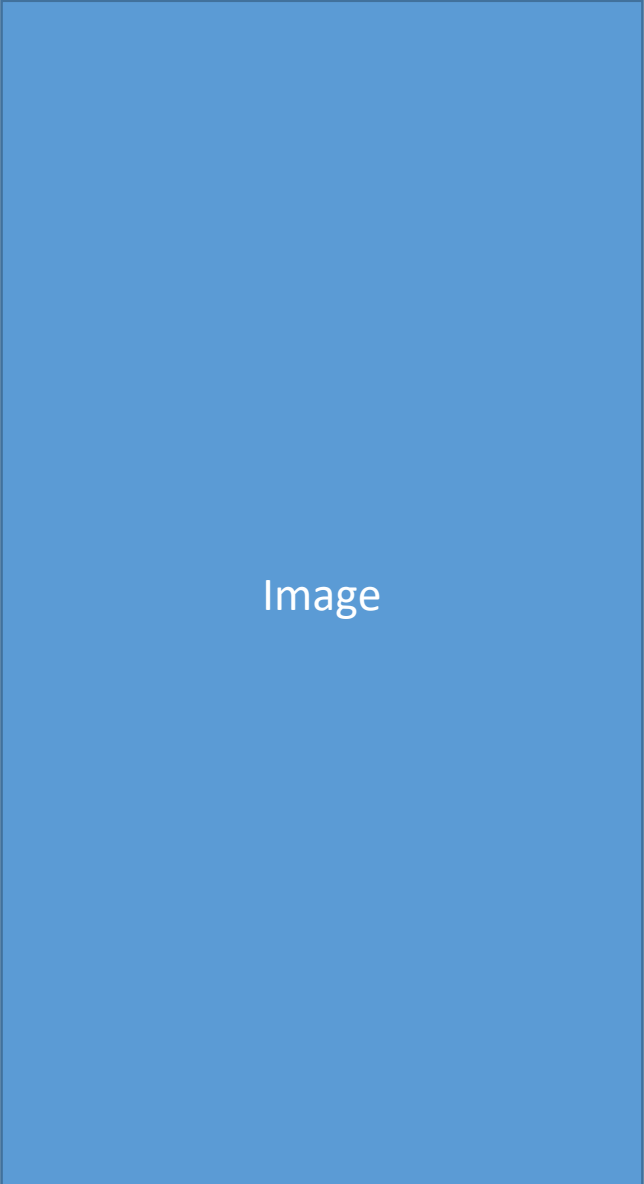


# Corporate Plan 2024-2028

*Additional title statement tbc*

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# Introduction

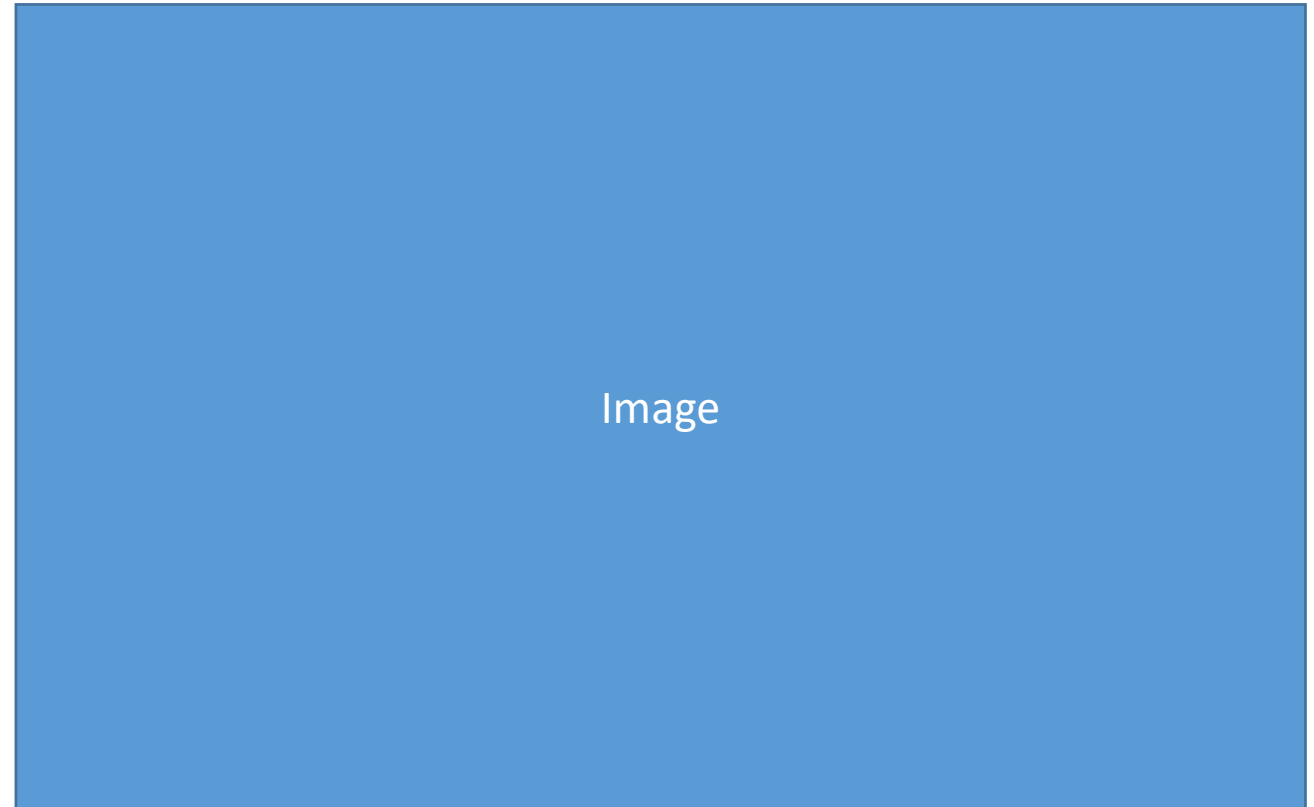
Through our Corporate Plan, we want to set out our ambitions for Mid Devon and the Council. By doing this, we hope to provide a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve. Our Corporate Plan is split into five sections (or themes). These are:

- Planning, Environment & Sustainability
- Community, People & Equalities
- Homes
- Economy & Assets
- Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

Within each of these five themes we set out:

- What we want to achieve
- How we will achieve it
- How we will measure our performance

The Council's Corporate Plan provides the framework for the delivery and monitoring of the Council's corporate ambitions.



## Background

Mid Devon District Council serves a rural location covering an area of 353 square miles (914 km<sup>2</sup>) in the agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. Mid Devon has three principle towns – Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. These towns provide services for surrounding rural communities.

Approximately 83,000 people live in Mid Devon, and more than half of our residents live in villages across the rural hinterland. Of the 296 districts in England, Mid Devon is the 32<sup>nd</sup> largest by area, but it is also the 23<sup>rd</sup> smallest by population. This reflects its rural characteristics.

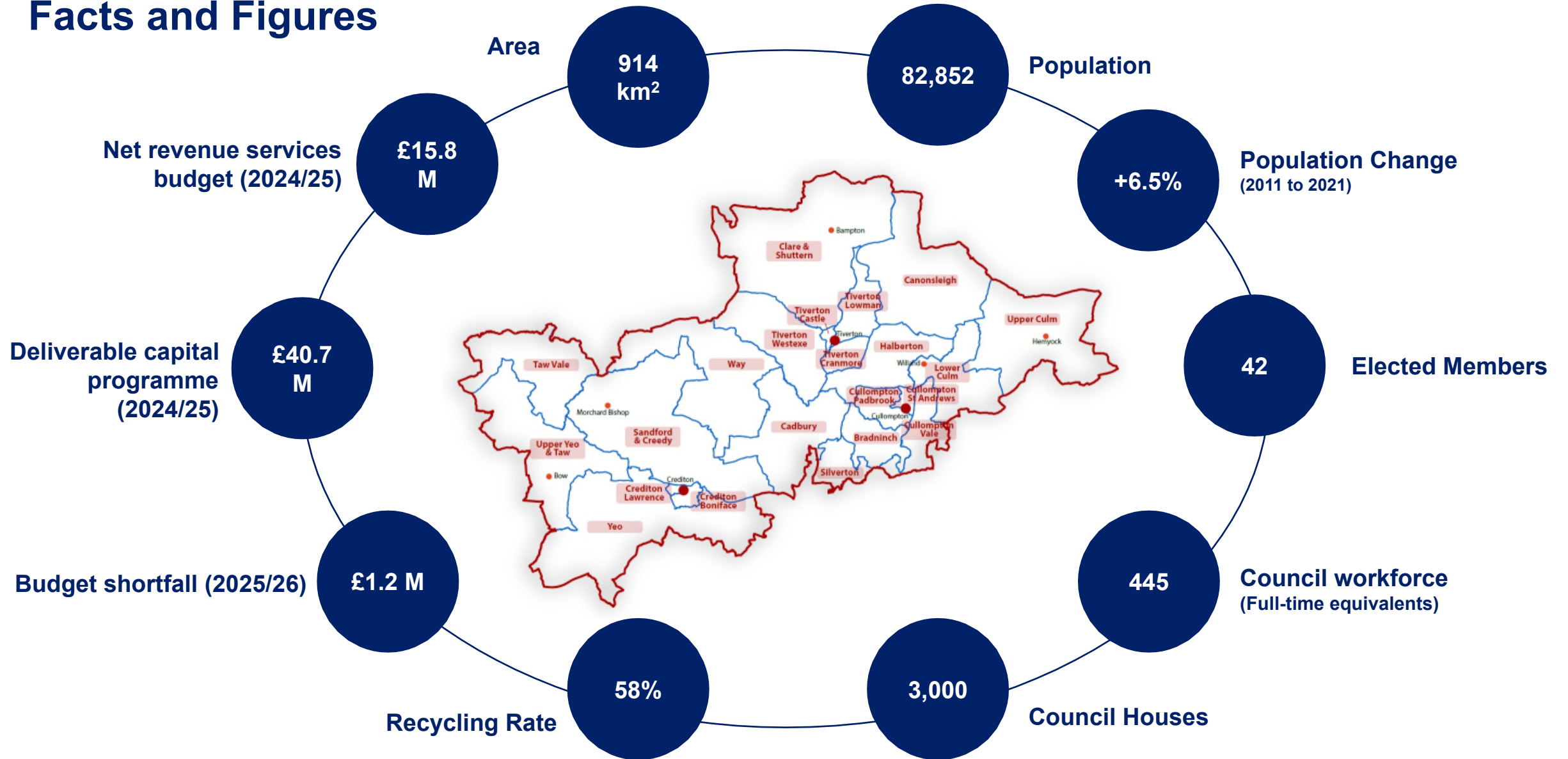
Strategically located on South West England's main transport and communication corridor, Mid Devon is mid-way between Taunton and Exeter. Our main offices lie to the North East of the city of Exeter, one of the most rapidly expanding economies in the country. As a district council, Mid Devon has sought to maximise this opportunity by delivering quality growth in a high-quality environment.

*“It is my pleasure to present the Corporate Plan 2024 - 2027. This Plan expresses a positive and ambitious vision for Mid Devon, however it also acknowledges the financial challenges facing the Council, and the district more generally. Understanding this broader context is important for setting the right expectations. The actions and targets set out in the corporate plan must be both ambitious and achievable in order to provide a meaningful assessment of the progress the Council is making. We will keep these under regular review to ensure they drive continual improvement and deliver the Council’s vision. We are committed to engaging with others in a collaborative way. We are strong local leaders, and will help others to improve and grow. We take pride in doing this.”*

Cllr Luke Taylor  
Leader of Mid Devon District Council



# Facts and Figures



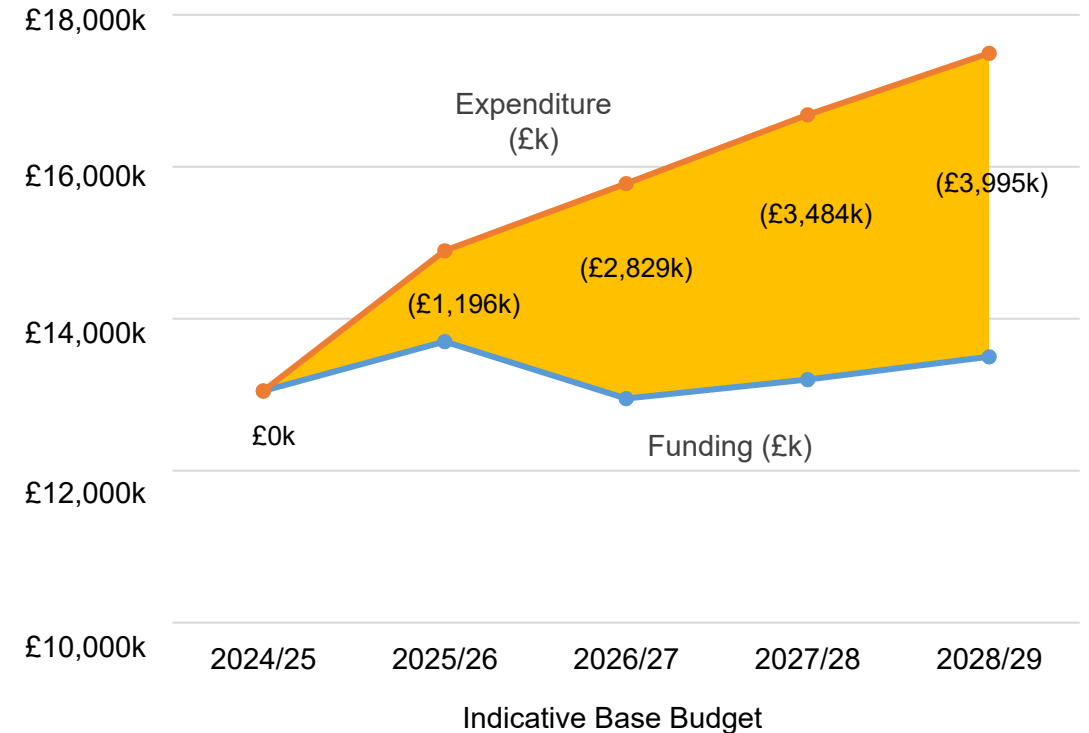
## Medium Term Financial Plan

The General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan summary position shows a cumulative shortfall of £3,995k over the remaining four-years of the Plan which remains to be addressed.

The underlying budget shortfall occurs largely in 2025/26 and 2026/27 due to inflation and reduced grant funding assumptions linked to long outstanding and overdue reforms to Local Government Funding mechanisms. These include:

- 2025/26 Grant allocations remain as per 2024/25. 2026/27 and beyond Grant Allocations assume a 50% reduction;
- A partial loss of historic growth in business rates on reset of the business rates system in 2026/27;
- Council Tax referendum principles at previous levels (£5 or 2%) from 2025/26.

These projections demonstrate the challenging financial position facing local councils, and set the context for outlining our corporate objectives.



# Our Priorities

Our aims and objectives are centred around five themes:



**Planning, Environment & Sustainability** - To be a leader and pioneer of best practice so new innovation and thinking is at the heart of the services we deliver and informs our planning policies.



**Community, People & Equalities** - Involving and engaging with our communities, ensuring everyone is treated with equity and respect, and protecting our most vulnerable.



**Homes** - Delivering new affordable and social homes annually, improving and maintaining the existing stock to the highest standards.



**Economy & Assets** - Growing the District Economy and increasing returns from our assets.



**Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement** - Delivering Council services that residents want in the right way, in the right place and at the right price.

# 1 Planning, Environment & Sustainability

To be a leader and pioneer of best practice so new innovation and thinking is at the heart of the services we deliver and informs our planning policies.

## 1.1 Demonstrate climate leadership through achieving ambitious net zero targets

We will take action on reducing our own emissions, but will also look to bring in additional funding to make our journey towards net zero a reality. Lowering our fleet emissions and supporting tree planting schemes will feature alongside opportunities to ensure our high-energy services, such as leisure centres, are as efficient as possible.

## 1.2 Support the district's climate resilience and net zero carbon aspirations

We will continue to expand the provision of electric charging points across the district and will support community groups undertaking environmental action – sharing best practice and encouraging learning across Mid Devon. We will continue to work to support the implementation of the Devon Carbon Plan and will look beyond our borders to learn from others as we support our communities to take opportunities to lower emissions and generate renewable energy.

## 1.3 We will work with stakeholders to introduce planning policy which reflects the key issues and challenges facing the district

We will work with communities to bring forward the new local plan – Plan Mid Devon based around our top planning priorities, seeking to encapsulate and reflect the planning ambitions of the council and its communities. As the Government increases its oversight on planning performance, we will ensure our planning decisions are timely, robust and defensible.

## 1.4 We will ensure that biodiversity is increased across the district

We will develop and implement our biodiversity duty action plan, and will encourage developers to exceed the minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, working with local communities where possible, in order to bring real enhancement to nature across the district.

## 1.5 We will value and protect Mid Devon's natural and built environment

We will work with our communities to address environmental damage and will look to prosecute those who cause harm through fly tipping or littering. We will also challenge those who fail to mitigate environmental impact, liaising with other statutory bodies as required to bring about change. We recognise the importance of the built environment and will work to protect our heritage.





## Performance Measures and Targets

To ensure transparency and accountability, we have set out how we will measure the performance of our Corporate Plan and our targets.

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
1.1	Council carbon footprint	17,730 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	TBC	To be discussed	
1.1	Carbon emissions avoided (renewables and green transport)			TBC	
1.2	Electric car charger points across MDDC car parks	0	0	10 by 2028 (TBC)	Need to clarify baseline (start point)
1.2	Secure external funding to deliver carbon reduction in the district			(TBC)	In development (RM)
1.3	Planning application standards on the speed and quality of decision making				In development (RM), suite of PIs
1.3	Strengthen planning enforcement approach by bringing forward a revised local enforcement plan			Adoption of new plan by end of 2024	RM to timeline
1.3	Adopt Plan Mid Devon			Adoption by 2027	In development (RM)
1.4	Biodiversity gain above 10% across new developments		>10%	>10%	To be reviewed once we have a meaningful baseline

## 2

## Community, People & Equalities

Involving and engaging with our communities, ensuring everyone is treated with equity and respect, and protecting our most vulnerable.

## 2.1

### We will work closely with Town and Parish councils

We value and understand the importance and expertise of our Town and Parish councils. We will seek to develop closer collaborative working relationships through improved communications and engagement.

## 2.2

### We value and will work closely with local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations

We recognise the vital role that voluntary, community and social enterprises play in our district. We will continue to support these organisations develop including through the use of grant funding. We will support community events across the district and recognise the importance of youth services.

## 2.3

### We will support the health, wellbeing, and safety of our residents

We will ensure that our leisure services continue to help improve peoples' health outcomes. We will keep the public safe through our rigorous public health inspections. And we will continue to enable people to stay in their homes by coordinating housing adaptations. We will work to ensure our places are planned to improve health and wellbeing.

## 2.4

### We will support our residents and communities through the Cost of Living Crisis

We recognise the challenges facing people brought about by the Cost of Living crisis. Through administrating benefit schemes and applying Council Tax Reduction schemes we will support the vulnerable in our communities. We will draw down grant funding to support businesses in our communities through these challenging times.

## 2.5

### We will listen to and respond to feedback

We value all feedback that the Council receives. We will maintain an effective complaints process and ensure that we respond promptly and appropriately. We will ensure that the we consult and engage with stakeholders in an open and transparent manner.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
2.1	Support towns and parishes to develop their Community Emergency Plans		4	4 p.a.	New measure
2.2	Support the VCSE sector by securing additional external funding		£200k	>£200kp/a	Need to baseline
2.3	Homes made safe under the Housing Assistance Policy	N/A	81	60 p.a.	
2.5	New Subscribers to Let's Talk Mid Devon	N/A	415	400 p.a.	
2.5	Complaints resolved within target timescales	93 %	92 %	85 % p.a.	Revised complaints policy timelines are far shorter for complex cases, hence reduced proportion expected

## 3

## Homes

Delivering new affordable and social homes annually, improving and maintaining the existing stock to the highest standards.

## 3.1

**We will increase the delivery of quality designed, well built homes across the housing market to meet identified needs**

Mid Devon does not have enough homes. We will support the delivery of quality new homes built in the district. We will build and expand our own social housing, and encourage the delivery of new affordable homes built in the district.

## 3.2

**We will build, promote, and encourage the building of energy efficient and low carbon homes and communities**

We recognise that our homes in Mid Devon need to be fit for the future. We will ensure our social housing meets high energy efficiency standards. Through planning and building control we will act so that homes in the district are energy efficient, low carbon, and resilient to climate change.

## 3.3

**We will invest in our homes**

We will upgrade our social housing by installing energy efficiency measures and renewable energy. We will maintain our high standards of maintenance across Mid Devon Homes. We will monitor tenant satisfaction with maintenance and act on the feedback received.

## 3.4

**We will work closely with our tenants to ensure they feel safe, secure and happy in their homes**

We will monitor and continue to improve overall tenant satisfaction. We will work to ensure that cases of antisocial behaviour are kept to a minimum. We will work with our tenants through engagement events, and be guided by them to ensure they feel safe, secure, happy and satisfied in their homes.

## 3.5

**We will support and respond to people presenting as homeless**

We will act compassionately to minimise rough sleeping in the district, ensuring people have a safe warm place to sleep. We will maximise homelessness prevention through the use of different types of accommodation, and increase the number of housing options available. We will provide support and guidance for people presenting as homeless.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
3.1	New Council houses added to MDH stock	N/A	6 (check number – not correct)	100p/a	Anticipated 440 by 27/28
3.1	Additional affordable homes delivered across the district			TBC (LHNA figure)	Including market delivery and RSLs
3.2	New net-zero MMC properties in Mid Devon stock			50/pa	The majority (greater than half) to be net zero
3.3	Tenant satisfaction with the overall repairs service (TP02)			70 % p.a.	Check we check regulatory regime – are these min thresholds?
3.4	Tenant satisfaction that home is safe (TP05)		71.6 %	70% p.a.	See above
3.5	Support those experiencing homelessness by minimising the use of B&B accommodation				Lower than £xxx spent

## 4

## Economy & Assets

Growing the District Economy and increasing returns from our assets.

4.1

**We will work with local businesses, stakeholders and residents to regenerate our town centres**

We will act to secure and distribute grant funding to support our town centres. Events and projects will be used to encourage increased footfall and ensure vibrant high streets.

4.2

**We will build on successful commercial activity, working with our communities to ensure its success**

We will continue with prudent commercial ventures. This includes letting industrial units to local businesses, expanding electric vehicle charging points on council assets, and ensuring Tiverton Pannier market continues to be a success.

4.3

**We will support local businesses set-up, develop and grow**

We will fully investigate the potential of establishing a co-working space for small businesses through the Work Hub project. We will drawdown and administer grants for businesses local to set up, develop and grow in the district.

4.4

**We will support business and economic development across Mid Devon, enabling job creation, and supporting sustainable tourism growth**

We will build on our excellent track record of securing funding to support economic development projects and will support businesses develop into new markets. We will work to develop events and festivals in Mid Devon to encourage footfall into our communities to benefit our businesses, making Mid Devon a destination in its own right.

4.5

**We will work with partners to ensure that Mid Devon has the infrastructure it requires to meet its potential**

We will play a key role in realising the major infrastructure the district requires to help it meet its potential. This includes the upgrade to J28 of the M5; the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road; Cullompton Station; Culm Garden Village; and Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension.

4.6

**Work with our communities and stakeholders to ensure our car parks meet the parking requirement needs of our communities**

We will continue to work in a collaborative manner with key stakeholders to review the use of our car parks. We will ensure that our parking charges are fair whilst maintaining a sustainable business model.

4.7

**The Council is able to maintain its property and land and maximise the benefits of these assets to the council and to the public**

It is vital that we maximise income streams from our assets. We will explore opportunities for partners becoming commercial tenants in our existing properties.



## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure (reporting timespan)	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
4.1	Events supported in our town centres			6 p.a.	In development (RM)
4.2	Pannier market occupancy rate	85 %	86 %	85 % p.a.	To be discussed?
4.3	Co-working spaces developed to support local economic activity			5 by 2027/28	In development (RM)
4.3	Businesses supported (non-financial support)	269	292	TBC	In development (RM), also applicable for 4.4
4.4	Tourism events supported			2 or 3 p/a?	In development (RM)
4.5	Secure the delivery of key enabling infrastructure at Cullompton				In development (RM)
4.7	Commercial property voids			Less than 5 %	

## 5 Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement

Delivering Council services that residents want in the right way, in the right place and at the right price.

### 5.1 We will ensure that The Council remains the employer of choice in Mid Devon

Against a set of challenging circumstances, we will ensure that our staff remain motivated and satisfied. We will ensure that staff development opportunities are available and that people choose to have long, productive, and happy careers with us.

### 5.2 We will further increase our recycling services, enabling our communities to achieve even higher levels of recycling

Through education and enforcement, we will continue to reduce residual waste collected. Alongside this we will strive to have one of the highest recycling rates in England, and consider additional waste streams we can collect as recycling. Our services will remain excellent, with minimal missed bin collections, and a high opt-in rate to our garden waste service.

### 5.3 We will maintain our leisure services and ensure they are fit for the future

We recognise the need to continue to reduce the environmental impact of our leisure services and will work to reduce the carbon emissions of our leisure centres. We will also strive to move the service to having less financial dependence on the council, whilst ensuring our leisure users are satisfied.

### 5.4 Council finances remain sustainable despite difficult financial conditions

Prudent financial management is critical in the testing financial environment. We will build up our financial reserves, maximise income collection, and ensure that debt remains at an appropriate level.

### 5.5 We will continue to improve and transform our services

We will continue to take the opportunities that arise from digital transformation to improve our services. Where appropriate we will consider opportunities for shared services or new ways of working with our partners. We will seek to improve our overall productivity to ensure Value for Money.

### 5.6 Ensure that the public have a good understanding of council services, and that they are satisfied that the services are efficient and effective

We will strengthen our public communications to ensure clarity on the services that we are responsible for. We will measure public satisfaction and act on the results to ensure residents are satisfied with our performance.





## Performance Measures and Targets

No.	Measure (reporting timespan)	2022/23	2023/24	Target	Comment
5.1	Staff turnover	19.5 %	17.0%	17.0% in 2024/25	2027/28 target: 15% (excluding retirees/ dismissals)
5.1	Positive staff engagement (staff survey measure)		TBC	72% in 2025/26	75% in 2027/28
5.2	Residual waste per household	327.3 kg	313.3 kg	300 kg in 2024/25	Targets: 290 kg (25/26); 285 kg (26/27); 260 kg (27/28)
5.2	Household recycling rate	55.4%	57.8%	58.5 % in 2024/25	Targets: 59% (25/26); 59.5% (26/27); 62 % (27/28)
5.2	Missed Bin Collections (All)	0.04 %	0.03 %	0.03 % p.a.	Need the aggregated figure
5.3	Total leisure memberships / Reducing level of public subsidy			TBC	Check with members on preferred metric
5.4	National non-domestic rates collection rate	96.8 %	99.4 %	98 % p.a.	
5.4	Council Tax collection rate	97.1 %	97.5 %	98 % p.a.	
5.6	Public survey engagement rate			15 % p.a.	
5.6	Overall council approval rating			70 % p.a.	Use residents survey data as baseline?

## Our Values

The organisation has an agreed set of core values that underpin the way we work and how we fulfil our aspirations. These values are known as the four Ps and set out what we believe should be the basis for the type of organisation we want to be.

These values are:

- People
- Performance
- Pride
- Partnership

While our organisation is a place-based entity, rooted in the custodianship of the area of Mid Devon, it is nevertheless primarily a people-focused business. The organisation supports and is steered by our Councillors as the democratically-elected representatives of the people, and is run for the benefit of the people of Mid Devon. Our performance as individuals and as a collective is paramount, and we expect all those working for or with Mid Devon to take pride not only in their own work, but in the way we operate and the outcomes that are achieved for our communities.

Finally, we recognise the core value of partnership as so many of our services depend on our relationships and collaboration with suppliers, contractors, government and its departments and agencies; local towns, parishes and the voluntary sector; or the wider strategic network of councils working together across Devon and the South West.

## Summary

The corporate plan sets out the ambition for what the council is aiming to achieve over the next four year period. It acts as the driving force behind our collective efforts and the guiding principles unifying our shared intent. Importantly, it also sets the strategic framework for managing our performance – and this cascades through the organisation in order that everyone can understand their role and how their success as an individual or as a local delivery team contributes to the success of the whole organisation and wider Mid Devon team.

We will use regional and national benchmarking to evaluate our performance and will ensure that we take opportunities to learn in order to deliver services for the people of Mid Devon that are informed by best practice and tailored to reflect the needs of our residents and communities. We will look ‘up and out’ not only to contextualise our own performance, but also to seek opportunities to collaborate with other authorities; neighbours, peer groups, and national innovators, to deliver better quality, more efficient services.

We start this corporate plan with a number of award winning services and top quartile achievement on a national basis. Against an increasingly difficult resource backdrop for local government, our challenge will be to maintain our existing high performance in the priority areas set out in this plan, and to support those functions where greater focus is needed. Our ambition can only be delivered by continuing to transform and modernise the way we work in order to deliver best value, by recognising the partnership and community interests of many other stakeholders in delivering this plan, and by working to maximise the effectiveness of all those with whom we share a common goal.



Stephen Walford  
Chief Executive

