

# Public Document Pack

**Mid Devon District Council**

## **Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday, 10 April 2017 at 2.15 pm**  
**Exe Room, Phoenix House, Tiverton**

**Next ordinary meeting**  
**Monday, 22 May 2017 at 2.15 pm**

Those attending are advised that this meeting will be recorded

## **Membership**

Cllr F J Rosamond  
Cllr Mrs H Bainbridge  
Cllr Mrs C P Daw  
Cllr T G Hughes  
Cllr Mrs J Roach  
Cllr T W Snow  
Cllr N A Way  
Cllr Mrs B M Hull  
Cllr Mrs G Doe  
Cllr Mrs A R Berry  
Cllr J L Smith  
Cllr S G Flaws

## **A G E N D A**

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

### **1 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

To receive any apologies for absence and notices of appointment of substitute Members (if any).

### **2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.

Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for this item.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting of this Committee (attached).

The Committee is reminded that only those members of the Committee present at the previous meeting should vote and, in doing so, should be influenced only by seeking to ensure that the minutes are an accurate record.

4      **MEMBER FORUM**

An opportunity for non-Cabinet Members to raise issues.

5      **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET**

To consider any decisions made by the Cabinet at its last meeting that have been called-in.

6      **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements that the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee may wish to make.

7      **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER** *(Pages 11 - 12)*

The Police Commissioner, Alison Hernandez, will attend the meeting to take questions from the Committee.

8      **UPDATE BRIEFING ON CLEAVE FARM AND CROSSPARKS, TEMPLETON** *(Pages 13 - 20)*

To receive an update following a report to the meeting on 13 March 2017.

9      **HOMELESSNESS** *(Pages 21 - 28)*

To receive a report from the Head of Housing and Property Services updating Members on homelessness within Mid Devon, as requested by the Committee.

10     **CABINET MEMBER FOR WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES** *(Pages 29 - 42)*

The Cabinet Member for Working Environment and Support Services will update the Committee regarding areas covered by this remit.

11     **LOCAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN** *(Pages 43 - 66)*

The Committee to review the Local Enforcement Plan which is currently out for consultation.

12 **COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP ANNUAL REVIEW** (Pages 67 - 72)

To receive an update from the Head of Customer Services and ICT.

At a meeting of the Committee in April 2016 discussion took place regarding the fact that the Chief Executive had shown some concerns regarding communication and it was RESOLVED that this matter be left with him to move forward.

It was AGREED that an agenda item be added for 12 months' time in order that Members could assess progress from a Members perspective.

13 **CHAIRMAN'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 73 - 76)

To receive the Chairman's draft annual report on the work of the Group since May 2016, which will be submitted to Council on 25 April 2017.

14 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

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

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

Member Development six monthly update  
Local Police Inspector  
Performance and Risk

**Stephen Walford**  
Chief Executive  
Friday, 31 March 2017

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

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

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

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

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

Tel: 01884 234209

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

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.

## MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 17 March 2017 at 11.00 am

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

F J Rosamond (Chairman)  
Mrs A R Berry, Mrs F J Colthorpe,  
Mrs G Doe, S G Flaws, T G Hughes,  
Mrs B M Hull, Mrs J Roach, N A Way and  
Mrs E J Slade

### **Apologies**

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

Mrs H Bainbridge and Mrs C P Daw

### **Also Present**

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

Mrs J B Binks, D R Coren and R L Stanley

### **Also Present**

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

Julia Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

## 127 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Bainbridge who was substituted by Cllr Mrs F J Colthorpe, Cllr Mrs C P Daw who was substituted by Cllr Mrs E J Slade, Cllr T W Snow and Cllr J L Smith.

## 128 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

## 129 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Subject to adding the wording 'the part that the Tiverton Gazette had played in highlighting Safeguarding issues was acknowledged' being added to Minute 125 the minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

## 130 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

## 131 **MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT MEL STRIDE**

The Chairman welcomed local MP Mel Stride and his assistant Mike Knuckey to the meeting.

The MP explained that due to his role as a Government Whip he had to be in London when the house was sitting, hence his attendance at the Committee on a Friday.

A number of questions had been forwarded to the MP in the advance of the meeting.

Cllr Mrs J Roach had asked would the government consider legislating to ensure that where there was a cycle track, cyclists who stayed on the road would be committing an offence.

Mr Stride answered that there were two types of cycle path; shared path and dedicated routes on the highway. The Highway Code determined what the cyclist should be doing on particular types. There were no plans to make changes at the current time but he was interested to know Members thoughts and asked that they put something in writing to him. He made comment that cyclists might say that the current cycle paths were not fit for use.

Cllr R J Rosamond said that according to an article in the Times rural areas were suffering from unfair funding for social care, receiving 60% less per head of population over 65 than in London. The funding was deemed regressive, unfair and opaque, and the gap was widening as the shire population of elderly people was increasing. Social Care funding should represent a needs based formula determined by demographic data. How was the government going to make society work for everyone?

Mr Stride replied that social care was one of the greatest challenges with an aging population that were living longer and in Devon 25% of the population being over 65. By living longer people were facing more complex conditions such as Alzheimer's. Devon was geographically large and end of care life was very expensive. The MP explained that the Government did not specify an amount to be spent on adult social care and it was up to the local authority to decide how funding was divided, with the exception of the extra funding that had been announced in the budget. He agreed that there were huge challenges ahead and that the size of the challenge should not be underestimated.

Cllr T W Snow had asked with regard to a statement from the Government that it would limit the amount of money spent by patients, to a maximum of £75000, after that it would be government funded, where did the government now stand on this pledge?

Mr Stride replied that a review was currently ongoing but his personal view was that it was a weakness in the system if those that could pay had to pay and others didn't have to pay anything at all. He was hoping that a cap would be put in place but it had not happened yet.

Discussion took place regarding 'baby boomers' and the need for all parties to work together to deal with long term problems. Mr Stride explained that the dynamics of politics often led to short term decision making rather than looking ahead a number of years, when the current Government might not even be in power.

Discussion took place regarding the provision of health care, the cost of overheads when more providers were used, the duty of a local authority to have a wide range of players providing care and the additional costs of providing care in a rural environment, although urban areas may have their own issues.

The MP informed Members that he was very aware of issues regarding rural sparsity. Priorities for Mid Devon included broadband, which could provide the ability to be

well connected even if physically unconnected, health, fairer funding for schools, social care and rail such as the Tarka line and the reinstatement of the Okehampton line to London. He stated that 96% of companies in central Devon were small businesses such as Post Offices, pubs, farming and tourism.

Mr Stride stated that he considered Mid Devon District Council to be much better run than it had been a decade ago.

Cllr Mrs J B Binks asked a question regarding broadband. She asked what was happening with Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) and the next phase of broadband rollout in remote rural areas. She said that the CDS website was very unhelpful for residents outside of the zones trying to find out how they might be connected. Was Gigaclear taking up the whole of Zone 4?

Mr Stride replied that he had had many meetings with Kerry Denton of CDS and that the contract for Zone 4 had been awarded but it had not yet been made public who to. He explained that the website had improved recently but asked Cllr Binks to contact him if she still encountered problems with the postcode search.

Discussion took place regarding broadband issues that several Members had encountered. Mr Stride offered to take up matters where BT had not performed and asked that Members forward him further information. He explained that for Phase 1 BT had exceeded their target and there had been a good take up of fibre broadband, as well as a lot of exciting developments such as wireless for hard to reach areas of Dartmoor.

Cllr N A Way informed Members that Kerry Denton of CDS provided an update to the Place Scrutiny at Devon County Council at every meeting. These meetings were webcast.

With regard to the 5 year Land Supply the MP invited Members to London to meet with the Minister to find out if anything could be done to relieve pressure from predatory applications.

Cllr F J Rosamond asked the MP for his view on Devolution. Mr Stride replied that he was positive about the concept, that local level was better and could better address local challenges, but that the proposal put forward did not include an elected Mayor and he considered that this would cause a delay. He explained that it was important to have an elected Mayor so that there was accountability.

Cllr Rosamond said that an experienced ex Head-Teacher had remarked that for every grammar school there would need to be two secondary moderns to house children, many of whom would deem themselves as failures, blighting their career prospects. Why did the Government ignore the voice of the professional? Why wasn't every child entitled to a quality education?

Mr Stride replied that existing grammar schools were valued in the communities that they existed. He had been to a grammar school and it had worked for him, although his brother had attended the local comprehensive and he was aware of the arguments against grammar schools. He considered that there were a number of alternatives available today, such as free schools and a growth in the number of apprenticeships. He considered education to be important to allow people to move

on in life and that grammar schools could play an important role in this. He stated that there was a need to ensure that those from a poorer background could go to grammar schools; by providing transport or looking at how tests were devised in order that they identified those with potential. Mr Stride considered that whilst education had been through a number of changes in recent years it had improved and that progress was being made.

Discussion took place regarding fair funding for education, challenges to budgets such as the living wage and the apprentice levy and consultation that was ongoing.

Cllr Rosamond asked a question on behalf of a concerned farmer. He asked if the UK was going to be opened as a free trade area; were we going to have cheap lamb and dairy products from countries like New Zealand as well as beef from the USA full of growth hormones and antibiotics and other cheap food from around the world dumped here?

The MP replied that he felt the farmer was right to be concerned. He had wanted to stay in Europe due to concerns regarding the economy and he still had those concerns. He considered that there would be massive challenges ahead and concerns raised were real challenges. He questioned where farming would come in the 'pecking order' against other areas such as car manufacturing. He said it was possible that food import taxes would be reduced, which would be good for the consumer but not for the farmer.

Mr Stride thanked Members for what he had learnt today and for all of the hard work that they did.

The Chairman thanked Mr Stride for his attendance.

Note: - Cllr N A Way declared a personal interest as he was a governor of Queen Elizabeth School.

## 132 **SCRUTINISING SCRUTINY**

The Chairman had requested that the Committee have an informal discussion regarding the role of Scrutiny. He had provided a report \* which he had prepared for the recent Peer Review, for reference.

The Chairman asked Members to consider if the Committee was challenging enough, was it acting as a critical friend and was it expressing the voice of the public. He asked if the Committee was owning the process and looking to improve services.

Discussion took place regarding;

- The number of items on agendas, should the Committee be concentrating on fewer items in more detail?
- The lack of officer resource to support Scrutiny;
- Recent consultation by Government regarding scrutiny;
- The statutory obligation to hold six meetings a year;



- Duplication of work when reports were requested by Policy Development Groups and Scrutiny;
- Health Scrutiny at Devon County Council which Members could view by webcam or attend;
- Examples of where Scrutiny had worked well, such as the Supplementary Policy Document for waste.

Note: - Report \* previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

### 133 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Police and Crime Commissioner  
 Communications Working Group – annual update  
 Cabinet Member for Working Environment and Support Services  
 Community Safety Annual Report  
 Chairman's Report  
 Local Enforcement Plan  
 Homelessness

(The meeting ended at 12.52 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**

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## Questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Cllr Snow

Where has the money that we the public contributed and were told would result in policemen being on the beat in Cullompton been allocated too. This is a financial matter and not an operational one.

Cllr Mrs R Berry

I would like to know how large the cyber-crime team is for the area and is there any facility to brief small rural businesses about cyber security. Realistically if someone falls prey to cyber-crime/attack is there any likelihood of the protagonists being caught?

Do we have robust plans in place for natural or human induced disasters and specifically terrorist attack -accepting that details are likely to be confidential? Do we have local armed response teams?

Is Brexit likely to affect information sharing between European countries or in any other way compromise our security?

Cllr Rosamond

Bearing in mind the increasing pressures on the police of terrorism, child safeguarding and cyber security, how are the priorities of policing determined?

What is the priority for rural policing?

Police Community Officers have been seen to be a useful contribution to policing on the streets. What is the future for this service?

The role of Police and Crime Commissioner was apparently to address the " Democratic deficiency " associated with Police Committees. How is this deficit being addressed? What procedures are you implementing to liaise more effectively with local people?

Have you given any consideration in respect of the efficacy of police stations? In Tiverton, one is reduced to picking up the outside phone and to find that one is talking to Plymouth, I believe, even though there are several police cars parked outside.

Cllr J L Smith

What is your opinion of the Government Crime Recording Standards Guidelines?

The government are now reducing crime by manipulating figures and statistics, how will this affect your Police Service

What is the current position concerning the alleged criminal fraud which you committed at the last general election, for which you were interviewed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016?

Have you identified any areas of Policing within Devon and Cornwall where you can make significant savings or reduce costs? For example the cessation of visits to Newquay Zoo by the Professional Development Unit to name but one.

## **UPDATE BRIEFING ON CLEAVE FARM AND CROSSPARKS, TEMPLETON**



### **Scrutiny Committee April 2017**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Members will note the briefing presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 13 March 2017 and the public question item raised by Miss S. Coffin (Chair of Templeton Parish Council) at the committee meeting on 13 February 2017, as recorded.
- 1.2 The March briefing presented a detailed response to a range of points and assertions raised by Miss Coffin. Specifically, nuisance allegations and the impact on a private drinking water supply arising from agricultural, farm storage and spreading activities at Cleave Farm and Crossparks.
- 1.3 The briefing also addressed matters relating to planning (as updated by the Head of Planning and Regeneration).
- 1.4 The briefing was noted by members and the committee also heard a further detailed question from Miss Coffin; in addition statements from local residents, Mrs and Mrs Faulkner.
- 1.5 The Committee requested an update at the April 2017 meeting; this is provided below. This paper is an update to supplement the March briefing, therefore members are advised to refer to that document in respect of the background to this issue, legal viewpoints and the investigations the Council have carried out prior to March 2017.

#### **2.0 Additional public question time statements – Environmental Health matters**

##### **Miss S. Coffin (Templeton Parish Council)**

- 2.1 A question was posed to the committee; why the Environmental Health (EH) team “categorically refuse to acknowledge the potential for nuisance in connection with the Crossparks slurry pit”. Whilst it is felt this matter was addressed in the previous briefing, and during the subsequent committee discussion in March, it is important to reiterate the on-going work of the council. The work undertaken by the council to date, specifically the investigations and site visits, have not to date substantiated the existence of a statutory nuisance.
- 2.2 The circumstances for a statutory nuisance to exist have been outlined previously and the briefing provided information on odour and noise nuisance specifically.

- 2.3 Clearly, where Environmental Health investigate without recourse to formal action (which is the case to date in respect of Crossparks) then this does not in any way constitute a refusal to acknowledge a potential problem or indicate a lack of reasonable response. Furthermore, contrary to assertions, at no stage have officers dismissed residents.
- 2.4 A question was also raised whether a sealed storage tank with a point emission source at high level (10 metres+) would offer significant improvements. Notwithstanding any planning or Environment Agency permitting matters that are likely to be relevant, such a structure would need to be subject to detailed design. The benefits of enclosure being a design parameter; without that detailed design work being completed it would be speculation to comment on the relative merit of an unspecified enclosure with a nominal stack height.
- 2.5 To explain further, a general comparison with an AD tank facility is made however this is not directly valid given such tanks are designed as part of a controlled, integral energy generation and material storage process and do not operate wholly in isolation.
- 2.6 Furthermore, point emissions from stacks are by their nature significantly more concentrated than open dispersed emissions, such as those from a slurry pit, and can therefore result in greater exposure. Some of the potential pollutants of concern (for example hydrogen sulphide) are heavier than air which may limit the benefit of an elevated emission point.
- 2.7 In respect of the query raised regarding Environment Agency requirements for permitted facilities to have a 200m separation distance, this (and any other permit requirements) does not apply at Crossparks. From information that has already been provided to all parties to date, the Agency have clarified that the Crossparks facility does not require a permit.
- 2.8 Miss Coffin made further reference to Environmental Health officers refusing to make rapid out of hours visits. Reference should be made to section 2.9 of the previous briefing; Environmental Health is not an emergency service and Mid Devon District Council does not provide a formal out-of-hours call out scheme. However, as outlined further below, officers have continued to respond to issues in normal hours as quickly as possible and a further targeted evening visit out of hours has been completed.

#### **Mr and Mrs Faulkner (local residents)**

- 2.9 Information provided in respect of the Fire Service, medical professionals and symptoms of ill-health experienced since the New Year were covered in the previous briefing. Mr and Mrs Faulkner have continued to report similar and on-going concerns; actions completed or planned since the previous committee meeting are outlined below.
- 2.10 We are aware that Mr and Mrs Faulkner are continuing to spend periods of time away from their home and have acknowledged any additional letters received in respect of symptoms they reported to their GP. However, we are not aware of any additional tests or information from medical professionals that enable a clear source

– pathway – receptor (symptom) relationship. It is clear that MDDC will be reliant on medical professionals to substantiate and lead on any prejudicial to health action were it to be deemed the most suitable course of action.

- 2.11 Where reference is made to an EH officer requesting that Mrs Faulkner be an 'ignorant witness' at the pit and the conducting of an 'experiment'. Having sought clarity from the case officer, the request made (and one made to all residents in contact with us) was for residents to contact the EH team if significant activity was observed so that it could be logged and potentially witnessed with nuisance assessment visits carried out.
- 2.12 Mr Faulkner made specific reference to Environmental Health struggling with the idea that if you cannot smell an odour it does not exist. In response, we have and continue to recognise that there will be different sensitivities to odour. As previously highlighted, more than one officer undertakes odour assessments and on some occasions more than one (most recently three) have been involved in simultaneous assessments at the same location. It is also important to stress that statutory nuisance is based on the test of reasonableness and its impact on the 'average' person; the 'man on the Clapham omnibus'. This means an individual may be impacted by an occurrence or recurrence of an activity, but that in itself may not constitute a statutory nuisance.

### 3.0 Update on Environmental Health investigations and responses

#### Additional odour assessments

- 3.1 The Environmental Health team have continued to response to reports of nuisance/ill-health and activity at the Crossparks pit. An additional four visits have been undertaken since the last committee meeting. This brings the total number of assessment visits for 2017 (up to 25th March) to 16.
- 3.2 A summary of these additional assessment visits is given in the table below.

| Reactive or planned? | Officer(s)           | Time              | Reason for visit/pit activity observed  | Nuisance observed and outcomes?  |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| Reactive             | EH technical officer | Daytime – am/noon | Call from resident (nuisance/symptoms). Additional call from separate resident received during officer visit so able to undertake simultaneous assessment.<br><br>Mixing and pit loading (AD digestate) and unloading witnessed | Low-level odour and noise noted immediately adjacent to pit during mixing. Odour reduced to zero within 10m of pit. No nuisance observed at relevant receptor location (boundary of residential property)<br><br>No officer ill-health |

|          |   |              |   |  |
|----------|---|--------------|---|--|
|          |   |              |   | symptoms reported.   |
| Reactive | EHO   | Daytime - pm | <p>Call from resident (strong odour nuisance)</p> <p>Unloading of pit for subsequent spreading</p>  | <p>No odour nuisance observed at any receptor location (boundary of residential properties).</p> <p>Location of spreading not identified however confirmed as not close to properties in vicinity of Crossparks</p> <p>No officer ill-health symptoms reported.</p>  |
| Planned  | EHO, Public Health Manager and Director of Operations | Daytime - pm | Planned visit to coincide with high risk nuisance potential following mixing and other activities at the pit in preceding days. Familiarisation visit for Director. | <p>Low-level mixed source of odour noted by all officers immediately adjacent to pit. No odour or any nuisance observed outside of Crossparks boundary. Assessment undertaken at relevant receptor location and again no odour observed by all officers. Call received subsequently from occupants of receptor property indicating they had experienced strong odour and reporting symptoms at the same time as the officers were on-site.</p> <p>No officer ill-health symptoms reported.</p> |
| Planned  | EHO   | Evening      | Planned extended indoor odour assessment visit to two residential properties currently providing the majority of ill-health and                                     | Indoor odour assessed along with items provided by occupants alleged to have absorbed odour (e.g. bedding) and relevant confined spaces (e.g. inside   |



|  |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | nuisance complaints.<br><br>This followed an increase in odour complaints during and after the above assessment visit. | oven with external flue) and higher risk living areas. No odour and any other nuisance identified inside or externally.<br><br>No officer ill-health symptoms reported. |
|--|--|--|--|---|

### **Reviewing unusual sources and pathways for potential exposure to harmful chemicals**

- 3.3 There is no evidence of exposure from the pit other than through the open air. Nonetheless, officers are obtaining highways drainage plans to rule out possible connecting features that may allow movement of gases by this pathway. This is a highly unlikely pathway but will be investigated in order to close this line of investigation.
- 3.4 In discussion with residents, officers have already ruled out other potential sources relating to individual properties; such as boilers/flues and household domestic chemical products etc. However, more in-depth investigations will seek to rule out other potential property specific issues such as damp course design, recent chemical/pest treatments or decorating and any farm chemical storage and possible exposure.
- 3.5 We are aware of at least two properties with private water supplies within 600m of the Crossparks pit. Sampling and analysis of these supplies will be offered to analyses water before and after filtration/treatment. This will be offered at no cost to the residents. Again, this is a highly unlikely pathway but will be investigated in order to close this line of investigation. .

### **Additional engagement with Environment Agency**

- 3.6 The results of the February samples taken from the pit have now been made available to officers and local residents by the Environment Agency. Unfortunately no interpretation information was supplied with the data when circulated. There has been some understandable confusion from residents interpreting this data.
- 3.7 The Agency has referred the results back to their laboratory services for further interpretation and will be communicating their conclusions in due course. Officers from Environmental Health have also provided some initial comments on the results and will await the overall findings.
- 3.8 The Environmental Health team have also raised two new queries with the Agency, first in respect of identifying any similar pit facilities regionally which the Agency are aware of as being used for mixed slurry/AD digestate storage. If a similar facility can be identified then this will be useful for comparison purposes in terms of whether problems are being reported elsewhere and if any different controls/practices are in

place. The second query relates to whether any gas analysis data is available from permitted AD plant sites in respect of gases within AD digestate prior to subsequent mixing and spreading off-site. These queries have been referred to the Agency agricultural lead regionally and the national permitting team respectively.

### **Additional engagement with public health professionals**

- 3.9 Officers continue to communicate all reports received of ill-health to Public Health England (PHE). With our input, PHE have also prepared some additional advice to residents and their GPs in respect of hydrogen sulphide and health-impact thresholds which will be sent out shortly. It is important to highlight the role of health colleagues from PHE in their lead role investigating health concerns manifesting as symptoms.
- 3.10 We are also in communication with the local Consultant for Public Health based at Devon County Council covering the Mid Devon area. The purpose was to establish if the consultant and/or the wider DCC Public Health team are able to offer any additional input into prejudicial to health concerns in particular given their direct working relationship with the NHS and GPs locally. A four-way meeting is now in the process of being arranged between the local consultants, PHE regionally and the Chilton based PHE Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE) and the Mid Devon Environmental Health team.

### **Further communication with local residents**

- 3.11 At the invitation of Templeton Parish Council, the new Director of Operations (who is also a trained EHO) will attend the Templeton parish meeting on 29 March in order to discuss Crossparks issues specifically.

## **4.0 Other matters**

### **Development Management response to additional public questions raised at Scrutiny Committee regarding planning matters**

- 4.1 The contents of the disc submitted to MDDC showing vehicular movements have been viewed and the content noted.
- 4.2 The planning department have stated that in their opinion, neither Crossparks nor Cleave farm are being used as a waste transfer station for the reasons explained in the report that was presented to Scrutiny Committee on the 13th March 2017. This opinion has not changed. The minutes of the 13th March 2017 Scrutiny Committee state: The Head of Planning and Regeneration informed the Committee that Mid Devon was not the Waste Planning Authority but that the service had been in liaison with Devon County Council and the Environment Agency with regard to whether or not the site was being used as a waste transfer station. They had concluded that the digestate being delivered to the site was not waste and therefore there was no requirement for planning permission.
- 4.3 Pulsard's Farm - the Enforcement Notice recently served at Pulsard's Farm requires the re-instatement of the site following the unauthorised excavation of a large pit.

The Enforcement Notice requires the re-instatement of the land by the end of March 2017. The Local Planning Authority will be seeking compliance with the Enforcement Notice.

- 4.4 The slurry pit at Crossparks has a historic planning permission. The Local Planning Authority is not aware of any new activities being undertaken at Crossparks or Cleave Farm that would constitute a change of use or require planning permission.

Simon Newcombe, Public Health and Professional Services Manager

Lucy Hodgson, Area Planning Officer (Section 4.0)

24th March 2017

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## SCRUTINY 10 APRIL 2017

### HOMELESSNESS UPDATE FOR MID DEVON

**Cabinet Member** Cllr Ray Stanley  
**Responsible Officer** Nick Sanderson, Head of Housing and Property Services

**Reason for Report:** Members requested an update on Homelessness within Mid Devon.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** For information purposes only.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Mid Devon District Council is committed to reducing and preventing Homelessness.

**Financial Implications:** There is a budget set aside within the Council for the Housing Options Service.

**Legal Implications:** The Council duties are governed by the Housing Act 1996 as amended under the Homelessness Act 2002 Part VII (The Act). This legislation sets out what a Council must provide and what duties it might owe a homeless applicant.

**Risk Assessment:** The Council is responsible for ensuring that the Act is adhered to. Failure to provide advice and assistance under the legislation could have financial implications, due to legal challenge.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Homelessness across the country is predicted to increase over the next few years with soaring private rental house prices and lack of social housing. The Council is starting to see an increase in the total numbers approaching the Housing Options team for housing advice.
- 1.2 Applicants presenting to the Council recently appear to have more complex needs, with the involvement of mental health services, drug and alcohol services; and there has appeared to be an increase in the numbers of private and social landlords issuing Notice To Quits due to the complex needs of tenants. This is common across the Devon and Cornwall network.
- 1.3 So far this year (2016/17) the service has had 347 approaches for housing advice compared to 299 this time last year. (Appendix 1)
- 1.4 The Housing Options team has taken a more proactive role in dealing with applicants approaching the service. The team will engage with applicants and landlords at an early stage to prevent the person from becoming homeless and attempt to retract any notices served by landlords.

1.5 The Housing Options team is fully dedicated to helping households and landlords to resolve their housing difficulties. The team has been more successful with homelessness preventions this last year by helping clients to secure alternative accommodation. (Appendix 2)

1.6 However, over the last few years we have seen an increase in the number of households going into temporary accommodation due to the threat of becoming homeless. This can be attributed mainly to households leaving it to the last minute to approach the Service for help. (Appendix 3) (Appendix 4).

## 2.0 Partnership Working

2.1 The Housing Options team already works in partnership with some other social landlords who work in the District. Where possible, individual officers engage in joint visits with landlords to help with preventative work at the stage when possession proceedings are being considered. This involvement can deliver positive outcomes because individual team members can have realistic conversations with tenants about what will actually happen once a Possession Order is made. This can prompt the tenant to work with the landlord to find a way forward, in order to avoid the possible disruption and other stress associated with eviction.

2.2 The Council belongs to the Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership which comprises all the local housing authorities in Devon and Cornwall. This group works in partnership to deliver strategies to reduce homelessness and to ensure that there is a consistent approach to homelessness across the peninsula. This is useful because it ensures that there is clarity for clients. The partnership approach also delivers savings due to the fact that there is a co-ordinator who is able to identify good practice, coordinate joint responses to relevant issues, disseminate relevant information and organise training.

## 3.0 Action Planning

3.1 Mid Devon has joined up with East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council and together applied for a bid from DCLG for the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers Application. Through this network, Mid Devon is working on an action plan to help deal with the impact of homelessness across the district.

3.2 The four districts were awarded a grant of £359,000 to help prevent homelessness over the next 3 years (2016/17-2018/19). The grant has been split into different areas for homelessness prevention.

3.3 Voluntary Sector MDDC: The successful bid was to include working more with the voluntary sector such as Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) and Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB). These organisations also offer housing advice and therefore see many people whose cases are not reported in any government statistics, in relation to homelessness. This would enable the local groups to also help prevent homelessness and to access some funding for the work which they complete to prevent homelessness. These statistics would then be used as part of MDDC returns.

- 3.4 Community Based Services: Assisting with services at the local Court desk, to help applicants seek additional help when required, and money advice services such as Moneywise.
- 3.5 Tenancy Passport Coaching MDDC: Working with agencies like St Petrock's and Julian House which are both based in Exeter, and which currently offer tenancy passport coaching, with the intention of extending this service to Mid Devon. This will help tenants learn what is required when they take on a tenancy and also how to maintain that tenancy.
- 3.6 Landlord Incentives MDDC: Working with new landlords to help them to promote private sector rented accommodation and allowing more properties to be let to applicants who are threatened with homelessness. Currently, most landlords will not let to applicants who approach them having first visited the Council, due to previous issues with tenant neglect associated with some of our clients.
- 3.7 Tenancy Rescue Scheme MDDC: Working with social sector landlords and also private landlords, getting in early when the threat of homelessness is present. We need landlords to talk to the service about tenancy issues, so that the team can prevent homelessness and solve any problems that the landlord might have. This could be arising from housing benefit issues, rent arrears or generally any problems relating to the tenancy not being sustained. Exeter City Council will be recruiting a Homeless Prevention Champion to help advise local authority and other landlords of good practice. This worker will also work with the other 3 authorities, providing advice and assistance.
- 3.8 Targeted Help MDDC: Helping with issues that might cause homelessness at an early stage, helping with financial advice and guidance at places or stages where changes happen which could lead to homelessness. For example: redundancy, disability, illness, relationship breakdown, or bereavements.
- 3.9 Other areas currently being reviewed at present include closer working with Julian House, which is based in Exeter, to extend the Rough Sleeper outreach service to MDDC. This service would enable a member of their team to respond to service requests from rough sleepers possibly sleeping in the area. The Housing Options team would then be able to access the rough sleeper provisions in Exeter.
- 3.10 All of these changes that the four districts are implementing might become part of the response to the new legislation relating to Homelessness Reduction due in 2017/18.
- 4.0 **The Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-2017**
- 4.1 The Bill is seeking to introduce a new duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness and a new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants. These duties will involve helping all eligible people, whether they are single or a family.

- 4.2 For more information on the government publications site:

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2016-2017/0096/17096.pdf>

- 4.3 The Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-2017 was introduced to Parliament as a Private Member's Bill by Bob Blackman, MP on 29 June 2016. It has now completed its progress through the House of Commons and is awaiting consideration of amendments before Royal Assent.
- 4.4 The Bill is set to change the way that English Councils respond to homelessness issues. It was informed by the work of an independent panel of experts, established by Crisis (a charity which assists single, homeless people). The aim of this panel was to review the current legislation affecting this client group and to identify improvements to the legal framework relating to the prevention of single homelessness in England.

## 5.0 **Changes expected**

- 5.1 When a person is homeless or threatened with homelessness, the Council is currently obliged to deal with them in accordance with the duties set out in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by Homelessness Act 2002. Section 175 of the Act states that a person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that they will become homeless within 28 days.
- 5.2 Under the new legislation, the number of days will increase to 56.
- 5.3 In addition, there will be further guidance relating to the action which an authority should take in relation to someone who applies for assistance after they have been served with a valid section 21 notice (of intention to seek possession from an assured shorthold tenancy). The Council will have to take reasonable steps to try and persuade the landlord to delay an order for possession or to agree not to pursue the notice.
- 5.4 The Bill is also seeking to introduce a new duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness and a new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants. These duties will involve helping all eligible people, whether they are single or a family.
- 5.5 Other agencies working in the public sector will also be required to notify the Council if they come into contact with someone that they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

## 6.0 **Impact**

- 6.1 On 17 January 2017 it was announced that £48 million would be made available to help local authorities to meet the additional costs required as a result of the changes to the legislation. Currently, there is no indication as to how this will be allocated to specific regions or to individual authorities.



- 6.2 On 17 January 2017, the Local Government Association released a statement which said that: "Councils have concerns that initial costings will inevitably be based on assumptions which will be difficult to predict. For example, it is impossible to know how many people will come forward to access the new duties, what the impact of the Bill will be on different groups over time, and therefore the funding councils need to deliver duties that reduce homelessness."
- 6.3 An increase in the numbers of people presenting to the Council for assistance in connection with homelessness or threatened homelessness once the new legislation is adopted is being assumed. The cost of temporary accommodation also needs to be taken into account. The Council already has a duty to secure accommodation for those applicants where it has reason to believe that the person may be homeless, eligible for assistance and has priority for assistance under the legislation, pending a decision on whether or not they are actually homeless. If the numbers of those presenting as homeless at Phoenix House increase, then it can be argued that the budget for temporary accommodation will need to be increased. The Council has a limited supply of temporary accommodation available but there is a heavy demand for this. Therefore, bed and breakfast accommodation does occasionally have to be used, which is more expensive. Further, there is only a limited supply of this in the District. This sometimes necessitates clients having to be placed in accommodation outside Mid Devon, away from their support networks, local schools, employment and so on, with the resulting anxieties associated with that, when they are already experiencing difficulties and stress.
- 6.4 In anticipation of the increased workload, new strategies are being devised with the aim of mitigating the risks associated with this.

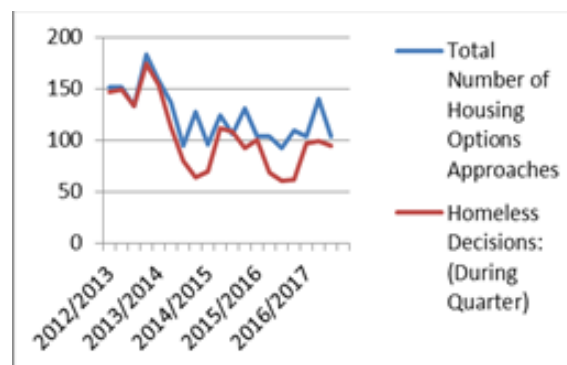
**Contact for more Information:** Mike Parker, Housing Options Manager, 01884 234906 / [mparker@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:mparker@middevon.gov.uk)

**Circulation of the Report:** Councillor Ray Stanley, Cabinet Member for Housing, Management Team



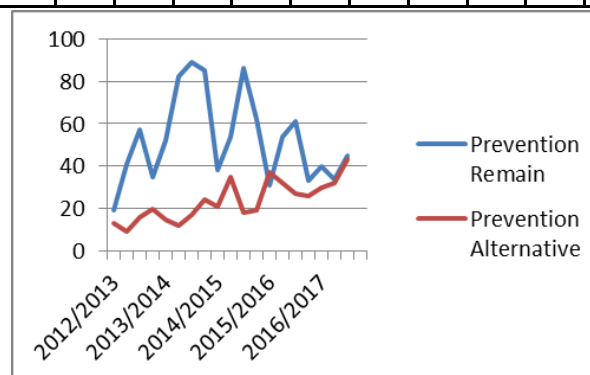
## Appendix 1 - Number of approaches for housing advice

|   | 2012/2013 |     |     |     | 2013/2014 |     |    |     | 2014/2015 |     |     |     | 2015/2016 |     |    |     | 2016/2017 |     |     |  |
|---|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|-----|----|-----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|-----|----|-----|-----------|-----|-----|--|
| Total Number of Housing Options Approache | 151       | 151 | 133 | 183 | 158       | 136 | 94 | 127 | 96        | 124 | 108 | 131 | 104       | 108 | 92 | 109 | 104       | 140 | 103 |  |
| Homeless Decisions: (During Quarter)      | 147       | 148 | 133 | 174 | 153       | 113 | 80 | 64  | 69        | 111 | 108 | 92  | 100       | 68  | 60 | 62  | 97        | 99  | 95  |  |

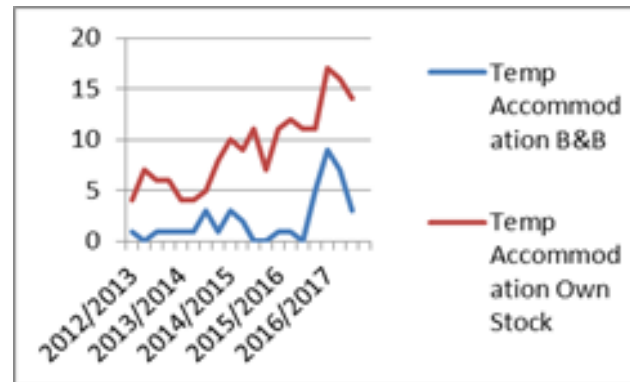


## Appendix 2 - Number of Homeless Preventions

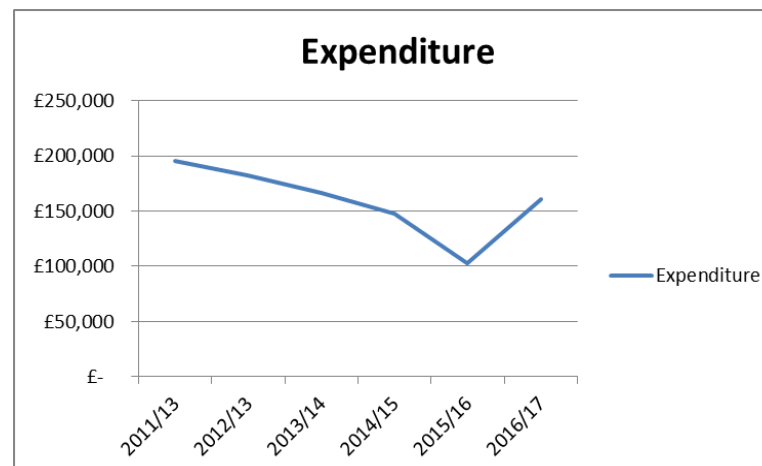
| Homelessness Prevention | 2012/2013 |    |    |    | 2013/2014 |    |    |    | 2014/2015 |    |    |    | 2015/2016 |    |    |    | 2016/2017 |    |    |  |
|-------------------------|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|--|
| Prevention Remain       | 19        | 41 | 57 | 35 | 52        | 82 | 89 | 85 | 38        | 54 | 86 | 62 | 31        | 54 | 61 | 33 | 40        | 34 | 45 |  |
| Prevention Alternative  | 13        | 9  | 16 | 20 | 15        | 12 | 17 | 24 | 21        | 35 | 18 | 19 | 37        | 32 | 27 | 26 | 30        | 32 | 43 |  |



### Appendix 3 - Number of Homeless Households Placed in Temporary Accommodation



### Appendix 4 – Expenditure of homeless service (B&B, DARS, Removals)



## **Cabinet Member for Support Services and the Working Environment Annual Report to Scrutiny**

### **Public Health Plan**

- The Mid Devon Public Health Plan 2016-19 has recently been adopted and provides a framework for public health action across Mid Devon. The Plan is informed by the priorities set out in the Devon Joint Health and Well Being Strategy to address health inequalities and the district specific health surveillance data. The four priority areas in Mid Devon are:
  - Prevention of cardiovascular disease and cancer
  - Decent high quality housing
  - Emotional/mental health and resilience
  - Air quality
- There is scope to work in other areas of concern, for example with skin cancer, where the evidence indicates higher levels compared with the national and regional average.
- The plan identifies some projects which may require limited set-up support before becoming self-sustaining/supported by external sources. Currently this support is largely being met from a circa £7K ear-marked reserve (ERM) created from unspent (but ring-fenced) previous public health grant funding received from the former Primary Care Trust and Devon County Council.
- Other projects and initiatives can be achieved from limited existing officer resources/service budgets or will be reliant upon mechanisms such planning obligations (section 106 projects) or central government grant applications e.g. Defra Air Quality bids in order to move forward.
- There will need to be further examination of the plan scope and delivery following the start of the new Director of Operations in March 2017. This should include a review of the current fixed-term Public Health officer post which is scheduled to finish in October 2017. It is intended that the Public Health Manager and the Director will commence this review as soon shortly.

### **Prevention of cardiovascular disease and cancer**

- Public Health Services and Mid Devon Leisure have been working together on a **GP exercise referral** program that had started some years ago but now requires a revamp. There will be more incentives to get people back into the physical activity with a longer term aim to get them to become regularmembers of Mid Devon Leisure. The program was kick-

started in February and has successfully gaining a number of early referrals.

- The exercise referral program will be funded from the public health ERM. The cost will vary dependent upon income received from GP patients with an upper limit of £1.5k being made available to Mid Devon Leisure. Discussions will be held with the Public Health team at Devon County Council and the NEW (Northern, Eastern and Western) Devon Clinical Commissioning Group regarding an evaluation of this program and possible funding in the future.
- A **Walking Football** program commenced in Mid Devon at Crediton and Cullompton in May 2016 using the Mid Devon Leisure facilities. Sessions are held weekly and on average attended by 8 -14 players aged between 50 and 75yrs. Initially funding was provided to set up the sessions, coaching and support was provided by Exeter City F.C. with Age UK doing recruitment and advertising. For 2017 onwards the aim of the program is for it to be self-managed and funded. The groups have also been connected with the wider Walking Football community operated by Devon Football Association which provides opportunities to be involved in competitions both regionally and nationally.
- All the schemes should be self-funded via member subs from January 2017 however a reserve of £0.5K will be assigned to the program to address any shortfall in pitch hire fees for 2017. Age UK is also funding a separate program at Uffculme whilst Mid Devon Public Health Services is responsible for Crediton and Cullompton. This reserve will come from the ERM fund.
- A **Sport England engagement** session was held in Exeter in January convened by Active Devon. The aim of the session was to help anyone considering applying to a Sport England programme, individually or collaboratively, and to improve their chance of success. Active Devon is keen to work with partners for the next round of grant funding aligned to the new strategy. Mid Devon works closely with Active Devon on local initiatives and was involved in this engagement session
- **Sugar Smart Exeter** was be launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and Mid Devon attended the official launch. The campaign aims to promote healthy alternatives and remove or reduce unhealthy food and drink, particularly targeting those high in sugar. It builds upon the pioneering work of Bristol's Sugar Smart City. The event will also showcase Devon Norse's new healthier food and drink range which is provided to schools, NHS and other public sector clients across Devon. There are no direct budget implications for Mid Devon from this initiative and the

scheme has national support from Sustain and the Jamie Oliver Foundation.

### **Decent High Quality Housing**

- Last October the Central Heating Fund, which provided installation of gas central heating to residents throughout Devon where possible, came to a close. Mid Devon and other districts have been invited to participate in two new schemes:
- **CosyDevon** and Partners are launching a new fully funded **fuel poverty scheme**. The program is called LEAP (Local Energy Advice project) and will run for the next six months across Devon. The new home visit scheme is designed to give households really deep support to help lift them permanently from fuel poverty.
- **Power utility switching** is a partnership between Agility Eco and UK Power. They are offering this arrangement to any of the CosyDevon partners that would like to get involved. Links really well with LEAP, as the home visits will create switching opportunities. A presentation was provided by Agility ECO to the Leadership Team in January and the Council benefits from a switching fee provided for each customer.
- Cosy Devon and partners are funded wholly through the government backed Energy Companies Obligation.

### **Emotional/mental health and resilience**

- In 2016 Councillors and staff were provided with **Dementia awareness sessions** which have received very good feedback. This is obviously an issue that affects many in the workforce who may have contact with a customer, relative or friend who has been diagnosed.
- Public Health Services have joined with Active Devon to provide start-up funding to Upstream for a 12 week program of '**Seated Exercise**' aimed at individuals who are less likely or unable to take up conventional forms of physical exercise and activity. This may include residents who have early stage dementia. Sessions commenced at the Boniface Centre, Crediton in January. This project has dual benefits in terms of social inclusion/well-being plus exercise and the prevention of cardio-vascular disease.
- Upstream are a local charity that reaches out into local communities to help people who are mentally, physically or socially isolated to improve their health. The initial 12-week program has a cost of £0.9K. This will

come from the ERM with Upstream taking over full responsibility for the scheme in the future if the initial program is a success.

- The **Dementia Alliance**, based at Tiverton Town Council, has suggested that the Mid Devon Council joins the alliance as a member to demonstrate ongoing commitment and support for dementia services. There have been no direct costs for running the dementia sessions to date and none are anticipated from joining and supporting the alliance.

### **Air Quality**

- Joint (Exeter, Teignbridge, East Devon, Mid Devon) and sole bids were been submitted for the **DEFRA Air Quality grants 2016/17**. The scheme was hugely over-subscribed and unfortunately none of the bids were successful. However one project is held on a reserve list should funding become available through savings in other successful bids.
- The joint projects identified include improving the **Electric Vehicle** charging network, expanding the **Electric Bike** scheme and purchasing personal exposure monitoring equipment for use by schools and community groups.
- The sole bid by Mid Devon was seeking funding for the initial stages of the **design work** (highways, drainage, flood risk and bridge design) for the Eastern Relief Road (ERR) at Cullompton to a total of £283,000. This is to progress the current preliminary design to the level of detail needed for planning application purposes.
- The joint projects outlined in the DEFRA bid will now form part of the deliverables within the Mid Devon Air Quality Strategy 2017-21 where possible. The strategy is currently under development and will be ready for consultation in the coming months with an update report going to the Community PDG in March. There are close links between having a sound Local Plan and the delivery of key infrastructure and other projects aimed at addressing on-going air quality concerns in the district and managing the impacts of new development.
- The Public Health manager has also been invited (in March) to discuss with the joint Director of Air Quality at DEFRA both the challenges that local authorities face and also the successes and good practice taking place across the country. This is part of informal policy formation discussions at DEFRA aimed at informing recommendations to ministers.



## **Human Resources (HR)/Payroll**

HR continue to be heavily involved in reorganisations and restructures which are taking place due to financial constraints and managers being required to make savings. Consultations need to be conducted with all affected staff over a thirty day period and information needs to be shared, views collated and HR then works with the manager to respond to these comments. Once the reorganisations/restructures are finished there is a great deal of work to be done with issuing new contracts, sorting out possible redeployments and amending organisational charts, management responsibilities and associated areas such as Etarmis (flexi system).

A staff survey was recently conducted and focus groups have now been arranged, the Group HR manager together with the Business partner for each area will attend feedback sessions led by the Director Of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation.

Gender Pay gap reporting legislation comes into force in April 2017 under the new laws we will have to calculate our gender pay gap from April 2017 and publish the details by April 2018

This year is likely to be hard with a 1% pay rise on the table which will be wiped out by increased national insurance contributions. This will have a knock on effect in respect of recruitment which is already problematic in some areas of the Council.

### **Links with the Trade Union**

Regular meetings with Unison allow a free exchange of views and thus enable a greater understanding on the part of the union as to why actions are taken but also from the senior management view a greater understanding of concerns of staff. The meetings have helped in the past to deal with matters before they become larger issues.

## **Customer services – update**

Customer Services is a support service, providing front line customer service and admin support for all our services.

The team are the first point of contact for our customers across many access channels and also provide the central admin services such as opening and despatch of post, printing, scanning and much more.

Customer Services includes Communications, Website content, FOI, Data Protection and Revenues and I have tried to include a snapshot of the work and performance for each area over the past year.

|  | <b>April 15-<br/>March 2016</b>            | <b>April 2016-<br/>February 2017</b> | <b>Comment</b><br>(Based on 11 months figures).                            |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Visitors to our offices<br>Numbers seen in 15 minutes                  | 50,297<br>94%                              | 30,115<br>96%                        | *Reduced.  |
| Calls answered call centre<br>% answered                               | 124,797<br>90% external<br>83% all         | 112,992<br>89% external<br>88% all   | No significant change  |
| Number of emails to<br>Customer First<br>% responded in 5 working days | 28,200 (included<br>penne testing).<br>98% | 14,312<br>99%                        | No significant change,<br>(Spike in 15/16 due to ICT<br>security testing.) |
| Payments made at our<br>offices  | 49,442                                     | 30,015                               | *Decrease  |
| Kiosk (self service)   | 7,244                                      | 6,101                                | No significant change  |
| Electronic payments  | 17,711                                     | 15,455                               | No significant change  |
| Phone payments<br>(automated)  | 14,578                                     | 15,359                               | *Increase  |
| Assisted phone payments  | 30,730                                     | 33,711                               | *Increase  |
| Face book posts  | 272  | 873                                  | Increase   |
| tweets   | 259  | 980                                  | Increase   |
| FOI requests   | 581  | 491                                  | Decrease   |
| Responded in 20 days   | 85%  | 92%                                  | Improved   |

- ❖ Reduced visitor numbers due to the closure of the Crediton office in April 2016, these customers are now using electronic or telephone payments.
- ❖ Introduction of garden waste permits increased the number of electronic payments in both years as this service was designed to enable an on-line transaction.

### **So what do all the statistics mean?**

**Customer Services** staff dealt with in excess of 222,998 transactions in an eleven month period. In addition to this, the team deal with post, media requests, complaints, various on line applications, so never a dull moment and ever increasing communication channels, with an increasing expectation of an instant response.

A fortnightly surgery has been provided since April 2016 in Crediton, this has been well received but with relatively few customers, total visitors to the surgery for 11 months 295.

Due to recent reductions in staff in Communications and the closure of our office in Crediton more work is now handled in Tiverton over the phone, by post, email, social media and in person. To ensure that we can continue to provide a good level of customer service with the resource we have it is essential that we design good digital transactions to enable customer that want to transact with us on line to do so.

For example garden waste permits started to be renewed in October and more than a third of customers have renewed on line. This helps to reduce contact to the call centre which is essential at peak times such as annual billing or elections, when call waiting time is increased due to the additional demand.

The call centre was also busy last year assisting elections with the referendum.

**The corporate admin team** had another busy year, to date the council has sent out 214,483 items of post from Phoenix House, this is considerably less than last year as we are now working with services to make efficiencies and outsource printing and postage wherever possible to take advantage of postage discounts and reduce printing costs.

**Communications** staffing reduced but work has continued on development of the website, during the year many parish councils took up the free website provision that we offered and received training on how to update and maintain their new website.

As you will see from the stats we have developed and improved our use of social media.

The customer service team also log all contacts from the media to February 2017 there have been 133 media enquiries, responses are sent once the story has been approved by the relevant Head of service.

### **Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection**

The administration of FOI moved to Customer services in 2015. All FOI requests are logged and monitored to ensure they are responded to on time.

Further development work was completed in 2016/17, and we now publish monthly FOI logs and data sets, this has helped to improve response times and reduce the number of FOIs that need to be responded to.

There were also 3 large Subject Access Requests (SARs) within in this period.

Data Protection breaches are recorded and monitored and a regular reports are provided to the Leadership Team, staff training and regular updates are provided to ensure we minimise the risk, a serious data breach could have both financial and reputational implications.

The next 12 months will be very busy preparing for the implementation of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Staff and Member briefings have been provided and a project group has been set up to take this forward.

### **Revenues**

The Revenues team have been part of Customer Services during this period. The team are a front line service responsible for the administration and collection of Council Tax, Business rates and all other Miscellaneous income.

Collections rates are on target to meet this years PI's

1 April 16 – February 17

Council tax collections = 97.23%

NDR collection = 99.59%

The Revenues team have an on-going development programme and had a successful take up campaign for e-billing this year, contributing to reduced printing and postage targets.

Revenues now report to the Director of Finance Assets and Resources.

### **Complaints**

In 2016 we received the following complaints total for all services:

Number of complaints 1 April 16- Feb 2017

|            |     |
|------------|-----|
| Complaints | 296 |
|------------|-----|

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| Compliments | 222 |
|-------------|-----|

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Comments | 91 |
|----------|----|

An annual report will be provided later in the year,

### **Learning and Development (L&D)**

The new L&D team includes a learning & development manager and a learning and development apprentice.

Following the audit review in February 2016 there have been changes to how the L&D service operates. Service Managers are responsible and accountable for their employee's training and development and as a result they are allocated a proportion of the L&D budget to maintain their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) health and safety requirements and necessary professional qualifications. The Service managers complete an annual service training plan to record what training and development each staff member requires over the next 12 month period and submits their training budget requirements to the L&D manager based on the essential needs. The remainder of the L&D budget is held centrally and managed by the L&D Manager for corporate training and development. This includes budget for e-learning licenses (for mandatory health and safety and other training), management development programmes and other identified development needs that are not 'essential' but desirable to enable a skilled workforce such as (communication skills, project planning and so forth). This process uncovered some training spend that was previously not paid for from the training budget and therefore the training budget has been increased to £135k (not including the HRA training budget) to reflect the training requirements for 17/18.

Our management development programme is now in place (working in partnership with CRISP). This programme is mandatory for all staff that have line management responsibility. Managers are also encouraged to join and participate in management learning sets as another means of enhancing their skills and behaviour as managers. Plans are also in place to introduce an 'aspiring managers' programme where 12 selected officers (who are not currently managers) are given the opportunity to

undertake a talent management training programme. This will involve an application process, and candidates will have to interview for a place.

Due to the new leadership and direction of the Council we will be undertaking a comprehensive 'skills audit' during the next year which will look at what skills, knowledge and behaviours are required corporately and within each service. We will then be able to examine what currently exists and highlight any gaps and identify training needs. This will also enable service managers to focus on longer-term succession planning for their services. We will work jointly with South West Councils in this project.

We offer an excellent coaching programme for staff who can access coaching from any of our 10 highly skilled and qualified coaches. We also form part of the south west council's coaching pool so Senior staff also have the option to go to the Pool to access coaching. This year some of our coaches have also been involved in facilitating and delivering training for the council to help save additional costs. The skills audit will also expose other areas of expertise within the council which will help to save on future external training costs. Internally run courses for 17/18 include; coaching skills, time management, assertiveness, communication, business planning and many more.

We continue to utilise opportunities including free courses (such as Petroc's distance learning courses) and look for other opportunities to access learning (such as e-learning, webinars, coaching programmes, class based or on the job). We are also currently exploring partnership opportunities with other councils or opportunities to mirror best practice ideas. We do not currently have an L&D management system in place and this is also being explored to create efficiencies and more effective monitoring of training needs.

The Apprenticeship Levy is going to create further opportunity to do things differently and we are currently exploring how this will work for the council. We have recently introduced an 'Apprentice Forum' to bring our apprentices together on a bimonthly basis for support, networking and learning opportunities.

We continue to place wellbeing of staff as a priority and are working towards a wellbeing charter. 16 staff are about to undertake mental health first aid training to be able to identify mental health and stress in the workplace. We are also planning to look at how we can prevent stress in the workplace.

## **Legal**

For Housing we have dealt with the following noteworthy cases:

- Closure Orders that have been reported in the press:  
Anderson – regarding his anti-social behaviour  
Russell – regarding drugs

- Also, we obtained a Civil Injunction against the ex-partner of a tenant – due to violence
- Possessions – these have been due to drug dealing from the property, and/or anti-social behaviour

The Police have asked us to obtain an injunction against a youth that is causing anti-social behaviour in the town centre.

Also, we have had a number of complaints/advice to Cllr's and Clerks. We have also assisted with the changes to the constitution and standards process.

## **Electoral Services**

### **Elections**

- Successfully delivered Police and Crime Commissioner Elections, May 2016
- Successfully delivered EU Referendum, June 2016
- Successfully delivered Crediton Town Council by-election, December 2016
- Planning for 2017 Devon County Council elections
- Contingency planning for snap General Election
- Met 100% of Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Returning Officers in 2016-17

### **Electoral Registration**

- 97% response to annual electoral registration canvass of properties in 2016-17
- Dealt with substantial increase in electoral registration and registration deadline extension in the run up to the referendum
- Dealt with substantial increase in overseas electoral registration in the run up to the referendum
- Planning for extension of overseas elector registration (from 15 years to indefinite period)
- Planning for extension of anonymous registration (wider group of people to attest applications)
- Met 100% of Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers in 2016-17

## **Member Services**

Ongoing support to Members

- Member Services continues to support Members with any issue that is within their remit, even if it only to signpost the member to the appropriate officer. Members have also been supported in the use of their iPads.

#### Ongoing Committee work

- Ongoing work in terms of Committee meetings.
- Provision of support and assistance to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on their fundamental review of Members Allowances.
- Working Groups in the current year have included Parish Liaison, Consultation, Refugee support and Devon Home Choice.

#### Member Development

- Member Services continue to support the development of Members; Personal Development Plan interviews will commence in the new municipal year and if any particular themes arise from the interviews, training sessions will be put in place. The team reports to the Member Development Group which consists of 5 Members and includes the Group Leaders.
- Member Development Charter Reassessment – 3 April 2017 – the outcome of the reassessment can be reported to the Scrutiny Committee
- Members briefings are also organised when appropriate and shared with other local authorities and Parish Councils if appropriate

#### Civic support

- Ongoing support to the Chairman of the Council, organising his diary and his attendance at civic events in Mid Devon and other districts. A successful Civic Service was held in Cullompton on 12 March 2017.

#### Parish Liaison

- Parish Liaison has now been brought under the wing of Member Services with a view that improved communication takes place with the Town and Parish Councils and that Member Services can now support the Town and Parish Councils alongside the District Councillors

#### Monitoring Officer Support

- Support has been given to the Monitoring Officer with regarding to meeting procedures and work on the Constitution.

### **Health & Safety Update**

#### **Work carried out during 2016-17**

- 12 x Health and Safety Site Inspections
- All sites have had Fire Risk Assessments review carried out with recommendations made to Managers were required

- Dangerous and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations (DSEAR) assessments were carried out on all sites where highly flammable or oxidising chemicals are kept
- The following numbers of employees have attended internal health and safety training
  - 75 Fire Wardens
  - 37 First Aid
  - 6 Risk Assessments
  - 5 Principals of health and safety
  - 26 Managing health and safety in leisure
  - 13 Induction
- Support has been given to Property Services to create a Planned Preventative Maintenance Scheme for all sites

### **Accident Reporting 2016-17**

To date a total of 49 accident reports have been received of which 5 were reported to RIDDOR. 2 of these were due to over 7 day absences due to back injury where employees had hyper extended their back whilst lifting. 2 were due to cuts where there was no protection by the PPE and 1 was caused when a motorist struck a Recycling operative who was standing on the pavement.

All incidents have been investigated and improvements made or training given where appropriate

### **Health and Safety Policies**

All health and safety policies are up to date

### **Planned Work for 2017-18**

- To follow up on the action plans previously created and review the current level of performance against the health and safety regulations and high risk services resulting in developing action and training plans to ensure compliance to regulations and approved codes of practice
- To develop and implement a program of change which places the Managers of their services as the drivers of health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace
- To develop and implement a program of change which places the Managers of their services as the drivers of health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace
- To work with the Human Resource and Learning and Development teams to develop an action plan working toward reducing sickness absence by focussing on the Wellbeing of MDDC employees, with an objective of achieving the Achieve standards of the Wellbeing Charter





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## **CABINET 5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016**

### **REPORT OF MRS JENNY CLIFFORD, THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION**

#### **LOCAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Richard Chesterton  
**Responsible Officer:** Mrs Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning and Regeneration

#### **Reason for Report:**

The Chief Executive was asked by the Council's Scrutiny Committee to investigate the efficacy and effectiveness of the Planning Service, with particular reference to the way enforcement is carried out and how members are engaged with the work of the council in this service area. As a result, it was recommended that the Head of Planning and Regeneration bring forward the Local Enforcement Plan for Cabinet to consider as a matter of priority to set the framework for enforcement activity in Mid Devon.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Cabinet agree the Local Enforcement Plan for public consultation

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** The primary purpose of the planning system is to regulate the use and development of land in the public interest and be a positive force in protecting what is good in our environment and preventing what is unacceptable. The Planning Service is a statutory service, the effective operation of which and necessary enforcement of breaches is central to the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities of community, housing, economy and environment

**Financial Implications:** None

**Legal Implications:** The Planning Service including the enforcement of planning control must operate within the legal and performance parameters established through legislation, case law and Government performance indicators, but should also command public confidence in the system. The operation of the Planning System and its enforcement will by its nature often involve making difficult decisions that will not be universally supported within the community.

**Risk Assessment:** Local Planning Authorities are expected to operate in a reasonable way, in accordance with statutory requirements and Government guidance. There is an expectation that the Council will be able to justify its decision making.

#### **1.0 Report**

1.1 At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016, Members noted that a report would be put to Cabinet regarding the Local Enforcement Plan.

1.2 Planning enforcement is a statutory function of local government although the power to take formal action is discretionary. The Council as Local Planning Authority has responsibility for the investigation of reported breaches of

planning control. Unauthorised development can be detrimental to the local environment and a source of community tension. Failure to investigate and enforce planning conditions or address unauthorised development can reduce the effectiveness of a Local Planning Authority and undermine public confidence in the planning system. The enforcement of planning control is not subject to national performance targets in the same way as the determination of planning and other applications.

- 1.3 In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework which replaced much of the previous advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG's) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS's). With regards to enforcement of planning control, Planning Policy Guidance Note 18 (Enforcing Planning Control) was replaced by the following single paragraph:

*Enforcement*

*207. Effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate to do so.*

- 1.4 In order to manage public expectations with regards to the resourcing, powers and tools available to the Local Planning Authority, a Local Enforcement Plan has been drafted in line with the advice set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.5 It sets out the legislative framework that the Council enforces, defines what does and what does not constitute a breach of planning control, how reported breaches will be investigated and the procedures for commencing formal enforcement action. It sets out new performance targets and clearly indicates the priority given in terms of high, medium and low to the investigation of differing breaches of planning control and the response time that can be expected. This is considered important in order to prioritise resources and manage expectations.
- 1.6 The Local Enforcement Plan was considered at a meeting of the Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2016. At the meeting Members sought the following:
- i) An amendment to prioritisation where serious disturbance /nuisance to residents of damage to the environment. Amendment done.
  - ii) Text amendment to give more recognition that reporting of breaches of planning control also arise from other sources including Parish / Town Councils, Elected Members and Council staff. Amendment done.
  - iii) Certain planning permissions require the discharge of conditions in advance of work starting on site. Other conditions must be adhered to during the works. Information on when work commences is gained from a range of sources including Parish /Town Councils and Elected

Members who may wish to bring this to the attention of officers. Members of PPAG wished the assistance of this to condition checking to be highlighted.

- iv) That officers investigate whether for the benefit of Parish /Town Councils and Elected Members it is possible to produce an automated list of conditions as planning permissions are granted. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

PPAG supported the proposal to consult upon the draft Local Enforcement Plan.

- 1.7 Members are asked to consider the content of the Local Enforcement Plan and agree it for public consultation purposes. Consultation is proposed to take place over a 6 week period and to be advertised by way of press release, notification of Parish and Town Councils and on the Council's website.

**Contact for more Information:**

Mrs Jenny Clifford 01884 234346  
[jclifford@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:jclifford@middevon.gov.uk)

**Circulation of the Report:**

Cabinet Members

**List of Background Papers:**

National Planning Policy Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Scrutiny Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016,  
23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016

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**Local Enforcement Plan  
Mid Devon District Council  
Consultation draft March 2017**

## MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

### LOCAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN

#### BACKGROUND

Mid Devon District Council has responsibility for the investigation of reported breaches of planning control. Unauthorised development can be detrimental to the local environment and be a source of social tension. Failure to enforce planning conditions or address unauthorised development can reduce the effectiveness of a Local Planning Authority and undermine public confidence in the planning system.

Policy DM31 of the Mid Devon Local Plan (MDLP) which was adopted in October 2013, states;

*The Council will investigate unauthorised development, acting proportionately to the scale of the suspected breach of planning control. Enforcement action will be taken where it is appropriate to do so and in the public interest.*

The MDLP, in paragraph 6.3 clarifies the need for a Local Enforcement Plan to set out the Council's approach to enforcement and states it will include timescales for action and detail on how the Council will respond to suspected breaches of planning control.

This Local Enforcement Plan has been developed in accordance with Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) which was issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Paragraph 207 states;

*Effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate to do so."*

Furthermore, the Local Government Ombudsman, who investigate complaints from the public when Councils have failed to take enforcement action, state in their report 'Not in my back yard:

Local People and The Planning Process' (December 2014);

*"(Local Enforcement) Plans should set out how councils will investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development, the circumstances where they might take action, and the enforcement actions that they will consider. This will help officers make*



*consistent decisions and understand the legal tools available to them. It will also help local people understand what to expect when they make a complaint. The enforcement plan should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.”*

Bearing this guidance in mind, this Plan will pursue the following objectives:

- Provide an accessible service that maintains public confidence in the planning system;
- Provide a service that is both reactive and proactive in its commitment to remedy undesirable effects of unauthorised development;
- Provide a service response that is prioritised according to the harm or the potential harm caused by the breach;
- Provide information on how breaches of planning control will be investigated and action taken where it is appropriate to do so;
- Monitor development in line with resources and prioritise according to the scale and complexity of the development permitted;
- Achieve a balance between protecting amenity and other interests and allowing acceptable development to remain, or to continue, in the absence of permission;
- Seek resolution of planning breaches through informal and formal action including prosecution of offenders to uphold the integrity of the planning system;
- Monitor performance of the service.

These objectives should be read within the context of the policies contained within the adopted MDLP and Mid Devon District Council's wider corporate aims as set out in the Corporate Plan 2016 -2020

- Economy
- Houses
- Community
- Environment

## LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The statutory legislation that the Council enforces is based upon the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This legislation forms the fundamental basis of the planning system today in England and Wales.

Subsequent national planning legislation that is of particular relevance to Planning Enforcement includes the following :

**The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England)**

**Order 2015** which sets out what can be done under 'permitted development rights', i.e. without requiring specific planning permission from the Council.

**The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended)** which sets out which advertisements benefit from deemed consent i.e. those advertisements which can be displayed without requiring express consent from the Council.

**The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)** which sets out the various categories that different uses of land fall into, and what comprises a material change of use requiring planning permission.

**Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** which sets out the regards a Local Planning Authority must have to preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas

## WHAT IS A BREACH OF PLANNING CONTROL?

The Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended) sets out that planning permission is required for development. Section 55 of this Act defines development as the “*carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change of use of any buildings or other land.*”

Section 171A of the Act defines a breach of control as a) carrying out development without the required planning permission, or b) failing to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted.

The majority of complaints made to the Council allege that one of the following breaches has occurred:

- Operational development has taken place without planning permission
- A material change of use of land without planning permission
- Works have not been carried out in accordance with an approved planning permission
- Failure to comply with conditions attached to an approved planning permission

There are also other matters which fall under the scope of planning control, and therefore any reported breach would be investigated by the Council. These include:

- Advertisements which are being displayed without either deemed or express consent
- Works to a listed building which affect its character and setting without the necessary listed building consent
- Demolition in a conservation area, when planning permission is required
- Works to or removal of protected trees and hedgerows

## **WHAT IS NOT A BREACH OF PLANNING CONTROL?**

We receive a number of complaints about matters which are not within the scope of planning control. They may fall within the remit of other Council departments, and where this is the case we will advise the complainant of where to seek further advice. Some examples of things that we cannot investigate include:

- Boundary wall and other land ownership disputes. These are civil matters between neighbours, and we do not keep records of land ownership
- Parking, traffic and obstructions on the Highway or verges. These are matters in which we cannot take action. Devon County Council are the highway authority and can be contacted on 0845 155 100 for further advice
- Fly tipping. This is investigated by the Council's Environmental Health Team. Reports can be made via the Council's website or by phone on 01884 255255. For very large quantities of fly tipped waste or incidents which might threaten to pollute a water course, the Environment Agency can investigate. Their hotline number is 0800 807060.
- Dangerous structures. These may fall within the remit of the Building Control team who can be contacted on 01884 234345
- Complaints regarding noise and smell. These may be an issue which can be investigated by Environmental Health who can be contacted on 01884 255255.
- Stationing of a caravan within the grounds of a dwelling

### **Time Limits**

Section 171B of the Act sets out the time limits for taking enforcement action. In the case of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, normally no action can be taken after four years from where the works were substantially completed. Where there has been a change of use of any building to a single dwelling house, the limit is also four years, beginning with the date of the breach. In the case of any other breach of planning control no enforcement action can be taken once ten years has elapsed. Works to listed buildings, protected trees and the display of advertisements fall within the remit of different legislation, and therefore these time limits do not apply.

## **INVESTIGATION OF REPORTED BREACHES OF PLANNING CONTROL**

### **Receipt of complaints**

There are several ways that members of the public can register a planning enforcement complaint:

- by email to [devcon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:devcon@middevon.gov.uk)
- by telephone to the contact centre 01884 225 225
- by completing the online form at <https://new.middevon.gov.uk/planning/alleged-breaches/>
- by writing to us at Planning Enforcement, Mid Devon District Council, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6PP
- in person to the duty Planning Officer at Phoenix House from 9:00 to 12:00, Monday to Friday

Breaches of planning control are also reported to the Council by its Elected Councillors, Parish and Town Councils. The Council's staff also identify breaches for investigation.

### **Confidentiality**

The details of the complainant are treated as confidential. However, in some circumstances this may not be possible particularly when matters progress to court in the event the complainant becomes a witness and gives evidence and/or details of the complaint must be disclosed. Representations received on a planning application are not confidential. Breaches reported by Parish and Town Councils where they are discussed in public at a meeting of the Council are a matter of public record and not treated as confidential.

### **Registration of complaints**

When a complaint is received, it is recorded on our secure database and allocated a unique reference number. In order that we are able to investigate effectively it is important that we have the following information as a minimum:

- Full address of the site where the breach of control is suspected
- Details of the nature and extent of the suspected breach of control
- Name and contact details of the complainant so that we are able to update on progress made and advise of the outcome of our investigation. For convenience and in the interests of best use of resources, it is helpful for this to include an email address if the complainant is happy to be contacted in this manner. Generally we will not investigate anonymous complaints.

We will acknowledge all complaints made to us, and confirm the reference number and the investigating officer. This may be by telephone if the complaint is made in this manner.

All complainant details will remain confidential. Although a contravener may be able to guess the source of the complaint, this will not be revealed by the Council. All information is held securely in our database and is not accessible to the public.

### **Background checks**

Once a complaint has been registered, we will carry out a check of the planning history of the site. This may include checking whether planning permission has been granted for the development, whether there are any relevant conditions or if the matter has been previously investigated. If appropriate, we may look at aerial photographs from different timescales and historic maps.

We may also liaise with other Council departments relevant to the case. This may include Building Control, Environmental Health, Licensing and Council Tax. This helps us establish a background to the case, and may help us to confirm whether works have already commenced or a change of use has occurred.

In order that we are able to use the resources available most effectively, we prioritise all cases received as follows:

**High Priority:**

A breach of planning control which is causing, or is likely to cause serious harm to the environment, serious disturbance or nuisance to residents or to public safety unless an immediate response is made

The unauthorised works or use of land or buildings, that present and immediate and serious danger to the public

Unauthorised works that could be seriously detrimental to the character of a Listed Building, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Conservation Area or Site of Specific Scientific Interest.

Unauthorised development that causes serious harm, yet has gone undetected and the statutory time limit for taking enforcement action is imminent

Works to protected trees or hedgerows.

**Response time – first site visit within 3 working days of registration**

**Medium Priority:**

The priority level covers all cases that are not a high or low priority

Unauthorised developments causing disturbance/ nuisance to residents or damage to the environment.

Work to Listed Buildings which is not considered seriously detrimental to its character.

Unauthorised advertisements in a conservation area or prominent locations which have the potential to cause serious harm to public safety or amenity.

Unauthorised development where the statutory time limit for taking enforcement action may expire within the next six months.

Untidy land which is causing serious harm to the amenity of the area

Non-compliance with planning conditions which are having a significant adverse impact on the development, amenity or neighbouring properties

Deviation from approved plans, which is having a significant adverse impact on amenity or neighbouring properties

**Response time – first site visit within 10 working days of registration**

**Low priority:**

This priority level covers breaches of planning control that are causing limited or no harm to the environment or residential amenity

Technical breaches of control – for example works that are marginally above permitted development

Installation of satellite dishes

Unauthorised advertisements in less sensitive locations

Minor variations from approved plans which are not having an adverse impact on amenity

**Response time – first site visit within 15 working days of registration**

**Initial site visit**

Once the check of the history of the site has been undertaken, the investigating officer will normally visit the site. Sometimes for safety or operational reasons this may be by more than one officer, or with colleagues from other departments. It is standard procedure for the officer to visit the site where the alleged breach of control has been reported, and speak to the owner or occupier where they are present.

The timescale for the initial site visit when required of the site relates to the priority of the alleged breach (see above). Where the matter falls within the remit of more than one Council department, the initial visit may be carried out by an officer from another department.

As part of our investigation we may take photographs at the site. These will be stored in a secure manner and will not be accessible to the public but may be used in documents which the public will have access to in the event of them being required as evidence. Photographs enable us to have an accurate record of the situation on a given day and also facilitate discussions with other officers about what has been seen during the site visit.

Once the visit has been completed, the findings will be assessed and a view taken as to how the investigation will proceed. This may include obtaining legal advice about the case.

**If no breach is established**

A significant proportion of cases are closed as it appears to the Council that no breach of control has occurred. Examples of where this might take place include where:

- planning permission has been granted for the development

- there is no evidence that the alleged breach has taken place.
- specific planning permission is not required as the works fall under the scope of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This legislation grants deemed planning permission for certain works.
- evidence confirms that the development is now immune from enforcement action due to the passage of time

Where no breach is established and therefore no further action is to be taken, we will notify the complainant within ten days of the date of the initial site visit to explain the position and the case will be closed.

### **Where further investigation is required**

In some circumstances it may not be possible to establish from our initial visit whether there is a breach of planning control. Examples of this may include:

- Alleged breaches of hours of operation conditions
- Domestic premises being used for business purposes where a material change of use is alleged
- Building works which the owner claims took place more than four years ago.

Further investigation will be required, and examples of this may include a more detailed study of Council records, liaison with other Council departments and external agencies and seeking further clarification from the alleged contravener.

In some cases, we may ask the complainant to provide us with more information. If they are unable to do so, this may result in the Council not being able to take further action due to insufficient evidence.

### **Obtaining additional information**

To help us obtain more information and to ensure we correctly identify the breach of planning control and persons responsible, there are specific legal tools available to us. These are discretionary, and are not used in every case:

#### **i) Planning Contravention Notice (PCN)**

A PCN can be served on anyone with an interest in the property. It can only be served where it appears to the Council that a breach of planning control may have occurred and they want to find out more information before deciding what if any enforcement action to take. It allows the local planning authority to require any information they need for enforcement purposes about any operations being carried out or any use of the land.

It can be used to invite its recipient to respond constructively to the Council about how any suspected breach of planning control may be satisfactorily remedied.

There is no right of appeal against a PCN and failure to respond within the required timescale is an offence.

#### **ii) Section 330 Notice (Requisition for Information)**

To enable the Council to exercise other powers, they may serve a notice under Section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring information as to interests in land,



including ownership and occupier details. There is no right of appeal against a Section 330 Notice and failure to respond within the required timescale is an offence.

### **Where a breach of control is established**

Where a breach is established, the first step is for a decision to be made whether it would be expedient to take formal action. Expediency is a test of whether the unauthorised activities are causing serious harm having regard to the Mid Devon District Council Local Plan policies and other material considerations. This decision will be made in conjunction with the relevant Planning Officer.

It may be the case that a technical breach of control has occurred, but that it is so minor in nature, and having little or no impact on the amenity of the local area, that it would not be expedient to take further action. An example of this might be a fence which is slightly higher than the height it could be erected without the need for planning permission, so is a technical breach of control. If it was not having any adverse impact on the amenity of the area, the Council may decide that it is so minor that it would not warrant any further action.

### **Proportionality**

The provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights such as Article 1 of the First Protocol, Article 8 and Article 14 are relevant when considering enforcement action. Government guidance advises that there is a clear public interest in enforcing planning law and planning regulation in a proportionate way. In deciding whether enforcement action is taken, the Council will have regard to the potential impact on the health, housing needs and welfare of those affected by the proposed action, as well as those who are affected by a breach of planning control.

Planning enforcement powers are discretionary, and it is not considered to be a good use of limited public resources to pursue enforcement action against any development where planning permission would normally be granted, except where the imposition of conditions would allow appropriate controls to be secured. It is important to be aware that enforcement is not intended to be a punishment for those who have breached planning control, but a necessary function to protect the environment.

Where a development is considered likely to be granted planning permission, or where the imposition of conditions would enable appropriate control, the Council will encourage the submission of a retrospective planning application. This enables affected neighbours and interested parties to have their say. Where the Council considers that there is no prospect of planning permission being granted, and there is an adverse impact on the built environment, the Council will proceed to formal enforcement action where negotiations to resolve the matter informally are unsuccessful.

### **Negotiation**

Where it is considered that the breach of planning control is unacceptable, the Council will initially attempt to negotiate a solution unless the breach is causing an irreparable harm to the environment or local amenity. This may include the reduction or cessation of an unauthorised use or activity or the modification or removal of unauthorised operational development.

In carrying out negotiations, officers will have regard to the specific circumstances of the case, and advise an appropriate timescale for any remedial works or relocation to be carried out. Where it is clear from the outset that negotiation will not be successful, or where a

solution cannot be reached within a reasonable timescale, we will proceed with formal action.

**Retrospective planning application**

In circumstances where a breach of planning control has occurred and it is considered that the development could be made acceptable by the imposition of conditions, or where the submission of a planning application is likely to benefit the proper assessment of the impact of the unauthorised development, a retrospective planning application would be invited within a specified timescale. In such circumstances it will be made clear that the invitation is made without prejudice to any final decision the Council may make in the matter. If such an application is not submitted, the Council will consider whether or not it is expedient to take enforcement action.

## **COMMENCING FORMAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

Where negotiations with the contravener are unsuccessful, or if the breach of control is considered to have such a detrimental impact that more immediate action is needed, there are a range of powers available to the Council, which are set out in the paragraphs below.

The Planning Services Scheme of Delegation sets out which powers are delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration and which will require Planning Committee authority.

Once a report has been prepared for committee approval, the contravener and complainant will be advised of the date in writing. The Planning Committee meeting will be held in Council's Tiverton office at Phoenix House and meetings usually commence at 2.15pm. The meeting is open to the public. There is an opportunity for both parties to address the Committee. Details of the procedure on how to register to speak will be contained within the letter.

A copy of the officer's report is available either from Phoenix House five working days prior to the date of the Committee or via the Committee Meetings and Minutes link accessed from [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk).

### **Enforcement Notice**

This can be issued where development is being carried out without planning permission or where a condition is not being complied with. It requires action to be taken to rectify the breach within a specified timescale. A copy should be served on the land and anyone with an interest in the land. Once the notice has been served, there is a further minimum period of 28 days before the notice becomes effective. Any person in receipt of a copy of the notice has right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. Failure to comply with an enforcement notice is a criminal offence tried in the Magistrates' or the Crown Court. The maximum penalty in the Magistrates' Court is a fine not exceeding £20,000 but there is no limit on the fine that the Crown Court may impose.

### **Breach of Condition Notice**

This can be issued where a condition on a planning permission is not being complied with. A copy of the Breach of Condition Notice, is not served on the land, but instead on anyone with an interest in the land and requires compliance with condition within a specified timescale. There is no right of appeal, but the validity of a breach of condition notice, and the appropriateness of the local planning authority's decision to serve it may be challenged by application to the High Court for judicial review. Summary prosecution can be brought in the Magistrates' Court for the offence of contravening a breach of condition notice. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine, currently not exceeding £1,000.

### **Listed building Enforcement Notice**

This is similar to an Enforcement Notice but used where works have been carried out to a listed building, either without the benefit of listed building consent or in contravention of a condition of such a consent. The notice can require the removal of the unauthorised works and reinstatement.

### **Stop Notice**

This can be served with an Enforcement Notice or after we have served an Enforcement Notice if it is considered that continuing unauthorised development is causing irreparable

and immediate significant harm. The Stop Notice continues to take effect even if an appeal is lodged against the Enforcement Notice. It requires that activities cease to safeguard local amenity or public safety and to prevent serious or irreversible harm to the environment. There is a minimum three day period before it comes into effect. There is no right of appeal to the Secretary of State against the prohibitions in a stop notice. The validity of a stop notice, and the appropriateness of the local planning authority's decision to issue a notice, may be challenged by application to the High Court for judicial review. Where the associated enforcement notice is quashed, varied or withdrawn or the stop notice is withdrawn, compensation may be payable in certain circumstances and subject to various limitations

### **Temporary Stop Notice**

These can be served where we consider that there has been a breach of planning control, and it is necessary to stop the activity or development in question immediately to safeguard the amenity of the area. This differs from the normal Stop Notice powers as it is immediate and does not have to be accompanied by an Enforcement Notice, but it is only valid for a period of 28 days. There is no right of appeal when a Temporary Stop Notice is served, but a judicial review can challenge the validity and propriety of our decision.

### **Section 215 Notices**

When the condition of land or buildings negatively affects the amenity of an area, a Section 215 Notice can be served. This requires the owners and occupiers of the land to take specific steps to secure an improvement in its appearance. Recipients of a Section 215 Notice have the right of appeal to a Magistrates' court. Failure to comply with the notice is an offence.

Where an appeal is lodged with the Planning Inspectorate against any notice issued by the Council, the complainants, the applicable Ward Councillors and the Town/Parish Council will be notified in writing and advised on how they may contribute to the appeal process, should they wish to do so.

### **Prosecution**

We can commence Court proceedings where a formal notice has not been complied with. In addition, in some instances we can commence legal proceedings for unauthorised works without the need to serve any formal notices, e.g. unauthorised works to a listed building or a protected tree or an unauthorised advertisement.

We will apply two tests in cases where a prosecution appears likely, in consultation with our legal services department:

- i) The evidential test - Is there admissible and reliable evidence that the offence has been committed, and that there is a reasonable prospect of conviction?
- ii) The public interest test - Is it in the public interest to take action?

### **Direct Action**

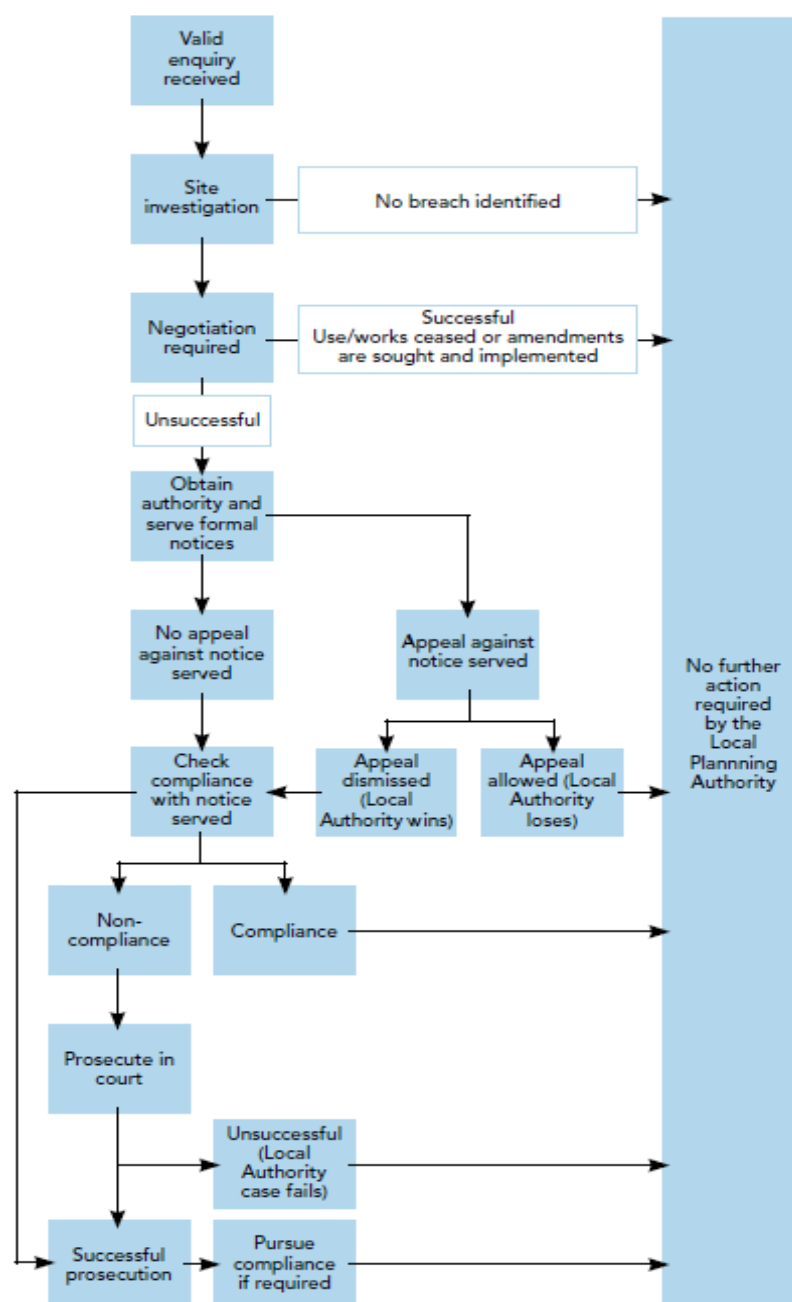
The Council has powers to enter land to carry out works and to make sure an Enforcement Notice or a Section 215 Notice is complied with by carrying out the required steps ourselves. The Local Planning Authority may also recover from the person who is then the owner of the

land any expenses reasonably incurred by them in doing so, either by direct billing or by registering. a charge on the property with the Land Registry. Direct Action is costly, and will only be considered when the level of harm being caused is sufficient to justify the use of limited resources.

### **Injunction**

This is an order of the High Court or the County Court, which can be used to restrain an actual or anticipated breach of planning or listed building control. This power is used where nothing short of an injunction would be effective to restrain breaches. There are compensation implications for the LPA to consider. Failure to comply with an injunction can lead to an unlimited fine and/or imprisonment.

## How the process works



## TARGETS FOR ACTION

The planning service aims to achieve the following targets. The Service will set performance targets depending upon the priorities and resources available to deliver the planning enforcement service:

| ACTION   | TARGET TIME   |
|--|---|
| Register and acknowledge all written complaints  | 3 working days  |
| Carry out initial site visit – High priority cases   | 3 working days  |
| Carry out initial site visit – Medium priority cases   | 10 working days   |
| Carry out initial site visit – Low priority cases  | 15 working days   |
| Initial response to complainant setting out progress or informing about a decision in cases where there is no breach | Within 5 working days of the date of the initial site visit                             |
| Notify complainant that Enforcement Notice has been served or decision that 'no action' will be taken                | Within 5 working days of the issue of the notice or decision to take no further action. |

When cases take a long time to investigate, for example where on-going monitoring is required, the Enforcement Officer will update the complainant at each significant stage of the process. This might include consulting if a retrospective planning application is submitted or advising of the compliance date within an issued enforcement notice.

The Enforcement Service will endeavour to resolve enquiries within three months of their receipt. However, where formal enforcement action is required, such as the issue of an enforcement notice, the timescales involved will not make this possible.

## **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANNING PERMISSIONS**

It remains the responsibility of individual developers to comply with the terms and conditions set out in their planning permissions. However, failure to comply can affect not only the quality of the environment of the district or the amenity of the neighbourhood and also undermine the reasons and justification for granting planning permission in the first place.

There is no requirement for a developer to notify the Council of commencement of most developments once planning permission has been granted, however we ask that they do so. We are not always aware of when work commences on site and it is of assistance if this is brought to our attention. Due to limited resources, it is not possible for the Council to monitor every planning permission granted. We rely in part on nearby residents and the Town and Parish Councils to let us know if they notice things are not being built in accordance with the approved plans, or if a condition is not being complied with.

Where planning applications have attracted a high level of public interest we will endeavour to monitor the implementation of any permission granted.



## **REVIEWING THE PLAN**

This Local Enforcement Plan will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there is a substantial change in the relevant legislation.

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## **Scrutiny briefing paper- Communications working group update March 2017**

The last update on the recommendations from the communications working group was provided to Scrutiny in March 2016.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that the Chief Executive had shown some concerns regarding communication and it was RESOLVED that this matter be left with him to move forward.

It was AGREED that an agenda item be added for 12 months' time in order that Members could assess progress from a Members perspective.

### **Communications working group**

The Communications working group looked at issues with communication between officers and members in particular in relations to

- Access to information
- Internal communication
- External communication

The only issue taken forward in 2015 was in relation to officer's failure to respond to emails from members. It was agreed that any issues with communication should be referred to the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive.

Communication with members is provided via WIS, member briefings and officers respond to individual member enquires.

The restructure and realignment of resources to meet our corporate priorities is still in progress, and at present resource for communications remains as it did in 2016.

### **Communications Service general update**

Since the redundancy of the Communications and Reputations Manager, dedicated resource to communications work has reduced. A member of staff who was working part time in communications is now full time but the role includes website and digital communications. This post is supported by customer service staff who are responsible for the day to day administration needed to log media enquiries and post press releases on our website.

Service managers and members were provided with media training and service managers are now responsible for their own media responses and communications plans.

Despite this reduction in staff the statistics below provide details on the work undertaken in the past 11 months and represent a significant increase in social media communication.

April to February 2017

Facebook posts      873

Tweets                980

Press releases        98

Media enquiries      133

In addition to this services have updated information on the website, and run various campaigns to inform customers of changes to service provision.

Cabinet and ward members are advised of any media enquiries that relate to them.

Liz Reeves Head of Customer Services and ICT

Update October 2015.

## **1. Access to information**

Clarification is urgently needed in relation to the information that Councillors can have access to. When this has been obtained then there is a need to ensure that everyone within the organisation is familiar with the Councillors right to know.

Members can have whatever they need for their job, but must have signed all relevant policies i.e data protection, information security etc.

## **2. Communication, internal**

a) All Members should receive notification of planned council house estate visits at the beginning of the calendar year. The Housing department to check with the Member Services meetings diary before doing this.

Done.

b) Training to be provided to all Members who would like it on the effective use of Outlook to aid meeting management and email correspondence.

Training is offered to all Members at induction – outlook calendars on the ipad

c) Members to receive a response to an email query within 5 working days, if this is not achievable then an acknowledgement to be sent indicating how long it will take to provide a response.

The Chief Executive explained that receiving a response to an email from an Officer within 5 days was an aspiration but could not be guaranteed due to Officer work load. He informed the Committee that they should report specific incidents to him if they had a continued problem;

Only one issues reported to Kevin in this period.

d) Investigations to be made into the possibility of acquiring the 'Doodle' system to help in setting up Member meetings.

In place and used when necessary but only works if everyone responds (system for arranging bookings – allows Members to select meeting dates against their availability.

e) Management team to provide an update on a six monthly basis as to who is responsible for what in each service area.

This was done in WIS

f) Group Leaders to be reminded that they need to feed back to their Group Members.

Done

g) Consideration to be given to replacing Group Leaders meetings with more regular meetings with the Chief Executive to include all Members.

The Chief Executive now holds two annual Q & A sessions with Members and had agreed to meet Groups on further occasions if required;  
This has been happening with the next briefing scheduled for 24 September

h) Cabinet Members must ensure that Ward Members are informed of significant events/meetings in their wards.

Reminded

### **3. Communication, external**

a) More publicity is needed when meetings are held in other areas (e.g. the Cabinet meetings in Crediton and Cullompton).

Acknowledged we do need to do more publicity

b) Members attending Outside Body meetings must provide feedback to the wider membership (e.g. the minutes of the meeting will suffice if necessary) even if those Outside Bodies are not meeting.

Members have been reminded

c) Outside Body attendance figures to be reported before the allocation of seats at each Annual Meeting in May.

This can only be done if we are given the information

d) Constitution Working Group to consider amending the Constitution to state that Public Questions should be answered during Public Question Time so that if the public want to ask a supplementary question they can.

Up to the chairman of the meeting

e) Members themselves should give consideration to the Council's reputation through their own behaviour and actions, particularly at meetings where the public are present e.g. Planning Committee.

f) The Council must ensure that all public notices display up to date and accurate information.

Not practical, best effort will be made, however if Members are aware of an issue we will deal with it

### **4. General Issues**

a) There should be something on the front of an agenda to say when confidential information is attached.

This should be resolved now because of modern.gov, the agenda pack will say that it is private on the top, instead of public, and all of the pages will state that they are restricted in a clear watermark. The app only allows access to the private papers to those with a log-in.

b) Confidential reports should be marked more clearly (consider water marking each page).

This should be resolved now because of modern.gov. see above.

c) The Constitution Working Group be asked to look at the problems associated with verbal reports and consider whether (except in extreme circumstances) all reports to committees and working groups should be in writing and issued with the agenda, in order to give Members time to consider the reports prior to any discussion.

There will be a need for verbal updates when appropriate, discussions are recorded in the minutes and no decisions are taken on these.

d) There should be a policy whereby incorrect statements in the press are always corrected.

This is not always possible or the best solution in all cases.

e) Queries from the press should be responded to in a timely fashion.

Contacts from the press are sent to the relevant service area as soon as they are received, responses are co-ordinated by Communications or Customer Services and responded to within deadlines whenever possible.

f) Good news stories should be more proactively promoted.

Discussed every week at Management team as a permanent item on the agenda.

g) Consideration should be given to setting up a review of the how the Council interacts with the press.

Patrick Phelvin to attend September SOF to explain his role and take questions.

The Chief Executive and the Leader had met with the editor of the Gazette. The Chief Executive considered that the Council had a good relationship with the local paper.

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## **Scrutiny Annual Report**

Scrutiny is an integral part of the governance of the council. It has normally been described in terms of four principles of good scrutiny:

1. It provides a “critical friend” challenge to the executive policy and decision makers. That does not mean scrutiny is oppositional. It is about supporting better decision making through a process of public challenges. Scrutiny should sit closely by the executive. It should understand and engage with the executive’s priorities (Centre for Public Scrutiny). It should monitor the achievement or otherwise of the corporate plan objectives.
2. It enables the voice and concerns of the public - about being open and being prepared to have conversations with local people about the services that are important to them – which may come from members in their role as ward representatives.
3. It is carried out by independent minded members who lead and own the scrutiny process – with an understanding of the resources available – and may examine issues that are politically contentious.
4. It leads to improvements in public services – perhaps the most important of the four principles.

How well does MDCC match up to these aspirations?

### **1. Critical friend challenge to executive policy and decision makers**

Each meeting a cabinet member is invited to attend to report on their portfolio and to consider success or failure in achieving their responsibilities and, where appropriate, their contribution to the implementation of the corporate plan. A briefing paper is circulated before the meeting and the cabinet member is subject to often intensive questioning.

Challenge may occur through call-in, particularly relevant where the cabinet/portfolio holder has acted beyond their constitutional responsibility or policy, expressed as beyond the remit of the corporate plan. Two call-ins were; the commitment to the construction of a Premier Inn as part of the multi-storey car park and, secondly, concern that housing construction failed to take sufficient account of the need to make provision for mobility scooters in the aids and adaptations policy. Both were aired but not actioned by the Scrutiny committee.

Each meeting examines performance and risk to monitor progress against the corporate plan and local service targets, as well as an update on the key business risks.

Scrutiny of the draft budget is an important function of the committee. The Chairman of the Scrutiny committee and other members attend Cabinet meetings and comment where appropriate in the “critical friend” capacity. However, it is worth noting that the structure of governance, with most policy proposals being first considered by PDG members which cover

the main business of the council and subsequently largely adopted by Cabinet, means that policy has been well considered as acceptable by members. This tends to limit the scope of scrutiny examination or concern of potential inappropriate executive action, but does provide the opportunity for Scrutiny to pull together and provide update and an overview of council policy and progress, e.g. devolution.

## **2. It enables the voice and concerns of the public to be examined**

The regular public question slot has been well used by parish representatives to challenge mainly planning issues such as the perceived failure to communicate enforcement or deal with burgeoning AD concerns.

Members have established a task group to scope a project for consulting with the public in Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton to ascertain their views on MDDC.

Scrutiny provides the means to act as examiner of the contribution of external public services to the welfare of the district. External agencies invited to attend have been the two local MPs, the Clinical Commissioning Group on proposed health changes and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members forward a list of detailed questions and subject the interviewee to substantial interrogation. The interview with Mel Stride brought forth the proposal to introduce a MDDC delegation to the relevant Minister in respect of concerns over the 5 year land supply.

The contribution of the Portas executive to the regeneration and wellbeing of Tiverton town centre was explored in detail.

Scrutiny members are able to bring forward items of public concern for the agenda, e.g. failure to implement a planning condition.

## **3. Carried out by independent minded members who own the scrutiny process**

A task group has been established to examine aspects of partnership with neighbouring authorities as a precursor to potential devolution developments. A task group was established on reviewing the cost of efficiency which made a series of recommendations to Cabinet to generate efficiencies. The relationship between MDDC and town and parish councils is much valued by members who established a task group to evaluate and improve the relationship by enhanced communication, e.g. Parish Matters, now replaced by the more informative Town and Parish Newsletter.

A number of important areas for investigation were requested by Members:-

- Safeguarding of children following a worrying incident in Tiverton
- The plans and progress for the Tiverton Pannier Market and Tiverton town centre with recommendations to Cabinet for action
- Increases to leisure centre charging
- Equalities and hate crime in the light of Brexit
- Car parking charges

- Establishment figures, staff stress and turnover
- Flood prevention
- Management restructuring
- Control of pigeons
- RIPA; whistleblowing

#### **4. Leads to improvement in public services**

The Committee drew the attention of the Chief Executive to concerns in respect of the planning service which led to an initial report with 11 recommendations for improvement. A subsequent report in October 2016 outlined the progress made, with recommendations on operational, structural and procedural changes which helped inform the merging of Planning, Regeneration and Economic Development teams. The Committee was also instrumental in introducing the potential of a LGA 'Productivity Expert' resource to help shape the council's planning function.

A report on the overview of S106 process for collecting financial contributions from development via the planning system.

Member development update to encourage greater expertise of Members.

#### **Conclusion**

The Committee briefly reviewed whether Scrutiny was as effective as it was intended in the original legislation of 2000. It noted a number of agenda items were updates or for noting, rather than representing the investigative capacity of Scrutiny. It has to be recognised that such opportunities without dedicated officer support are rather limited. However, this is a common problem across many councils but I would commend the level of support from officers for the Scrutiny function. In particular I would extend my thanks for the contribution of Julia Stuckey – and the efforts of the Members of the Committee.

Cllr F J Rosamond  
Chairman

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