

Public Document Pack

Mid Devon District Council

Homes Policy Development Group

Tuesday, 13 March 2018 at 2.15 pm
Exe Room, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next meeting
Tuesday, 22 May 2018 at 2.15 pm

Those attending are advised that this meeting will be recorded

Membership

Cllr W J Daw (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs E M Andrews
Cllr Mrs H Bainbridge
Cllr D R Coren
Cllr Mrs G Doe
Cllr R J Dolley
Cllr P J Heal
Cllr F W Letch
Cllr J D Squire

A G E N D A

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

- 1 **Apologies and Substitute Members**
To receive any apologies for absence and notice of appointment of substitutes.
- 2 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**

Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.
- 3 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 4 **Minutes (Pages 5 - 10)**
Members to consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 16 January 2018.

- 5 **Chairman's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 6 **Performance and Risk 2017/18** (*Pages 11 - 20*)
To receive a report from the Director of Operations providing Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2017/18 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.
- 7 **Update on Empty Homes** (*Pages 21 - 24*)
To receive a report from the Public Health and Regulatory Services Group Manager providing an update on the progress of the Empty Homes Plan.
- 8 **Chairman's Annual Report for 2017/18** (*Pages 25 - 26*)
To receive the annual report from the Chairman of the Policy Development Group for 2017/18.
- 9 **Identification of items for the next meeting**
Members are asked to note that the following items are already identified in the work programme for the next meeting:
- Election of Chairman
 - Election of Vice Chairman
 - Harrassment Policy
 - Hoarding Policy
 - Tenant Involvement Policy
 - Tenant Involvement Strategy
 - Homelessness update
 - Start time of meetings for the remainder of 2018/19

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

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive
Monday, 5 March 2018

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 to 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 Sarah Lees on:

Tel: 01884 234310

E-Mail: slees@middevon.gov.uk

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 16 January 2018 at 2.15 pm

Present

Councillors

W J Daw (Chairman)
D R Coren, R J Dolley, F W Letch and
J D Squire

Apologies

Councillor(s)

Mrs E M Andrews, Mrs H Bainbridge, Mrs G Doe and
P J Heal

Also Present

Officer(s):

Andrew Pritchard (Director of Operations), Claire Fry (Group Manager for Housing), Roderick Hewson (Principal Accountant), Simon Newcombe (Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services), Michael Parker (Housing Options Manager), Catherine Yandle (Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security) and Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager)

45 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Cllrs: Mrs E M Andrews, Mrs H Bainbridge, Mrs G Doe and P J Heal.

46 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00-01-33)**

Mr Conyngham speaking as Convenor of the Welcoming Refugees in Crediton Group and referring to Item 12 (Update on the housing of refugees in Mid Devon) on the agenda stated that at the meeting of the committee on 17 January 2017, it was agreed to house up to 5 refugee Syrian families for the duration of the resettlement scheme but also to review it after the first family was settled. We are glad that 2 families have so far been resettled in Mid Devon. We in Crediton are actively seeking private sector accommodation which we believe is a very suitable place for one or two families. Given that the scheme only has another 3 years to run, will the Group recommit to the scheme now and agree to support more families being resettled, in Crediton or elsewhere in the District if and when appropriate accommodation is found?

The Chairman indicated that a response would be given when the matter was discussed.

47 **MINUTES (00-03-15)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2017 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

48 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00-03-20)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

49 **MEETING MANAGEMENT**

The Chairman indicated that he intended to take Item 12 (Update on the housing of refugees in Mid Devon) as the next item of business. This was **AGREED**.

50 **UPDATE ON THE HOUSING OF REFUGEES IN MID DEVON (00-03-43)**

The Housing Options Manager referring to the question posed in public question time stated that there were 2 refugee families housed in Mid Devon, in Cullompton and Bradninch. The offer of a house in Washfield had been refused because of its rural location. There had also been a need to refuse another house in Uffculme because of the lack of primary school places in the area. He stated that officer time on the scheme was being recharged to Devon County Council. One family was struggling with the cold weather and officers were monitoring the situation. Not many private landlords were coming forward as the authority could only pay the local housing allowance. The officer would continue to correspond with Mr Conyngham with regard to moving the scheme forward in Crediton.

51 **PRESENTATION FROM HOUSEMARK ON THE COUNCIL'S BENCHMARKING RESULTS (00-09-25)**

The Group received a presentation from HouseMark updating it on the Council's current position with regard to its benchmarking results for 2016/17:

Mr Lomax Relationship Account Manager for HouseMark provided the meeting with information on the Cost and Performance Benchmarking Report for 2017; he explained that the organisation collated information from different housing organisations and made comparisons with other similar rural local authorities. He identified the "bespoke group" used for comparison purposes with similar stock sizes.

He outlined the following issues that were part of the benchmarking process and where the authority stood within the group on each issue:

- Overheads as percentage of adjusted turnover
- Total cost per property – housing management
- Total tenant arrears as % rent due (excluding voids)
- Average re-let time in days (standards re-lets)
- Rent loss due to voids
- Tenancy turnover rate
- Vacant dwellings split
- Total cost per property : responsive repairs and void works
- Average number of responsive repairs per property and cost per property
- Average number of calendar days to complete repairs
- Percentage of repairs completed at the first visit
- Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made
- Total cost per property: major works and cyclical maintenance

- Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate
- Satisfaction with repairs.

Members acknowledged that performance was good and asked that congratulations be passed to officers. The Chairman thanked Mr Lomax for his attendance.

52 PERFORMANCE AND RISK 2017/18 (00-41-12)

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Director of Operations providing it with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2017/18 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

The Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security stated that the previous item had been very interesting, collating all the performance statistics from the previous year. The performance figures before Members today were the current performance figures to date. She identified the Corporate Plan aims with regard to housing growth and informed the meeting of the process and timings for the review of the Local Plan. She highlighted the concerns with regard to the introduction of Universal Credit.

Note: * Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

53 FINANCIAL MONITORING (00-44-07)

The Principal Accountant provided an update in respect of the income and expenditure so far in the year. He indicated that there had not been any material changes since his last report and that the budget gap remained at £181k. Most of the Council's functions were performing well.

The Housing Revenue Account had a forecasted underspend of £130k; this was due to underspends on repairs, staffing costs and housing management.

54 BUDGET UPDATE (GENERAL FUND) - 2018/19 (00-47-09)

The Group had before it and **NOTED** an *update on the budget from the Director of Finance, Assets and Resources setting out the revised draft budget changes identified.

The Principal Accountant outlined the contents of the report stating that following initial meetings of the Cabinet and the Policy Development Groups, the Finance team and service managers had been revisiting a range of budgets to deliver more savings or increase income levels. Members discussed the following table which showed the main budget variances affecting the 2018/19 budget:

Variances	Amount £k
18/19 Budget Shortfall (Cabinet Report 26/10/17)	617
Further Cost Pressures identified	570
Additional savings identified	(231)
18/19 Revised Budget Shortfall	956

2% Staff Pay award offer (1% previously built in)	116
Business Rate 100% Pilot bid accepted (1 year only)	(230)
Business Rate Growth (Solar & Benefit of Devon Pool)	(150)
Funding from sinking funds & reserves (ICT & Leisure)	(215)
Other additional savings identified	(174)
18/19 Revised Budget Shortfall	303
No reduction in Rural Services Delivery Grant	(86)
3% increase in C/Tax (2.6% previously built in)	(22)
Draft budget gap for 2018/19	195

He highlighted the provisional formula grant ward for 2018/19 which amounted to £2.7m and the fact that the Council had also been given the freedom to raise its council tax by an additional 0.4%.

Consideration was given to the use of sinking funds and any percentage increase in Council Tax.

Note: *Update previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

55 **DRAFT 2018/19 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET (00-52-09)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report * of the Director of Finance, Assets and Resources considering options available in order for the Council to set a balanced budget for 2018/19 and to agree a future strategy for further budgetary planning for 2019/20 onwards.

The Principal Accountant outlined the contents of the report highlighting the key issues for consideration that of : Right to Buy Property Sales, the 1% rent decrease, other income, the work of the DLO and the amount transferred into the Housing Maintenance Fund

Consideration was given to:

- The number of vehicles purchased in 2017/18 and those proposed to be purchased in 2018/19
- The need for sinking funds to feed into renewals

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes

56 **DEVON WIDE HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY (00-56-33)**

The Group had before it a * report of the Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services presenting a revised Housing Assistance Policy under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 for consideration.

The officer outlined the contents of the report stating that in 2015 the Government had introduced the Better Care Fund (BCF) in an attempt to bring health and social care together in an integrated way. The fund was a combination of Government funding from the Department of Health and the Department of Communities and Local Government and included the grant allocation for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). The 2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund Policy document listed the conditions that must be addressed by the BCF and in particular this included working together on a jointly agreed plan.

A task and finish group was set up in late 2016 involving representatives from neighbouring authorities which included Devon County Council, their remit was to produce a common policy that could be adopted across the whole of Devon. The policy provided for flexibility and discretion for the Councils to provide appropriate assistance to meet 4 objectives:

Objective 1 - Assist disabled residents to remain in their own homes through supporting the provision of adaptations (so far as this is necessary, appropriate and reasonably practicable) to prevent admissions to care and to assist with delayed transfers where possible.

Objective 2 – Safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable residents by removing unnecessary hazards to health and safety in the home to reduce avoidable emergency admissions

Objective 3 – Provide adaptations that are suitable for the future by ensuring the scheme of works is dementia aware.

Objective 4 – Assist vulnerable people to afford to heat their homes through appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures.

The officer continued by outlining the summary of assistance that was also available, that of the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, the Accessible Homes Grant, the Home Improvement Loan Scheme and the ECO Flex Top Up Scheme.

Consideration was given to the schemes available

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- (1) The revised Housing Assistance Policy attached in Annex 1 be approved.
- (2) The ECO Flex Statement of Intent (SOI) attached in Annex 4, associated with the revised Housing Assistance Policy be approved.
(Proposed by Cllr F W Letch and seconded by Cllr D R Coren)
- (3) Delegated authority be given to the Director of Operations in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Housing to suspend some or all non-mandatory parts of the revised Housing Assistance Policy attached in Annex 1 if adequate funding is not available.

- (4) Delegated authority be given to the Director of Operations in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Housing to determine continued participation in the Wessex Home Improvement Loans Scheme.

(Proposed by Cllr D R Coren and seconded by Cllr R J Dolley)

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

57 **THE HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE - ACTIVATION OF THE SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROTOCOL (SWEP) AND EXTENDED WINTER PROVISION PROTOCOL (1-15-36)**

The Group had before it a * report of the Group Manager for Housing presenting a revised protocol in case of severe weather.

She outlined the contents of the report stating that the Council was a member of the Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership (DCHOP). Members of the partnership worked together with the aim of preventing rough sleeping at any time of the year. The winter months presented greatest risks to the health of rough sleepers. They also offered increased opportunities to engage with hard-to-reach groups and those rough sleepers who may not wish to consider any other sort of lifestyle. This was due to the fact that they may be more likely to accept support at this time of the year.

Consideration was given to the number of homeless and engaging with those who did not wish to be helped.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that: the Housing Service continues to work in partnership to deliver the Housing Options Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and Extended Winter Provision Protocol.

(Proposed by Cllr D Coren and seconded by Cllr R J Dolley)

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

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

In addition to those items already identified within the agenda, an update on homelessness would be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 3.40 pm)

CHAIRMAN

HOMES PDG
13 MARCH 2018

PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT FOR 2017-18

Cabinet Member Cllr Ray L Stanley
Responsible Officer Director of Operations, Andrew Pritchard

Reason for Report: To provide Members with an update on performance against the corporate plan and local service targets for 2017/18 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the PDG reviews the Performance Indicators and Risks that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Corporate Plan priorities and targets are effectively maintained through the use of appropriate performance indicators and regular monitoring.

Financial Implications: None identified

Legal Implications: None

Risk Assessment: If performance is not monitored we may fail to meet our corporate and local service plan targets or to take appropriate corrective action where necessary. If key business risks are not identified and monitored they cannot be mitigated effectively.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues identified for this report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Appendix 1 provides Members with details of performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for the 2017/18 financial year.
- 1.2 Appendix 2 shows the section of the Corporate Risk Register which relates to the Homes Portfolio. See 3.0 below.
- 1.3 Appendix 3 shows the profile of all risks for Homes for this quarter.
- 1.4 All appendices are produced from the corporate Service Performance And Risk management system (SPAR).

2.0 Performance

- 2.1 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Build more council houses:** No new **Council Houses** were completed however work is progressing on Birchen Lane and Palmerston Park, both due for completion in 2018/19.

2.2 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aims: **Facilitate the housing growth that Mid Devon needs, including affordable housing: and Planning and enhancing the built environment:** The independent review of the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Update 2017 has been completed and the consultants concluded that the work carried out for the proposed modifications to the Plan “was proportionate and appropriate to meet the Strategic Environmental Assessment regulations”. This precautionary approach has caused delay to the examination hearings but the work undertaken was justified. It reflected due diligence by the Council in meeting its obligations and this would help the examination process and participants at the forthcoming hearings.

2.3 A proposed timetable was set out as follows:

- 6 week public consultation - February – April 2018
- Submission of the suite of documents and consultation responses - April 2018

Officers estimate that examination hearings will take place during summer/autumn 2018 but it is for the Inspectorate to determine when the examination hearings should be reconvened.

2.4 **Percentage of Properties with a Valid Gas Safety Certificate (LGSR):** There are currently eight properties where MDDC has been unable to carry out the annual service and issue a Landlord Gas safety Record. Failure to renew the safety record was not due to inaction by the contractor but is centred on tenant issues that have prevented the contractor from delivery of the necessary works.

2.5 When benchmarking information is available it is included.

3.0 Risk

3.1 The Corporate risk register has been reviewed by Management Team (MT) and updated. Risk reports to committees include risks with a total score of total score of 10 or more. (See Appendix 2)

3.2 Appendix 3 shows the risk matrix for MDDC for this quarter. If risks are not scored they are included in the matrix at their inherent score which will be higher than their current score would be.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 That the PDG reviews the performance indicators and risks for 2017/18 that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.

Contact for more Information: Catherine Yandle, Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security ext 4975

Circulation of the Report: Management Team and Cabinet Member

Corporate Plan PI Report Homes

Monthly report for 2017-2018
 Arranged by Aims
 Filtered by Aim: Priorities Homes
 For MDDC - Services

Key to Performance Status:

Performance Indicators:

No Data	Well below target	Below target	On target	Above target	Well above target
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* Indicates that an entity is linked to the Aim by its parent Service

Corporate Plan PI Report Homes

Priorities: Homes

Aims: Build more council houses

Performance Indicators																		
Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Actual to Date	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Build Council Houses</u>	0 (3/4)	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (10/12)	Angela Haigh	

Aims: Facilitate the housing growth that Mid devon needs, including affordable housing

Performance Indicators																		
Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Actual to Date	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)</u>	27 (3/4)	31	80	n/a	n/a	26	n/a	n/a	59	n/a	n/a	72	n/a	n/a		72 (3/4)	Angela Haigh	
<u>Deliver 15 homes per year by bringing Empty Houses into use</u>	21 (10/12)	33	25	7	11	13	23	34	43	54	84	98	111			111 (10/12)	Simon Newcombe	

Aims: Other

Performance Indicators																			
Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Actual to Date	Group Manager	Officer Notes	
<u>Number of Successful</u>	224 (3/4)	295	No Target - for	n/a	n/a		99	n/a	n/a		159	n/a	n/a	240	n/a	n/a	240 (3/4)	Angela Haigh	

Corporate Plan PI Report Homes**Priorities: Homes****Aims: Other****Performance Indicators**

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Prev Year End	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Actual to Date	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Homelessness Prevention Cases</u>			information only															
<u>% Decent Council Homes</u>	100.00% (10/12)	100.00%	100.0%	99.9%	99.9%	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			100.0% (10/12)	Mark Baglow	
<u>% Properties With a Valid Gas Safety Certificate</u>	99.95% (10/12)	99.86%	100.00%	99.95%	99.64%	99.87%	99.82%	99.96%	99.91%	99.82%	99.87%	99.82%	99.64%			99.64% (10/12)	Angela Haigh	
<u>Rent Collected as a Proportion of Rent Owed</u>	100.05% (10/12)	100.18%	100.00%	93.76%	95.18%	96.25%	96.87%	99.14%	98.73%	99.08%	98.85%	99.73%	99.37%			99.37% (10/12)	Angela Haigh	
<u>Current Tenant Arrears as a Proportion of Annual Rent Debit</u>	0.95% (10/12)	0.60%	1.00%	0.93%	1.06%	1.16%	1.30%	1.26%	1.30%	1.17%	1.33%	1.05%	1.28%			1.28% (10/12)	Angela Haigh	
<u>Dwelling rent lost due to voids</u>	0.5% (10/12)	0.5%	no target - for information only	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%			0.5% (10/12)	Angela Haigh	
<u>Average Days to Re-Let Local Authority Housing</u>	16.4days (10/12)	15.7days	16.0days	14.0days	13.9days	14.9days	14.1days	13.8days	14.3days	14.4days	14.0days	13.5days	13.1days			13.1days (10/12)	Angela Haigh	

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Report for 2017-2018

For Homes - Cllr Ray Stanley Portfolio

Filtered by Flag:Include: * CRR 5+ / 15+

For MDDC - Services

Filtered by Performance Status: Exclude Risk Status: Low

Not Including Risk Child Projects records or Mitigating Action records

Key to Performance Status:

Risks: No Data (0+) High (15+) Medium (6+) Low (1+)

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Risk: Affordable and Council Housing Demand Housing supply does not meet local demand or reflect demographic shifts like increased demand for single occupancy

Effects (Impact/Severity): • Increased costs for paying for private accommodation to house homeless
• Increase in number of homeless people in Mid Devon

Causes (Likelihood): • Impact of economic downturn and reduced funding has reduced number of affordable housing units being built
• Under-occupation in existing stock
• Reduction in number of Right to Buys results in less HRA funding available for new builds

Service: Housing Services

Current Status: Medium (12)	Current Risk Severity: 4 - High	Current Risk Likelihood: 3 - Medium
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Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: There is still a significant deficit between permissions granted and build-out rates

Risk: Electrical testing Risk of electrocution or fire in Council Properties

Effects (Impact/Severity): Failure to carry out periodic electrical testing could result in the risk of electrocution or fire.

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing – Building Maintenance

Current Status: No Data	Current Risk Severity: 5 - Very High	Current Risk Likelihood: 1 - Very Low
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Service Manager: Mark Baglow

Review Note: Every Council property is tested every 5 years as part of the cyclical testing programme.

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Risk: Evictions Tenants being evicted could become violent.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status:
Medium (10)

Current Risk Severity: 5 -
Very High

Current Risk Likelihood: 2 -
Low

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: The pre-eviction risk assessment identifies household composition and layout, and any issues such as mental health and drug use relating to the tenant(s) and their families as well as whether or not there are any dogs present at the property.

Risk: Five year housing land Supply Risk: Housing land supply. Inability to demonstrate the required 5 year housing land supply (+20%) until Local Plan Review approved

Effects (Impact/Severity): Effects (Impact /severity):

- Receipt of speculative housing applications in unplanned locations with less community benefit and less infrastructure / coordination compared with allocated sites.
- Objections
- Pressure on major application appeal performance (Government indicator of quality of decision making). Risk of intervention: loss of fee and less local control over major application decision making.

Causes (Likelihood): - Lack of sufficient housing completions, housing market conditions.

Service: Planning

Current Status: High
(15)

Current Risk Severity: 3 -
Medium

Current Risk Likelihood: 5 -
Very High

Service Manager: Jenny Clifford

Review Note: Found to not have sufficient housing supply at appeal. Mitigation principally via new Local Plan once adopted. Close monitoring of applications, decisions and associated appeal performance.

Risk: Hoarding Some tenants are known hoarders but we have policies in place and we do regular inspections.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status:
Medium (10)

Current Risk Severity: 5 -
Very High

Current Risk Likelihood: 2 -
Low

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: Staff are trained to respond to such issues and we have a policy setting out our approach to this type of management issue.

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Risk: Homelessness Insufficient resources to support an increased homeless population could result in failure to meet statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless.

Effects (Impact/Severity): - Dissatisfied customers and increase in complaints.
 - This will involve an increase in officer time in dealing with Homelessness prevention and early intervention.
 - Possible increase in temporary accommodation usage.

Causes (Likelihood): - Social and economic factors like the recession and mortgage repossessions increase the number of homeless.
 - Lack of private sector housing.

Service: Housing Services

Current Status: High (16)

Current Risk Severity: 4 - High

Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: Homelessness strategy to be reviewed early 2018.

Risk: Impact of Welfare Reform and other emerging National Housing

Policy Changes to benefits available to tenants could impact upon their ability to pay. Other initiatives could impact upon our ability to deliver our 30 year Business Plan.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status: High (15)

Current Risk Severity: 5 - Very High

Current Risk Likelihood: 3 - Medium

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note:

Risk: New Homes A low housing build rate would equal less affordable housing resulting in a reduction in potential New Homes Bonus

Effects (Impact/Severity): - Loss of Affordable Housing Income Section 106
 - Failure to meet targets in Development Plan
 - Potentially unallocated sites being developed as 5-year housing supply reduces

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Planning

Current Status: Medium (12)

Current Risk Severity: 4 - High

Current Risk Likelihood: 3 - Medium

Service Manager: Jenny Clifford

Review Note:

Homes PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Risk: Reputational re Council Housing Stock Handling a disaster/mistake properly would prevent any reputation damage.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status:
Medium (10)

Current Risk Severity: 5 -
Very High

Current Risk Likelihood: 2 -
Low

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note:

Risk: Stress The physical and mental well-being of Officers could be affected by work environment and pressures caused by work demands and work relationships.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status:
Medium (12)

Current Risk Severity: 4 -
High

Current Risk Likelihood: 3 -
Medium

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: In the case of potential stress and related conditions, Managers should undertake regular supervision meetings to monitor the situation and provide support.

Risk: Tenants with Complex Needs As our housing stock shrinks, the proportion of such tenants will increase.

Effects (Impact/Severity):

Causes (Likelihood):

Service: Housing Services

Current Status:
Medium (12)

Current Risk Severity: 4 -
High

Current Risk Likelihood: 3 -
Medium

Service Manager: Claire Fry

Review Note: Good links with other partners including the Police, Social Services, support agencies etc.

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Print Date: 20 February 2018
14:25

Risk Matrix Homes Appendix 3

**Report
For Homes - Cllr Ray Stanley Portfolio
Current settings**

Risk Likelihood	5 - Very High	No Risks	No Risks	1 Risk	No Risks	No Risks
	4 - High	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	2 Risks	No Risks
	3 - Medium	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	4 Risks	2 Risks
	2 - Low	No Risks	No Risks	3 Risks	1 Risk	3 Risks
	1 - Very Low	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	No Risks	5 Risks
		1 - Very Low	2 - Low	3 - Medium	4 - High	5 - Very High
		Risk Severity				

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HOMES PDG
13 MARCH 2018

UPDATE ON EMPTY HOMES

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ray Stanley
Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe, Public Health and Regulatory Services Group Manager

Reason for Report: To provide an update on the progress of the Empty Homes Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: To note the contents of this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The empty homes activity links directly to the aspirations of the Corporate Plan. In particular, Economy - Improving and regenerating our town centres by intervening in empty homes, and ensuring that flats over shops are safe for occupation; and Homes – Facilitating the housing growth that Mid Devon needs, including affordable homes by bringing empty homes back into use.

There is a specific target within the Corporate Plan to bring 15 properties back into use each year.

Financial Implications: There is a capital budget in place to support the empty homes activity which can be used to support more serious enforcement interventions such as compulsory purchase. This budget has not been required during 2017/18 to date, nonetheless it remains available and interventions of this nature may be required in the future where there is a lack of engagement from property owners. Capital outlaid for this reason, and also where urgent works in default are required to improve property conditions, can be recovered.

There is revenue income available to the Council generated from the New Homes Bonus (NHB). All properties bought back into use may qualify for the NHB and are included in our annual out-turn figures.

Bringing empty properties back into use therefore makes a positive net financial contribution to the Council's revenue budget in addition to the wider beneficial social, housing and regeneration impacts.

Legal Implications: In those cases where it is appropriate to take formal action the relevant legislation will be followed.

Risk Assessment: The risks associated with this activity are low. If the empty homes activity was not undertaken some properties would continue to come back into use naturally but the numbers would reduce and some long-term empty properties impacting upon the local community may not be tackled and continue to cause problems.

Equality Impact Assessment: This activity relates to empty properties and any action taken is based on the circumstances of the property therefore there are no adverse impacts on individuals with protected characteristics.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on empty homes activity for 2017/18. This follows a project briefing and subsequent update to the PDG during 2017 which focussed on the delivery of phase-one of the plan. From these previous reports members will therefore be aware of the Empty Homes Plan for 2016-18.
- 1.2 The plan originally set out to achieve a minimum of bringing 15 empty properties back into use each year, as set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.3 Following the implementation of the plan, the empty homes project has been significantly more successful, with over 140 properties bought back into use so far.
- 1.4 In accordance with the second phase of the plan, over the course 2017/18 the team have been concentrating on:
 - Procuring a property auction partner to help empty home owners to sell their properties through auction and to assist us in selling properties where enforced sale procedures have been used;
 - Visiting the 6 months to 2 years empty properties on an area by area basis;
 - Prioritising the empty properties for action based on their impact on the local community and/or potential re-use.

2.0 Progress

- 2.1 Following a procurement exercise, we have entered into a property auction agreement with Clive Emson Auctioneers. This gives owners of empty properties access to professional valuation and guidance in addition to competitive auction rates in order to support the sale of properties.
- 2.2 567 properties have been inspected during 2017/18 and 700 since the beginning of the plan.
- 2.3 111 have been brought back into use so far this year (2017/18). This compares to 33 in 2016/17.
- 2.4 20 have been identified as requiring further intervention.

3.0 **Next Steps**

- 3.1 Writing to all the empty home owners with details of the property auction agreement and details of the Wessex home improvement loan scheme.
- 3.2 Making additional direct contact with owners of high priority properties with a view to taking further action.
- 3.3 Reviewing and updating the Empty Homes Plan for the next two years and increasing our target to 72 properties each year (6 per month). This is a significantly increased target and whilst it is below the out-turn for the current year, it reflects the fact that increased interventions will be required in the future as we tackle the more problematic properties and nonetheless mirrors the overall out-turn to date since the plan was implemented.

Contact for more Information: Tanya Wenham, Lead Officer (Private Sector Housing), 01884 244610, twenham@middevon.gov.uk or Simon Newcombe (Public Health and Regulatory Service Group Manager), 01884 244615, snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report:

Members of the Homes Policy Development Group
Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing (Cllr Ray Stanley)
Director of Operations
Legal Services
Audit
Leadership Team

List of Background Papers:

Empty Homes Plan 2016-18

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Homes Policy Development Group Chairman's Report 2017-2018

The past year has seen the P.D.G. dealing with many varied subjects at our bi-monthly committee meetings. Apart from our continual updating of Housing Department Policies, I feel we had had a very positive year. More than double the number of empty homes have been brought back into use – very good news as this also brings a positive net financial contribution for the Council

Processes have been streamlined so that it only takes 9 weeks to deal with a Disabled Facility Grant, instead of 17 weeks in the past. One of the other successes of the year has been the piloting of the Wessex Scheme which, with additional funding of £100k from Devon County Council, increased advertising, Drop In sessions and a new contract, has resulted in much reduced processing application time – 100% recovery rate and an improved performance all round.

As a result of the horrific fire in London with the Grenfell Tower, as a committee we needed to be sure that all was secure in our patch and we also made sure that all communal spaces were clear and allowed a quick safe exit.

The situation with regard to the housing of refugees is that currently 2 families are housed in Cullompton and Bradninch. One of the families is struggling with cold isolation and lack of Primary School places. Our officers are in contact with someone in Crediton with regard to housing a family nearby – this may seem probably very little in the whole scheme of things but surely far better than being in their ravaged homeland.

Towards the end of the Municipal Year the PDG held an informal workshop where there was a lengthy discussion of “Right to Buy” and “Devon Home Choice”. Here there was agreement that Band E should stay and a motion to be put to Full Council to lobby Government to remove Right to Buy.

Once again this year has seen a lot of work put in by T.T.G. who are very dedicated to their tasks which as ever is most appreciated.

As with all departments in our Authority the Housing Service find themselves having to do more and more with less income, the Government 1% rent reduction strategy will continue to have a major impact on our financial situation and will mean ongoing challenges to provide the excellent service that our tenants have come to expect from our Repairs Service headed up by Mark Barlow.

In addition I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all our Repair Staff who on a daily basis are the face of Mid Devon in the eyes of our tenants. It is always a pleasure to see the praise that is recorded for the good work that is done for our tenants.

Next the Housing Officers who have once again this year proved to be invaluable to us. Their dedication has ensured that as an Authority we are ranked amongst the

best in the land. Your efforts in making sure that our rent arrears are at a constantly low level is a credit to this Council as you diligently continue to pursue outstanding rents and seem to have found a very successful formula for rent collection – well done.

We as a Council are continuing in the process of building more affordable homes, to try to help as many people as possible who find themselves in need of local authority housing. We are aware that the scheme at Palmerston Park in Tiverton has continued to suffer some setbacks but I am still confident that we will see these houses being occupied. We are striving to bring forward more affordable homes in our District as I know this has a high priority with both the Cabinet Member for Housing and our Head of Housing. I take this opportunity of thanking them both for their dedication and forward thinking also for their ongoing advice and sound judgement which they bring to our meetings

I would also like to record a heart-felt thanks to all the members of the PDG who have turned up to our meetings and have taken part in our discussions.

In the next couple of years I think our Housing Service will continue to face some very tough challenges brought about by ever changing regulations, including Universal Credit, customer expectations and last but far from least financial restrictions. I am sure however that as in the past you will rally around and produce a service we as Members can be proud of.

Finally I wish to extend special thanks to our Committee Clerk, Sarah Lees for her continued dedication, help and advice, which is always delivered with a smile and in a thoughtful manner – thank you Sarah.

JOHN DAW

Chairman of MDDC Homes Policy Development Group.

February 2018