



## **2.0 Updates**

### **2.1 New National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

- 2.1.1 Previous reports have outlined that further to the release of the latest iteration of the NPPF in December 2024, it remains expected that the Government will consult on a national set of 'core' development management (DM) policies. Officers have also received various informal updates to confirm that the publication of further information was 'imminent'. However, no announcements have yet been made with regard to the policies and so no further update can be provided at this time.

### **2.2 New Local Plan: Plan Mid-Devon**

- 2.2.1 Work to develop the new Local Plan (Plan Mid Devon) continues – albeit there is an important link to the announcement on national development management policies.
- 2.2.2 The Local Plan team has also appointed an interim officer (consultant) to support work on the new Local Plan whilst recruitment of permanent staff continues. This officer brings a wealth of experience and is already contributing to the work of the team.
- 2.2.3 The team has also appointed two planning assistants, who will also add additional capacity to the team. Unfortunately, recruitment to the Forward Planning Officer and Principal Forward Planning Officer has been less successful and no appointments to these roles were made after the last round of recruitment. A further round of advertisement is now underway in the hope that recruitment might be more successful during September/autumn.

### **2.3 Development Management Policies**

- 2.3.1 The Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan was adopted at the 8<sup>th</sup> July Cabinet meeting.
- 2.3.2 The EUE (Area B) masterplan was also noted at the September Cabinet meeting. Although developments on Area B will still be bound to adhere to the adopted Tiverton EUE Master Plan SPD, this Area B masterplan will support the progression of development proposals for this area of the EUE allocation.
- 2.3.3 The Council is required to renew its Infrastructure Funding Statement and publish it online by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. This document is refreshed annually and details what the Council expects to fund, or contribute towards, using S106 funds. A review of the Infrastructure Funding Statement is currently being undertaken shortly ahead of its presentation to Cabinet for approval

prior to publication. The previously published statement can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

- 2.3.4 The Infrastructure Funding Statement (and Infrastructure list) can only include items where a policy basis exists to support a contribution towards the cost of delivery. However, Members are invited to review the list to ensure that all items are included. This will help ensure the list has been fully and rigorously reviewed. The list will then be subject to a more detailed review and discussion through the Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) ahead of presentation to Cabinet. The PPAG meeting is scheduled for October.

## **2.4 Development Management**

- 2.4.1 Members will be aware that some staffing changes are occurring within Development Management with the departure of the former permanent DMM and one of the Principal Officers. It is expected that the interim DMM will remain in post whilst a permanent solution is implemented and recruitment is underway in relation to the PPO role.
- 2.4.2 Performance within Development Management remains strong with 100% of householder applications determined within 8 weeks and 0.5% of minor applications overturned at appeal. (Q1 2025/26 data.)
- 2.4.3 However, Q1 income is below trajectory for the years (£167k versus £835k target). This financial picture does reflect the wider market sentiment and macro-economic conditions with housebuilders, contractors and other Local Authorities also experiencing a downturn in sales/contracts and applications.

## **2.5 Building Control**

- 2.5.1 Building Control (a shared function with North Devon Council) continues to perform well, albeit with continuing resourcing challenges and pressures accruing through changes introduced through the Building Safety Act (2024).
- 2.5.2 Q1 data showed 100% approval of full applications within 2 months (versus 95% target and 97% achieved in Q3) and continuity of a strong market share (85% versus 75% target and 82% in Q4 2024/25.) Market share of new housing completions has picked up versus Q4 data (31% vs. 17%) but remains below target (40%) and is highly dependent upon the nature of developers active within the market.
- 2.5.3 Applications numbers are down, and are below the same period last year, and income is also therefore below target. Again – akin to Development Management - this is reflective of a depressed housing market and low confidence within the construction/development sector as a whole. Poor trading conditions seem likely to continue.

## **2.6 Planning Enforcement**

- 2.6.1 The Enforcement services continues with a high/active case load albeit there continues to be churn/change in the live cases as new cases are presented and officers close older/completed cases.
- 2.6.2 The service continues to operate with two officers (a contractor and an assistant enforcement officer.) Multiple attempts have been made to recruit a senior enforcement officer, including with market supplements applied. Further consideration is being given as to how a permanent officer might be secured.
- 2.6.3 In addition to this, planning officers continue to support with the resolution of live cases in order to seek to manage and reduce the case-load.

## **Financial Implications**

Financial implications associated with this report are limited – but members are asked to note points relating to financial performance and other implications of matters.

## **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications arising from this information report.

## **Risk Assessment**

There are no major risks associated with this report.

## **Impact on Climate Change**

The scope of this PDG means it has a significant opportunity to progress positive work around climate, biodiversity and other environmental/sustainability matters. Officers will work to seek to support the PDG in maximising these opportunities.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

No negative equalities impacts are expected.

## **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

The work of this PDG will supports a wide range of corporate objectives and the corporate plan as a whole.

## **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Date:** 10 September 2025

**Statutory Officer:** Maria De Leburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 10 September 2025

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford  
Agreed by Chief Executive  
**Date:** 10 September 2025

**Performance and risk:** Stephen Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 15 September 2025

**Cabinet member notified:** yes

#### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Richard Marsh, Director of Place and Economy  
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**Background papers:**