Mid Devon Housing (MDH) team to ensure it was fit for purpose and fully compliant with the legal requirements. This was important as the Tenancy Agreement was the formal agreement between the Council and each of their residential Council tenants. As such, it underpinned the core relationship with them and was the key basis for the Council's ongoing tenancy management.
- More information on the extensive tenant consultation exercise and the responses were set out in more detail in sections 2 and 3 of the report respectively.
- Subject to Cabinet approval, MDH would plan and implement the introduction of the new terms & conditions set out in the new Tenancy Agreement. This process would vary for a small number of new tenants who had signed up with MDH after the consultation closed in August this year compared to the existing tenants who were able to be involved in the consultation. Once the new agreement was live, then existing tenants would transfer to the new agreement and relevant future tenants would be automatically signed up under the new document until such time as the agreement may need to be reviewed and updated again.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- How was the Council managing the overgrown gardens that also included gardens with rubbish and rodents? It was explained that it was the tenant's

responsibility to maintain their own gardens. Housing Officers would check properties and report appropriately to ensure actions were taken.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Tenancy Agreement attached in Annex A be approved subject to any responses from new tenants signed up after the preliminary consultation ended.
2. Delegated authority be given to Head of Housing and Health (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services) to review the consultation responses from the new tenants and authorise such changes to the new Tenancy Agreement as he considered necessary in the light of any late consultation responses.
3. Delegated authority be given to Head of Housing and Health (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services) to draft and serve the Notice of Variation to existing secure/introductory tenants under section 103 of the Housing Act 1985 to vary the terms and condition of their tenancies so that they were on the terms and conditions of the new Tenancy Agreement.

As recommended by the Homes Policy Development Group.

(Proposed by Cllr J Lock and seconded by Cllr S Keable)

Reason for Decision:

As a registered provider (RP) of social housing, the Council is obliged to comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 1985.

It is good practice to review tenancy agreements on a regular basis to take account of changes to legislation, regulatory requirements, policy and good practice. RPs also need to ensure that those responsible for housing management can rely on a robust tenancy agreement which can be used in support of efficient and effective management of tenancies and the housing stock.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

65. **CARBON FOOTPRINT REPORT 2024-2025 (00:13:40)**

The Cabinet had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Climate and Sustainability Specialist on the Council's Carbon Footprint.

The Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- The result 2% higher than the 2023-2024 carbon footprint. That increase was down to the climate change impact linked to spending, and the rise in construction spending had the most effect.
- The Council had successfully cut emissions by investing in decarbonising the Tiverton and Crediton Leisure Centres and social housing and by doing this the Council had significantly lowered its carbon footprint.

- In the Council's Climate Change Strategy: the focus had been on the elements in their control; acting on opportunities to invest; and acting to influence those that the Council did business with.
- The net emissions for elements in the Council's direct control (comprising Council offices and facilities; transport; and offsets) contributed to just under 9% of the 2024/25 overall total footprint.
- The 1,589 tCO₂e figure for 2024/25 was circa 35% lower than the 2,427 tCO₂e figure for the 2018/19 baseline year. (Almost 840 tCO₂e less.)
- Reductions since 2018/19 came from Council offices and facilities (from 1,098 to 705 tCO₂e); and offsets (from 0 to -420 tCO₂e).
- Since 2018/19 fleet impacts had hardly changed, although the Council now served circa 2,500 more households (from 35,650 up to 38,150).
- The team had made rapid progress to replace old social housing with 48 net-zero new-build homes. The procurement relating to those construction projects would show on the Council's 2025-2026 carbon footprint (Scope 3 indirect i.e. supply chain). However, that investment would reduce the annual carbon footprint, in Scope 1 and Scope 2, by approximately 136 tonnes per year.

Discussion took place regarding:

- How the electric vehicles worked operationally and what was the availability? It was explained that vehicles could be charged whilst officers were on call out which would then provide enough charge to get officers to where they would need to be.
- Whether a hybrid vehicle would be more suitable for that line of work? It was explained that this may be a suitable option but that it would also depend on the emissions used and the reduction in the carbon footprint.
- Did the Council have any data from other authorities to compare on the reduction in emissions? It was explained that due to the difference in the operations day to day it would be difficult to compare.
- The purchasing of the Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers and for those to be installed through a trained electrician that worked for the Council. It was explained that challenges may occur as some homes may have complications when installing an EV Charger.
- How were the Council performing in regard to solar panels and air source heat pumps? It was explained that the Council were liaising through the appropriate channels to meet the Council targets.
- The Council was in the top 20% - how many other Council's were part of this?
- Were the electric vehicle serviced locally? It was confirmed that they were serviced locally.

Reason for Decision:

The Council's environmental sustainability duties are underpinned by legislation e.g. Environment Act 2021. All local authorities have obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008 with regard to climate change adaptation (resilience) and mitigation (emission reductions). Full Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

66. DRAFT BUDGET REPORT 2026/27 (00:33:33)

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

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

- The update on the 2026/27 draft budget for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, highlighted the forecast shortfalls on the basis of what the Council currently knew, recognising that the Council were not likely to be aware of the full financial context until the funding allocation after the Chancellor's national budget was received.
- To that end, Cabinet had deferred aspects of this report from the last meeting in order to seek greater clarity on the status and deliverability of the proposals put forward from the Policy Development Groups (PDG) that had been categorised as 'amber'.
- As a result of this, the recommendation in the report was not to approve these savings, but to retain them in the budget planning process until this Council had greater certainty and confidence over the budget gaps that remained following upcoming national government statements on the reconfiguring of Council funding allocations. It was further highlighted that the potential of savings in economic development grants was overstated in the previous version that came to Cabinet and would be revised within future reports. This approach continued this administration's commitment to financial responsibility and would allow time to assess the true extent of the funding shortfall before making amendments to budget options based on that position.
- The report also introduced the emerging 2026/27–2030/31 Capital Programme including expenditure profiles for consideration.
- Members were reminded of the ongoing challenges due to significant funding uncertainties prevalent at this time. Further updates were expected before the final budget approval decisions in February 2026.

RESOLVED that:

1. The amber budget options remained as budget planning assumptions until clarity was received following the Government financial settlement announcement and that was **AGREED**.
2. Consideration and comments were given regarding the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31 within Appendix 1a and 1b;
3. There remained little clarity on the financial settlement currently and that this was likely to require additional ad hoc updates as and when greater information was known, particularly following the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement be **NOTED**.

(Proposed by Cllr J Downes and seconded Cllr S Keable)

Reason for Decision:

By undertaking regular reviews of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, the Council could ensure that the 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.

Note: *Report previously circulated

67. 2025/26 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 (00:49:52)

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) and the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience on the 2025/26 Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring.

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

- The 2025/26 Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring report detailed the current projected General Fund overspend of £156k, a Housing Revenue Account overspend of £745k with narrative explaining the variances.
- The Capital Programme variances including underspends, overspends, and slippage, with recommendations for budget increases due to additional grants and housing stock purchases.
- The report updated Members on the usage of procurement waivers, the social rent corrections, and the ongoing financial risks amid uncertain future funding.

Discussion took place with regards to:

- Providing clarification around the disposal of the derelict social house as referred to within the recommendation. It was explained that it was uneconomic to renovate, the land had development and the Council would seek to sell the land for the maximum price.
- Clarification regarding the Housing Revenue stock and if that was a forecast outturn position or an overspend. It was explained that it was a forecast outturn, however it was in year and changes may happen.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure for the three months to 30 September 2025 and the projected outturn position be **NOTED**.
- b) To recommend to Full Council that the increase to the Capital Programme of £526k in respect of additional Grant funding received (£276k – see par 5.3) and extra budget to further increase the HRA Housing Stock (£250k – see para 5.5) be **AGREED**.
- c) Delegated Authority be given for the Head of Housing and Health in association with the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) to dispose of a derelict social house which was uneconomic to renovate, and where there was no need for such a home and use the capital receipt generated to reinvest in the provision of additional social housing - see para 5.6.
- d) The use of Waivers and Direct Awards for the Procurement of goods and services as included in Section 7 be **NOTED**.

- e) The performance achieved in respect of resolving the Social Rent errors within the Council's direct control and recognise the impact of the delays in responses from partner organisations, as outlined within Section 8 be **NOTED**.
- f) The update on future funding given in paragraphs 9.2 be **NOTED**.

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

Reason for Decision:

Good financial management and administration underpin the entire document. A surplus or deficit on the Revenue Budget would impact on the Council's General Fund balances. The Council's financial position was constantly reviewed to ensure it was continued financial health.

Note: *Report previously circulated

68. **2025/26 TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT QUARTER 2 (00:49:25)**
69.

The Cabinet had before it a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) and the Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience on the 2025/26 Quarter 2 Treasury Management.

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

- The report provided an update on the Council's treasury performance for the first six months, noting a decline in investment returns due to lower interest rates and reduced cash balances.
- It was proposed that there be a continuation of the current investment policy and outlined revised capital financing requirements and borrowing limits based upon the updated information. This also included an economic commentary from the Council Treasury Advisors forecasting falling interest rates amid inflation and economic uncertainties.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Council that:

- a) A continuation of the current policy outlined at paragraphs 4.0 – 4.5 be **AGREED**.
- b) The changes to the Capital Financing Requirement, Operational Boundaries and Authorised Limits for the current year at paragraphs 5.4 – 5.5 be **AGREED**

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

Reason for Decision:

Good financial management and administration underpin the entire strategy. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy should attempt to maximise investment return commensurate with minimum risk to the principal sums invested.

Note: *Report previously circulated

69. TAX BASE CALCULATIONS REPORT

The Leader of the Council stated that the Tax Base Calculation Report would be deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

70. NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS

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

This included the following:

- The Waste Depot remodelling update had been added to the meeting on 2 December 2025.
- Tax Base Calculation Report be deferred to 2 December 2025.

Note: * Key Decisions Report previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at 18.08pm)

LEADER

Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	4 November 2025
Subject:	2025/26 QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING
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 A – General Fund Summary Appendix B – General Fund Service Variances Appendix C – Employee Cost Summary Analysis Appendix D – Income Summary Analysis Appendix E – HRA Summary and detail variances Appendix F – Capital Programme Summary

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To present the forecast Outturn position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme for the financial year 2025/26.

Recommendation(s):

1. The Cabinet are asked to:

- a) **Note the financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure for the three months to 30 September 2025 and the projected outturn position;**
- b) **Recommend to Full Council the increase to the Capital Programme of £526k in respect of additional Grant funding received (£276k – see par 5.3) and extra budget to further increase the HRA Housing Stock (£250k – see para 5.5)**
- c) **Delegated approval is sought for the Head of Housing and Health in association with the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) to dispose of a derelict social house which is uneconomic to renovate, and where there**

is no need for such a home and use the capital receipt generated to reinvest in the provision of additional social housing- see para 5.6.

- d) **Note the use of Waivers and Direct Awards for the Procurement of goods and services as included in Section 7;**
- e) **Note the performance achieved in respect of resolving the Social Rent errors within our direct control and recognise the impact of the delays in responses from partner organisations, as outlined within Section 8;**
- f) **Note the update on future funding given in paragraphs 9.2.**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report contains information relating to the Council's overall financial performance for the 2025/26 financial year. Monitoring the Budget is an important part of the Council's performance management framework. The aim is to keep a tight control on spending on services within a flexible budget management framework.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to highlight to Cabinet the current financial status and the likely reserve balances at 31 March 2026. It encompasses the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and Capital Programme. The detail underpinning these projections is included within the body of report in the following sections / appendices:

- The projected General Fund outturn position for 2025/26 (**Section 3 + Appendices A to D**);
- The projected HRA Outturn position for 2025/26 (**Section 4 + Appendix E**);
- The projected Capital Outturn position for 2025/26 (**Section 5 + Appendix F**);
- Collection Fund (**Section 6**);
- Procurement Waivers (**Section 7**)
- Social Rent Update (**Section 8**).

1.3 Favourable variances generating either increased income or cost savings are expressed as credits (negative numbers), whilst unfavourable overspends or incomes below budget are debits (positive numbers). Any variance against the agreed budget will impact on the Council's reserves. This monitoring focuses on significant budget variances (+/- £20k), including any remedial action where necessary leading to an estimated overall Outturn position.

1.4 The Council's financial position will be constantly reviewed to ensure its continued financial health and delivery of excellent Value for Money.

1.5 Members should note that officers have also identified areas where some unbudgeted expenditure can be mitigated using earmarked reserves. Therefore, this is shown in Appendix A within the individual service areas enabling clarity on the overall forecast outturn variance that will affect General Reserves.

- 1.6 This report also includes Section 7, which updates Members on the use of Procurement Waivers and Direct Award Contracts during this quarter. A procurement waiver is where contract procedure regulations have not been applied due to exceptional circumstances, such as urgency of the goods/services being required, or the specialist nature of the goods/services where there is no effective competition to provide it. A direct contract award through a framework agreement is when a contract is awarded to a pre-qualified supplier on the framework for various goods, services, or works.

2.0 Executive Summary of 2025/26

- 2.1. The report indicates a projected General Fund Outturn variance of £156k overspend and a HRA outturn variance of £745k overspend. In respect of the Capital Programme, there is forecast spend of £26,282k against the deliverable budget of £41,860k, leaving forecast variances of £3,966k under spend, £2,379k overspend and slippage of £13,874k across various projects, with £117k no longer required. However, it should be noted that at only halfway through the financial year, further movement in the projected outturn position is possible. That this early within the financial year it is difficult to identify trends and robustly forecast the future year-end position.
- 2.2. The Council has continued to struggle to recruit to some key vacancies, particularly within Waste, Finance, Legal and Planning Enforcement, which has continued the above budget spend on agency staff, costing nearly £140k above the salary savings. However, recruitment and sickness remain close to that experienced in the last financial year.
- 2.3. Overall income is below target with several service areas slightly down. The prevailing economic conditions continue to impact Planning and Building Control income. Waste and Recyclate income is behind expectations due to lower tonnages and lower sales prices per tonne. The only service exceeding budget expectations is Leisure which continues to show the good growth in membership numbers.
- 2.4. If the forecast level of overspend is delivered, this will indicatively decrease the General Reserve balance to £1,868k, below the agreed minimum £2m balance. This position will be reviewed at year end where we reflect on levels of reserves and the significant uncertainty of central government changes to core funding, plus any short-term implications of preparing for Local Government Reform / Devolution.

3.0 The General Fund

- 3.1. The forecast General Fund over spend for the current year is £156k after transfers to and from earmarked reserves. A summary explanation of these key variances is shown in **Appendix A**, service by service. **Appendix B** also

provides the detail of the key variances and those above £20k (+ or -) at individual service level to enable full transparency of the position. Similarly, within **Appendix F** (Capital Programme) the detail of the key variances at individual project level are included.

- 3.2. The table below shows the overall Budget, Forecast and Variance, summarised for 2025/26.

Table 1 – General Fund Summary

Financial Summary for 2025/26	2025/26 Budget	2025/26 Forecast After EMRs	2025/26 Variance After EMRs
	£	£	£
Total Net Cost of Services	14,163,370	14,189,645	26,275
Other Income and Expenditure	(19,070)	110,930	130,000
Total Net Budgeted Expenditure	14,144,300	14,300,575	156,275
Total Funding	(14,144,300)	(14,144,300)	0
Net Income and Expenditure	0	156,275	156,275

- 3.3. The current incomes from our major fee income streams are shown in **Appendix C**. It shows that the full year forecast Income variance is £120k below budget, although overall is up year-on-year. Leisure income continues to show the good growth in membership numbers, although this is slightly lower than reported in Qtr 1. Planning income remains low following the trend experienced in the previous year, with a worsening position being recorded within Building Control. Garden Waste and Recyclate income is down due to lower tonnages and lower sales prices per tonne. However, this is offset by the increase in the 2024/25 Devon Shared Savings which has been confirmed as £93k higher than the initial prudent projection, reflecting the increase in recycling performance. Car Parking Permit income is also behind the ambitious budget set. Other main income streams broadly track the budget at this stage in the year.
- 3.4. The current employee costs are shown at **Appendix D**. It shows a full year forecast under spend of £517k, after considering the £282k vacancy target included within Corporate Management (with the actual savings shown against the respective service areas). Notable savings are being made in Corporate Management relating to delays in recruiting to the planned apprenticeship scheme, and due to vacancies within Property, Finance, Legal and Democratic Services, Waste, Leisure and Economic Development / Planning. The only service with any notable overspend is Revenues and Benefits and these additional costs will be covered by Earmarked Reserves. To cover some of the longer-term vacancies, Finance, Legal and Waste have required the use of agency staff to ensure services are delivered. However, the cost of the agency staff exceeds the corresponding underspends on the service's staffing establishment, giving an overall net pressure of nearly £140k on General Fund staffing. All vacancies are fully reviewed to consider if the position can be removed permanently or temporarily managed without.

- 3.5. The table below shows the opening position of key reserve balances of the Council, the forecast in year movements and final predicted position at 31 March 2026:

Table 2 – Summary of Key Reserves

Usable Reserves	Actual 31/03/2025	Forecast In Year Movement	Forecast 31/03/2026
REVENUE	£000's	£000's	£000's
General Fund (See above)	(2,025)	156	(1,868)
GF Earmarked Reserves	(15,806)	(580)	(16,386)
Housing Revenue Account (Section 4)	(455)	745	290*
HRA Earmarked Reserves	(20,327)	0	(20,327)

* Note that should the HRA overspend not be mitigated to a level that could be covered by the existing HRA Reserve, an additional draw on the Housing Maintenance Reserve would be required.

- 3.6. However, the actual reserves will be increased or decreased by the surplus or deficit generated in the year.

4.0 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 4.1. This is a ring-fenced reserve in respect of the Council's housing landlord function. It is increased or decreased by the surplus or deficit generated on the HRA in the year. The forecast year-end budget position has changed since the Qtr 1 position and is now forecast as a net deficit of £745k. An explanation of the key variances and those above £20k + or -) are highlighted within **Appendix E**.

- 4.2. The main variances relate to:

- £55k Net income below budget – lost rent due to voids;
- (£228k) Salary underspend resulting from vacancies;
- £43k Unbudgeted post for fixed-term staff dealing with rent correction refunds;
- £62k Reduction in treasury income due to increases in internal borrowing leading to reduced cash balances;
- £512k Increased spend on contractors and materials across Housing Operations, following above inflationary costs for materials, high void numbers and rising void costs. Some contractors spend is front loaded and will be refined over the remainder of the year; and
- £295k increase in Premises Insurance premium following the last tender. The previous contract had protected us from a large proportion of this increase due to the contract terms.

- 4.3. Clearly with a forecast overspend position, the service is considering how it can mitigate this as far as possible, with the following opportunities being considered:
- Review and reprofile contractor spend due to some front loading of costs (setup costs for example);
 - Review void staffing resources to reduce future contractor spend and wider ongoing recruitment to vacant positions currently covered by contractors. This can partially be achieved through the increase in the number of apprentices within the service (8no.), enabling the service to grow from within.
 - As highlighted within the general fund variance within Financial Services, the need for agency staff has significantly increased the cost of providing financial support to the service. Further recruitment should stem this cost;
 - Review of procurement for new works and the ongoing contract renewal to limit inflationary price rises; and
 - Additional income to offset expenditure including private sector recovery of adoptions costs.
- 4.4. The review of the above matters will also feed into the ongoing review of the 2026/27 budget and future MTFP. In the longer-term rent convergence and the higher than forecast inflation can also increase income, matching the higher costs we are experiencing. In addition, over time, the introduction of the new homes, will reduce the overall maintenance costs.
- 4.5. As highlighted above, should the overspend not be sufficiently mitigated to be covered by the existing HRA Reserve, a draw will be required from the Housing Maintenance Reserve, which currently has over £12m. A significant proportion of this is assigned to help funding the re-provision of social housing, but an element could be redirected if required.

5.0 Capital Programme

- 5.1. The Capital Quarter 2 summary is attached as **Appendix F** to this report. The actual and forecast spend for 2025/26 amounts to £26,282k, leaving a variance against the revised 2025/26 Deliverable Capital Programme of (£15,578k). Of which, £3,966k is an under spend, £2,379k is an overspend, £117k is no longer required and £13,874k will slip into future years.

5.2. General Fund Project Variances

- 5.2.1. £2,394k Slippage – The forecast slippage is largely from the delays to the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road, with construction works due to begin in 2026/27. There is also delays to scoping the planned solar projects, although soft market testing is about to begin. There are several other smaller projects

in the scoping phase that is likely to result in delays, including three where MDDC is not the lead.

5.2.2. £1,585k Overspends – The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) works at Culm Valley and the CHP and Battery Storage project at Exe Valley exceed the grants awarded, leading to larger contributions required from the Council. The forecast cost of the new waste baler is also likely to be higher than original forecast. An additional HMO purchase is due to complete and renovation due to commence, funded from LAHF3 grant funding. Further spend on fire safety works is also shown as an overspend although the budget is included with the revenue budget, so the costs will be transferred to revenue.

5.2.3. £3,485k Underspends – The majority of the under spend relates to the waste depot being remodelled rather than a new depot being purchased and built. The approval of the proposals by Cabinet in July will enable the existing depot to be expanded and be fit for the medium term, along with meeting the new Environment Agency permitting requirements. Furthermore, the provisional allocation for the EPR has recently been increased by over £450k, meaning that less of these works will be funded through internal sources. There are also underspends on some projects where the scope has changed, or savings have been achieved through procurement. Vehicle leasing costs have been lower than forecast as the existing vehicles have lasted longer than projected.

5.2.4. £95k No Longer Required – The waste depot remodelling budget also includes the replacement of the diesel tank, which was previously included separately.

5.3. A recommendation is included to increase the 2025/26 deliverable budget by £276k reflecting the additional grant received since the budget was set. This constitutes £64,277k for year 4 of the Shared Prosperity Fund SPF and £211,536 for year 3 of the Rural England Prosperity Fund.

5.4. Housing Revenue Account – Projects

5.4.1. £11,480k Slippage – There are a few delays on the HRA housing developments due to delays in procurement, planning, or following receiving no bids for tenders. Some projects will not commence until 2026/27 as a result.

5.4.2. £794k Overspends – increased work in respect of Modernisation Works and Renewables account for most of the overspend. There is an overspend on a development project due to amendments to S278 streetlighting and additional drainage works. The cost of finalising a development that overran into 2025/26 makes up the remainder.

5.4.3. £480k Underspends – much of the underspend relates to projects being accelerated, meaning more of the spend was incurred in prior years. Another saving is due to the purchase of diesel vehicles rather than the electric vehicles

budgeted for, this is due to the vehicles not being compatible with operational demands. Alternatives are being considered for future vehicle replacement to ensure we continue to meet our carbon reduction targets.

- 5.4.4. £22k No Longer Required – The initial scoping budget for one of the development projects is not required as the project is deemed unviable.
- 5.5. A recommendation is included to increase the 2025/26 deliverable budget by £250k for the purchase of additional Right-to-buy buybacks. This is by far the most cost-effective way to increase the overall HRA stock. This additional budget would likely enable the purchase of a further 2 units.
- 5.6. Within the housing stock, there is single semi-detached unit in significant disrepair and requires substantial investment to bring it back to a decent homes standard and is therefore considered unviable. Furthermore, there is no assessed need for a property of this size within the village, so there is no justification for undertaking to upgrades. Therefore, on balance, it is recommended to dispose of the asset and reinvest the capital receipt in adding additional units to the stock where the need exists. Corporate Strategic Asset Advisory Group (CSAG) considered the disposal of a derelict HRA unit and recommended that Cabinet approve its disposal.

6.0 The Collection Fund

- 6.1. Mid Devon is a Collection Authority for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates, and as such, is required to produce a Collection Fund Account for the Mid Devon area.
- 6.2. The Council collects Council Tax on behalf of Devon County Council, Devon Fire and Rescue Service, Devon & Cornwall Police and the Town/Parish Councils. The forecast Council Tax collection rate for 2025/26 is 97.5% and is currently on target to achieve this. In addition, growth in the Taxbase is strong which will increase the value collected and an initial estimate of an overall £720k surplus is projected, with £93k being MDDC's share.
- 6.3. The Non-Domestic Rates collection rate is forecast to be 98.0% for 2025/26 (99.8% in 2024/25). At Qtr 2, the collection rate is a little lower (2.16%) than the exceptional performance in 2024/25. This indicates an overall deficit at the year end of approximately £650k, with £260k being MDDC's share.

7.0 Procurement

- 7.1. Procurement Waivers

7.1.1. In exceptional circumstances, there are sometimes justifiable reasons to act outside the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 / Procurement Act 2023. These include the following reasons:

- I. The work, goods or materials are urgently required, and loss would be entailed by delay arising from advertising;
- II. The work, goods or materials required are of such special nature that no advantage would accrue by inviting competitive tenders;
- III. There is no effective competition for the goods or materials required by reason of the fixing of prices under statutory authority or that such goods or materials are patented or proprietary articles or materials;
- IV. Transactions, which, because of special circumstances, may (either individually or as a class) be excepted from time to time by the Cabinet of the Council.

In such circumstances, prior written approval of the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) is required and Cabinet will be informed.

7.1.2. There were no waivers raised during this quarter.

7.2. Direct Awards via Frameworks

7.2.1. Framework agreements are agreements between one or more buyers and suppliers, setting out the terms for contracts to be awarded over a specific period. Frameworks can be used to establish pre-qualified suppliers for various goods, services, or works and offer a streamlined process for buyers to award contracts without needing to conduct a full procurement process each time. The following is a summary of the contracts awarded during this quarter through this route:

Contract Reference No.	Value (inc VAT)	Contract name / Supplier	Start date	Framework
MDDC202507-003	£107k	Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Contract - Wavenet	12 July 2025 – 11 July 2028	Crown Commercial Framework
MDDC202506-010	£25K	Risk Ledger Service Subscription - Risk Ledger Ltd	18 August 2025 – 17 August 2028	CCS G-Cloud

8.0 Social Rent Error Correction Update

8.1. As previously advised, there was an underlying error identified within the historic calculation of Social Rents. The calculation was corrected, and independently verified, with correct charges raised since February. The process of identifying the corrections and processing refunds has been ongoing since that point. Note, under charges are not being recovered.

8.2. The process of refunding is complex, as there is a mix of tenants who also receive either Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC) or both, those in receipt of UC (rent element) are outside of the control of the Council. Therefore,

focus to date has been on those tenants that do not receive UC and Housing Benefits. Payments made are net of any arrears and include compensation as appropriate. At the time of writing (as at 17/10/2025), over 150 refunds have been issued to tenants with a value of over £165k.

- 8.3. Work is now completed on the non-benefit cases and Housing benefit cases, refunds have been issued since 11 July. The Council await advice from Department of Work and Pensions on how they wish to treat the Universal Credit cases. An update is expected in early November, if they issue a working solution the corrections will commence.
- 8.4. The council continues to communicate through a range of mechanisms to ensure all applicable tenants are fully aware of their position and the steps being taken. This includes drop-in sessions within the three main towns, as well as letters, calls, home visits and through our website. Members will continue to receive periodic updates. The regulator is also fully engaged and kept informed, with the next planned meeting scheduled for 13 November.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1. Members are asked to note the Revenue and Capital Outturn figures for the financial year 2025/26 along with the use of procurement waivers and direct award contracts during the quarter. We continue to closely monitor the financial position and amend our expectations accordingly.
- 9.2. Whilst this report clearly focuses on the financial performance vs budget for 2025/26, it is worth clarifying to members that at this time there remains no further clarity on the future funding position from that reported in previous Medium Term Financial Plan / Budget update reports. It is understood that a policy statement could be issued shortly, but it is not known what this might contain, or whether it will be beneficial in enabling any more refinement to the council's forecast position. Officers, the DCN and other representative bodies continue to press Government for early, and full clarification.

Financial Implications

Good financial management and administration underpin the entire document. A surplus or deficit on the Revenue Budget will impact on the Council's General Fund balances. The Council's financial position is constantly reviewed to ensure its continued financial health.

Legal Implications

The Local Government Finance Act requires the Council to take steps to ensure that the Council's expenditure does not exceed the resources available. The Council is also required (by its Constitution and Financial Rules) to secure a balanced budget and also to provide certain services. Regular financial monitoring by the Executive helps ensure that the Council is able to meet these statutory 1992 obligations.

Risk Assessment

Regular financial monitoring information mitigates the risk of over or underspends at year-end and allows the Council to direct its resources to key corporate priorities.

Members will be aware that the Council continues to face a financially difficult and uncertain future. As such, the Strategic Risk Register (monitored by Audit Committee) includes a specific risk relating to this issue (CR7).

Impact on Climate Change

The General Fund, Capital Programme and the Housing Revenue Account all contain significant investment in order to work towards the Council's Carbon Reduction Pledge.

Equalities Impact Assessment

No equality issues identified for this report

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The financial resources of the Council impact directly on its ability to deliver the Corporate Plan prioritising the use of available resources in 2025/26. The Monitoring Report indicates how the Council's resources have been used to support the delivery of budgetary decisions.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 27/10/2025 via Leadership Team meeting

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 27/10/2025 via Leadership Team meeting

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

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

Date: 27/10/2025 via Leadership Team meeting

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 22/10/2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Paul Deal, Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change

Email: pdeal@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 23(4254)

Background papers: 2025/26 Budget Report to Cabinet / Full Council
2025/26 Qtr 1 Budget Monitoring Report.

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GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

General Fund Summary 2025/26	Appendix B Note Ref	Annual Budget	P6 Actual	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance (0 = On budget) £	Transfer To/(From) Earmarked Reserves £	Variance after EMRs £	Full Year Variance (0 = On budget) %
		£	£	£	£	£	£	%
Cllr Luke Taylor (Leader)								
Corporate Management	GF1a	1,596,140	782,393	1,765,640	169,500	0	169,500	10.6%
Cllr Jane Lock								
Commercial Estate	GF2a	(354,890)	(312,540)	(334,890)	20,000	0	20,000	-5.6%
Property Services	GF2b	1,821,350	805,086	1,656,350	(165,000)	0	(165,000)	-9.1%
Community Alarms	GF2c	(7,060)	12,060	(2,960)	4,100	0	4,100	-58.1%
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping	GF2d	(411,510)	(613,172)	(411,510)	0	0	0	0.0%
Housing Options	GF2e	548,570	287,718	548,570	0	0	0	0.0%
Cllr John Downes								
Financial Services	GF3a	923,150	458,479	1,039,425	116,275	0	116,275	12.6%
Revenues & Benefits	GF3b	997,810	1,623,500	1,100,810	103,000	(60,000)	43,000	4.3%
Performance Management	GF3c	78,300	39,193	78,300	0	0	0	0.0%
Electoral Services	GF3d	205,450	92,753	205,450	0	0	0	0.0%
Cllr Matt Fletcher								
People Services	GF4a	633,420	348,645	633,420	0	0	0	0.0%
Communications	GF4b	124,430	61,425	124,430	0	0	0	0.0%
Legal & Democratic Services	GF4c	980,760	515,490	1,008,760	28,000	0	28,000	2.9%
IT Services & Digital Transformation	GF4d	1,669,220	998,597	1,639,220	(30,000)	30,000	0	0.0%
Cllr Josh Wright								
Car Parks	GF5a	(801,090)	(310,998)	(761,090)	40,000	0	40,000	5.0%
Street Scene	GF5b	1,173,290	580,832	1,161,290	(12,000)	(26,000)	(38,000)	-3.2%
Waste Services	GF5c	1,538,260	2,070,504	1,253,660	(284,600)	285,500	900	0.1%
Fleet Management	GF5d	58,220	30,543	58,220	0	0	0	0.0%
Parks & Open Spaces	GF5e	201,520	98,466	231,520	30,000	0	30,000	14.9%
Bereavement Services	GF5f	(97,860)	(3,138)	(67,860)	30,000	0	30,000	30.7%
Environmental Enforcement	GF5g	191,440	114,802	201,440	10,000	(10,000)	0	0.0%
Recreation & Sport	GF5h	907,940	997,653	727,940	(180,000)	0	(180,000)	-19.8%
Customer Services	GF5i	716,040	346,766	716,040	0	0	0	0.0%
Cllr Steve Keable								
Economic Development	GF6a	424,020	141,437	435,020	11,000	(46,000)	(35,000)	-8.3%
Planning	GF6b	845,960	375,803	843,460	(2,500)	(55,000)	(57,500)	-6.8%
Pannier Market	GF6c	45,950	30,136	65,950	20,000	0	20,000	43.5%
Cllr David Wulff (Deputy Leader)								
Licensing	GF7a	42,000	29,090	42,000	0	0	0	0.0%
Public Health	GF7b	788,910	(118,026)	788,910	0	0	0	0.0%
CCTV	GF7c	42,730	15,718	42,730	0	0	0	0.0%
Cllr Natasha Bradshaw								
Climate change	GF8a	272,750	87,936	272,750	0	0	0	0.0%
Flood Defence and Land Drainage	GF8b	26,030	44	26,030	0	0	0	0.0%
Cllr Gwen Duchesne MBE								
Emergency Planning	GF9a	55,250	31,874	55,250	0	0	0	0.0%
Community Grants	GF9b	120,230	120,240	120,230	0	0	0	0.0%
All General Fund Services		15,356,730	9,739,309	15,264,505	(92,225)	118,500	26,275	0.2%
Net recharge to HRA	GFa1	(2,050,250)	0	(2,050,250)	0	0	0	0.0%
Statutory Adjustments (Capital charges)	GFa2	856,890	0	856,890	0	0	0	0.0%
Net Cost of Services		14,163,370	9,739,309	14,071,145	(92,225)	118,500	26,275	0.2%
Interest Payable	GFb1	295,520	0	295,520	0	0	0	0.0%
Interest Receivable	GFb2	(776,470)	(306,628)	(646,470)	130,000	0	130,000	-16.7%
Transfers into Earmarked Reserves	GFb3	2,224,720	2,224,720	2,708,220	483,500	(483,500)	0	0.0%
Transfers from Earmarked Reserves	GFb4	(1,762,840)	(1,762,840)	(2,127,840)	(365,000)	365,000	0	0.0%
Net Non-Service Costs		(19,070)	155,252	229,430	248,500	(118,500)	130,000	-681.7%
Total Budgeted Expenditure		14,144,300	9,894,561	14,300,575	156,275	0	156,275	1.1%
FUNDED BY:								
Business Rates								
Retained Business Rates	GFc1	(5,061,190)	768,196	(5,061,190)	0	0	0	0.0%
Business Rates Prior Year (Surplus)/Deficit	GFc2	(18,140)	247,290	(18,140)	0	0	0	0.0%
Council Tax								
Council Tax	GFd1	(7,348,850)	2,701,845	(7,348,850)	0	0	0	0.0%
Council Tax Prior Year (Surplus)/Deficit	GFd2	(123,160)	0	(123,160)	0	0	0	0.0%
Un-Ringfenced Grants								
New Homes Bonus Grant	GFe1	(498,150)	(249,074)	(498,150)	0	0	0	0.0%
Rural Services Delivery Grant	GFe3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Other Grants	GFe4	(215,360)	(147,160)	(215,360)	0	0	0	0.0%
Services Grant	GFe5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Revenue Support Grant	GFe6	(139,800)	(72,696)	(139,800)	0	0	0	0.0%
Funding Guarantee Grant	GFe7	(739,650)	(369,827)	(739,650)	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Budgeted Funding		(14,144,300)	2,878,574	(14,144,300)	0	0	0	0.0%
Forecast in year (Surplus) / Deficit		0	12,773,135	156,275	156,275	0	156,275	
General Fund Reserve 31/03/24							(2,024,580)	
Forecast General Fund Balance 31/03/2025							(1,868,305)	

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GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Service Variances			Gross Full Year Variance £	EMR Transfer To/(From)	PDG
Description of Major Movements or those above £20k					
GF1A	Corporate Management	Salary savings due to unfilled corporate apprentice positions	(112,500)	0	Cabinet
GF1A	Corporate Management	Vacancy target - salary savings included within specific service lines	282,000	0	Cabinet
GF2A	Commercial Estate	Rental shortfall due to vacant shop unit in Fore Street	20,000	0	Economy & Assets
GF2B	Property Services	Contractual dispute settlement - unlocking additional income over medium term	55,000	0	Economy & Assets
GF2B	Property Services	Forecast saving from maintenance budget	(170,000)	0	Economy & Assets
GF2B	Property Services	Salary underspend due to vacant post	(50,000)	0	Economy & Assets
GF2C	Community Alarms	Net pressure on Careline installations and rentals	4,100	0	Homes Pdg
GF3A	Financial Services	Various smaller employee pressures	31,700	0	Cabinet
GF3A	Financial Services	Unbudgeted agency spend	(43,700)	0	Cabinet
GF3A	Financial Services	Unbudgeted agency spend	116,400	0	Cabinet
GF3A	Financial Services	Unbudgeted software upgrade costs	11,875	0	Cabinet
GF3B	Revenues & Benefits	Unbudgeted software costs	13,000	0	Cabinet
GF3B	Revenues & Benefits	Estimated unbudgeted council tax disregard for care leavers	30,000	0	Cabinet
GF3B	Revenues & Benefits	HSF officer to be covered by EMR	8,000	(8,000)	Cabinet
GF3B	Revenues & Benefits	New subsidy officer to be covered by EMR	25,000	(25,000)	Cabinet
GF3B	Revenues & Benefits	Maternity leave overlap to be covered by EMR	27,000	(27,000)	Cabinet
GF4C	Legal & Democratic Services	Salary savings due to vacancies	(128,000)	0	Cabinet
GF4C	Legal & Democratic Services	Salary savings due to maternity pay	(52,000)	0	Cabinet
GF4C	Legal & Democratic Services	Unbudgeted agency spend	198,000	0	Cabinet
GF4C	Legal & Democratic Services	Fees & Charges projected to underachieve	10,000	0	Cabinet
GF4D	IT Services & Digital Transformation	Payment Card Industry (PCI) certification delayed	(30,000)	30,000	Cabinet
GF5A	Car Parks	Shortfall in parking permit income	40,000	0	Economy & Assets
GF5B	Street Scene	Contracted vehicle maintenance extended to whole lease term (EMR Funded)	26,000	(26,000)	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5B	Street Scene	Salary saving due to vacancies	(14,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5B	Street Scene	Fuel saving due to lower than budgeted price per litre	(24,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Additional DEFRA pEPR payment	(453,500)	453,500	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Salary saving due to vacancies	(119,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Additional agency costs to cover vacancies	94,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Contracted vehicle maintenance extended to whole lease term (EMR Funded)	118,000	(118,000)	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Fuel saving due to lower than budgeted price per litre	(77,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Additional recycling officer posts to improve recycling collection rate	50,000	(50,000)	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Reduced income from recyclate due to lower tonnages and lower per per tonne	63,900	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Agency costs to cover maternity	12,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Increased vehicle hire to cover damaged vehicles	20,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Reduced number of garden waste permits	40,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Additional income from DCC Shared Savings Scheme for 2024-25	(93,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	Recycling credits reduced due to reduced tonnages and lower rate per tonne	100,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5C	Waste Services	General maintenance underspend at Carlu Depot due to Capital expansion works	(40,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5E	Parks & Open Spaces	Additional Town / Parish contributions not yet confirmed	60,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5E	Parks & Open Spaces	Underspend on project maintenance	(30,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5F	Bereavement Services	Cemetery income shortfall at the end of Q2	30,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5G	Environmental Enforcement	Contracted vehicle maintenance extended to whole lease term (EMR Funded)	10,000	(10,000)	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Salary savings due to vacancies	(50,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Increase in income due to high membership numbers	(60,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Increase in income from swimming lesson programme	(35,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Loss of wetside income due to refurbishment works taking longer than forecast	25,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Service Variances		Description of Major Movements or those above £20k	Gross Full Year Variance £	EMR Transfer To/(From)	PDG
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Reduction in income due to loss of club bookings	20,000	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF5H	Recreation & Sport	Active Tiverton utility savings	(80,000)	0	Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
GF6A	Economic Development	Salary savings due to vacancies	(35,000)	0	Economy & Assets
GF6A	Economic Development	Garden Village project to be covered by EMR	46,000	(46,000)	Economy & Assets
GF6B	Planning	Building Control partnership adjustment to reflect our share of staffing costs	56,500	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Building Control projected income is anticipated to underperform relative to budgeted expectations	50,000	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Enforcement salary savings due to vacancies	(130,000)	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Enforcement agency staff costs due to vacancies	130,000	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Planning income forecasted to be less than budget	20,000	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Forward Planning salary savings due to vacancies	(40,000)	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Building Control agency staffing costs currently are being paid by North Devon District Council. The costs will be split via partnership adjustment at year-end.	(144,000)	0	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6B	Planning	Settlement agreed Tidcombe hall. To be covered by EMR	55,000	(55,000)	Planning, Environment & Sustainability
GF6C	Pannier Market	Market income forecast to be less than budget	20,000	0	Economy & Assets
Service Forecast (Surplus)/Deficit as at 31/03/2026			(92,225)	118,500	

Non-Service Variances		Description of Major Movements or those above £20k	Gross Full Year Variance £	EMR Transfer To/(From)	PDG
GFB2	Interest Receivable	Reduction in treasury income due to increases in internal borrowing leading to reduced cash balances	130,000		
GFB3/4	Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	Net movements to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	118,500	(269,500)	
Non-Service Forecast (Surplus)/Deficit as at 31/03/2026			248,500	(269,500)	
Total Forecast (Surplus)/Deficit as at 31/03/2026			156,275	(151,000)	

GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Fees & Charges	Annual Budget	P6 Profiled Budget	P6 Actual	P6 Variance	Full Year Forecast Variation	
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Building Control Fees	(250,510)	(125,255)	(86,279)	38,976	50,000	-20%
Planning Fees	(1,058,000)	(529,000)	(665,659)	(136,659)	20,000	-2%
Land Search Fees	(101,220)	(50,610)	(53,877)	(3,267)	0	0%
Car Parking Fees - See Below	(1,082,610)	(499,487)	(495,051)	4,436	40,000	-4%
Leisure Fees & Charges	(3,731,970)	(1,837,695)	(1,715,291)	122,404	(50,000)	1%
Trade Waste Income	(1,090,000)	(603,080)	(635,503)	(32,423)	0	0%
Garden Waste	(855,000)	(405,087)	(389,038)	16,050	40,000	-5%
Licensing	(165,880)	(71,241)	(71,609)	(368)	0	0%
Market Income	(108,180)	(57,748)	(44,920)	12,828	20,000	-18%
	(8,443,370)	(4,179,204)	(4,157,227)	21,977	120,000	-1.4%

Car Parking Fees	Annual Budget	P6 Profiled Budget	P6 Actual	P6 Variance	Spaces	Budgeted Income per Space
	£	£	£	£		£
Beck Square, Tiverton	(84,740)	(43,217)	(44,577)	(1,359)	38	(2,230)
William Street, Tiverton	(48,040)	(23,540)	(20,940)	2,600	49	(980)
Westex South, Tiverton	(78,800)	(40,188)	(40,327)	(139)	49	(1,608)
Wellbrook Street, Tiverton	(12,820)	(6,923)	(6,868)	55	28	(458)
Market Street, Crediton	(50,420)	(25,714)	(27,374)	(1,660)	30	(1,681)
High Street, Crediton	(76,790)	(39,931)	(38,379)	1,552	190	(404)
Station Road, Cullompton	(47,850)	(24,404)	(23,575)	829	115	(416)
Multistorey, Tiverton	(183,780)	(97,403)	(97,051)	353	642	(286)
Market Car Park, Tiverton	(256,500)	(123,120)	(134,337)	(11,217)	124	(2,069)
Phoenix House, Tiverton	(15,530)	(5,901)	(7,910)	(2,009)	19	(817)
P&D Shorts & Overs	0	0	4	4	-	0
Total Pay and Display	(855,270)	(430,341)	(441,333)	(10,992)	1,284	(10,950)
Day Permits	(53,980)	(8,243)	0	8,243		
Allocated Space Permits	(107,570)	(33,846)	(13,602)	20,244		
Overnight Permits	(1,570)	(426)	(187)	239		
Day & Night Permits	(46,090)	(15,641)	(30,312)	(14,670)		
Other Income	(18,130)	(10,990)	(9,618)	1,372		
Total Permits	(227,340)	(69,146)	(53,719)	15,427		
Total Car Parking	(1,082,610)	(499,487)	(495,051)	4,436		
Standard Charge Notices (Off Street)	(69,850)	(36,322)	(30,798)	5,524		

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GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Employee Costs	Annual Budget	P6 Profiled Budget	P6 Actual	P6 Variance	Full Year Forecast Variation	
	£	£	£	£	£	%
General Fund						
Corporate Management	1,174,120	893,969	668,969	(225,000)	169,500	14.4%
Commercial Estate	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Property Services	788,840	394,420	372,734	(21,686)	(50,000)	-6.3%
Community Alarms	36,900	18,450	35,968	17,518	26,300	71.3%
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping	0	0	823	823	0	0.0%
Housing Options	600,060	300,030	299,134	(896)	0	0.0%
Financial Services	708,870	354,435	307,653	(46,782)	(75,600)	-10.7%
Revenues & Benefits	1,040,830	520,415	525,984	5,569	60,000	5.8%
Performance Management	77,930	38,965	39,037	72	0	0.0%
Electoral Services	135,980	67,990	67,327	(663)	0	0.0%
People Services	528,140	264,070	258,511	(5,559)	0	0.0%
Communications	108,820	54,410	59,309	4,899	0	0.0%
Legal & Democratic Services	577,630	288,815	216,703	(72,112)	(180,000)	-31.2%
IT Services & Digital Transformation	818,190	409,095	402,893	(6,202)	0	0.0%
Car Parks	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Street Scene	995,380	497,690	457,684	(40,006)	(14,000)	-1.4%
Waste Services	3,698,800	1,849,400	1,728,946	(120,454)	(69,000)	-1.9%
Fleet Management	52,570	26,285	27,055	770	0	0.0%
Parks & Open Spaces	17,540	8,770	8,283	(487)	0	0.0%
Bereavement Services	28,400	14,200	14,230	30	0	0.0%
Environmental Enforcement	173,520	86,760	86,838	79	0	0.0%
Recreation & Sport	2,753,840	1,376,920	1,363,841	(13,079)	(50,000)	-1.8%
Customer Services	684,810	342,405	335,830	(6,575)	0	0.0%
Economic Development	336,550	168,275	138,532	(29,743)	(35,000)	-10.4%
Planning	1,709,690	885,025	803,863	(81,162)	(113,500)	-6.6%
Pannier Market	78,370	39,185	37,223	(1,962)	0	0.0%
Licensing	177,460	88,730	56,788	(31,942)	0	0.0%
Public Health	774,020	387,010	372,271	(14,739)	0	0.0%
CCTV	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Climate change	60,960	30,480	59,014	28,534	0	0.0%
Flood Defence and Land Drainage	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Emergency Planning	47,650	23,825	23,874	49	0	0.0%
Community Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total General Fund	18,185,870	9,430,024	8,769,321	(660,703)	(331,300)	-1.8%
Housing Revenue Account						
Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	0	0	(200,000)	0.0%
Supervision & Management	0	0	0	0	14,200	0.0%
Total Housing Revenue Account	0	0	0	0	(185,800)	0.0%
Total Employee Costs	18,185,870	9,430,024	8,769,321	(660,703)	(517,100)	-2.8%

Agency Staff (within Employee costs)	Annual Budget	P6 Profiled Budget	P6 Actual	P6 Variance	Full Year Forecast Variation	
	£	£	£	£	£	%
General Fund						
Corporate Management	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Commercial Estate	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Property Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Community Alarms	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Housing Options	0	0	5,836	5,836	0	0.0%
Financial Services	0	0	99,438	99,438	180,000	0.0%
Revenues & Benefits	0	0	8,693	8,693	0	0.0%
Performance Management	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Electoral Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
People Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Legal & Democratic Services	0	0	110,129	110,129	198,000	0.0%
IT Services & Digital Transformation	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Car Parks	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Street Scene	21,160	10,580	15,102	4,522	0	0.0%
Waste Services	42,460	21,230	117,876	96,646	106,000	249.6%
Fleet Management	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Parks & Open Spaces	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Bereavement Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Environmental Enforcement	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Recreation & Sport	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Customer Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Economic Development	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Planning	144,000	71,999	59,293	(12,706)	(14,000)	-9.7%
Pannier Market	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Licensing	0	0	12,169	12,169	0	0.0%
Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
CCTV	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Flood Defence and Land Drainage	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Emergency Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Community Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total General Fund	207,620	103,809	428,536	324,727	470,000	226.4%
Housing Revenue Account						
BHO09 Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	3,208	3,208	0	0.0%
BHO10 Supervision & Management	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Housing Revenue Account	0	0	3,208	3,208	0	0.0%
Total Agency Costs	207,620	103,809	431,744	327,935	470,000	226.4%

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	Note Ref	Annual Budget	P6 Actual	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance (0 = On budget)	Full Year Variance (0 = On budget)
		£	£	£	£	%
Income						
SHO01 Dwelling Rents Income	HRA1a	(15,075,680)	(7,281,489)	(14,956,480)	119,200	-1%
SHO04 Non Dwelling Rents Income	HRA1b	(494,920)	(287,436)	(532,220)	(37,300)	8%
SHO07 Leaseholders' Service Charges	HRA1c	(36,210)	(63,589)	(63,610)	(27,400)	76%
SHO08 Contributions Towards Expenditure	HRA1d	(125,500)	(70,371)	(125,500)	0	0%
SHO10 H.R.A. Investment Income	HRA1e	(320,000)	0	(258,000)	62,000	-19%
SHO11 Miscellaneous Income	HRA1f	(6,000)	(4,459)	(6,000)	0	0%
Services						
SHO13A Repairs & Maintenance	HRA2a	5,489,090	2,949,840	5,891,090	402,000	7%
SHO17A Housing & Tenancy Services	HRA2b	2,448,320	1,327,146	2,667,220	218,900	9%
Accounting entries 'below the line'						
SHO29 Bad Debt Provision Movement	HRA3a	150,000	0	150,000	0	0%
SHO30 Share Of Corporate And Democratic	HRA3b	177,590	91,408	184,990	7,400	4%
SHO32 H.R.A. Interest Payable	HRA3c	1,083,280	0	1,083,280	0	0%
SHO34 H.R.A. Transfers between earmarked reserves	HRA3d	864,110	0	864,110	0	0%
SHO37 Capital Receipts Reserve Adjustment	HRA3e	(20,800)	0	(20,800)	0	0%
SHO38 Major Repairs Allowance	HRA3f	2,892,700	0	2,892,700	0	0%
SHO45 Renewable Energy Transactions	HRA3g	(144,880)	27,585	(144,880)	0	0%
SHO36 Financing Of Capital Expenditure	HRA3h	1,068,650	0	1,068,650	0	0%
Recharges from General Fund		2,050,250	0	2,050,250	0	
		0	(3,311,365)	744,800	744,800	1 #DIV/0!

HRA Variances	Description of Major Movements or those above £20k	Gross Full Year Variance £
SHO01 Dwelling Rents Income	HRA1A Increased rent loss due to voids	234,900
SHO01 Dwelling Rents Income	HRA1A Increase in Affordable Rent properties	(115,700)
SHO04 Non Dwelling Rents Income	HRA1B 2025/26 budget reduction in line with historical trend not reflected in YTD income	(37,300)
SHO07 Leaseholders' Service Charges	HRA1C Increased income for Leaseholder service Charges	(27,400)
SHO10 H.R.A. Investment Income	HRA1E Reduction in treasury income due to increases in internal borrowing leading to reduced cash balances	62,000
SHO13A Repairs & Maintenance	HRA2A Increased spend on contractors and materials across Housing Operations. Above inflationary costs for materials, high void numbers and rising void costs. Some contractor spend is front loaded and will be refined over the remainder of the year.	511,500
SHO13A Repairs & Maintenance	HRA2A Salary underspends expected due to vacant posts	(112,300)
SHO17A Housing & Tenancy Services	HRA2B Premises insurance increase following retender	295,200
SHO17A Housing & Tenancy Services	HRA2B Salary underspends expected due to vacant posts	(116,000)
SHO17A Housing & Tenancy Services	HRA2B Unbudgeted post for fixed-term staff dealing with rent correction refunds	42,500
SHO30 Share Of Corporate And Democratic	HRA3B Superannuation back-funding requirement greater than budgeted	7,400
Forecast (Surplus)/Deficit as at 31/03/2026		744,800

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Ref	Manager	Area	Project Title	Project Spend in Prior Years	Total Budgeted Capital Programme 2025/26 Onwards	Original Deliverable Programme 2025/26	Actual Expenditure Q1 - Q2	Forecast Spend Q3 - Q4	Total Actual & Forecast Expenditure	Variance	Variance Type	Explanation of Variances Over £10k
				£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s		
GF1012	Andy Mackie	Leisure	Reception infrastructure	-	160,000	160,000	-	28,000	28,000	- 132,000	Underspend	Scope of project has changed since budget was set
GF1051	Andy Mackie	Leisure	CVSC - Remodelling of Ground Floor	-	204,000	30,000	-	-	-	- 30,000	Slippage	In discussion with school about changes to building layout to better facilitate dual use - likely to be required in 2026/27
GF1008	Andy Mackie	Leisure	All leisure sites replacement management/site access system (Hardware Element)	-	200,000	200,000	-	120,000	120,000	- 80,000	Underspend	Procurement exercise has resulted in lower cost than originally estimated
GF1031	Will Styles	Other MDDC Buildings	Building Mgmt System for Heating Control	2,970	100,000	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-		This is currently being scoped
GF1061	Tim Powell	Other MDDC Buildings	Depot Development - Waste & Recycling	23,140	3,727,000	3,727,000	-	750,000	750,000	- 2,977,000	Underspend	Hanger extension now incuded within lease agreement. Original budget was to buy & build a new depot. Cabinet agreed to extend and remodel the existing depot, therefore spend significantly reduced. £1,000k to be slipped to 2026/27 to cover capitalisation of hanger extension.
GF1041	Adrian Welsh	HIF	CA719 Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road (HIF)	3,666,006	30,302,000	5,002,000	47,950	4,040,189	4,088,139	- 913,861	Slippage	Construction works due to begin 2026/27. Forecast doesn't include any allowance for contingency spend.
GF1057	Steve Densham	Other	West Exe South - Remodelling - additional parking spaces	-	90,000	90,000	-	-	-	- 90,000	Slippage	Options currently being assessed
GF1053	Steve Densham	Other	Open Space Infrastructure (incl Play Areas)	-	35,000	35,000	-	5,000	5,000	- 30,000	Slippage	Details to be agreed with Environemnt Agency and subject to planning
GF1065	Brian Trebilcock	Other	Server farm expansion/upgrades & UPS replacements	-	103,000	73,000	- 5,225	78,000	72,775	- 225	Underspend	
GF1058	Steve Densham	Other	Land drainage flood defence schemes - St Marys Hemyock	-	50,000	50,000	-		-	- 50,000	Slippage	The Environment Agency are leading on this project - timeframe unknown
GF1059	Steve Densham	Other	Land drainage flood defence schemes - Ashleigh Park Bampton	-	87,000	87,000	-		-	- 87,000	Slippage	The Environment Agency are leading on this project - timeframe unknown
GF1110	Will Styles / Andy Mackie	Leisure	Wetside resin floor replacement	-	143,000	143,000	147,837		147,837	4,837	Overspend	
GF1111	Will Styles / Andy Mackie	Leisure	Wetside resin floor replacement	-	52,000	52,000	51,714		51,714	- 286	Underspend	
GF1121	Steve Densham	Leisure	Replacement skate park (poss relocation)	-	350,000	200,000	-	5,000	5,000	- 195,000	Slippage	Long lead project with stakeholder engagement. Spend for consultancy and planning application pending construction
GF1027	Will Styles	Other MDDC Buildings	MSCP -Solar carport and additional security	-	600,000	600,000	-	100,000	100,000	- 500,000	Slippage	Options currently being assessed
GF1108	Will Styles	Other MDDC Buildings	Market Walk - Solar Panels	-	200,000	200,000	-	-	-	- 200,000	Slippage	Options currently being assessed
GF1029	Will Styles	Other MDDC Buildings	Cooling options Air Handling Unit	-	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000	-		Options currently being assessed
GF1109	Tim Powell	Other MDDC Buildings	Diesel Tank	-	65,000	65,000	-		-	- 65,000	No Longer Required	This will now be covered as part of the works against project GF1061
GF1002	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	DFG and other private sector grants	-	3,000,000	600,000	153,455	450,000	603,455	3,455	Overspend	
GF1113	Steve Densham	Other	LED updgrade	-	65,000	65,000	-	65,000	65,000	-		
GF1119	Steve Densham	Other	LED lighting replacement	-	20,000	20,000	-	20,000	20,000	-		
GF1120	Steve Densham	Other	Becks Square resurfacing & lining	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-		
GF1116	Steve Densham	Other	Widen Riverside Path	-	20,000	20,000	-	20,000	20,000	-		
GF1117	Steve Densham	Other	Fencing end of life	-	125,000	125,000	-	125,000	125,000	-		
GF1118	Steve Densham	Other	Rubber floor tile replacements	-	100,000	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-		
GF1006	Brian Trebilcock	Other	Laptop/Desktop Refresh	-	620,000	100,000	17,494	82,500	99,994	- 6	Underspend	
GF1040	Darren Beer	Other	PDA's for cabs - Recycling, Trade and Ground Maintenance	-	210,000	210,000	113,825	39,850	153,675	- 56,325	Underspend	Procurement process resulted in lower project cost
GF1083	Darren Beer	Other	Vehicle leasing - Caretaking Services	-	33,000	33,000	-	-	-	- 33,000	Underspend	Order of new leased vehicle delayed until existing vehicle requires replacement
GF1122	Darren Beer	Other	Vehicle leasing - Street Cleansing	-	648,000	135,000	57,390	-	57,390	- 77,610	Underspend	Order of new leased vehicle delayed until existing vehicle requires replacement
GF1123	Darren Beer	Other	Vehicle leasing - Refuse	-	908,000	-	50,011	-	50,011	50,011	Overspend	Order of new leased vehicle brought forward from future year to meet service need
GF1125	Darren Beer	Other	Vehicle leasing - Recycling	-	275,000	56,000	105,959	-	105,959	49,959	Overspend	Additional vehicle required
GF1016	Tim Powell	Leisure	CHP -Replacement future energy saving project	156,756	23,000	23,000	311,716	25,000	336,716	313,716	Overspend	CHP is up and running, delays on the battery storage. Project scope increased after the budget was set in 2024/25. This is largely covered by grant funding from Sports England.
GF1028	Jason Ball	Other MDDC Buildings	Additional electric car charging points	-	80,000	80,000	-	-	-	- 80,000	Slippage	Spend likely to occur in 2026/27 as we are looking at partnership investment which will take time to put in place
GF1039	Darren Beer	Other	Baler	-	500,000	500,000	378,000	-	378,000	- 122,000	Underspend	Procurement process resulted in lower project cost
GF1131	Tim Powell	Leisure	CVSC PSDS Salix Project 4	37,500	280,000	280,000	303,435	26,000	329,435	49,435	Overspend	Procurement exercise resulted in higher costs than originally forecast
GF1134	Andy Mackie	Leisure	Extension to building on land of skate park at Lords Meadow	-	600,000	30,000	-	-	-	- 30,000	No Longer Required	No longer considering an extention to the building
GF1135	Andy Mackie	Leisure	Pool Pods - Submersible platforms for disabled	-	70,000	70,000	-	92,000	92,000	22,000	Overspend	Procurement exercise resulted in higher costs than originally forecast
GF1136	Keith Ashton	Other MDDC Buildings	Phoenix House - CCTV Replacement	-	65,000	65,000	-	65,000	65,000	-		
GF1137	Darren Beer	Other MDDC Buildings	Baler conveyor replacement	-	150,000	150,000	-	300,000	300,000	150,000	Overspend	Procurement to commence at the beginning of Q3 - Based on other LAs procurement of conveyors in 2024-25
GF1138	Steve Densham	Other	Open Space Infrastructure (incl Play Areas)	-	300,000	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-		
GF1139	Steve Densham	Other	Upgrade Park Lighting	-	100,000	100,000	-	-	-	- 100,000	Slippage	Options are currently being assessed

Ref	Manager	Area	Project Title	Project Spend in Prior Years	Total Budgeted Capital Programme 2025/26 Onwards	Original Deliverable Programme 2025/26	Actual Expenditure Q1 - Q2	Forecast Spend Q3 - Q4	Total Actual & Forecast Expenditure	Variance	Variance Type	Explanation of Variances Over £10k
				£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s		
GF1002	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	Capitalised staff resource to deliver Private Sector Housing Grants	-	570,000	114,000	51,837	58,370	110,207	- 3,793	Underspend	
GF1140	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	Capitalised staff resource to deliver Private Sector Housing Grants	-	65,000	13,000	6,382	7,260	13,642	642	Overspend	
GF1141	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	Capitalised staff resource to deliver Private Sector Housing Grants	-	105,000	21,000	9,853	11,090	20,943	- 57	Underspend	
GF1142	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	Survey costs to deliver the Private Sector Housing Grants	-	-	-	90	100	190	190	Overspend	
GF1142	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	Survey costs to deliver the Private Sector Housing Grants	-	100,000	20,000	1,895	15,000	16,895	- 3,105	Underspend	
GF1143	Tanya Wenham	Other	Lendology Loans	-	250,000	50,000	50,000	-	50,000	-		
GF1156	Tanya Wenham	Private Sector Housing	HFU The Laurels	6,650	-	-	4,521	365,000	369,521	369,521	Overspend	Purchase due to complete in October with additional costs associated with the renovation and conversion of the property. LAHF 3 funding to be used towards the costs.
GF1144	Steve Densham	Other MDDC Buildings	Newcombes Meadow Toilet Block	-	100,000	50,000	-	5,000	5,000	- 45,000	Slippage	Options are being considered
GF1145	Adrian Welsh	Other	Tiverton Public Realm Enhancement Project	-	74,000	43,000	-	-	-	- 43,000	Slippage	Project is currently being scoped
GF1146	Adrian Welsh	Other	Crediton Public Realm Enhancement	-	80,000	30,000	-	-	-	- 30,000	Slippage	Project is currently being scoped
GF1030	Alex Adams	Other MDDC Buildings	Etarmis - Security Swipe - (linked to security project)	45,741	-	-	15,003	-	15,003	15,003	Overspend	Invoiced late for works completed in March 2025 which wasn't accrued
GF1107	Keith Ashton	Other	Fire Safety Measures	271,863	-	-	47,297	230,000	277,297	277,297	Overspend	This was budgeted as revenue and will be funded from this budget
GF1074	Tim Powell	Leisure	Evlc Ashp - Salix Round 3 Funding	488,727	-	-	2,669	-	2,669	2,669	Overspend	
GF1089	Adrian Welsh	Other	Shared Prosperity Fund - Year 4	-	-	-	67	64,344	64,277	64,277	Overspend	* Grant award confirmation received after budget was finalised, Additional budget requested - refer to monitoring report recommendations
GF1090	Adrian Welsh	Other	Rural England Prosperity Fund - Year 3	-	-	-	14,339	197,197	211,536	211,536	Overspend	* Grant award confirmation received after budget was finalised, Additional budget requested - refer to monitoring report recommendations
			GF Totals		50,346,000	14,197,000	1,877,544	7,929,736	9,807,280	- 4,389,720		

Ref	Manager	Area	Project Title	Project Spend in Prior Years	Total Budgeted Capital Programme 2025/26 Onwards	Original Deliverable Programme 2025/26	Actual Expenditure Q1 - Q2	Forecast Spend Q3 - Q4	Total Actual & Forecast Expenditure	Variance	Variance Type	Explanation of Variances Over £10k
				£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s		
HRA1002	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Replacement roofing to HRA properties	-	2,400,000	600,000	305,325	294,675	600,000	0		
HRA1057	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Major Structural Works	-	1,400,000	260,000	74,370	185,630	260,000	- 0		
HRA1052	Mike Lowman / Simon Ne	HRA Projects	Old Road Depot Relocation	-	450,000	50,000	-	20,000	20,000	- 30,000	Slippage	Design and prelims only in 25/26
HRA1054	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Sewerage Treatment Works - Washfield	-	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	- 25,000	Slippage	Currently with Legal
HRA1001	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Modernisation of HRA garages	-	450,000	150,000	100,426	49,574	150,000	- 0		
HRA1003	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Modernisation works to HRA properties	-	750,000	150,000	198,527	51,473	250,000	100,000	Overspend	Increased schedule of works over and above original budget expectations
HRA1004	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Fire safety works to HRA properties and communal areas	-	210,000	50,000	34,367	15,633	50,000	0		
HRA1005	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Replacement UPVC Windows and doors to HRA properties	-	2,325,000	450,000	103,092	346,908	450,000	- 0		
HRA1006	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	New Heating to HRA properties	-	2,350,000	450,000	230,636	219,364	450,000	-		
HRA1007	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Renewables	-	1,250,000	250,000	83,807	450,000	366,193	116,193	Overspend	Increased schedule of works over and above original budget expectations
HRA1008	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Major Adaptations to HRA properties	-	1,625,000	315,000	150,589	164,411	315,000	0		
HRA1055	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Void Capital Works	-	775,000	145,000	69,800	75,200	145,000	-		
HRA1056	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Double Glazed Unit Replacement	-	120,000	40,000	6,912	13,048	19,960	- 20,040	Underspend	Slippage from 2024/25 not likely to be required
HRA1058	Steve Bennett	HRA Projects	Responsive capital works	-	460,000	100,000	38,540	61,460	100,000	- 1	Underspend	
HRA1060	Darren Beer	Other	Vehicle leasing - Housing	-	1,430,000	160,000	134,082	-	134,082	- 25,918	Underspend	Budgeted for electric vehicles, but diesel vehicles were required which came in slightly cheaper
HRA1070	Mike Lowman	Other	RTB Buy backs	-	5,000,000	1,000,000	378,254	821,746	1,200,000	200,000	Overspend	* Additional budget requested - refer to monitoring report recommendations
HRA1024	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 51 - Honiton Road, Cullompton	21,567	394,000	394,000	95,422	310,578	406,000	12,000	Overspend	Overspend due to discovery of a well
HRA1025	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 52 - Exon Buildings, Cullompton	9,260	294,000	294,000	385	-	385	- 293,615	Slippage	Previously been out to tender, but no bids received. Going back out for quotations but will delay start until 2026/27
HRA1027	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 53	-	300,000	23,000	-	-	-	- 23,000	Slippage	Deferred to 2026/27
HRA1028	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 5	-	255,000	22,000	-	-	-	- 22,000	No Longer Required	Project not viable
HRA1019	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 41 - Fir Close, Willand	113,411	222,000	222,000	-	107,000	107,000	- 115,000	Underspend	Costs incurred in prior year due to project being accelerated from 2025/26
HRA1009	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 15 - School Close, Bampton	3,303,691	3,092,000	3,092,000	3,155,660	250,000	3,405,660	313,660	Overspend	Amendments to S278 streetlighting and additional drainage works have contributed to the forecast overspend on this project.
HRA1010	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 18 - Eastlands, Hemyock	1,435,953	603,000	603,000	215,332	387,668	603,000	0		
HRA1011	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 10 - Holly/Sycamore Road, Tiverton	2,957,075	674,000	674,000	496,150	177,850	674,000	0		
HRA1012	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 14 - Crofts, Sandford	1,472,810	-	-	52,168	-	52,168	52,168	Overspend	No budget set as project was expected to be completed in 2024/25. Project now complete.
HRA1014	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 9 - Beech Road, Tiverton (1)	2,138,787	476,000	476,000	183,036	292,964	476,000	0		
HRA1016	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 11 - College Green, Uffculme	449,737	799,000	799,000	143,603	336,000	479,603	- 319,397	Underspend	Costs incurred in prior year due to project being accelerated from 2025/26
HRA1017	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 3 - Wordland Cross, C Fitzpaine	-	2,100,000	2,100,000	12,200	-	12,200	- 2,087,800	Slippage	Previously been out to tender, but no bids received. Going back out for quotations but will delay start until 2026/27
HRA1020	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 25 - WateryLane, Tiverton	218,742	2,907,000	2,907,000	451,383	2,455,617	2,907,000	0		
HRA1021	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 8	417,835	3,537,000	1,595,000	8,148	21,852	30,000	- 1,565,000	Slippage	Project still in pre-planning stage
HRA1026	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 37 - Somerlea, Willand	337,573	2,586,000	2,586,000	1,376,737	1,209,263	2,586,000	0		
HRA1029	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 33	167,826	794,000	794,000	-	93,674	93,674	- 700,326	Slippage	Contract being reviewed by Legal - no start on site until 2026/27
HRA1033	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 22 - Beech Road, Tiverton (2)	455,625	3,743,000	3,743,000	1,357	130,000	131,357	- 3,611,643	Slippage	Contract being reviewed by Legal - no start on site until 2026/27
HRA1035	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 54	-	275,000	275,000	-	-	-	- 275,000	Slippage	Still in planning stages - no start until 2026/27
HRA1038	Mike Lowman	HRA Projects	Project 23	394,553	7,462,000	2,869,000	372	-	372	- 2,868,628	Slippage	Build unable to begin at this time
GF Totals				6,920,989	50,346,000	14,197,000	1,877,544	7,929,736	9,807,280	- 4,389,720		
HRA Totals				13,894,444	85,415,000	27,663,000	7,933,065	8,541,588	16,474,653	- 11,188,347		
Grand Totals				20,815,433	135,761,000	41,860,000	9,810,609	16,471,324	26,281,933	- 15,578,067		

	Type	Deliverable	Forecast	Variance	Type	Variance
General Fund	Capital Grants	- 7,154,000	- 5,833,850	1,320,150	Underspend	- 3,485,407
	Capital Receipts	- 120,000	- 28,000	92,000	Overspend	- 1,584,548
	Revenue	- 1,650,000	- 2,376,011	726,011	Slippage	- 2,393,861
	Borrowing	- 5,273,000	- 1,569,419	3,703,581	No Longer Required	- 95,000
	Total GF Funding	- 14,197,000	- 9,807,280	4,389,720	Total GF Variance	- 4,389,720
Housing Revenue Account	Capital Grants	- 10,402,200	- 4,164,581	6,237,619	Underspend	- 480,356
	Capital Receipts	- 2,120,400	- 1,516,855	603,545	Overspend	- 794,020
	Revenue	- 2,677,000	- 2,848,153	171,153	Slippage	- 11,480,012
	Borrowing	- 12,463,400	- 7,945,064	4,518,336	No Longer Required	- 22,000
	Total HRA Funding	- 27,663,000	- 16,474,654	11,188,346	Total HRA Variance	- 11,188,348
Total Capital Funding		- 41,860,000	- 26,281,934	15,578,066	Total Variance	- 15,578,069

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Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	04 November 2025
Subject:	Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26
Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Downes, Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance & Risk
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Jarrett, Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix A – Economic Commentary from our Treasury Advisors (Link Group)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To inform the Cabinet of the treasury performance during the first six months of 2025/26, to agree the ongoing deposit strategy for the remainder of 2025/26 and a review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2025/26.

Recommendation(s):

1. The Cabinet are asked to recommend to Council approval of:

- a) A continuation of the current policy outlined at paragraphs 4.0 – 4.5 be agreed; and
- b) The changes to the Capital Financing Requirement, Operational Boundaries and Authorised Limits for the current year at paragraphs 5.4 – 5.5.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management recommends the annual setting of a Treasury Management Strategy and best practice dictates a specific half yearly update on treasury performance. This report will not only update Members on the treasury performance over the first six months of 2025/26, but will also seek approval for the ongoing deposit strategy.

2.0 Treasury Performance 01/04/2025 to 30/09/2025

- 2.1 The table below shows the Council's overall treasury management position for the first six months of 2025/26.

Treasury Position	Average Interest	Total Interest as at 30/09/2025	Forecast Year-End Position
Temporary Investments and Deposits	4.51%	£368k	£587k
CCLA Dividends	4.10%	£103k	£205k
Loans to Redlands Primary Care*	3.72%	£39k	£78k
Total		£510k	£870k
Split Between:			
General Fund		£348k	£612k
Housing Revenue Account		£162k	£258k

*The Council made two loans in 2021 totalling £2.175m towards the construction of a new GP surgery in Crediton.

- 2.2 The General Fund 2025/26 budget for all investment activity is £742k and for the Housing Revenue Account is £320k. Therefore, performance is below budget expectations. This is mainly due to increased use of internal balances to support the capital programme, leaving less for investment.

3.0 Economic Update

- 3.1 The Council's treasury advisor, MUFG Corporate Markets, provided the following forecasts on 11 August 2025 (PWLB rates are certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80bps):

MUFG Corporate Markets Interest Rate View 11.08.25													
	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27	Mar-28	Jun-28	Sep-28
BANK RATE	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
3 month ave earnings	4.00	4.00	3.80	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
6 month ave earnings	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.70	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.40	3.40	3.40
12 month ave earnings	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.70	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.60
5 yr PWLB	4.80	4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10
10 yr PWLB	5.30	5.20	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.80	4.80	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.60
25 yr PWLB	6.10	5.90	5.70	5.70	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.40	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.20
50 yr PWLB	5.80	5.60	5.40	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.20	5.10	5.10	5.00	5.00

- 3.2 This latest forecast sets out a view that the short, medium and long-dated interest rates will fall back over the next year or two, although there are upside risks in respect of the stickiness of inflation and a continuing tight labour market, as well as the size of gilt issuance.
- 3.3 Please refer to Appendix 1 for the economic commentary provided by the Council's treasury advisors (MUFG Corporate Markets).

4.0 Investment Portfolio

- 4.1 In accordance with the Code, it is the Council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity, and to obtain an appropriate level of return which is consistent with the Council's risk appetite (SLY Principle).
- 4.2 The Council's investment portfolio as at 30 September 2025 was made up of short-term investments/deposits to the value of £12.39m, comprising of £8.00m in fixed

term investments and £4.39m in NatWest call accounts. In addition to this, the Council also holds £5.00m in the CCLA commercial property fund.

4.3 Short term investments/deposits held as at 30 September 2025 are as follows:

Institution	Principal (£)	Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date
Uttlesford District Council	2,000,000	4.25%	21/05/2025	21/11/2025
NBK International PLC	3,000,000	4.28%	03/06/2025	03/12/2025
Chesterfield Borough Council	3,000,000	4.30%	09/06/2025	09/12/2025

By way of comparison to emphasise the point made in paragraph 2.2, at the same time last year, the council held short-term investments of £18.000m.

- 4.4 The Council received an average return of 4.51% on investments during the first six months of 2025/26, down from 5.34% at the same point in the previous year. Interest rates on offer have reduced through 2024/25 and into 2025/26, as markets price in cuts to Bank Rate. Therefore, returns during the first half of this year were strengthened slightly by maturing investments made in late 2024/25 and early 2025/26 before interest rates dropped further to their current levels. Performance is expected to reduce in the second half of 2025/26 as the full effect of the lower interest rates is felt and cash balances reduce.
- 4.5 The Council currently has £5m deposited with the CCLA (Churches, Charities and Local Authorities) Local Authorities' Property Fund, which pays dividends quarterly. For the first two quarters of 2025/26, dividends of £103k (4.10%) were received, down from £117k (4.69%) for the same period in 2024/25. There has been a small increase in fund value of £10k during the first half of 2025/26, with the Council's share in the fund now valued at £4.554m.

5.0 Borrowing Requirements and Prudential Indicators

- 5.1 The Council has no short-term borrowing but has existing PWLB loans of £28.389m as at 30 September 2025, in addition to £4.294m in finance leases.
- 5.2 The Council's revised capital financing requirement (CFR) for 2025/26 is £72.338m. The CFR denotes the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. If the CFR is positive the Council may borrow from the PWLB or the market (external borrowing) or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The balance of external and internal borrowing is generally driven by market conditions. Table 5.6 shows the Council has forecast borrowings at 31 March 2026 of £35.365m, and so will have utilised £32.974m of cash flow funds in lieu of borrowing to finance the CFR of £72.338m shown in table 5.5.
- 5.3 There has so far been no new borrowing in 2025/26, however it is possible that new borrowing of up to £8.000m will be required before the end of the financial year to help fund the capital programme. This is a reduction in the level of new borrowing forecast at the start of the year, which originally stood at £18.000m, and is mainly due to slippage in the Capital Programme.

- 5.4 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2025/26 was approved by Council on 19 February 2025. The underlying TMSS approved previously requires revision in light of a revised deliverable Capital Programme for 2025/26. The proposed changes are set out below:

Prudential Indicator 2025/26	Original £000	Q1 Updated Forecast £000	Revised Prudential Indicator £000
Authorised Limit	92,000	81,000	82,000
Operational Boundary	83,000	72,000	73,000
Capital Financing Requirement	81,931	71,436	72,338

- 5.5 The table below shows a breakdown of the revised CFR.

Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement	2025/26 Original Estimate £000	Q1 Updated Forecast £000	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000
CFR – Non Housing	19,443	17,550	15,927
CFR – Housing	62,488	53,886	56,411
Total CFR	81,931	71,436	72,338
Net movement in CFR*	13,828	3,389	4,290

**In-year movement calculated against 2024/25 CFR (estimated at £68,103k when the original 2025/26 estimate was calculated, now known to be £68,048k – 2024/25 Treasury Outturn).*

- 5.6 The table below shows the expected debt position at 31 March 2026, which determines the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit shown in 5.4 above.

Prudential Indicator – External Debt	2025/26 Original Estimate £000	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000
Borrowing	45,365	35,365
Other Long Term Liabilities*	3,620	3,999
Total Debt (Year End Position)	48,985	39,364

** Includes finance leases*

6.0 Annual Investment Strategy

- 6.1 Any fixed term investments in the market place (except Debt Management Office [DMO]) are restricted to a maximum term of two years (previously one year). The Council's substantial commitments (particularly the monthly precepts to Devon County Council, the Police and Fire Authority) constrain the term of investments. The Cabinet of 7 February 2019 resolved to diversify the investment portfolio to include non-UK banks with a minimum Sovereign Fitch rating of AAA (highest possible rating).
- 6.2 The Council will continue to have regard to the MHCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") issued in April 2018 (3rd Edition) and CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectorial Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA Treasury Management Code").

7.0 Lending Criteria and Counterparty Limits

- 7.1 The current policy allows the lending of funds to be deposited with major UK banks and building societies with an investment period no longer than two years and where the counterparty is required to meet the following ratings requirements: Banks (Fitch F1, F1+) and for building societies based upon a minimum Fitch rating of F1 and an asset base level of at least £1bn. The maximum lending limit to any group counterparty is £5m. The policy includes investments with CCLA property fund and money market funds with a limit of £2m on this option. Note that delegation was provided to the S151 officer and Finance Portfolio Holder in 2011/12 to make reactive decisions when market conditions changed due to volatility in rating changes when our own bankers, NatWest, were downgraded, along with other part nationalised banks. We do not invest any term deposits with the Royal Bank of Scotland Group and only have our call accounts with them.
- 7.2 Officers recommend a continuation of the existing policy for investments with banks and building societies, property funds and money market funds.
- 7.3 In addition to these fixed term deposits, the Council also uses an instant access liquidity account with NatWest (the Council's banker) to sweep any small surplus funds which cannot be placed by our brokers. Again, this account will be subject to the same £5m maximum deposit level, plus the balance of any grant fund.
- 7.4 The Council will also continue to lend to:
- Local Authorities, Police, Fire & Rescue, Parish Councils and other Public Bodies
 - UK Government (including gilts, Treasury Bills and the DMADF)
 - Other Bodies.
- 7.5 The investments that can be made to the organisations stated in paragraph 7.4 will not be constrained to a maximum deposit of £5m due to their lower level of risk. However, other bodies have a monetary limit of £3m.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The first half-year has seen a decline in treasury performance on 2024/25, due to reducing interest rates and lower cash balances available for investment. A slight decrease in performance is expected through the second half of the year as interest rates on temporary investments and deposits continue to decline. The Council's investment in the CCLA property fund has seen a reduction in dividend payments, but returns should be unaffected by future reductions in interest rates.

Financial Implications: Good financial management and administration underpins the entire strategy. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy should attempt to maximise investment return commensurate with minimum risk to the principal sums invested.

Legal Implications: The Council is under a statutory duty to "have regard" to the 2011 CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. The Council's own Financial Regulations include requirements as to the reporting of treasury management information.

Risk Assessment: The Council considers deposit security as the paramount function in any treasury dealings or activities. It should be noted that any investment decisions will always be subject to a degree of risk. However, in complying with an agreed Treasury Management Strategy, these risks would be kept to an acceptable level.

Impact on Climate Change: There are no Climate Change implications relating to the content of this report.

Equality Impact Assessment: It is considered that the impact of this report on equality related issues will be nil.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Maximising investment return whilst minimising risk of credit default enables the Council to finance the delivery of its Corporate Plan objectives.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Date: 24/10/2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 24/10/2025

Chief Officer: Andrew Jarrett

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

Date: 24/10/2025

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 23/10/2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Kieran Knowles, Operations Manager for Financial Services

Email: kknowles@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 24(4624)

Background papers: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 (Council 19/02/2025)

Appendix 1

1.0 Economic Commentary from the Council's Treasury Advisors (MUFG Corporate Markets)

1.1 The second quarter of 2025/26 saw:

- A 0.3% pick up in GDP for the period April to June 2025. More recently, the economy flatlined in July, with higher taxes for businesses restraining growth;
- The 3m/yy rate of average earnings growth excluding bonuses has fallen from 5.5% to 4.8% in July;
- CPI inflation has ebbed and flowed but finished September at 3.8%, whilst core inflation eased to 3.6%;
- The Bank of England cut interest rates from 4.50% to 4.25% in May, and then to 4% in August;
- The 10-year gilt yield fluctuated between 4.4% and 4.8%, ending the half year at 4.70%.

1.2 From a GDP perspective, the financial year got off to a bumpy start with the 0.3% m/m fall in real GDP in April as front-running of US tariffs in Q1 (when GDP grew 0.7% on the quarter) weighed on activity. Despite the underlying reasons for the drop, it was still the first fall since October 2024 and the largest fall since October 2023. However, the economy surprised to the upside in May and June so that quarterly growth ended up 0.3% q/q. Nonetheless, the 0.0% m/m change in real GDP in July will have caused some concern, with the hikes in taxes for businesses that took place in April this year undoubtedly playing a part in restraining growth. The weak overseas environment is also likely to have contributed to the 1.3% m/m fall in manufacturing output in July. That was the second large fall in three months and left the 3m/3m rate at a 20-month low of -1.1%. The 0.1% m/m rise in services output kept its 3m/3m rate at 0.4%, supported by stronger output in the health and arts/entertainment sectors. Looking ahead, ongoing speculation about further tax rises in the Autumn Budget on 26 November will remain a drag on GDP growth for a while yet. GDP growth for 2025 is forecast by Capital Economics to be 1.3%.

1.3 Sticking with future economic sentiment, the composite Purchasing Manager Index for the UK fell from 53.5 in August to 51.0 in September. The decline was mostly driven by a fall in the services PMI, which declined from 54.2 to 51.9. The manufacturing PMI output balance also fell, from 49.3 to 45.4. That was due to both weak overseas demand (the new exports orders balance fell for the fourth month in a row) and the cyber-attack-induced shutdown at Jaguar Land Rover since 1 September reducing car production across the automotive supply chain. The PMIs suggest tepid growth is the best that can be expected when the Q3 GDP numbers are released.

1.4 Turning to retail sales, and the 0.5% m/m rise in volumes in August was the third such rise in a row and was driven by gains in all the major categories except fuel sales, which fell by 2.0% m/m. Sales may have been supported by the warmer-than-usual weather. If sales were just flat in September, then in Q3 sales volumes would be up 0.7% q/q compared to the 0.2% q/q gain in Q2.

1.5 With the November Budget edging nearer, the public finances position looks weak. Public net sector borrowing of £18.0bn in August means that after five months of the

financial year, borrowing is already £11.4bn higher than the OBR forecast at the Spring Statement in March. The overshoot in the Chancellor's chosen fiscal mandate of the current budget is even greater with a cumulative deficit of £15.3bn. All this was due to both current receipts in August being lower than the OBR forecast (by £1.8bn) and current expenditure being higher (by £1.0bn). Over the first five months of the financial year, current receipts have fallen short by a total of £6.1bn (partly due to lower-than-expected self-assessment income tax) and current expenditure has overshot by a total of £3.7bn (partly due to social benefits and departmental spending). Furthermore, what very much matters now is the OBR forecasts and their impact on the current budget in 2029/30, which is when the Chancellor's fiscal mandate bites. As a general guide, Capital Economics forecasts a deficit of about £18bn, meaning the Chancellor will have to raise £28bn, mostly through higher taxes, if she wants to keep her buffer against her rule of £10bn.

- 1.6 The weakening in the jobs market looked clear in the spring. May's 109,000 m/m fall in the PAYE measure of employment was the largest decline (barring the pandemic) since the data began and the seventh in as many months. The monthly change was revised lower in five of the previous seven months too, with April's 33,000 fall revised down to a 55,000 drop. More recently, however, the monthly change was revised higher in seven of the previous nine months by a total of 22,000. So instead of falling by 165,000 in total since October, payroll employment is now thought to have declined by a smaller 153,000. Even so, payroll employment has still fallen in nine of the ten months since the Chancellor announced the rises in National Insurance Contributions (NICs) for employers and the minimum wage in the October Budget. The number of job vacancies in the three months to August stood at 728,000. Vacancies have now fallen by approximately 47% since its peak in April 2022. All this suggests the labour market continues to loosen, albeit at a declining pace.
- 1.7 A looser labour market is driving softer wage pressures. The 3m/yy rate of average earnings growth excluding bonuses has fallen from 5.5% in April to 4.8% in July. The rate for the private sector slipped from 5.5% to 4.7%, putting it on track to be in line with the Bank of England's Q3 forecast (4.6% for September).
- 1.8 CPI inflation fell slightly from 3.5% in April to 3.4% in May, and services inflation dropped from 5.4% to 4.7%, whilst core inflation also softened from 3.8% to 3.5%. More recently, though, inflation pressures have resurfaced, although the recent upward march in CPI inflation did pause for breath in August, with CPI inflation staying at 3.8%. Core inflation eased once more too, from 3.8% to 3.6%, and services inflation dipped from 5.0% to 4.7%. So, we finish the half year in a similar position to where we started, although with food inflation rising to an 18-month high of 5.1% and households' expectations for inflation standing at a six year high, a further loosening in the labour market and weaker wage growth may be a requisite to UK inflation coming in below 2.0% by 2027.
- 1.9 An ever-present issue throughout the past six months has been the pressure being exerted on medium and longer dated gilt yields. The yield on the 10-year gilt moved sideways in the second quarter of 2025, rising from 4.4% in early April to 4.8% in mid-April following wider global bond market volatility stemming from the "Liberation Day" tariff announcement, and then easing back as trade tensions began to de-escalate. By the end of April, the 10-year gilt yield had returned to 4.4%. In May, concerns about stickier inflation and shifting expectations about the path for interest rates led

to another rise, with the 10-year gilt yield fluctuating between 4.6% and 4.75% for most of May. Thereafter, as trade tensions continued to ease and markets increasingly began to price in looser monetary policy, the 10-year yield edged lower, and ended Q2 at 4.50%.

- 1.10 More recently, the yield on the 10-year gilt rose from 4.46% to 4.60% in early July as rolled-back spending cuts and uncertainty over Chancellor Reeves' future raised fiscal concerns. Although the spike proved short lived, it highlighted the UK's fragile fiscal position. In an era of high debt, high interest rates and low GDP growth, the markets are now more sensitive to fiscal risks than before the pandemic. During August, long-dated gilts underwent a particularly pronounced sell-off, climbing 22 basis points and reaching a 27-year high of 5.6% by the end of the month. While yields have since eased back, the market sell-off was driven by investor concerns over growing supply-demand imbalances, stemming from unease over the lack of fiscal consolidation and reduced demand from traditional long-dated bond purchasers like pension funds. For 10-year gilts, by late September, sticky inflation, resilient activity data and a hawkish Bank of England have kept yields elevated over 4.70%.
- 1.11 The FTSE 100 fell sharply following the "Liberation Day" tariff announcement, dropping by more than 10% in the first week of April - from 8,634 on 1 April to 7,702 on 7 April. However, the de-escalation of the trade war coupled with strong corporate earnings led to a rapid rebound starting in late April. As a result, the FTSE 100 closed Q2 at 8,761, around 2% higher than its value at the end of Q1 and more than 7% above its level at the start of 2025. Since then, the FTSE 100 has enjoyed a further 4% rise in July, its strongest monthly gain since January and outperforming the S&P 500. Strong corporate earnings and progress in trade talks (US-EU, UK-India) lifted share prices and the index hit a record 9,321 in mid-August, driven by hopes of peace in Ukraine and dovish signals from Fed Chair Powell. September proved more volatile and the FTSE 100 closed Q3 at 9,350, 7% higher than at the end of Q1 and 14% higher since the start of 2025. Future performance will likely be impacted by the extent to which investors' global risk appetite remains intact, Fed rate cuts, resilience in the US economy, and AI optimism. A weaker pound will also boost the index as it inflates overseas earnings.
- 1.12 MPC meetings: 8 May, 19 June, 7 August, 18 September 2025
 - 1.12.1 There were four Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meetings in the first half of the financial year. In May, the Committee cut Bank Rate from 4.50% to 4.25%, while in June policy was left unchanged. In June's vote, three MPC members (Dhingra, Ramsden and Taylor) voted for an immediate cut to 4.00%, citing loosening labour market conditions. The other six members were more cautious, as they highlighted the need to monitor for "signs of weak demand", "supply-side constraints" and higher "inflation expectations", mainly from rising food prices. By repeating the well-used phrase "gradual and careful", the MPC continued to suggest that rates would be reduced further.
 - 1.12.2 In August, a further rate cut was implemented. However, a 5-4 split vote for a rate cut to 4% laid bare the different views within the Monetary Policy Committee, with the accompanying commentary noting the decision was "finely balanced" and reiterating that future rate cuts would be undertaken "gradually and carefully". Ultimately, Governor Bailey was the casting vote for a rate cut but with the CPI

measure of inflation expected to reach at least 4% later this year, the MPC will be wary of making any further rate cuts until inflation begins its slow downwards trajectory back towards 2%.

- 1.12.3 The Bank of England does not anticipate CPI getting to 2% until early 2027, and with wages still rising by just below 5%, it was no surprise that the September meeting saw the MPC vote 7-2 for keeping rates at 4% (Dhingra and Taylor voted for a further 25bps reduction).
- 1.12.4 The Bank also took the opportunity to announce that they would only shrink its balance sheet by £70bn over the next 12 months, rather than £100bn. The repetition of the phrase that “a gradual and careful” approach to rate cuts is appropriate suggests the Bank still thinks interest rates will fall further but possibly not until February, which aligns with both our own view and that of the prevailing market sentiment.

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

**Present
Councillors**

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

**Apologies
Councillors**

L Taylor and S Keable and L Taylor

**Also Present
Councillors**

L G J Kennedy and L Knight

**Also Present
Officers:**

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

**Councillors
Online**

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

Officers Online

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

75. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors S Keable and L Taylor.

76. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Paul Elstone

Question 1:

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

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

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

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

Does the increase in risk scoring now recognise this potential?

Question 2:

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

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

Question 3:

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

Question 4:

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

Question 5:

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

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

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

Question 6:

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

Question 7:

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

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

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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

78. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

79. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT- QUARTER 2

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

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

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

Discussion took place with regards to:

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

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

Note: Report previously circulated.

80. **CORPORATE RISK REPORT**

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

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

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

Discussion took place with regards to:

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

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

Note: * Report previously circulated.

81. **ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT; THE INFRASTRUCTURE LIST**

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

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

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

RESOLVED that:

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

31st December 2025.

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

Reason for Decision:

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

Note: *Report previously circulated

82. MID DEVON OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER

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

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

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

RESOLVED that:

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

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

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

Reason for decision:

The OSPPO was designed to accurately reflect the Council's parking service and was a legal requirement that allowed the Council to provide such services. The Council was at risk of not being able to enforce parking contraventions within new locations and in respect of electric vehicle parking, which could result in reputational damage for not taking appropriate action against offenders.

Note: *Report previously circulated

83. CAR PARKING AND PERMIT PROPOSALS 26/27

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

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

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

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

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

Discussion took place with regards to:

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

RESOLVED that the following be approved:

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

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

Reason for decision:

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

Note: * Report previously circulated.

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

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

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

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

Discussion took place with regards to:

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

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

RESOLVED that:

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

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

(Proposed by the Chair)

Reason for Decision:

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

85. TAX BASE CALCULATION 2026/27

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

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

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

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Council that:

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

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

Reason for Decision:

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

Note: *Report previously circulated

86. BUDGET UPDATE 2026/27

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

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

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

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

Discussion took place regards to:

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

Note: *Report previously circulated.

87. **ACCESS TO INFORMATION- EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

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

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

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

88. **WASTE DEPOT REMODELLING- UPDATE**

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

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

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

RESOLVED that:

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

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

Reason for Decision:

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

89. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS**

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

This included the following:

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

Note: * Key Decisions Report previously circulated.

(The meeting ended at 18.54pm)

LEADER

Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	2 December 2025
Subject:	Tax Base Calculation 2026/27
Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Downes, Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance & Risk
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Jarrett, Deputy CEO (s151)
Exempt:	None
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This paper details the statutory calculations necessary to determine the Tax Base for the Council Tax. The calculations made follow a formula laid down in Regulations.

Recommendation(s): Cabinet recommend to Council:

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

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Every year each billing authority is required to calculate and approve its Band 'D' Equivalent Council Tax base, in line with regulations.
- 1.2** It should be noted that that this report has been prepared in advance of the Government's Autumn Budget, where key details are usually published. The

assumptions within this report mirror the current regulations. Therefore any new announcements or changes, will require a review of the calculations.

2.0 The Collection Rate calculation (A)

2.1 For 2026/27 this technical calculation is as follows:

2.2 Collection Rate

2.2.1 It is necessary to estimate a 'collection rate', which is the proportion of Council Tax due that will be paid. It is recommended that a collection rate of 97.5% be estimated for the year 2026/27, which remains the same as the previous year's collection rate.

2.2.2 Any variation from the collection rate of 97.5% is pooled in a collection fund, which is distributed in the next financial year to all Precepting Authorities. Broadly, MDDC's share is approximately 10%.

2.3 Calculation of the relevant amount (B)

2.3.1 **Number of Properties per Valuation Band.** The starting point will be the total number of properties within Mid Devon set out in the Valuation List on the prescribed date.

2.3.2 **Less Exemptions.** Properties are exempt from Council Tax under certain circumstances. The calculated tax base uses the information currently held in deciding the level of exempt properties that are likely to apply for 2026/27.

2.3.3 **Add Appeals, new properties and deletions from the Valuation List.** The Valuation Officer has dealt with the vast majority of Council Tax appeals to date and so no further allowance is believed to be necessary at this time. At the **23 October 2025** the council have estimated a net increase in properties within Mid Devon of **87** properties to go live on or before 1st April 2026 and a further **211.2** properties during the financial year, totalling **298.2**. This estimate is based on the current number of reports outstanding with the Valuation Officer.

2.3.4 **Disabled Allowance (move down a Band).** Where a disabled resident has made alterations to their property to help with their disability or they use a wheelchair internally at the premises, the property is entitled to a reduction, and which is applied by charging the property to the next lowest band to its current banding. Existing Band A properties are also entitled to a reduction by reducing the banding from 6/9ths charge down to 5/9ths charge.

2.3.5 **Less 25% Discounts - Single Persons Discounts.** If only one (adult) person lives in the dwelling as their "sole & main residence" then a discount of 25% is allowed.

- 2.3.6 **Less 50% discount.** A discount of 50% is allowed where two or more persons who can be disregarded for Council Tax purposes occupy the property, e.g. care workers.
- 2.3.7 **Second homes.** From 1st April 2025, second homes will pay a 100% council tax premium, as agreed 21 February 2024 at Full Council.
- 2.3.8 **Long Term Empties.** Currently, after a three-month free period no further discount is allowed; and empty dwellings that remain empty after one year attract a premium, as agreed 21 February 2024 at Full Council. This is a discretionary discount and is under review.
- 2.3.9 If a property remains empty of furniture and residents for one year or more, the Council is allowed to apply an additional 100% premium to the Council tax charge, so the Charge payer will have to pay 200% of the Council Tax charge. With effect from the 1st April 2020 a premium of 200% can be levied so the Charge payer will have to pay 300% of the Council Tax after a period of five years and with effect from the 1st April 2021 a premium of 300% can be levied so the Charge payer will have to pay 400% of the Council Tax. The Regulations detailing the additional premium are Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 as amended.

With effect from 1st April 2019 an additional 100% premium after 2 years
With effect from 1st April 2020 an additional 200% premium after 5 years
With effect from 1st April 2021 an additional 300% premium after 10 years
With effect from 1st April 2024 an additional 100% premium after 1 year

- 2.3.10 **Family Annex Discount.** If there is an Annexe within the grounds of your main house and either: used by the resident of the main house as part of the main home, or is lived in by a relative of the occupier in the main home, a 50% discount is applied.

2.4 Estimated cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR)

- 2.4.1 Before converting the properties to Net Band D equivalents the council must reduce the total properties by the estimated cost of the Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme:
- 2.4.2 The criteria for the CTR scheme is that those claimant's in the lowest income band do not have to pay anything; thereafter the percentage payable ranges from 35% to 75% of the charge (with the exception of those protected by legislation namely pensioners in receipt of guaranteed pension credit).
- 2.4.3 The main criteria of the scheme are:
- Support is increased up to 100% i.e. those claimants who are least able to pay.

- Support is restricted to Band D charges so claimants in a higher banded property will receive CTR up to 100% of a band D and be required to pay the balance of the additional banding in full.
- Savings limited to £6,000.
- Changes were made to the CTRS in April 2017 to align it with Universal Credit.

2.4.4 Mid Devon's CTR scheme for 2026/27, is estimated to cost in the region of **£4.774m**, based on the scheme criteria.

2.4.5 CTR has been included within the tax base calculation and applied to each band and parish individually then a band D equivalent calculation has been used to arrive at a final figure.

2.4.6 The cost of the CTR scheme must be reflected in the Tax Base calculation so the following calculation is carried out for each valuation band to arrive at the net chargeable Dwellings:

Calculation of the Relevant Amount

Paragraph Ref		2025/26	2026/27
2.3.1	Number of properties per valuation list	37,894.00	38,735.00
2.3.2 – 2.3.4	Exemptions	-672.00	-740.00
2.3.5	Single occupiers and 25% disregards	-3,099.50	-3,171.00
2.3.6	50% discount	-50.00	-41.50
2.3.7	Second home premium		+137.00
2.3.8 – 2.3.9	Empty property 50% exempt	-32.50	-26.00
	Empty property 100% exempt	-222.00	-178.00
	Additional long-term empty at 100%	+268.00	+236.00
	Additional long-term empty at 200%	+60.00	+74.00
	Additional long-term empty at 300%	+69.00	+51.00
2.3.10	Family Annexe Discount	-27.50	-29.50
	Chargeable dwellings before conversion to Band D equivalent	34,759.50	35,047.00
	Additional net new properties	+392.00	+298.20
	*Local council tax support adjustment and local discounts	+166.50	+150.75
	Chargeable dwellings after growth and before conversion to Band D equivalent	35,318.00	35,495.95

*Adjustment reflects part year support only and additional premiums charged.

2.5 Conversion to Band D equivalents

2.5.1 The net chargeable dwellings are then converted to Band D equivalents. This is carried out by multiplying the Net chargeable dwellings by the appropriate factor (A=6, B=7, C=8, D=9, E=11, F=13, G=15, H=18) for the band and dividing by that

for Band D (9). The Table below details the Net Chargeable Dwellings converted to Band D equivalents.

Band	Chargeable Dwellings	Multiplier	Band D equivalent properties	Less CTR properties	Revised properties
@	9.25	5/9	5.15	- 2.52	2.63
A	5,493.55	6/9	3,662.36	- 734.17	2,928.19
B	8,480.50	7/9	6,595.97	- 628.53	5,967.44
C	6,888.55	8/9	6,123.16	- 293.14	5,830.02
D	6,325.45	9/9	6,325.45	- 141.24	6,184.21
E	4,794.45	11/9	5,859.87	- 57.82	5,802.05
F	2,512.45	13/9	3,629.08	- 28.68	3,600.40
G	933.50	15/9	1,555.82	- 6.97	1,548.85
H	58.25	18/9	116.50	- 0.66	115.84
	35,495.95		33,873.36	- 1,893.73	31,979.63

Note: An @ band dwelling is a band A property with a disabled banding reduction applied

2.5.2 The calculation shows the estimated annual cost of the CTR scheme, shown as the number of Band D equivalents. For the 2026/27 year this is estimated as 1,893.73 Band D equivalent properties.

2.5.3 To clarify, the table detailing the **Calculation of the Relevant Amount** is based on actual properties and the final calculation above is based on a Band D equivalent of actual properties.

2.6 Calculation of the Tax Base

2.6.1 The Tax Base is finally calculated by applying the collection rate to the total Band D equivalents when summarised below for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.6.2 Based on the above detailed calculations in accordance with SI 2914 of 2012, the Tax Base is to be calculated as:

31,979.63	Total relevant amounts (A)
97.5%	The estimated collection rate (B)
31,180.16	A x B

3.0 Assumptions

3.1 In line with current Council Tax Referendum limits, the impact of any changes to the assumptions used in the calculations are shown below:

Variable Assumption	Assumption	Change	Impact on dwellings*
Collection rate	97.5%	+0.5%	159.87
Growth	15% of 1,408 properties with planning permission	+1%	12.84

*If both changes above were adopted, this would result in an increase to the budget of circa £42.5k.

- 3.2 Should the Autumn Budget announce any changes to current legislation or regulations, this calculation will need to be reviewed. The delayed announcement is scheduled for 26 November 2025.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Mid Devon District Council's Council Tax Base for 2026/27 will be **31,180.16**.

N.B. This figure is calculated by applying the estimated collection rate to the total relevant amount for each parish individually, so could differ slightly when compared to the estimated collection rate being applied to the total shown in 2.6.2 above.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

This is a statutory function and is a legal requirement. The Council must now set its budget annually using Council Tax information each year in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base)(England) Regulations 2012 calculating the relevant amount by applying the formula set out in the above regulations.

Risk Assessment

If the Council fails to carry this duty out then the Council Tax cannot legally be set. In accordance with the LGF Act 2012 above and SI 2914 of 2012 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base)(England) Regulations 2012,

Impact on Climate Change

No implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The Council Tax Base calculation includes a deduction for the Council Tax Reduction scheme within its Tax Base calculation.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

This report sets out how the Tax Base is calculated for 2026/27. This calculation is then used as a basis to set the Council's budget for the forthcoming year in line with the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer
Date: 27 October 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 27 October 2025

Chief Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 27 October 2025

Performance and risk: Dr Stephen Carr
Agreed by the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 23 October 2025

Cabinet member notified: yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Paul Deal – Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience
Email: pdeal@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234254

Background papers: CTB1 and supporting documentation – available upon request

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 20 October 2025
at 5.00 pm

Present

Councillors

C Adcock, E Buczkowski, A Cuddy,
G Czapiewski, M Farrell, C Harrower,
L Knight, J Poynton and R Roberts

Apologies

Councillors

D Broom, L G J Kennedy and G Westcott

Also Present

Councillors

J Buczkowski and J Wright

Also Present

Officers

Maria De Leburne (Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Lisa Lewis (Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

G Duchesne, M Fletcher, S Keable and L Taylor

Officer Online

Richard Marsh (Director of Place and Economy)

45 ELECTION OF CHAIR

There was a need to elect a Chair for the meeting as both Cllr L Kennedy (Chair) and Cllr G Westcott (Vice Chair) had sent apologies.

RESOLVED that Cllr G Czapiewski be elected Chair for the purposes of this meeting only.

(Proposed by Cllr C Adcock and seconded by Cllr E Buczkowski)

Note: Cllr G Czapiewski chose not to elect a Vice Chair.

46 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr L G J Kennedy and Cllr G Westcott.

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

No interests were declared under this item.

48 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

49 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th September 2025 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

50 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair's had the following announcements to make:

1. Unfortunately South West Water had been unable to send a representative to the meeting this evening. Given the strength of feeling regarding the outstanding SWW issues the Chair (Cllr L G J Kennedy) had agreed that this item be deferred to a future meeting and as soon as possible. This was so that a representative could be present to answer any queries and provide clarification in person.
2. There may be a need to cancel the next scheduled meeting on 17th November, as the 'Complaints and Compliments' report which was due to come to that meeting would now be going to the Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement PDG in the first instance and then to the Scrutiny Committee in December.

However, this would not be the case if:

- a) There was a "Call-in" following the Cabinet meeting on 4th November.
- b) The Committee wished to discuss a new item at the next meeting.
- c) If South West Water were able to attend the next meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she should be able to confirm this one way or the other by the end of the week and as soon as this information became available.

51 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET**

The Committee **NOTED** that none of the decisions made by the Cabinet on 7th October had been called in.

52 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION & ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REQUESTS - QUARTERS 1 & 2 (00:10:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement providing a quarterly dashboard update report regarding the monitoring of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Environmental Information Requests (EIR). It also updated the Committee on any decision notices that had been provided during quarters 1 & 2.

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

- Bringing the report to the Committee now had allowed officers to capture both the data for Quarter one and Quarter two.
- 483 requests had been made during this period.
- Of the 483, 4 requests exceeded the 20-working day period statutory time, making the percentage responded to within the statutory time limit, 99.2%. 1 was 21 working days and another took 30 working days. All requests dealt with outside the statutory time limit were due to absences of the relevant staff collating the data.
- There were 4 Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) cases closed during Quarters 1 and 2. 2 were not upheld, 1 was withdrawn and 1 was upheld.
- Providing such reports to Members always provided an opportunity to review what the service did and how it did it.
- A revised disclosure log had been provided on the Council's website. It was live and being used although the numbers were still relatively low.
- Work was continuing on the publication scheme.
- An all Member briefing was being organised on Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Requests (EIR) for 1 December 2025. The appointment would be sent out shortly. This would be online only and start at 5.15pm.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The disclosure logs on the website referred to 'attachments'. These by their nature were extremely large in terms of data and it was not manageable to include them on the Council's website, however, they could be provided upon request. The website explained how to do this.
- 2 officers worked in the FOI/EIR area, although they did not solely deal with FOI and many officers across the Council provided their own responses to requests. The all Member briefing would provide more information regarding the time and costs involved. Specific subjects would not be detailed but examples would be given.
- It was noted that the service was able to respond over 99% of the time within prescribed timescales.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

53 **REVIEW OF RESPONSES AND ACTIONS FROM SOUTH WEST WATER (00:20:00)**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

54 **WORK PROGRAMME**

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

Suggestions made for the Work Plan were:

- Highways concerns, specifically the frequent damage caused to Bickleigh Bridge by heavy goods vehicles and what could be done to address this? The suggestion was made that an officer from the Highways Authority be invited to attend a future meeting. The Councillor making the suggestion was asked to complete a Scrutiny proposal form in the first instance to ensure that the issue met all of the necessary criteria first before being progressed.
- Speeding in Palmerston Park, again the Councillor was requested to either complete the necessary proposal form or speak to the Police direct.
- An up to date report on Town and Parish assets. It was suggested by the Chair that the Councillor raising the issue discussed the matter with the Chief Executive or Leader direct to see what could be gleaned as it was still too early in the Local Government Reorganisation process to bring any meaningful information to the Committee.

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

(The meeting ended at 5.32 pm)

CHAIR

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COMMUNITY, PEOPLE & EQUALITIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 11 November 2025 at 12.30 pm

**Present
Councillors**

B Holdman (Chair) S Chenore (Vice Chair),
C Connor, M Farrell, C Harrower,
B Holdman and H Tuffin.

**Apologies
Councillors**

D Broom and A Glover

**Also Present
Councillor**

D Wulff.

**Also Present
Officers**

Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leiburne (Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Simon Newcombe (Head of Housing & Health) and Lewis Dyson (Resilience Officer) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager).

**Councillors
Online**

A Cuddy and J Lock.

Officers Online

Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance Improvement Manager).

27 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor: D Broom who was substituted by C Connor, A Cuddy (online) and A Glover.

28 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.

29 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 September 2025 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

31 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had the following announcement to make:

- The Chair thanked Officers past and present for the organisation for the “Meet the Funders” event. This was held to connect local community groups, charities, and social enterprises with key funding bodies and grant providers.

32 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD- QUARTER 2 (00:10:58)

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, a slide * showing performance information in the Community People and Equalities area for Quarter 2.

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

The following was referred to:

- There was one Corporate Risk relating to this PDG, that being Severe Weather Emergency Recovery which was at 12 and increasing.
- Two indicators that were shown as red on the dashboard related to “Let's Talk Mid Devon”, the Communications Team were continuing to promote the use of the site and had recently launched the annual Residents Survey on the site which would hopefully encourage people to sign up and register. The team were having discussions with service areas to ensure that it was the best platform for their needs and that work would feed into future planning around the platform.
- Support VCSE sector by securing additional external funding - £51,791

Discussion took place regarding:

- The Annual target set for “Let's Talk Mid Devon” with the barriers that had been taken away was the target unrealistic. It was explained that the Corporate Plan and would go to a meeting of Cabinet to make any changes in regard to the percentages.
- The Housing support was showing as Red. Was this due to the Housing Law regulations changing? What measures were the Council taking?
- Were the postcodes of people completing the survey collected?
- The level of support for Town and Parish Council's developing their Community Emergency Plans.

Note: * Slide previously circulated.

The Group received and **NOTED** a report* from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) and in accordance with the IPCOs recommendation that the Policy was presented to Members annually.

The following was highlighted in the report:

- The 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).
- The powers were only ever used if the Council had obtained approval from the Magistrate's Court, and this was only for offences where the sentence would attract 6 months or more and or relate to the underage sale of alcohol or tobacco.
- The requirement from Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO), who were the Council auditors was for this Policy, to be presented annually.
- The powers available to the Council had not been used since 2014.
- There had been a three-year audit carried out in August 2024. The Inspector had been satisfied with the information provided.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The offences in the report stated sale of alcohol or tobacco, however, were drugs included within this? It was explained that the Policy referred to no alcohol and tobacco only, offences relating to drugs would be over a 6-month sentence.
- When would a statutory update be provided from government? It was explained that IPCO would update the Council quarterly which would include any statutory updates that the Council needed to be aware of.

The Group **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the Council's policy for ensuring compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) was appropriate and should remain as currently drafted.

The Group **NOTED** that the Council had not used its powers under RIPA since March 2014.

(Proposed by Cllr S Chenore and Cllr C Harrower)

Reason for the decision:

The use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) powers was 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

Note: *Report previously circulated.

34 **MEETING MANAGEMENT (00:30:00)**

The Chair MOVED that he would be bring the following Agenda item:-

- (i) 9 Resilience Strategy update

35 **RESILIENCE STRATEGY UPDATE (00:30:10)**

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, a presentation* providing a Resilience Strategy update for the Community, People and Equalities PDG.

The following was highlighted:

- The Risk Management covered Emergency Planning Recovery and Emergency Response
- The Local Community Risk Register containing risks identified by local community to be noted at the March Community PDG.
- Core Plans, these were new and included the following; roles and responsibilities, action cards, new templates with consistent terminology and an introduction of the tactical response team.
- Each Council department had or will have a Business Continuity Plan in place to be used if an emergency was to occur.
- Business continuity examples that had happened previously such as power outages, unauthorised encampment and Carlu Chipper theft along with Major Incident examples such as Severe Weather and M5 Vehicle Fire.
- There has been a lot of training/exercises completed by MDDC officers including Tactical, TCC Familiarisation, Exercise Pegasus with more to come such as internal exercises and Recovery training.
- Lessons learnt were to be completed with a new template that had been created and was a standing item to be discussed at monthly service management meetings as required.
- A Community Hub working group had been set up by the Local Resilience Forum to provide support for Town and Parishes to build the Resilience for the future. Guide will be published next year along with the Resilience Officer push to attend Parish/Town meetings to discuss.
- Next Steps- An update on the Local Community Risk Register and the Resilience Strategy would be provided to the Group in March 2026 and an all Member briefing on this subject would be scheduled.

Discussion took place regarding:

- What would happen if there was an IT attack and there was no access to computers/power? It was explained that was difficult to answer due to the complexity of what could occur, however, there was a joint plan with Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum, in addition to each MDDC Business Continuity Plans covering various impacts which includes loss of power and loss of IT.
- The access through Tiverton when the M5 was closed due to an accident which resulted in the bridge at Bickleigh being used, what measures were in

place to safeguard the bridge? It was explained about the Category 1 responders who would liaise directly with Highways and Devon County Council, the Head of Housing and Health who would report back the Group's concerns.

- The Emergency Planning page on the website, one of the links was broken and the documents to download were out of date. It was explained that the review of the website was to take place in the new year, however, the broken links would be removed before then.

Note: Cllr M Farrell arrived at this item.

36 **STRATEGIC GRANT REVIEW 2025 (01:04:05)**

The Group had before it, a report* from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the Strategic Grants renewal grant funding for external agencies for a 3-year period (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29) with a forward recommendation to Cabinet.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presented the report and the following was highlighted:

- The Council valued 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.
- The report attempted to provide both security and continuity of funding provision to key Strategic groups that provided a strong level of complimentary service provision with a number of services and areas of Council activity.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Would the Council consider a local Charity called "Unite", this Charity supported young carers that provided care for adults. It was explained, given the Council's financial forecast that in section 2.4 the Group could support other Local Charities if they wish however the total amount of £120,225 would have to remain the same.
- The funding amounts were different between organisations that the Council supported.
- Some of the organisations charge for admission and therefore received a level of income.
- For the Group to work closely with their Town and Parish Councils.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:

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

(Proposed by Cllr S Chenore and seconded by Cllr C Connor)

Note:

- (i) Report previously circulated.
- (ii) Cllr A Cuddy declared a personal interest in that he was business owner.
- (iii) Cllr C Connor declared a interest as she was a Member of Devon County Council who also provided funding to some of the organisations.
- (iv) Cllr Ben Holdman **ABSTAINED** from voting.

37 **2026/27- DRAFT BUDGET (01:24:30)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report* from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the Draft Budget for 2026/2027

The Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience presented the report and the following was highlighted:

- The Group was advised that there was very little clarity available on the future funding decisions for the Local Government Sector. Since the last meeting of this PDG, this position had not altered as no further announcements received.
- The Group recommended to Cabinet the Green proposals were approved and noted the Amber pressures to make a decision once the position was known.
- Cabinet noted the Groups recommendation of the Red saving option to cease the Strategic Grants which was considered at the previous item on this agenda.
- 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.
- Generally, the bids were 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.

Discussion took place regarding:

- There was a replacement of the Woodchipper, what would happen to the old equipment of the Council? It was explained that it would depend on what condition that piece of equipment was in. The council may sell it or otherwise it would be scrapped.
- The costing of the replacement for the CCTV would this include a replacement of the whole system or parts of it. It was explained that it included the whole system.

Note: Report previously circulated.

38 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The items listed in the Work Programme for the next meeting were **NOTED**.

In addition to this, the following was requested to be on the agenda for a future meeting of the Group:

- The Police would be invited to the March meeting.

(The meeting ended at 14.03pm)

CHAIR

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MINUTES of a MEETING of the ECONOMY & ASSETS POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 20 November 2025 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

G Cochran (Chair)
J Buczkowski, J Cairney, M Farrell (Vice-Chair), L Knight, A Stirling and T Stanford

Apologies

Councillors

R Roberts and M Stratton

Also Present

Officers

Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Matthew Page (Head of People, Performance & Waste), Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Linda Perry (Economic Development Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

E Buczkowski, S Keable and N Woollatt

Officers Online

Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street Scene and Open Spaces) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager)

25 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr R Roberts and Cllr M Stratton (who was substituted by Cllr T Stanford).

26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following public question was received:

Nick Quinn

Agenda Item 8 - Car Parking Report

On page 24 of your papers, Recommendation 2 of this report asks this PDG to “reaffirm its previous recommendation for a 5% rise for Car Parking charges to be introduced as part of the budget setting process for 2026/2027”.

I do not know the basis for the previous recommendation, but this report is not truthful in content or accurate in describing some tariffs in Appendix 1.

Paragraph 2.1 states “pay and display tariffs have not been increased since June 2023”. That is a lie, parking tariffs were increased in June 2024, by 6.7%, and, as proof of my statement, I have brought a copy of the order which I will pass to the Chair in a moment.

Paragraph 2.3 sets out the “proposal for a 5% increase on all pay and display tariff bands”.

And paragraph 2.5 states “Appendix 1 provides comparative detail for current tariff costs and the new proposals for consideration. Please note that proposed new tariffs are rounded up or down to the nearest 10p”.

This tariff rounding, in Appendix 1, is true for short stays and long stays in the Tiverton Multi-storey, but it is not true for long stay parking in CREDITON or CULLOMPTON where the tariffs have been ‘rounded up’ to the next pound!

CREDITON and CULLOMPTON Members should be outraged as the tariffs proposed for their car parks mean the cost of a 10 hour stay would increase by 9% and a 5 hour stay would increase by a massive 16%.

Due to the inaccuracies in the body of the report and the proposed tariffs in Appendix 1, this report should be thrown out.

I ask: Will this PDG please reject this flawed Car Parking and Permit Report and request that a, fully fact-checked and accurately calculated, revised report be brought to the next meeting?

The Chair allowed Mr Quinn a supplementary question which was:

The Constitution said that if the question cannot be answered at the meeting, then written replies will be provided. The question which I asked specifically deals with this PDG dealing with this report or rejecting this report, I am assuming that that can be done at this meeting and would not require a written reply in 10 days?

The Chair confirmed that it could but only when that item was reached on the agenda and debated properly.

27 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chair declared a personal interest in relation to the Car Parking Permit item, in that he was also the Chair of the Car Parking Consultative Group.

No other interests were declared under this item.

28 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th September 2025 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

29 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had no announcements to make.

30 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q2 (00:10:00)

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, a slide * showing performance information in the Economy & Assets area.

The dashboard aimed to give an 'at a glance' understanding of how services were performing in terms of performance measures, finance and risk. Any measures that were also part of the Corporate Plan were listed in yellow text.

The indicators were presented with current performance, the annual target and a RAG (red/amber/green) rating to indicate whether or not the Council was on track to meet its target. Overall performance was presented in a pie chart which combined the RAG ratings for both the performance and the finance measures.

A summary of the performance position was presented as follows:

- Car parking income was showing as amber. This was mainly due to lower than budgeted permit income within the Multi Storey Car Park.
- The Pannier Market income was showing as red with income around 20% lower than the target budget.
- The Capital Slippage of projects was showing as amber. This related to six out of 22 capital projects, the main ones being the solar projects which were reaching soft market testing point. The others related to public realm and toilet enhancement where the Council was awaiting clarification from Town Councils on how they wished to proceed.

A brief discussion took place regarding the negotiations which had been taking place with both Town Council's in Tiverton and Crediton for the future provision of toilets. These had been ongoing for some time but unfortunately there had not been any progress in terms of which toilets or how the provision would be taken forward. It was possible with impending Local Government Reorganisation that Town Council's would need to take on more responsibility for this area but at this stage much was still unknown. This had been the general topic of the State of the District debate earlier this year in terms of engaging with Town and Parish Council's on the assets that the District Council currently owned but which Town and Parish Council's were interested in getting involved with in terms of their operation going forwards.

Note: * Slide previously circulated.

31 DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2026/2027 (00:15:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting an update on the 2026/27 Budget and the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was only a very brief budget update since clarification from central Government was still needed. The forecasted position based on a number of assumptions was presented to the last meeting, no greater detail had been received from central Government since then. The autumn statement was due on the 26th November 2025 and that would give, at a very high level, national indications of where funding would go but not at a local authority level. The Council would have to wait until the Local Government Finance Settlement in December for that. Budget proposals had been presented and supported by this Group in September 2025. All the green recommendations were approved subsequently by the Cabinet. The Cabinet was currently awaiting clarification on the amber proposals before reaching a decision.
- In terms of the Capital Programme where there were new proposals or changes to the existing scheme, these were shown in Appendix 1.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Currently, this was the last scheduled opportunity for the Policy Development Group to comment on the budget proposals for 2026/2027. Considerations would be taking place in the near future to determine the best way to seek Member engagement regarding next year's budget before the necessary deadlines and this may need to be by way of an all-Member briefing. This was yet to be determined.
- Clarification was sought as to the position on Section 106, development money and how this was used within capital projects? It was confirmed that how projects were funded would be shown in the February committee reports. Section 106 monies were important as the Council did not receive any capital grant from Government. It was largely used to fund initiatives such as play parks.
- Were there any revenue implications on the capital projects or were they just things the Council needed to do to maintain or improve its assets? What would be the impact on the revenue budget of taking those initiatives forward? It was explained that largely speaking there were no revenue impacts, but some things, for example ICT where the Council had additional licences would have a knock-on impact but very few of these were asset replacements.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

32 **CAR PARKING AND PERMIT PROPOSALS 2026/2027 (00:20:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Head of People, Performance and Waste and the Environment & Enforcement manager recommending proposals from the Car Parking Consultative Group for future changes to both pay and display as well as permit parking within Mid Devon District Council car parks for the financial year 2026/2027.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The Head of People, Performance and Waste commenced his introduction to the report by responding in full to the questions from Mr Quinn. In response to

Mr Quinn's claim that the last introduction of new tariffs was the 1 June 2024 and not 1 June 2023 the Head of People, Performance and Waste confirmed that the public questioner was correct. The last rise was in June 2024 and not June 2023. The Head of People, Performance and Waste corrected the record for this change and also acknowledged that some of the proposed changes were incorrect due to being raised to the nearest £1 rather than the nearest 10p. The Head of People, Performance and Waste gave the examples for Station Road, Cullompton and High Street, Crediton.

- Cllr Woollatt later identified that a similar error had occurred for Wellbrook Street, Tiverton and the Head of People, Performance and Waste acknowledged this mistake and likewise corrected the proposed rates on record.
- The Head of People, Performance and Waste apologised for the above mistakes to both the public questioner and the committee and confirmed these would be corrected before being sent on to Cabinet.
- The Head of People, Performance and Waste then introduced the substance of the report. In terms of looking at the package of measures that were being presented this paper set out proposed fees and charges for car parks and permits for the upcoming 2026/2027 financial year. These were intended to be bought in from the 1st of April 2026. These proposals had all been carefully considered and put forward by the Car Parking Consultative Group. This group comprised of a collection of business and community representatives across the district who provided feedback and input to ensure proposals were properly considered and reflective of community views before they came to the Policy Development Group.
- There had been three key considerations in making these proposals. First, that they were logical and worked for both businesses and communities in the district. Secondly, consideration was given to the cost of living pressures being experienced by residents and thirdly that they took account of the financial pressures being placed on the Council, including funding and inflation. The group had put forward three main sets of proposals for consideration. First, that car parking fees were raised by 5%. There had been no rise in car parking fees since the 2024 financial year. The rise on the 1st of June 2024 had reflected inflation during that year. Inflation was projected to rise by at least 5.7%. The increase in costs for the parking service were considerable and included the cost of patrolling car parks and the increase in National Insurance tax on employees, supply costs and maintenance. The Consultative Group carefully considered a range of different options and came to the conclusion that a 5% rise across the board was the fairest way of addressing the inflation issue. This decision had been agreed in principle by this Group back in June but was being reiterated as it was being brought with a package of other measures that the PDG was being asked to consider.
- Feedback supported a need and desire to expand permit options to include a sole day permit option.
- Further research was also to be undertaken around different permit options that could encourage further take up of spaces in the Multi Storey Car Park and this work would come back to the PDG.
- In terms of the day permit charges, there was an error in the paperwork. A correction was needed to show that, in Appendix 2, an annual day permit, would be offered at £331. It would also be offered at a half yearly rate of at £180, quarterly at £100 and monthly at £33.

- Finally, representatives from Crediton and Cullompton had asked for an additional three days of free parking during the year to support local events. The Council did currently offer five free car parking days to residents during November and December to support Christmas shopping initiatives. The Car Parking Consultative Group had requested these additional days as an extension to the existing Christmas offer.

The Group then received a presentation which supported the information provided at this meeting and detailed the work which had taken place prior to the recommendations coming forward.

Discussion took place regarding:

- It was felt that Tiverton was benefitting from the car parking permit proposals more than Crediton and Cullompton and there needed to be parity across the whole district including the offers made to market traders and potential business permits. It was confirmed that the Car Parking Consultative Group had looked at this and would be exploring it further.
- Officers were thanked for providing the necessary corrections and the public questioner indicated that he was satisfied a corrected report would be going forward to the Cabinet for approval.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

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

(Proposed by Cllr J Buczkowski and seconded by Cllr L Knight)

Reason for the decision

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

Note: * Report previously circulated.

33 MID DEVON OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER (00:45:00)

The Group received a report * from the Head of People, Governance and Waste and the Environment and Enforcement Manager considering recommendations to the Cabinet that the Mid Devon (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2016 (the “OSPPO”) be amended.

The following was highlighted in the report:

- These proposals would, after appropriate consultation, enable implementation of restrictions and subsequent enforcement to be conducted in the areas of Saint George's Court and Wellbrook Green in Tiverton.
- Informal discussions with the Highway Authority had been undertaken and they had indicated they would not object to the recommendations being put forward within this report.
- Residents and Ward Members had raised concerns regarding ongoing parking issues at both St. George's Court and Wellbrook Green in Tiverton. These had included impeded access and egress as well as potential obstruction to emergency service vehicles. To address these issues, the report presented this evening proposed the introduction of parking restrictions that would make contraventions in both of those areas enforceable. At present, the absence of any restrictions was contributing to the persistence of problems in those areas.

Discussion took place regarding:

- School drop-offs and pick-ups remained a problem in terms of the amount of extended time people were parked. This sort of detail would need to be worked through during the consultation.
- The number of spaces available and was this sufficient for local need?
- Concerns as to how school drops could be regulated.
- The detail was yet to be worked out. The consultation would be helpful in trying to achieve this.
- Any references to St George's Place within the report needed to be corrected to say St George's Court.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

1. On being satisfied that the statutory grounds for amending and varying the OSPPO are met, as detailed in the Report, to allow and authorise the Operations Manager for Street Scene to commence statutory consultation for the following proposed amendments to the OSPPO:

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

(Proposed by Cllr J Cairney and seconded by Cllr M Farrell)

Reason for the decision:

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

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

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated
(ii) Cllr M Farrell declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Tiverton Town Council whose premises were adjacent to St George's Court.

34 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE REPORT (01:03:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy & Delivery providing an update on activities carried out by the Growth, Economy and Delivery Team since the last meeting.

A presentation was provided that included the following information on projects the team had been involved with:

- Business Support through Prosper
- A 'Generative AI for everyday business tasks' event on 24 November 2025
- A packaging and waste event on 2 December 2025
- A bid writing webinar

- A 'Business Refresh' grant scheme which was being delivered through the Rural England Prosperity Fund
- Updates to the Visit Mid Devon website
- Tiverton Pannier Market Christmas events
- The team's participation at the recent 'Meet the Funders' event
- 'Filming in Mid Devon' event taking place on 28 November
- Shop/commercial front enhancement grants which was one of the team's longer term grant programmes that was available for businesses in Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton town centres
- Water wise farming event
- Work with 'Innovate UK' who covered the whole of the UK and could offer tailored business support to ambitious businesses

The team were thanked for all the work that they did with reduced resources and tight deadlines. Feedback from business regarding the help and support provided by the team had been very positive.

The Chair confirmed that he would be attending the 'Filming in Mid Devon' event on 28 November 2025.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

35 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:14:00)

The items listed in the Work Programme for the next meeting were **NOTED**.

In addition to this the following was requested to be on the agenda for a future meeting of the Group:

- A report on the Tiverton Pannier Market

(The meeting ended at 6.53 pm)

CHAIR

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 18 November 2025 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

A Glover (Chair)
C Adcock (Vice-Chair), J Cairney,
G Czapiewski, B Holdman, Henwood, Jones
and Sixsmith

Apologies

Councillors

S Chenore, C Harrower, N Letch and H Tuffin

Also Present

Councillor

J Lock

Also Present

Officers

Simon Newcombe (Head of Housing & Health), Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager), Tanya Wenham (Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options), Sophie Richards (Customer Manager, Mid Devon Housing), Sarah Thomas (Housing Options Manager), Sam Barnett (Housing Initiatives Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

S Chenore, H Tuffin and D Wulff

Officers Online

Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager), Dean Emery (Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure), Tina Lowe (Tenancy Manager) and Carole Oliphant (Housing Policy Officer)

Also in

Attendance

I Henwood (Co-Opted Tenant), M Jones (Co-Opted Tenant) and T Sixsmith (Co-Opted Tenant)

30 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr S Chenore (online)
- C Harrower
- Cllr N Letch who was substituted by Cllr B Holdman
- Cllr H Tuffin (online)

31 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

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

Cllr A Glover declared a personal interest in relation to item 10 on the agenda, 'Mid Devon Housing Rent Error Update' in that she was a Council tenant.

No other interests were declared under this item.

33 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

34 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed Tina Lowe, the new Tenancy Manager, to the Mid Devon Housing team and asked her to introduce herself. She also welcomed the new Housing Management Apprentices to the team.

35 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q2 (00:10:00)**

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, two slides * showing performance information in the Mid Devon Housing (MDH) area under the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the General Fund (GF).

The dashboard aimed to give an 'at a glance' understanding of how services were performing in terms of performance measures, finance and risk. Any measures that were also part of the Corporate Plan were listed in yellow text.

The indicators were presented with current performance, the annual target and a RAG (red/amber/green) rating to indicate whether or not the Council was on track to meet its target. Overall performance was presented in a pie chart which combined the RAG ratings for both the performance and the finance measures.

A summary of the performance position was presented as follows:

- For the General Fund, the projected outturn was showing as amber due to a very small projected overspend on community alarm installations.

Housing Revenue Account:

- The 'MDH delivery of new social housing' was showing as amber. 46 homes had been added to the Housing Revenue Account during the financial year so far, therefore, performance was just behind the target. The mid year target was 50. However the delivery with housing projects was not linear and it would be more suitable to fully consider performance at the year end.
- 'New MDH net zero properties' was showing as red. 5 had been added to the housing stock in the year to date. However, the Housing Service was

expecting a high number of completions in quarter four with 51 additional properties being added.

- The housing stock occupancy rate was showing as amber and the rate had fallen below the target at the end of September 2025. This was mainly because the 28 flats at Saint George's Court were brought into the social housing stock on the 4th August 2025. These flats were currently going through the letting process. There were also 14 properties awaiting demolition elsewhere which affected the occupancy rate.
- The projected outturn for the HRA was showing as red and this was largely due to an increased cost of contractors and higher than inflation increase in materials. It was also due to premises insurance. Officers were confident that the overspend could be managed over the remainder of the year and be reduced.
- Projected tenant income was showing as amber. This was below budget due in part to the increased number of void properties. This was partially offset by the additional income from affordable properties.
- The projected capital outturn was showing as red. This was driven mainly by 5 large projects. Slippage was due to various factors, including delays in plan, in obtaining planning permission or no bids being received on tenders and delays in contract signing.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The 'type of build' listed in the 'MDH Delivery of new Social Housing' was confirmed as being more traditional build in the year to end of Q2. New 'net-zero' properties were more modular in design and were expected to be ready later in the year.
- Projected Capital Outturn figures whilst lagging behind at the moment were predicted to catch up by the time the year end figures were presented.
- The reasons why particular void properties took a while to be reoccupied were many and often complex. Sometimes properties were 'end of life' or needed complex survey's undertaking due to the fabrication of the building, for example, 'concrete cancer' may be present. Also on occasions a property may appear void where a tenant might be in care meaning the property was empty but could not be classified as 'void' as it was still under tenancy. A 'cost/benefit' analysis needed to be undertaken as sometimes the cost of repair was too great due to the extensively poor condition of a building. In addition the tender process was not always straight forward and could be drawn out if no bidders came forward.
- Whether there would be additional pressures on the team due to the introduction of Awab's Law in terms of resources and available budget? It was explained that it was still very early days so the true impact was not yet known but the Council would need to comply and budgetary provision had been made at the start of the year. It was likely that there would need to be additional spend on contractors but this would be closely monitored. An initial spike of calls had been received but it was too early to say how this would level out in the near future. There had been communications with tenants providing advice on how to avoid opportunists and scammers seeking to target vulnerable tenants who may be in properties with damp and mould.

Note: * Slides previously circulated.

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting an update on the 2026/27 Budget and the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was only a very brief budget update since clarification from central Government was still needed. The forecasted position based on a number of assumptions was presented to the last meeting, no greater detail had been received from central Government since then. The autumn statement was due on the 26th November 2025 and that would give, at a very high level, national indications of where funding would go but not at a local authority level. The Council would have to wait until the Local Government Finance Settlement in December for that. Budget proposals had been presented and supported by this Group in September 2025. All the green recommendations were approved subsequently by the Cabinet. In terms of the HRA, there had been some amber proposals which the Cabinet was currently awaiting clarification on before reaching a decision.
- In terms of the Capital Programme where there were new proposals or changes to the existing scheme, these were shown in Appendix 1.
- Also included within the report was more information regarding the financial implications of 'rent convergence'. The Government had consulted on either a £1 increase or a £2 increase in relation to formula rent. The £1 increase would generate additional income, but it would not move all properties on to the new correct formula rent. The Council would prefer the £2 cap to be the Government's outcome from their consultation because of the increase in the revenue that it would generate and also the movement of all tenants onto the correct formula rent by the end of a 10 year process. The outcome of the Government's consultation was awaited and once known, the Council would look to implement or at least consult on the options that the Government had selected.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The meaning of the negative and positive figures in relation to the Housing Development Programme was explained.
- The effect of the delay with the Government announcing it's Budget mainly affected the General Fund and not the HRA as the HRA did not receive grant funding only tenant income.
- Formula rent was set by Government. The only time the Council could currently bring rent in line with this was when there was a change of tenancy. It would take many years, perhaps decades to bring all rents in line with formula rent if rent convergence did not take place. Ultimately it would present a much fairer and consistent approach to rent setting than existed at the moment. It was not clear at the current time which option the Government was going to opt for.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

37 DOWNSIZING RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE (00:55:00)

The Group received an update from the Mid Devon Housing Customer Manager on the uptake of the Downsizing recommendations.

This included the following summary information:

- The downsizing incentive was launched on the 14th July 2025 and as of Friday 14th November, 23 households had formally registered to downsize. Of those 23, 12 were currently in three bedroom properties, 10 were in two bedroom properties and there was one six bedroom house.
- So far there had been a series of communications and engagement on downsizing with tenants. This had included newsletters and information on Facebook, the Council's website, Let's Talk Mid Devon and on the engagement hub. Those most likely to benefit from the scheme were also targeted such as tenants that were in three bedroom or more properties. The Downsizing Scheme would continue to be publicised on various platforms. There needed to be a better understanding of what had worked and what hadn't which could then be fed back into the project. Although the scheme had freed up some family sized homes, the uptake had been limited. It was currently having a small impact at the moment with the current policy being broadly in-line with the Devon Home Choice policy, which meant no under occupation was allowed and downsizing had to be based on actual bedroom need. Those in a three or more bed property often had a preference to downsize to a two bed but they were only eligible for a one bed. The scheme was going to be formally reviewed in 12 months time as set out in the beginning of the scheme. The scheme could deliver meaningful benefits for tenants whilst also releasing much needed housing stock.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Currently tenants could only bid on a property based on bedroom need. There were exceptions for people with a medical need, for example, if there was a situation where a carer needed to stay overnight.
- The premise behind the scheme was to free up much needed housing stock in the fairest and most equitable way but the scheme was never going to be perfect for everybody hence the need for a 12 month review. If bedroom need could be demonstrated then this would be considered.
- There wasn't much more the service could do in terms of communication and advertising of the scheme. Some families had been in their properties for many many years and were extremely reluctant to move.
- Different providers had different policies, there was limited consistency across the sector in terms of downsizing schemes.
- Mutual exchanges with alternative providers and within MDH stock was an option open to tenants.

38 PREPARING FOR THE RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT 2025 (01:15:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Housing and Health providing information in relation to the Renters Rights Bill (formerly Renters Reform Bill) which had now been through all the parliamentary stages required and received Royal Assent on 27th October 2025.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was a significant piece of legislation brought in at the end of October 2025 and introduced a 'once in a generation' change in the rights of tenants. It set out what landlords could do and what landlords could not do in the private sector.
- Over time the legislation would bring similar provisions to private landlords which existed for social landlords.
- The key changes were set out in Section 2 of the report.
- The Council's Public Health Service would have to manage this regulatory change, providing support and guidance to tenants. They would have to enforce a number of provisions for landlords who weren't compliant. The volume of regulatory work was not yet known but was anticipated to be significant. Whilst the Council knew the conditions of all of its own stock, little if anything was known about the condition of private sector stock. The Government would be providing some funding but hadn't told Council's how much yet.
- The legislation would be brought in in three phases. The first phase would take effect from May 2026. From this date there would be an abolition of 'no fault eviction'. Fixed term tenancies would end and be replaced by rolling periodic tenancies giving tenants more protection. The grounds for landlords to gain possession of a property were also changing. There would be clearer rules around anti-social behaviour and persistent arrears. That would be partly to protect the landlord. There would be situations where it was perfectly legitimate for the landlord to gain possession, but they were made much clearer in the new Act. Landlords would only be able to increase rent once a year and two months notice would need to be given beforehand. There would be a ban on rental bidding. Landlords would also have to reasonably consider pet requests. There would be strengthened enforcement powers and expanded civil penalties.
- Phase 2 would come into force from late 2026 onwards and that would require a national database of landlords (where it would be compulsory for landlords to register) and the introduction of a new private rented sector landlord Ombudsman.
- Phase 3 was very much about long term measures and providing better quality housing in line with the 'Decent Home Standards' and energy efficiency considerations.
- The Private Sector Housing team knew roughly how many private sector properties did not meet the 'Decent Home Standard' (through a modelling process) but they did not know where they were located.

Consideration was given to:

- It was estimated that there were over 6.5k private sector landlords in Mid Devon but the Private Sector Housing team only communicated with approximately 200 of them. The team consisted of 3 full time members of staff and one part time. The team may need to expand in order to comply with the requirements of the new legislation and our legal duties as a Council. There would be a need to research letting agents, ensure compliance within the market place and ensuring enforcement took place where it could. All of this would place a significant extra burden on the resources of the team, therefore

any promised Government new-burdens funding would be welcome in supporting this additional work.

- There was a fear that many private sector landlords would ‘disappear’ and their properties would be lost from the market place due to the requirements of the new legislation. The Council would need to work with them offering guidance and education where it could. The ultimate aim was to bridge the gap between the private sector and the social housing sector in terms of housing standards and bring in greater protections for private sector tenants.
- Enforcing civil penalties was a familiar tool to the Housing Service but it did not want there to be an over reliance on this.
- Fears that the onus would fall on tenants to report landlord non-compliance. It was confirmed that the Private Housing Sector team did act on any intelligence that it received and tried to identify patterns in non-compliance.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

39 MID DEVON HOUSING RENT ERROR UPDATE (02:04:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) and the Head of Housing and Health providing a further update on the corrective measures completed and next steps to rectify an identified historic rent setting error.

The following information was highlighted:

- 100% of non-benefit current tenancy cases had been processed and refunds offered where due. Not included within those were the cases that involved tenants in receipt of Universal Credit. The Council could not process these without further support and guidance from the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions). DWP had informed the Council that they were waiting for a ministerial letter to be signed off and until that was received these particular cases could not be processed.
- The team were now starting to look at former tenancies.
- The report, when written, stated that £169k had been refunded, since then it was confirmed that £238k had now refunded with further cases processed and refunds claimed. There was also a higher number of unclaimed refunds as a result of more cases been updated and the numbers would continue to move. Where there were unclaimed amounts the tenants had been contacted and everything was being done to help tenants receive what was due to them, including reducing outstanding balances on their rent accounts where appropriate. The team had also been engaging vulnerable tenants, for example where English was not the first language, to assist where they could.
- The Regulator of Social Housing was content with the progress that was being made following a further monitoring meeting on 13 November.
- Another update would come to the Policy Development Group once the implications of the ministerial letter were better understood and to provide a further update on progress with former tenancy cases.

Discussion took place regarding:

- It was confirmed that if a tenant passed away then contact would be made with the next of kin to ensure the refund was returned to the family.

- As the Housing Revenue Account was ring fenced any monies held here would be secure regardless of Local Government Reorganisation and would pass to the new authority for correct transfer where needed.

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated.
(ii) Cllr A Glover declared a personal interest in that she was a Council Tenant.

40 **MID DEVON HOUSING SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT FOR Q2 2025/2026** **(02:26:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Housing and Health presenting information in support of an ongoing commitment to provide a quarterly update to Members on activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing (MDH), including some relating to enforcement.

The following summary information was provided:

- Performance data indicated that all areas were performing well.
- The one area presenting a challenge was void properties. There was currently a record number of voids this year. The number was on track to be over 200 for the 2025/26 year, a 40% increase on the annual number completed to 2023/24. The reasons for this were varied and complex. It had been a tough autumn with more 'deceased' tenants than usual. Also, the Housing Development Programme and the moving of tenants to these newer properties was having an effect on void numbers. Major construction projects at Hinkley and Bridgewater, where higher wages were being paid, was also having an effect in terms of attracting operatives meaning increased vacancies and delivery via contractors. Added to this, the health and safety of existing tenants requiring repairs on the properties would always take priority over repairing an empty property.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Why some heating repairs took so long? This was another area presenting a challenge. It was explained that all repairs were triaged. Heating systems were complex and there were many different types depending on the age of each property and what was installed initially. Some systems were at 'end of life' and replacement parts were difficult to obtain. In these cases full system replacements may need to be installed. There had also been challenges with the contractor but the contract with them would be ending in March and a new contractor sought.
- The number of stage one complaints had reduced and there was a very robust 'lessons learned' process in place.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

41 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (02:41:00)

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

The Group were informed that:

- The Domestic Abuse Policy would not now be coming as a separate policy item as the provisions within the existing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy already included the necessary requirements for this.
- The Housing Strategy would need to move to the June 2026 meeting following the release of guidance from central Government next year.

(The meeting ended at 4.57 pm)

CHAIR

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MINUTES of a MEETING of the PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 25 November 2025 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors: B Fish (Chair)
G Cochran (Vice-Chair), C Adcock,
G Czapiewski, A Stirling and G Westcott

Apologies

Councillor: A Glover and C Harrower

Also Present

Councillor: S Keable

Also Present

Officer: Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Jason Ball (Climate and Sustainability Specialist), John Hammond (Development Management Manager), Tristan Peat (Forward Planning Team Leader), Elaine Barry (Planning Obligations Monitoring Officer), Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery) and Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online: N Bradshaw, D Wulff and G Duchesne

Officers Online: Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager)

32 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00:04:36)**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Glover and Cllr C Harrower both attended on-line.

33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00:05:05)

The following questions were received from a member of the public:-

Andrew Moore (which the Chair read out)

Thank you for responding to my questions to your last meeting, and apologies that once again I am unable to attend in person this time due to business commitments that take me to Scotland. I would be grateful if answers could be provided to the following questions relating to the minutes of the previous meeting.

1. At the last meeting I asked whether the PDG would amend planning guidance in favour food security, the natural environment and beauty of Mid-Devon over conflicting solar and wind proposals. The answer was that it was not within? the PDG's remit. Can you please explain how it is that it is not within the remit of the 'Planning ... Policy Development Group' to develop planning policy, particularly when it comes to matters of importance to the local community such as those outlined?
2. At the last meeting I examined reported performance figures to discover that they had been changed. Can you please explain why the historic CO2 figures cited in the report presented to the last PDG meeting differ from those in the Council's Climate Strategy? The significant differences are in Transport (now 11% higher), Procurement (now 22% higher), and Buildings (now 1% lower). How can the Strategy be trusted if the baseline figures were so wrong?
3. At the last meeting I asked whether the PDG would commission a study to inform its strategy for the future in the light of alternative views on the standard climate change narrative. The answer was, in summary, a flat 'no'. Apparently, 'independent advice' was sought. In line with the point of my question, did that 'independent advice' include alternative opinions to provide a balanced view of the response to global warming? If not, the comment is not relevant. As is the case for citing views from nearly two years ago. An enquiring PDG, working on behalf of constituents, would be interested in new information that might mean that policy should be revised. It seems that this 'Policy Development Group', having developed a policy once per its remit, is not going to stir itself to do it again. So, here too, policy development does not seem to be the active remit of a 'Policy Development Group'. Bill Gates, a long-time climate change activist, has recently called for a “strategic pivot” in the effort against the climate crisis, writing that the world should shift away from trying to limit rising temperatures to instead focusing on efforts to prevent disease and poverty.

He has also criticized what he described as a “doomsday view of climate change” which focuses “too much on near-term emissions goals”. So, once again, will this PDG open its eyes and commission a balanced study to inform future strategy, considering whether use of public money is being appropriately targeted, given many other local priorities, in its recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council?

The Chair explained that the questions would be answered in writing within 10 working days.

34 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:09:31)**

No interests were declared under this item.

35 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:10:00)**

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

36 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:10:17)**

The Chair had no announcements to make.

37 **DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2026/2027 (VERSION 2) (00:10:24)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting an update on the 2026/27 Budget and the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

The Head of Finance, Property and Climate Resilience presented the report and the following was highlighted:-

- The report contained a very brief budget update which summarised the report that went to Cabinet in November 2025.
- The Government had made several announcements at the end of last week however this did not allow for individual Council levels of funding for next year.
- The Chancellors budget would be announced on 26 November which would be summarised in readiness for the Cabinet meeting on 2 December 2025.
- The new Year 5 bid was explained which showed investment in service areas.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- How capital assets would be affected by Local Government Reorganisation. It was explained that from April 2027 dual agreements would need to take place and these would have to be ratified by the new Authority. However local services would still be provided in this geographical area for some time.
- Whether there was scope or flexibility to defer some of the spend to future years? It was explained that there was a degree of flexibility when projects started depending upon compliance and health and safety.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

38 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD QUARTER 2 (00:23:24)**

The Group were presented with and **NOTED** the Performance Dashboard for Quarter 2 2025/26.

The Performance Dashboard gave an at a glance understanding of how services were performing in terms of performance, finance and risk.

Any measures that were part of the Corporate Plan were listed in yellow text. The indicators were presented with the current performance, the annual target and a rag rating (Red, Amber, Green) to indicate whether they were on track or not to meet targets.

The overall performance was presented in a pie chart and combined rag ratings from performance and finance measures.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- Electric car charging points installed across Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) sites were showing as Red. No charge points had been installed so far this financial year. However, in the previous financial year six new charging points had been installed ahead of the annual target of four per annum.
- The projected capital outturn was showing as Amber. This was spending in terms of the Cullompton Relief Road which had slipped from the initial forecast. Although the project was well underway, spend was not at the forecast level.
- The capital slippage of overall projects was also showing as Red as all three projects had slipped
- Capital slippage as a percentage of projects was showing as Red. This related predominately to three land drainage projects that were being led by the Environment Agency which would continue to slip behind schedule.
- Building Control income was showing as Red and was approximately 20% below the target due to lower levels of applications this financial year than was originally forecasted.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- Why there were contradicting figures showing for net emissions. It was explained that there were two performance measures showing as Green which captured a small part of the overall footprint. The in-focus box was for the whole of the carbon footprint for Mid Devon District Council. Whilst the footprint for the whole estate increased, those two figures were outperforming. Also, the reporting timescales were slightly different as the in-focus box was focused on the annual carbon footprint comparing 2024/25 to the previous year and the Performance Dashboard which was looking at Quarter 2 2025/2026.
- Whether there was any possibility of the figures reflecting the overall picture as a mixture of timelines was difficult to compare. It was explained that the overall footprint were elements that the Council could not control. Whilst the in-focus box showed the very latest position, a live overall carbon footprint could not be provided as it took an amount of time after the year end to provide up-to-date figures.

- How was energy consumption per dwelling assessed? It was explained that the heating systems and upgrades provided to Council homes against the types of different buildings and the age of the house gave an estimate of energy performance. Exeter University were able to update the estimated figures which showed an improvement in energy performance overall for the Council's housing stock.
- The life-cycle of a building and the performance over a short- and long-term period of time. For example, the long-term view looked at whole life cycle and the requirement of developers to give assessments in understanding the long term impacts.

Note: * Performance Dashboard previously circulated

39 **SECTION 106 GOVERNANCE (00:37:44)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting an update on the progress made in implementing the revised S106 arrangements as approved by Cabinet in December 2024.

The Planning Obligations Monitoring Officer presented the report and the following was highlighted:-

- Since the approval, the Governance Board had been fully constituted following an induction session and had met in line with the framework.
- The Board had actively engaged in its governance role, including monitoring funds risk, reviewing the quarterly reconciliation report and supporting continuous improvement.
- The Board undertook its annual review earlier this month. Two key updates were agreed – the removal of the fixed meeting time clause to allow greater flexibility in scheduling and the addition of a standing agenda item to report delegated decisions made in the previous quarter. This would strengthen transparency.
- Members were asked to note the progress made and the updated terms of reference included within the report.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- When Ward Members were required to attend how was it determined who was invited? It was explained that depending on the area that the spend related to, all relevant Ward Members would be invited to attend.
- The number of meetings that would take place. It was explained that every quarter the S106 monitoring records were reconciled with the Council's financial records to ensure they matched and therefore this was a good time for the Board to meet. The quarterly funding reports were then circulated to Town and Parish Councils. However there may be ad hoc meetings called at any time if there was a funding application that need to be decided within a certain timeframe.

- The number of attendees for the Board to be quorate? It was explained that there were a total of four members and that it required two of those four to be quorate.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

40 **NORTH DEVON RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE (00:46:59)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Strategic Manager Growth, Economy and Delivery introducing Members to the work of the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA) to develop a strategic outline business case for significant capital investment in the North Devon Line between Exeter and Barnstaple.

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

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance campaigned to secure significant capital investment into the North Devon Railway Line which was commonly known as the Tarka Line.
- It was operated by the Great Western Railway and ran between Exeter and Barnstaple calling at seven stations in Mid Devon.
- The Alliance was gaining significant momentum with support from a wide range of bodies which were listed in the report. Given the scale of ambition the Group had for the important transport corridor it was considered appropriate for consideration to be given to formally join the partnership.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- How could the Council help progress the improvement of the Tarka Line? It was explained that supporting the Alliance would be a way that the Council would have discussions with the rail industry and others in Devon County Council's Transport Authority and working more closely in terms of the improvement and the reinstatement of Clemson Station. It was a very important route for students travelling from Barnstaple to Exeter College.
- How would the £1000 be used? It was explained that the financial contribution would be used to fund a meeting in Mid-Devon.
- How long it would take for the project to come to fruition? It was explained that there would be a range of proposals put forward, and a strategic outline business case was currently being prepared. This would take time to deliver approximately 18 months to two years.
- Whether additional carriages would be provided to allow for additional seats being available for students to use? It was believed that this would help with capacity.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:-

- (i) That Mid Devon District Council supports the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance (NDRDA) by officially joining the alliance to achieve delivery of a modernisation programme for the North Devon (Tarka) Line passenger rail services between Exeter and Barnstaple, to achieve the associated economic, social and environmental benefits for our local communities and business.
- (ii) To consider a financial contribution of £1,000 to support the third annual convention of the NDRDA scheduled for March 2026 at a location in Mid Devon.

(Proposed by Cllr G Cochran and seconded by Cllr G Westcott)

Note: * Report previously circulated.

41 **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE
(00:59:55)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The Council's environmental sustainability work was split into corporate actively related to its own assets and the Council's operations and community activities which enabled and facilitated community actions across Mid Devon as net zero targets could not be achieved alone.
- Net emissions for areas in the Council's direct control remained on a downward trend with an overall 35% reduction since 2018/19 when the net zero target was baselined.
- Over the last few months the Cabinet Member had engaged with Sustainable Tiverton, Exe Valley Farmers and considering the importance of Neighbourhood Plans to support local action.
- The Climate and Sustainability Specialist had been meeting with funders to enhance partnership working including promotion of the Green Enterprise Grant Scheme.
- Work towards a big event in Spring next year was taking place.
- Between April and September, Energy Boost Mid Devon had advised over 100 local residents and helped them to save nearly £5,000 on home energy costs.
- External funding included £472,500 Warm Homes Local Grant which was great news for low-income households across Mid Devon especially for those with an annual income of less than £36,000. The Warm House Local Grants would help low-income households with a poor energy performance certificates.

- With regard to electric vehicle (EV) chargers the Deletti Partnership Project would help the Council to deliver on the Corporate Plan target.
- Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) chargers would deliver more charge points at more than 20 other sites across Mid Devon.
- The Exe Valley Leisure Centre, Tiverton, the tenant Instavolt had decided to upgrade their chargers to faster more powerful units. This was something that the Council could not control however it did respond to the demand for faster charging.
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy had been out for public consultation by Devon County Council. Mid Devon District Council promoted and responded to the consultation.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- Whether the Council were engaging with the South West Net Zero Hub? It was explained that the Council had been engaging with them and had attended a recent conference and were looking at ways they could support the Council with renewable energy investments. They could help the Council to understand how to use “complex sites” status to group several sites for renewable power installation. In terms of funding there was a community energy fund and although it currently had a limited scope, it was hoped that initiatives would be available.
- The Dart/Exe Valley Farmers Regenerative Soils Event – and that the Council had supported some of the costs of running the event. It helped to bring more farmers and the community together - farmers were keen to develop a landscape recovery project which would scale up the really good work already achieved.
- Collaborative work with the Broadpath Landfill Liaison Group and the preparation work for the closure of the landfill site.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:-

- The Planning, Environment and Sustainability PDG tasked officers to work with the Net Zero Advisory Group and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change to draft the 2026-28 Climate Change Action Plan in line with the Climate Change Strategy.

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

Note: * Report previously circulated.

42 PLANNING SUMMARY REPORT (01:14:45)

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Development Management Manager summarising activity undertaken in relation to planning matters.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- In relation to the National Planning Policy Framework, announcements were expected but had not been received at the time of writing the report.
- There had been an announcement from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) which included proposals to promote house building near to train stations including minimum housing densities although it was unknown what those densities might be.
- There was a suggested requirement that the Council notify the MHCLG of any applications that were minded for refusal for 150 or more houses. This would be subject to a consultation.
- There was a current consultation on removing streamlining statutory consultees with the intention of removing Sport England, the Garden Trust and Theatre Trust as statutory consultees.
- There had been confirmation that that the National Development Management Policies would be a non-statutory document. A decision had to be made whether the Council prepared their own district wide development management policies knowing there was a potentially similar version that sat in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- It was anticipated that the new Local Plan would come forward within the 30-month procedure. However, the Council were still awaiting regulations which could mean it was likely to overrun vesting day and a new timetable would need to be presented to Council.
- With regard to recruitment there had been partial success in relation to the Policy Assistant posts. However, there was still a reliance upon external support for the Forward Planning Team. Principal and Planning Officers had been recruited to Development Management who would join MDCC in January. The position of the Planning Enforcement Officer would be re-advertised.
- Enforcement cases remained high with a Public Inquiry just finishing. There were currently a total of 12 enforcement notice appeals.
- The Development Management Team performance remained strong and were seeing an increase in housing applications and fees..
- Building Control had retained a strong market share in the recent collapse of a private consultancy competitor which meant they had a lot of work by default which would result in financial returns.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

43 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:20:36)

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** the items identified in the Work Programme for the next meeting.

The Chair confirmed the following would be considered at the next meeting of the PDG:-

- Performance Dashboard for Q3
- Motion 608 – Anaerobic Digester Plants
- Climate and Sustainability Update
- Planning Summary Report
- Chair's Annual Report for 2025/2026.

(The meeting ended at 6.52 pm)

CHAIR

MINUTES of a MEETING of the SERVICE DELIVERY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on 24 November 2025 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

J Buczkowski (Chair)
M D Binks, M Farrell, C Harrower (Vice-Chair), L Knight, S Robinson, M Stratton and G Westcott

Apologies

Councillor(s)

B Fish, M Jenkins and J Poynton

Also Present

Councillor(s)

J Wright

Also Present

Officer(s):

Matthew Page (Head of People, Performance & Waste), Paul Deal (Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience), Dean Emery (Head of Revenues, Benefits & Leisure), Lisa Lewis (Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement), Andy Mackie (Leisure Services Manager), Darren Beer (Operations Manager for Street Scene), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Kelly Lee (Leisure Business Manager) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

E Buczkowski, G Duchesne, A Glover, L G J Kennedy, J Lock and L Taylor

Officers Online

32 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr B Fish
- Cllr M Jenkins who was substituted by Cllr G Westcott
- Cllr J Poynton who was substituted by Cllr S Robinson

33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

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

No interests were declared under this item.

35 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

36 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair had no announcements to make.

37 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q2 (00:04:00)**

The Group were presented with, and **NOTED**, a slide * showing performance information in the Economy & Assets area.

The dashboard aimed to give an 'at a glance' understanding of how services were performing in terms of performance measures, finance and risk. Any measures that were also part of the Corporate Plan were listed in yellow text.

The indicators were presented with current performance, the annual target and a RAG (red/amber/green) rating to indicate whether or not the Council was on track to meet its target. Overall performance was presented in a pie chart which combined the RAG ratings for both the performance and the finance measures.

A summary of the red and amber performance positions were presented as follows:

- The amount of waste collected per household was showing as amber.
- There had been a slight increase in the amount of non-recyclable waste presented at the curb side by householders in this financial year so far. Household recycling rates were also showing as amber. It was explained that the targets in place were extremely challenging.
- Staff turnover was showing as red and generally had been relatively high in the year to date. However, it remained within the range that the Council had experienced in previous years. A new exit interview process was going live and this would involve the line manager a lot more and include retirees. This would be updated in the next Performance Dashboard presented to this Policy Development Group in March 2026.
- The Council Tax collection rate was currently showing as amber, however, performance was exactly in line with last year's performance where the target was exceeded by the year end.
- The public survey engagement rate was showing as red. Performance had improved in Q2 over Q1 and the survey was now being run against a small number of new processes on the Customer Relationship Management system.
- Households on chargeable garden waste was showing as amber, but the service was maintaining a stable customer base and was currently just 20 households short of target.

- Income received from recycled material was showing as amber. This was below budget due to fluctuating prices for recyclate and also slightly lower tonnages of material collected.
- Agency spend versus budget was showing as red. The performance figure presented was actually a year end projection rather than the year to date. This would be corrected on the next Performance Dashboard.
- Projected capital outturn was showing as red. The main underspend reflected the change in approach for the Waste Depot, changing from building a new depot to remodelling the current one. This had saved almost £3m from the 2025/26 budget.
- There were also a number of projects, particularly in Leisure and Waste, with variances which largely offset each other. These included slippage on the replacement of a skate park, additional spend on energy saving projects and the additional cost of a new baler within Waste.
- Capital slippage as a percentage of projects was showing as amber. This affected four out of 22 projects largely relating to parks and open space works where tenders were currently being drawn up.

Note: * Slide previously circulated.

38 **ANNUAL REPORT COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS & COMPLAINTS (00:10:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement providing the annual report on customer feedback relating to compliments, comments and complaints received.

The following was highlighted in the report:

- This was the annual report for comments, compliments and complaints, which ordinarily was presented to the Scrutiny Committee only, but as of last year, there had been a request for the report to come to this PDG first for noting and for any comments to be passed back to the Scrutiny Committee.
- The report presented an overview of the customer feedback received from 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2025.
- It was explained that getting customer feedback could sometimes be quite difficult from an engagement point of view.
- Over the last 12 to 18 months, Leisure and Waste were the services that received the highest volume of feedback and that included both positive and negative comments. This was to be expected given the nature of the services provided. It was noted that there was positive feedback as well as a high number of complaints.
- With other services, for instance, Council Tax, Benefits and Planning, there tended to be less feedback.
- Regarding performance, the one area where the Council was experiencing some challenges was within the acknowledgment of complaints within five days. There was a target of 85% and the Council was consistently under achieving on that. In order to address this, in the new year, Customer Services would be reviewing the training and guidance given to other services and working with them to ensure that they were able to quantify the service delivery around complaints based on the nature of how many they were receiving.

- The Council was obliged to review its complaints, particularly under equality and accessibility. The service sought feedback on whether customers believed they had been discriminated against and / or whether some of the decisions or services had been detrimental to them under protected characteristics such as disability or age, etc. Those statistics and findings were reported on a quarterly basis to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Panel which was made up of Members and officers.
- Two complaints had been referred to and investigated by the Ombudsman during the period discussed and one of those had been upheld.

A brief discussion took place as to whether there were any recurring themes in the types of complaints made. It was explained that a common theme in the area of Waste was missed collections, however, as part of a digital transformation project, plans were under way to address this as much as possible.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

39 **2026/2027 DRAFT BUDGET UPDATE (00:17:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting an update on the 2026/27 Budget and the emerging Capital Programme covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was only a very brief budget update since clarification from central Government was still needed. The forecasted position based on a number of assumptions was presented to the last meeting, no greater detail had been received from central Government since then. The autumn statement was due on the 26th November 2025 and that would give, at a very high level, national indications of where funding would go but not at a local authority level. The Council would have to wait until the Local Government Finance Settlement in December for that. Budget proposals had been presented and supported by this Group in September 2025. All the green recommendations were approved subsequently by the Cabinet. The Cabinet was currently awaiting clarification on the amber proposals before reaching a decision.
- In terms of the Capital Programme where there were new proposals or changes to the existing scheme, these were shown in Appendix 1.

A brief discussion took place regarding how the capital programme was going to be funded. Was it going to be a mixture of borrowing, reserves and grants? It was explained that this would be detailed in the February 2026 report to Cabinet. Where the Council could bid for grant's it would do all it could to do so, as very little capital funding came from Government directly. S106 funding would be used where relevant. Borrowing would only be used as a last resort.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

40 **WASTE DEPOT UPDATE (00:23:00)**

The Group received, and **NOTED**, a verbal update and presentation from the Head of Finance, Property & Climate Resilience on the Waste Depot at Carlu Close, Willand.

This included the following summary information:

- A reminder of the project and the reasons why it was taking place.
- A map was shown illustrating the proposed changes to the site.
- The agreed works included:
 - Securing a new car park and transition into it
 - A new baler
 - The commissioning of new offices into the old car park
 - Extending the existing hanger to accommodate the bale storage
 - Commissioning a new weighbridge, fuelling station and washdown area
 - A review of the welfare block
 - Moving the Grounds Maintenance service into the old car park
 - Four new storage bays
 - Raising the wall heights for all bays including the transfer station
 - Ensuring the fire detecting system was adequate
 - Creating a sample testing area
 - Relocating the bin storage area
 - Altering the traffic route
 - Aligning leases for all units to June 2039.
- The timeline was explained as well as the updated costs involved.

Discussion took place regarding:

- It was pleasing to see such investment in critical infrastructure.
- A report would be brought to the next meeting detailing the additional collections which may be achievable in the future as a result of the changes and enhancements at the Waste Depot.
- The welfare block would be sufficient to accommodate the number of operatives using the site and the improved office space could be used to accommodate some additional officers if they needed to be relocated from Phoenix House, or for business continuity purposes.
- It was confirmed that, by law, there were trained first aiders on site.
- It would not be feasible to install a crash barrier due to the tightness of space but drivers would be reminded of the need to manoeuvre vehicles carefully in order to prevent damage.
- In the event of fire, the sprinkler system was design to flood the whole building with the floor area having a bunding around the perimeter to contain the spread of contaminated water.

41 ENVIRONMENT & ENFORCEMENT Q2 (00:49:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Environment and Enforcement Manager and the Head of people, Performance and Waste providing an overview of the Environment and Enforcement service performance for quarter two of the 2025/20256 financial year.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

42 **ACTIVE MID DEVON - VERBAL UPDATE (00:51:00)**

The Group received, and **NOTED**, a verbal update and presentation from the Operations Manager for Leisure Service on activities within the Leisure Service since it was last report to this meeting.

This included the following summary information:

- The new entry system at Exe Valley Leisure Centre and improved entrance area at Lords Meadow, Crediton.
- The new 'Coursepro' swimming lesson digital management system available to users.
- Active Mid Devon had been shortlisted in the UK Active Awards which was a national award for providing excellence in the leisure industry.
- A new 'PoolPod 3.0' would be available soon allowing dignified entry into and out of a swimming pool for a disabled person and their carer. The service had a strong focus on inclusivity and accessibility.
- A grant had been received to provide start up costs for a junior park run.
- A carers pilot had received extremely positive feedback and a permanent offer was likely to be proposed. Details regarding this would be brought back to this PDG at a future date.
- There had been free health checks offered to the residents of Mid Devon.
- The 'virtual wallet' was now up and running.
- 'Sparkle of Magic' would be run again this Christmas donating gifts to those in need.
- The Leisure Service had a commitment to professional standards amongst its staff and encouraged professional qualifications where appropriate.
- Menopause Awareness sessions had been run.
- The service was committed to the Safe Spaces Charter.
- A successful, reduced price, family membership campaign had been run over the summer holidays.
- Height restriction barriers had been installed at the Leisure Centres in Crediton and Cullompton to prevent future illegal encampments.

Consideration was given to:

- The Leisure Service was congratulated on the number and range of positive activities and initiatives that had taken and were taking place. There was a great deal for the service to be proud about.
- Engagement with the Care Home community was seen as particularly positive.
- It was confirmed that first aid training included what to do in the event of knife injuries.
- It was confirmed that membership take up after the summer holiday scheme had been low due to the costs of full time membership compared to the great reduced rate during the summer holidays.

43 LEISURE PRICING STRATEGY 2026 (01:10:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Head of Revenues, benefits & leisure providing proposals to change the leisure fees and charges from 1st April 2026.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- Active Mid Devon was committed to delivering a pricing strategy for 2026/27 that balanced affordability, inclusivity, and financial sustainability. Following an independent review by leisure consultants the proposed approach reflected market conditions, competitive pressures and the need to maintain strong community engagement during a challenging economic climate.
- The recommendation was to freeze membership fees for all adult and junior categories throughout the forthcoming year. This decision prioritised member retention and affordability, ensuring that the offer remained competitive against local operators while supporting the community during the ongoing cost-of-living challenges. By freezing membership prices, the service aimed to strengthen loyalty and reduce attrition, which had been identified as a key driver of long-term success.
- To offset inflationary pressures and maintain financial resilience, pay-as-you-go tariffs were proposed to increase by 3% from April 2026, this was below Consumer Prices Index at 3.8%. This adjustment was modest and had been informed by sector benchmarks, generating an estimated £6,500 in additional income without discouraging casual participation. Concessionary discounts would remain in place, including 25% off memberships and 20% off pay-as-you-go sessions, ensuring continued access for priority groups and those on lower incomes.
- There was an amendment to the report as the percentages had been shown the wrong way around on page 4 section 3.5 where it was stated 20% off memberships and 25% off pay as you go sessions. This has been amended to state 25% off memberships and 20% off pay as you go sessions.
- Care leavers continued to enjoy a free membership up to the age of 25 as would unpaid carers, with free memberships for those under-18 and discounted rates for adults. These measures reflected the services' corporate parenting responsibilities and commitment to inclusivity. Commercial hire arrangements for schools, clubs, and organisations would also be reviewed periodically to optimise revenue opportunities while maintaining fairness and competitiveness.
- Growth would be driven by improving retention rather than increasing membership prices. The target was to increase total membership by 5% and extend the average length of stay with internal Key Performance Indicator's.
- Financially, this strategy aligned with the Council's corporate objectives to promote health and wellbeing while ensuring commercial sustainability.
- In summary, the pricing strategy represented a balanced approach that safeguarded affordability, supports inclusivity, and positions Active Mid Devon for sustainable growth in 2026 and beyond.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The forecasted increased operational costs due to employer National Insurance contributions and premises costs. The increase was estimated to be in the region of £700k.
- Additional income could be generated by improving member retention by as little as one month extra.
- The need for a full and positive publicity campaign should Cabinet agree to freezing fees for Active Mid Devon members in 2026/2027.

It was **AGREED** that the recommendations within the report be referred directly to the Cabinet for decision. The Policy Development Group were broadly in support of these but were also mindful of the £700k cost pressure on the Leisure Service budget. The PDG therefore agreed to **NOTE** the report only.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

44 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (0124:00)**

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

In addition the following was requested to be on the agenda for the next meeting:

- A report detailing progress with ongoing recycling initiatives as well as proposals for additional pilots in the future.

(The meeting ended at 6.56 pm)

CHAIRMAN

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held on 12 November 2025 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors: L J Cruwys (Chair)
G Cochran (Vice-Chair), F J Colthorpe,
G Czapiewski, J M Downes, G Duchesne,
C Harrower, B Holdman, M Jenkins and
S Robinson

Apologies

Councillors: S J Clist and N Letch

Also Present

Councillors: Cllr L Kennedy and Cllr D Wulff

Also Present

Officers: Maria De Leburne (Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), John Hammond (Development Management Manager), John Millar (Area Team Leader), Thomas Muston (Conservation Officer) and Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillor Online: Cllr S Keable

Officer online: Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager)

1 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00:03:48)

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr N Letch
- Cllr S Clist who was substituted by Cllr J Downes.

2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00:04:09)

Dr Frank O'Kelly referred to Application No. 25/01234/LBC

Question 1: - Are you aware of the direction of travel for NHS Healthcare Delivery?

I am Frank O'Kelly a local GP. I have been a doctor for 38 years and working as a GP at Clare House Surgery in Tiverton for the last 26 years. In that time,

I have also been a GP Anaesthetist for 11 years, worked in Tiverton Urgent Care Centre and run the wards in Tiverton Hospital for 20 years. I care passionately about the local delivery of care to the people of Tiverton and about the future of that delivery.

4 years ago, I reduced from being a full time GP to working 3 days in the practice and the rest of the time in medical leadership. Since 2022 I have been the Primary Care Partner Member on the Board of NHS Devon and this year have also become a member of the SW Peninsula Board in a similar role. As such I am involved in planning the future delivery all Healthcare care in Devon and Cornwall and especially Primary Care Medical, Pharmacy, Optometry and Dental services.

I am speaking to you today to ensure you are aware of the direction of travel of health care delivery. The NHS 10-year plan published in July 2025. This sets out the direction of travel for the NHS with three major shifts.

1. Analogue to Digital
2. Treatment to Prevention
3. Hospital to Community.

Great clarity as to what this means has been given in the NHS planning framework published in September. It is clear the NHS delivery model of the future is the Neighbourhood.

In my SW Peninsula Board role, I am helping to lead a bid to the November SW Board for a very significant investment in Neighbourhood working. This bid is in the region of a 5% increase on present funding. If successful, it has significant implications for how we deliver Neighbourhood health, in terms of personnel and estates.

When I joined the practice, we had 10,500 patients, 7 doctors with about 30 staff. We now have about 18,700 patients, 25 doctors and about 100 staff working at the Clare House and Bampton sites.

In 2004, when the new hospital was built, we endeavoured to move to that site. In 2008 we were told we would not be given planning permission because of the change in flood risk, so we looked to develop on the Clare House site. This was declined because of the Grade 2 listing.

In 2009 we looked to move out of the centre of town. When the Planning Committee realised our foot fall would move with us, we were given permission to build the modern extension. In 2013 the extension was completed, and we thought it enormous, at the time.

In 2025 our site is now inadequate for the patient population needs and the delivery of General Practice and PCN (Primary Care Network) work.

The Partnership now finds itself at a similar juncture as we did in 2009. With the move to Neighbourhood working, we are going to have to plan significant changes in healthcare delivery which means we may well need to come back to the Planning Committee over the next 2-10 years with further requests to meet the needs of the growing and increasingly elderly population.

I am in the twilight of my career, as a local GP, so my question is not about me or personal gain it is about future Healthcare in Tiverton.

Question 2:- The Practice needs to know now whether, you as a Committee, understand the direction of travel for the NHS, are in favour of Neighbourhood working and if so, want the Practice to pursue this within the town centre or once again start looking for an alternative site.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:09:38)

Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests where appropriate.

Cllr B Holdman made a declaration of interest in accordance with Protocol of Good Practice in dealing with Planning matters regarding Application 25/01234/LBC as he had called in the application. However, he informed the Committee that he would have an open mind when determining the application today.

Cllr L Cruwys and B Holdman made a non-pecuniary declaration of interest in accordance with Protocol of Good Practice when dealing with planning matters regarding Application 25/01234/LBC as they were both patients of Clare House Practice.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:10:42)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 October 2025 were agreed as a true record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:11:01)

The Chair had no announcements to make.

6 WITHDRAWALS FROM THE AGENDA (00:11:10)

There were no withdrawals from the Agenda.

7 THE PLANS LIST (00:11:14)

The Committee considered the applications in the *Plans List.

1. 25/01234/LBC - Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to create 2 additional clinical rooms at Clare House Practice, Clare House, Newport Street, Tiverton.

The Conservation Officer outlined the contents of the report by way of a presentation and highlighted the following:-

- As the building was a grade 2 listed building the Council must be mindful of the duty as set out in Section 16 of the Planning List Buildings and Conservation Areas Act of 1990 and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and features with special architectural or historic interests which it possessed.
- The main issues raised included DM25 - development affecting heritage assets; DM1 - high quality design; and economic and social benefits.
- The building was a large 19th century house built on the site of Clare Parsonage and contained 20th century alterations and extensions and was located within the Tiverton Conservation Area.
- The proposal was for two additional clinical rooms to be created within the historical core of the heritage asset.
- The proposed clinical rooms would result in the surviving and legible historic floor plan being adversely impacted through the division of the two rooms affecting the central fireplaces.
- The new partitions were joined to the existing window which would result in a visual change externally. The windows on the ground floor would adversely impact a historic and an architectural feature that could possibly contribute to the significance of the heritage asset.
- The joining of the two walls would interrupt the existing features including the ceiling roses within the rooms.
- The nature and extent of the proposal was considered less than substantial regarding the framework. However, that should not be equated with a less than substantial planning objection.
- As the works were largely internal it was considered that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the Tiverton Conservation Area, and the harm would only be to the listed building.
- The continued use of the building as a surgery would generate economic and social benefits however there was no evidence that such benefits could not be achieved by a different scheme which would not result in the harm identified.
- Giving considerable importance and weight to the harm of the designated heritage asset it was found that the harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits.

In response to the public questions raised the Conservation Officer explained that it was for the Committee to reply as the questions were directed to the Committee.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- Whether the changes could be easily reversible as Studio 4 in the report stated that the changes could be reversed. It was explained that the application was for permanent changes.

- The previous alterations made to the listed building.
- Whether alternative changes had been proposed. It was explained that to unlock funding available through the NHS, the changes had to be internal and not to trigger a planning application. If an extension were to be looked at then planning permission would have been required.
- Whether it was possible to add conditions in order that changes could be reversed if the building was to be sold in the future for example to use materials that could easily be removed. It was explained that conditions could be added to that effect.

It was **RESOLVED** that building consent be granted subject to conditions that the work carried out would be reversed should the surgery vacate the building and that the Conservation Officer be consulted on the specific details of the method of the build-up, including section drawings to scale to show exactly how it would be inserted and installed as well as how the building would be reinstated.

The Development Management Manager would consult with the Chair of the Planning Committee and the Ward Member for the final wording of the conditions in accordance with the conditions discussed. The conditions to be provided in good time for the applicant to begin the work in order that the grant money was not lost due to timescales.

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

Notes:-

- (i) Dr Nick Sherwin spoke on behalf of the applicant.
- (ii) Cllr L Kennedy spoke on behalf of Tiverton Town Council.
- (iii) Cllr D Wulff spoke as the Ward Member

2. 25/01282/MFUL - Variation of Conditions 7 and 12 of Planning Permission 24/00506/MFUL (Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 10 affordable dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and other minor associated works) to allow substitution of approved plans to reflect revised cycle and refuse storage locations, landscaping strategy, and improved vehicular access at Garages and Forecourt at Watery Lane & Land at Elmore Way & Sunningbrook Road, Tiverton, Devon

The Area Team Leader outlined the contents of the report by way of a presentation and highlighted the following:-

- The application was to vary the conditions attached to an existing permission.
- The application was to alter some of those approved plans specifically the landscaping and site plans.

- There would be a slight rearrangement of how the car parking spaces would be laid out however there would be no changes to the amount of parking provided.
- The hard surface to the rear of the site would be enlarged to allow improved access to residents to the southwest of the property for access to car parking spaces.
- The landscaping scheme would be altered very slightly to ensure there was the required levels of biodiversity net gain which was still in excess of 10%.
- A slight change to some of the positions of the recycling and bin stores was proposed.
- There was not much change in terms of the impact on the character of the area.
- There would be no changes to the living space and layout of the properties which all complied with the National Space Standards.

Discussion took place regarding:-

- Land ownership and whether the proposed plans would be contested by the land owners. It was confirmed that the plans had not been contested.
- Whether the proposed changes would have an impact on the sewerage plans. It was explained that there would be no impact.

It was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

(Proposed by Cllr G DuChesne and seconded by Cllr G Czapiewski)

*List and report previously circulated.

8 **MAJOR APPLICATIONS WITH NO DECISION (01:24:27)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a list *of major applications with no decision.

The Committee agreed the following:-

1. 25/01326/MARM – to come to Committee (no site visit required)
2. 25/00735/MARM – to remain delegated as per the report
3. 25/01325/MFUL – to remain delegated as per the report
4. 25/01095/MARM – to remain delegated as per the report

Note: *List previously circulated.

9 **APPEAL DECISIONS (01:25:71)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a *list of appeal decisions.

Note: *List previously circulated.

10 **PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD QUARTER 2 (01:28:07)**

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager presented the Committee with the Performance Dashboard for Quarter 2 2025/26.

The overall performance was presented in a pie chart which combined the RAG ratings (Red/Amber/Green). The indicators were presented with the current performance and the annual target to indicate whether or not the Council were on track to meet its target.

The following was highlighted within the report:-

- The performance dashboard for Quarter 2 aimed to give an understanding of how services were performing that related to this Committee.
- Major planning applications determined within 26 weeks and minor and other planning applications determined within 16 weeks were both showing as Amber.
- The Council continued to perform above the national targets which were 60% and 80% respectively.
- The cost of planning appeals showing as Red. No costs were awarded in Q2 and the position related to costs awarded in Q1.
- Planning fees income (statutory fees) were shown as Red due to the continuing market conditions.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Where the funding from appeals came from to cover the costs. It was explained that there was no budget and that it came from the Council reserves.
- The blue background on the slide and whether for printing purposes it could be changed. It was explained that the blue was the corporate branding and would continue to be used on the Council's website. However, for Committee reports this could be reviewed.

The Committee **NOTED** the Performance Dashboard for Quarter 2 2025/26.

Note: * Performance Dashboard previously circulated

(The meeting ended at 3.51pm)

CHAIR

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MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held on 15 October 2025 at 5.15 pm

Present

Councillors:

E Buczkowski (Chair), G Duchesne (Vice Chair), F J Colthorpe, G Czapiewski, M Stratton, and L Taylor.

Apologies

Councillors:

M Fletcher (online), N Woollatt and D Wulff (online).

Also Present

Officers:

Maria De Leburne (Director of Legal, People & Governance (Monitoring Officer)) and Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager)

Councillors

Online:

J Buczkowski.

17 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00:04:01)**

18

Apologies were received from Councillors: M Fletcher (online), N Woollatt and D Wulff (online).

18 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00:04:18)**

None received.

19 **MINUTES (00:04:29)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 June 2025 were **APPROVED** as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:04:45)**

No interests were declared under this item.

21 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (05:00:00)**

The Chair had no announcements to make.

22 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION FOLLOWING MOTIONS APPROVED BY COUNCIL (05:11:00)**

The Committee **NOTED** the amendments to the constitution following motions approved by Council.

23 UPDATE FROM THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION (05:31:00)

The Committee had before it and **NOTED**, a verbal update from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) on the Government consultations. There was no response yet to the consultation on 'Strengthening the Standards and Code of Conduct for Local Authorities in England'. The Council were awaiting further legislation/guidance from Government in relation to remote attendance and proxy voting and this would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

24 REGISTER OF INTEREST UPDATE (00:06:15)

The Committee had before it and **NOTED**, a verbal update from the Democratic Services Manager on how Councillors Register of Interest Forms would be displayed on the Council's website and that in the future Members would make their own changes. A training session would be provided to all Members before this went live.

25 ACCESS TO INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (00:10:25)

The Chair stated that the Committee would remain in open session.

26 COMPLAINTS (00:11:19)

The Committee **NOTED** a verbal update from the Director of Legal, People and Governance (Monitoring Officer) which provided an update on complaints received.

The following was highlighted:

- The reference number 2025/2 was outstanding from the last meeting. This decision was not upheld.
- The reference numbers 2025/5 and 2025/6-7 were outstanding from the last meeting, all 3 complaints were upheld, and the decisions had now been issued.
- The decisions on these 3 complaints were an informal resolution to request an apology and a review of the Code of Conduct. Also, a reminder regarding appropriate communication.
- There had been 6 new complaints that had been received to date, 5 decisions had been drafted and 1 was still outstanding for decision.
- Further information had been provided in more detail with regard to the types of complaints that had been made including if they had been upheld or not.
- The themes were disrespect, non-declaration of interest and bullying and intimidation at meetings.

The following was discussed:

- The concerns about the informal resolution if the Councillors were to refuse to comply with the outcome. What enforcements powers would the Council have

to ensure this was done? – It was explained that the current legalisation had no grounds to enforce. The Monitoring Officer could only request that the informal resolution was completed and where relevant does liaise with the relevant Clerk of the Town or Parish Council about the matter.

- The Committee was not aware whether any of the complaints were repeat offenders.
- The outcomes of the decisions and if they had been completed. – It was explained that the Monitoring Officer would issue the decision and then it would be for the Town or Parish Clerk to act i.e. arrange code of conduct training where it has been suggested. The Monitoring Officer advised that she could contact the Clerk regarding the decision to find out the outcome or next steps and feed back to the Committee, however, this may not be the case for all complaints.
- Were there any plans within the Government for changes to take place for councils to have the powers to enforce the recommendations– It was explained that the Council had submitted their responses in relation to ‘Strengthening the Standards and Conduct framework for Local Authorities in England’ and were awaiting the consultation outcome and further guidance on how this would be embedded in due course within this Council.
- Clarification about hearings and suspension. It was explained that within our Constitution, page 282 under the sanction section, it referenced what the Council had the powers to do.
- The understanding of the complexity of the complaints and to be reassured that the processes were being followed.
- With the repeat offenders would this change the approach and severity? - It was explained that each application would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis individually and whether there was a breach.
- Was the Monitoring Officer providing support to the Town and Parish Clerks? – It was explained that the Monitoring Officer often gave advice to Clerks.
- Should Councillors get involved with the Town and Parish Clerks on these matters? – It was explained that they should not get involved and should let the Monitoring Officer deal with the complaints.

27 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (00:30:35)

The following items were identified for the next meeting of the Committee:

- The Terms of Reference Report from the Working Group.
- A report on the complaint process post Local Government Reorganisation to a future meeting.
- Disclosure Barring System update
- Annual Report from the Monitoring Officer.

The Committee **NOTED** that that clerk would arrange a training session for all Members on the Councils Standards Code of Conduct.

(The meeting ended at 17.50pm)

CHAIR

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MEETING	Normal day	1 2026	2	3	4	5 2027	6	
Planning Committee <i>(first meeting of cycle)</i>	Wed	10th June	29th July	9th September	4th November	13th January	10th March	
Planning Committee <i>(second meeting of cycle)</i>	Wed	1st July	19 th August	7th October	2nd December	17th February	7th April	
CABINET <i>(first meeting of cycle)</i>	Tues	12th May	7 July	1st September	3rd November	12th January	2nd March	
CABINET <i>(second meeting cycle)</i>	Tues	16th June	4th August	6th October	1st December	9th February	6th April	
PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY PDG	Tues	9th June		22 nd September	24th November		9th March	
HOMES PDG	Tues	2nd June		8 th September	17th November		16th March	
ECONOMY & ASSETS PDG	Thurs	18th June		17 th September	19th November		11th March	
COMMUNITY, PEOPLE & EQUALITIES PDG	Tues	23rd June		15 th September	10 th November		23rd March	
SERVICE DELIVERY & CI PDG	Mon	22nd June		14th September	23rd November		22nd March	
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE <i>(first meeting of cycle)</i>	Mon	8th June	17th August	28 th September	14th December	25th January	15th March	
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE <i>(second meeting of cycle)</i>	Mon	13th July	7th September	19 th October	16th November	22 nd February	19th April	
AUDIT COMMITTEE	Tues	30th June		29 th September	8th December		30th March	
Standards Committee	Weds	17th June		14th October		3rd February		
Licensing Committee	Fri	26th June			4th December			
Regulatory Committee	Fri	26th June			4th December			
Away Days	Fri 9.30am			Reserve 25th September				
COUNCIL	Wed 6.00pm	22nd July	23rd September	28th October	16th December	17th February 24 th February- RESERVE	21st April	6th May

Note:

(i) *Annual meeting of the Council at 6.00pm. **Annual Meeting in 2026 is on 6th May**(ii) *Annual meeting of the Council at 6.00pm. **Annual Meeting in 2027 is on 19th May**

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