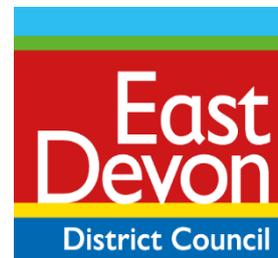


Agenda for consultative meeting of the Housing Review Board

Thursday, 13th January, 2022, 10.00 am



Members of Housing Review Board

S Beer, S Chamberlain (Chair), C Collier, C Drew, G Pook, I Hall, H Parr, S Saunders, P Sullivan (Vice Chair), C Summers, B Taylor

East Devon District Council
Blackdown House
Border Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1EJ

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Tel: 01404 515616

www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Venue: online via the Zoom app

Contact: Alethea Thompson 01395 517653; email
athompson@eastdevon.gov.uk

(or group number 01395 517546)

Tuesday, 4 January 2022

Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.

Please do not attend Blackdown House.

Members are asked to follow the [Protocol for Remote Meetings](#)

This meeting is being recorded by EDDC for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the Council's Youtube Channel at
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNHQruge3LV4hcgRnbwBw>

Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-public-meetings/#article-content>

Between 8th December 2021 to 11th May 2022, the Council has delegated much of the decision making to officers. Any officer decisions arising from recommendations from this consultative meeting will be published on the webpage for this meeting in due course. All meetings held can be found via the [Browse Meetings](#) webpage.

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Welcome to two newly appointed tenant co-optees on to the Housing Review Board

3 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 10)

4 Apologies

5 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

6 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

7 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

8 Housing Review Board forward plan (Page 11)

9 Draft Housing Service Plan and draft budget 2022-23 (Pages 12 - 53)

10 Housing Management System software upgrade (Pages 54 - 61)

11 Updated Housing Policies (Pages 62 - 75)

12 Mental Health Strategy for Housing 2021-2025 (Pages 76 - 99)

13 Housing Covid-19 Performance Monitoring report (Pages 100 - 103)

14 Quarterly PI report Quarter 2 2021-22 (Pages 104 - 119)

[Decision making and equalities](#)

For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held at Online via the zoom app on 16 September 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 1.00 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no matters raised by the public.

2 Appointment of Vice Chair

The new Chair of the Housing Review Board, Councillor Sarah Chamberlain introduced herself and thanked the previous Chair, Councillor Tony McCollum for all his hard work with the Board during the past two years.

Nominations for Vice Chair were received for co-opted tenant member Peter Sullivan.

RECOMMENDED: that the recommendation that tenant representative Peter Sullivan be appointed Vice Chair of the Board for the ensuing year be passed for approval.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Housing Review Board meeting held on 29 April 2021 were recommended for approval.

4 Declarations of interest

Declarations of interest.
Cat Summers, Personal, housing tenant.

Declarations of interest.
Cindy Collier, Personal, housing tenant.

Declarations of interest.
Councillor Ian Hall, Personal, Devon County Council councillor, his mum was a council tenant and a user of HomeSafeguard, and he may be involved in a future men's shed project at Millwey Rise estate, Axminster.

Declarations of interest.
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, employee of Exeter City Council.

Declarations of interest.
Peter Sullivan, Personal, housing tenant.

9. Housing Strategy 2020-2024.
Councillor Geoff Pook, Personal, has a number of private sector rentals.

5 Matters of urgency

Councillor Ian Hall requested information and assurances that there were adequate safeguards in place for the HomeSafeguard overnight service. The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment advised members that a report had been taken to Cabinet earlier this month outlining a short term agreement with a specialist calling handling provider as an emergency measure to ensure that the service was maintained overnight to ensure business continuity for customers.

The Vice Chair expressed disappointment that tenants had not been made aware of these changes to the service. He was assured that this emergency temporary measure could be communicated to tenants and the Cabinet report would be circulated to Board members.

6 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential/exempt items.

7 **Housing Review Board forward plan**

The Acting Housing Service Lead presented the forward plan and advised members that the forward plan acted as a reminder of agenda items to come forward to future meetings. Members were reminded that they could add further issues to the next forward plan by informing either herself or the Democratic Services Officer.

During the meeting the following items were added to the forward plan which was endorsed by the Board:

- A presentation from the Housing Services Manager and tenants regarding the Council's response to the social housing White Paper.
- Procurement updates.
- To consider the current and potential use of garage sites, particularly in respect of possible development sites.
- Progression of the Fairshare project as an important contributor to the agenda.

8 **Housing Strategy 2020-2024**

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment presented the revised Housing Strategy following consultation, for member approval and asked the Board to recommend that Cabinet approve and adopt the strategy. The Housing Strategy reflected and responded to broader council policy as set out in both the Housing Service Plan and the developing Council Plan. It presented an overview of the Housing Service's planned strategic approach to effectively meet continuing and emerging housing challenges over the next four years. The high level themes covered:

- Providing homes.
- Improving homes.
- Improving communities.
- Improving services.

It picked up on the Council ambition of increasing the supply of new social and affordable homes.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommendation that Cabinet adopts the Housing Strategy is passed for approval.

9 **Updated Housing Policies**

The Acting Housing Service Lead's report informed the Board of a number of housing policies that had been reviewed by the relevant housing manager to ensure that they continue to reflect current good practice and legislation.

Following a question about mutual exchanges it was clarified that the properties were 'sold as seen' and did not qualify for repair works unless it was emergency repairs or related to compliance, for the first six months following exchange.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommendation to Cabinet that the policies are formally adopted by the Council is passed for approval.

10 **Housing Management System upgrade**

The Housing Systems Manager explained to the Board that the Housing Service was currently investigating options to upgrade its housing management system, Capita's Open Housing, to its latest version branded as "One Housing". He explained that it was a relatively significant upgrade, with a number of key benefits, which were outlined in section 8 of the report. It was noted that due to the scale of the upgrade and that the upgrade was unique to the Capita site it had not been possible to previously budget for the upgrade. However, a further report would be brought back to the next meeting of the Housing Review Board with a more detailed costed proposal.

The Acting Housing Service Lead informed the Board that Capita Open Housing was becoming outdated and until the trial sessions had been undertaken she could not comment on how user friendly and intuitive the new system would be. It was hoped that following the upgrade the system would substantially help with monitoring case loads, asset management, compliance, stock condition, complaints management and other key functions of the housing service.

The Vice Chair commented that he was pleased to see that there would be more involvement for tenants and requested a tenant portal be activated.

The Housing Review Board noted the current investigation of software upgrade options for the Council's Housing Management IT system and the potential for a budget request once the outcome of demonstrations and the financial implications of the final recommendation were known.

11 **Property & Asset; expanding the Compliance & Cyclical Servicing arm of the Property & Asset Team**

The Property and Asset Manager's report requested that the HRB accept the recommendation for an increase in budget for additional posts in the Housing Property and Asset team for the delivery of compliance and cyclical services work streams, to ensure that the housing stock remained safe, compliant and that tenants could feel safe in their homes. There was a focus on the big five areas of compliance/cyclical servicing:

- Asbestos management
- Gas servicing

- Electrical testing
- Fire management
- Legionella

The responsibility for the management and delivery of all these work streams fell within the Property & Asset Team, but there was limited specific dedicated resource/team to deliver compliance and cyclical servicing. A decision was taken earlier in the year to provide an additional delivery arm within the Property & Asset Team to focus on compliance and cyclical servicing, the team having four direct delivery strands:

- Reactive repairs and voids.
- Planned works, climate change and stock condition survey.
- Compliance and cyclical servicing.
- Call centre, customer improvement and relationship management.

The current make-up of the team was below industry standard and that required to deliver all the work streams. Compared to the industry standard EDDC's compliance team was 70% understaffed. Following a review it was believed that four additional officers were required and the report highlighted where the responsibilities would fit within the team. At present there were no funds in the budget to facilitate the enlargement of the compliance and cyclical servicing arm of the Property and Assets team and the report set out the anticipated financial implications of this.

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment in response to a question on recruitment advised the Board that the Council would be undertaking a pay review across the organisation as it had been recognised in some areas it was now paying below the market rate and therefore recruitment and retention of staff was suffering. Once the pay review had been undertaken he expected that the Council would find it easier to recruit. It was essential to recruit the right skill sets and competence.

Concern was expressed that the Council would struggle to recruit and retain staff with the correct skill sets to these essential roles. The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment reassured the Board that once the need for the new posts had been agreed budget funding would come from the Housing Revenue Account. Market supplements could be considered, if required, following advice from Human Resources. If severe recruitment issues were experienced, a report would be brought back to the HRB.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommends to Cabinet and Council that approval be sought for additional budget to resource new posts for the delivery of compliance and cyclical service work streams to ensure that the Council's housing stock remains safe and compliant so that tenants can feel safe in their homes.

12 **Procurement of the Gas Servicing/Services Contract**

The Property and Asset Manager updated the Board on the current position with the gas servicing contract, the progress with its re-procurement and the proposed route to complete the re-procurement process to enable seamless delivery of the service following expiry of the existing/implementation of the new contract. The current contract with Liberty Group was due to expire on 31 March 2022.

The report set out procurement options and suggested that Advantage South West framework be utilised to procure the 3 star gas servicing contract as a single service, accepting that small elements might be sub-contracted.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommend to Cabinet that delegated authority is granted to the Strategic Lead for Housing, Health & Environment in conjunction with the Housing Service Lead and the Strategic Lead for Governance & Licencing and the Strategic Lead for Finance to agree to proceed with the relevant stages of the procurement process and agree to granting the contract to the contractor identified in the process to deliver the 3 Star Gas Servicing Contract.

13 **Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital finance report**

The accountant's report provided the Housing Review Board with current draft financial outturn figures for the housing revenue account and housing capital program for the 2020/21 financial year. The report also considered the implications of any forthcoming regulatory changes.

Producing a Housing Revenue Account had been a statutory requirement for Councils who managed and owned their housing stock for some time, and therefore a key document for the Board to influence.

The previous finance report to the HRB explained regulatory changes to Right to Buy and how Right to Buy receipts could be used. It noted the phased reduction placed upon the proportion of acquisitions made within the year from the 2022/23 financial year onward. The limits imposed would be:

- From 2022/23 – maximum 50% of supply to be acquisitions.
- From 2023/24 – maximum 40% of supply to be acquisitions.
- From 2024/25 onwards – maximum of 30% of supply to be acquisitions.

The limits within the right to buy agreement sent by MHCLG only applied after 20 properties. The Council could only therefore make 20 acquisitions before being required to spend any receipts on development.

The Housing Revenue Account surplus was in a healthy position. Income levels for dwellings remained consistent and on budget, whereas garage rents, mostly impacted by voids, continued to underperform.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommendation to Cabinet that the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Finance report is passed for approval.

14 **Integrated Asset Management Contract**

The Property and Asset Manager's report provided the HRB with an update on the delivery of the Integrated Asset Management Contract for quarter 1 of 2021/22 and sought approval of the high level governance of the contract. This was to ensure that all amendments/variations/changes required to the contract were managed in the most efficient compliant manner as possible to ensure the daily operational delivery of the Integrated Asset Management Contract (IAMC) was maintained.

The IAMC delivered by Ian Williams entered its third year on 1 April 2021. Many challenges had been encountered during the first two years, the main ones being:

- Developing a professional working relationship between EDDC and Ian Williams.
- Implementing a new contract delivery model, Price Per Property (PPP) and Price Per Void (PPV).
- The impact on delivery of the service of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The impact on delivery of the service of Brexit.

It was noted that the level of performance in the delivery of reactive repairs was falling and this needed to be addressed. Compliance meetings were held monthly between both parties and this was going well. No access continued to be an issue in the delivery of compliance/cyclical servicing work. Quarter 1 had seen a drop in complaints made directly against Ian Williams. Although as a service, Property and Assets complaints were still at a higher than hoped level, work was being done to reduce this trend through learning across both parties.

The Covid-19 pandemic had significantly reduced demand for the Handyman Service and despite restrictions being lifted demand remained low.

The report explained that the IAMC was designed and set up in such a way to allow additional work streams to be added and to amend the manner in which it was delivered, as the Contract evolved it was likely that numerous changes would be required, it was therefore necessary that there should be a mechanism in place to allow such changes to be made with minimal disruption to the daily operation. The Governance of the Contract was:

- Any/all changes that effect or require a change to the Terms and Conditions of the Formal Contract to be tabled to/approved by the Core Group and then tabled to the Housing Review Board for final acceptance/sign off.
- Any/all changes that were solely operational and required no change to the Terms and Conditions of the Formal Contract to be tabled to/approved by the Core Group and then signed off by the EDDC Strategic Lead/Service Lead for Housing and a Director of Ian Williams.

The report recommended that the Housing Review Board accept the levels of Governance for the IAMC Contract and this was noted by the Board.

The Chair of the Board thanked the Property and Asset Manager for his report.

The Vice Chair reported that from a tenant's point of view the IAMC had been challenging. Tenants had struggled to have a meeting with the Ian Williams repairs team for the past 18 months. It was hoped that as Covid restrictions were no longer in place it would be possible to recommence tenant review team meetings. There was a need to ensure continuous improvement and to manage expectations.

15 **The Building Safety Act presentation**

The Property and Asset Manager and the Compliance and Cyclical Servicing Manager gave the Board a presentation on the Building Safety Act and the impact on housing.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017 in which 72 people died and more than 70 were injured the Prime Minister announced that a public inquiry would be set up. This began on 14 September 2014 and the findings from the first report were released in October 2019. A second phase to investigate the broader causes began on 14 June 2020.

As a result of the fire and subsequent testing of aluminium composite material cladding from similar buildings across the country the Government commissioned an independent review of the building regulations and fire safety on 28 July 2017. Its purpose was to make recommendations that would ensure a sufficiently robust regulatory system for the

future and that residents felt that the buildings they lived in were safe and remained so. The review concluded that the whole system needed major reform and that residents' safety needed to be a greater priority through the entire life cycle of a building. The Government accepted the recommendations and published the draft Building Safety Bill in July 2020, due to come into force in late 2021. The Bill brought forward a more stringent regulatory regime focused on fire and structural safety, which defined roles and responsibilities and a new dedicated Building Safety Regulator which was part of the Health and Safety Executive.

The recommendations for the Bill were:

- Stringent regime for the fire safety in higher risk buildings.
- Regime to monitor performance of the building from design stage to occupation.
- Cross cutting legislation and reform of building regulations and guidance.
- New Homes Ombudsman.
- Easier access to the Housing Ombudsman.
- A more transparent testing regime.
- Increasing tenants' voice.

Everyone within the Council had a responsibility for reporting any fire concerns, including the HRB. Within housing, the duty holder was the Chief Executive. The accountable person would be the Strategic Lead or Service Lead. The Building Safety Manager was appointed by the accountable person and approved by the building safety regulator to deliver the day to day functions on behalf of the accountable person. Residents of buildings in scope of the new regime would be given duties to cooperate with the Building Safety Manager and developing a resident engagement strategy would be a required part of a building's safety case.

It was noted that at present EDDC did not currently have any in-scope buildings, however it was believed that further buildings, possibly sheltered blocks of flats would become in scope at a later date. The two options to fulfil the role of the Building Safety Manager was to appoint to the role or to discharge this duty to the senior management team within housing.

The Government asked for the Health and Safety Executive to establish a new building safety regulator to oversee the safe design, construction and occupation of high risk buildings so that residents were safe and felt safe. It would be independent and give expert advice to local regulators, landlords and building owners, the construction and design industry, and to residents. For new developments and major refurbishments there would be three gateways; pre-planning stage, pre-construction stage and pre-occupation stage.

The key points of the Building Safety Act for the future were:

- A stricter regime on building and refurbishment of buildings.
- Golden thread of information needed at all stages of the buildings.
- Fire door inspections.
- Stricter regime on fire safety inspections.
- Ensuring resident engagement.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked the Property and Asset Manager and the Compliance and Cyclical Servicing Manager for their presentation and commented that every agenda item would be covered by the Building Safety Act, and that compliance was key to all.

Attendance List

Board members present:

Peter Sullivan, Tenant (Vice-Chair)
Cat Summers, Tenant
Councillor Ian Hall
Councillor Helen Parr
Cindy Collier, Tenant
Councillor Geoff Pook
Councillor Brenda Taylor
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain (Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

M Armstrong
D Ledger
T McCollum
P Millar
E Rylance
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
Graham Baker, Senior Technical Officer Asset Management
Sue Bewes, Housing Services Manager
Michelle Davidson, Property and Asset Management
Jo Garfoot, Acting Housing Service Lead
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Rebecca Heal, Solicitor
Andi Loosemore, Rental Manager
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Councillor apologies:

Christine Morrison, Tenant

Chairman

Date:

HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

This forward plan identifies reports and other agenda items for future meetings of the Housing Review Board. It is also intended to assist agenda management and act as a reminder of items to come forward to future meetings.

Report title	Meeting date	Author
Housing Decarbonisation Fund Bid		Housing Service Lead
Housing Management System software upgrade		Housing Service Lead
Community Development food initiative		Landlord Services Manager
Mental Health Strategy and other policies		Landlord Services Manager
Social Housing White Paper		Landlord Services Manager
Quarterly performance reports and regular reports		
Responsive repairs	Quarterly report	Property & Asset Manager
Letting of Council homes/voids	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Devon Home Choice	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Rent management	Quarterly report	Housing Services Manager
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Benchmarking survey	Annual report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	Democratic Services Officer

Board Members can propose agenda items during meetings/debates that can be included on the Forward Plan for future meetings, or outside the meetings with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice chairman.



Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 13 January 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Draft Housing Service Plan 2022 -2023

Report summary:

This report presents the draft Service Plan for the Housing Service covering the period 2022-23.

The Service Plan is a document produced annually and sets out the key achievements over the past year and the forthcoming issues to be faced by the Service. This year the Plan reflects continuing service interruptions due to the pandemic.

A range of service improvements and carbon reduction aspirations are identified through a number of SMART objectives.

The Plan also considers service challenges and pressures over the next three years, including climate change implications, tenant safety measures, the implications of the Social Housing White Paper, the new Building safety Act and the ambitions to increase the supply of social housing.

The Service Plan is presented in draft form for the Housing Review Board's consideration.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

To consider, comment on and approve the Housing Service Plan for 2022-23.

Reason for recommendation:

To enable the Housing Review Board to influence the production of the Service Plan prior to it being finalised

Officer: John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing Health and Environment

jgolding@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning

- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Medium Impact

Climate change High Impact

The Service Plan contains a section on climate change and a number of proposals for reducing the climate impact of our housing stock.

Risk: Low Risk; [Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.](#)

Links to background information .

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

Housing Service Plan 2022-23

- 1.1 For some time now all the Council's services have organised an annual service planning exercise and produced a service plan, which sets out details of what the service does, achievements and future challenges and targets.
- 1.2 The Service Plan is produced using a corporate template and it shows how the service improvements link with the Council Plan/Statement of Intent. The Plan identifies the key service objectives, challenges ahead and outlines areas of performance that we should measure. It also considers efficiencies, key risks, training needs, equalities, opportunities to do things differently, and workforce planning.
- 1.3 The Service Plan links closely with our Housing Strategy and is designed to complement a number of other housing plans and policies as part of how we manage our own housing stock and the services we deliver. There is also a strong link with the Council's Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-care and community resilience and integrate and improve support for people in their own homes. There is also a strong link to both the Poverty Strategy and the council's Climate Change aspirations
- 1.4 The Service Plan is intended as a working document and the service managers will cascade the contents of the plan at their team meetings and reflect priorities in staff objectives. It is a good discipline to complete an annual statement of what the Service expects to achieve, set out in a structured way using a template and involving staff, service users and members in the process.
- 1.5 The Plan presented contains some ambitious objectives that are reflective of challenges faced through current service delivery. The objectives are split between the three areas of the Housing Service (landlord services, property and asset, housing needs and strategy)

however, a number of the objectives sit across teams, an example being the creation of a mental health strategy for housing, an area that is currently impacting on all of our services.

1.6 The headlines for the Service Plan include:

- A focus on delivering our housing purpose(s).
- A commitment to tackle homelessness.
- Recognition of poverty as a significant factor in people's lives.
- Revision of the HRA Business plan.
- Delivering the Stock Condition Survey
- A focus on new development opportunities with the need to review the current acquisition programme.
- The recruitment and implementation of the new Social Housing Task Force
- Emphasis on the importance of compliance and keeping tenants safe in their homes.
- A focus on mental health and how we are addressing the challenges this is presenting us as a landlord.
- Robustly managing the Integrated Asset Management Contract.
- Continuing with the future proofing of Home Safeguard with a realistic view of risks ahead including the next phase of the digital switchover, refresh of the marketing strategy and growth plans
- An emphasis on evidencing value for money with the need to scrutinise some areas to satisfy ourselves that we are achieving what matters most to the customer, in line with our systems thinking purpose.
- Acting on the climate change agenda and building towards a carbon neutral council.
- Delivering the next phase of the carbon reduction programme for our housing stock

1.7 The Housing Leadership team have enjoyed being able to refresh the Service Plan as a way of setting out how we plan to get through what looks to be another challenging year ahead with a number of uncertainties in relation to national housing policy as well as competing demands impacting on our financial position. There are still unknown factors relating to the ongoing pandemic which continues to impact various elements of the service

1.8 The Service Planning Day, involved input from all our service managers, the Portfolio Holder and the Climate Change Officer and covered, the day to day challenges of the job, ideas for service improvement, and the needs of our customers.

1.9 The draft Service Plan (**Annex 1**) will be presented to the tenant groups over the next few months and cascaded to Housing staff through team meetings and Service briefings.

1.10 I welcome the Housing Review Board's input into the Service Plan before it is finalised and reported to Cabinet.

Financial implications:

At the same time as preparing the draft service plans, draft budgets have been prepared for member consideration. Service plans and budgets are aligned and link back to the Council Plan.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment in the report

Service Planning 2022-23

Housing Service

Version 2.0

April 2022 – March 2023



Each part of the council plays its part in a joined-up approach to service delivery- from this plan that sets out our staff priorities, to staff's individual performance reviews to confirm that everyone is doing their part.

Strategic Lead: John Golding

Service Lead: Amy Gilbert-Jeans/Joanne Garfoot

Portfolio holder: Councillor Megan Armstrong

Service Plan Template 2022-23: Contents Page

Section 1	Brief description of service and purpose(s)
Section 2	Key achievements in 2021-22
Section 3	Looking forward: what we will do in 2022-23
Section 3a	Looking forward: options for doing things differently
Section 3b	Looking forward: what we will measure, how often and for whom
Section 4	Resources and workforce planning
Section 5	Training and development
Section 6	Reducing our carbon footprint
Section 7	Service risks: current and new/emerging
Section 8	Equalities and safeguarding

Notes for Strategic Leads and Service Leads:

*Certain parts of this form will be pre-populated. Shaded areas are for guidance.

When you have completed your Service Plan:

- ✓ Save to O:\Service Plans. Final versions will be placed on the intranet/internet
- ✓ Communicate it to your staff
- ✓ Keep it under review – make it a live document which adds value!
- ✓ Use it to formulate individual objectives

Section 1 – Brief description of service and purpose(s)	
<p>What we do and who we deliver to</p>	<p>Our over-riding Housing Service vision is to deliver a decent home for all residents of East Devon. This compliments the emerging Council Plan priority of Better Homes and communities for All.</p> <p>Our Housing Strategy 2020-2024 sets out our key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing Homes • Improving Homes • Improving Communities • Improving Services <p>We have adopted the following purpose(s) where we have undertaken Systems Thinking reviews in Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To match the right people with the right home (voids & allocations). • Do the right repair at the right time, get it right first time, and stay fixed (responsive repairs). • Do the right service/repair at the right time, and leave safe (gas servicing). • To collect the right amount of rent at the right time (rent management). • Deal with customer emergencies promptly (Home Safeguard). <p>Our services are delivered consistent with the Council’s Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-care and community resilience, and integrate and improve support for people in their own homes.</p> <p>Our approach to managing and tackling homelessness has been reviewed and articulated in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019- 2023. The strategy is based upon the results of a review of homelessness in our area and has resulted in establishing the following four priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise prevention activities and outcomes; • Increase accommodation options; • Minimise rough sleeping; • Improve health and wellbeing.
<p>How we deliver and ensure equal access</p>	<p>Our Housing Services are delivered through a combination of direct service delivery from our housing teams as well as a number of partnerships and contracting arrangements.</p> <p>All of the housing policies are subject to the completion of an equality impact assessment to ensure our services are fully accessible and we work in compliance with the council’s corporate equalities policy.</p> <p>We are regulated by the Social Housing Regulator and operate in compliance with the regulatory standards framework.</p> <p>We strive to actively involve tenants in all aspects of our service to ensure wide consultation and the opportunity for tenants to influence the services we deliver.</p> <p>We provide varied methods of communication for customers to access our services and ensure our web pages are kept up to date.</p> <p>We promote the work of the Housing Service using a variety of methods, including the use of social media.</p>

<p>How we compare</p>	<p>We use HouseMark for periodic benchmarking of our services and report the results to our Housing Review Board. We encourage tenants to complete customer satisfaction surveys to give us feedback on our services. We have recently completed a longitudinal study in partnership with a local housing association and Birmingham University to look closely at the impact of our services on current tenants as well as those trying to access our services. We are members of The Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership. The group aims to improve the consistency of housing options and homelessness services across Devon and Cornwall Local Authorities by developing shared policies, practices and service standards to ensure equality of services. We monitor our service delivery reporting annually to national and local bodies.</p>
<p>Statutory elements of the service</p>	<p>Management of our Council housing stock in line with the regulatory standards framework. Right to Buy Council homes Homelessness/Housing Advice (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) Management of the housing register and operation of an allocations team to ensure our housing stock is allocated appropriately. Creation of a tenancy strategy Safeguarding responsibilities- Children’s Act 2004 and Care Act 2014 Health and Safety legislation in relation to asset management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and control of asbestos regulations 2012 • Gas safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998 • Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005.
<p>Current net budget (excludes Internal support charges and capital budget)</p>	<p>Housing Revenue Account annual turnover £19 million. General Fund budgets for Homelessness and Home Safeguard.</p>

<p>Section 2 – Key achievements in 2021-22</p>		
	<p><i>Briefly describe key achievements and what outcomes were created. This will inform Annual Report at year end.</i></p>	<p><i>Strategic link to Council Plan priorities</i></p>
	<p>A three year research partnership between East Devon District Council’s (EDDC) housing department, the University of Birmingham’s Research Centre on Household Assets and Saving Management (CHASM), and LiveWest has been completed. The objective of the partnership was to build a richer understanding of people’s experience of their home and the relationship between their home, landlord and wellbeing. Over 3,500 social tenants, private renters (those on the Devon Home Choice housing register) and those in shared ownership responded to the survey. 58 respondents were also interviewed, some of whom were contacted over all three years of the study.</p> <p>Despite challenges faced through the pandemic we have continued to deliver our acquisition programme and worked with Partners to deliver affordable housing in the District</p>	<p>Better Homes and Communities for all</p>

We updated and released our new Housing Strategy 2020-2024. We have produced an Action Plan that will monitor objectives that we have committed to within the Strategy.

We released our Open Housing management dashboard, this gives Managers complete visibility and oversight on performance of the housing service, including areas of compliance in order to instantly recognise areas of concern.

Rental income remains high despite the continued challenges of the pandemic. We have increased the number of tenants on direct debits by pro-actively pushing this. We have undertaken in depth work around income maximisation with our tenants and worked closely with rev's and ben's to ensure covid grants can be accessed where required. This all highlights excellent progress that has been made against the objectives contained in the poverty strategy.

With record numbers of homelessness presentations, we have continued to ensure that where we have a duty- all have been accommodated. The 'everybody in' campaign worked well and although busier than ever before the rough sleeper navigators have had a busy but successful year.

We have successfully secured good outcomes for homelessness funding bids achieving higher levels of income than previously achieved this has enabled us to increase our number of housing first placements.

We have achieved a good number of allocations, in spite of the pandemic. We have re-started the Allocations panel for complex needs tenants and this is working very well.

We have successfully relocated Home Safeguard into Blackdown House and undertaken a significant system upgrade. As an emergency provision we have implemented PPP Night Owl to cover our overnight delivery and this has worked seamlessly. We continue with recruitment

A very positive new Social Value Programme has been agreed with Ian Williams, this will bring tangible benefits for our tenants and communities.

Work has been underway in consultation with tenants around implementing the new Social Housing White Paper across the service.

A new system for closely managing ASB cases across the district is well underway. This a collaborative piece of work between estate management and housing systems and is progressing well

We have a new manager and team structure within the Sheltered Housing Service and this is working extremely well now that it is

<p>embedded. It offers resilience and progression through the service and ensures staff and tenants are getting the support they require</p> <p>The successful procurement of the gas servicing contract has been undertaken this year and the contract has been awarded within the given procurement timescale</p> <p>We have undertaken an in-depth gap analysis and positioning working with regards the potential impact of the Building safety Act and a presentation was delivered to HRB</p> <p>A new complaints monitoring system has been developed and is currently being built into Open Housing in order to offer greater degree of visibility, accuracy and accountability</p> <p>A strong bid was submitted for funding in the first wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, if we are successful this will support further carbon reduction programmes on our housing stock</p> <p>We successfully delivered the previous Green Homes Grant funding and delivered sustainable heating and hot water technologies into 130 homes across the district. This has had a massive positive impact on the tenants within those homes and we have had some amazing and heart-warming feedback</p> <p>A new set of planned works programmes have been designed and undertaken covering; exterior works, kitchens and bathrooms</p>	
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Section 3 – Looking forward : what we will do in 2022-23 (service objectives)				
Key Service Objectives (please include consultation or procurement activity required)	Financial/ corporate resource	Lead Officers	Start date	End date
<i>Please highlight any projects so that they may be recorded and monitored in SPAR. See project guidance document for the definition of a project.</i>				
1) Better homes and communities for all				
Refresh the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, incorporating a review of our approach to delivering affordable housing with the aspiration of building more Council housing, as well as delivering climate change actions and new building safety requirements.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	January 2022	Ongoing

Support the work of the newly established Housing Task Force in order to increase our housing stock.				
Meet the increased demand from homeless households and secure suitable temporary and permanent accommodation, supporting households who present with physical and mental health needs, poverty and other issues, to ensure they are able to sustain their tenancies.	General Fund	Housing Solutions Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to review and monitor outcomes from the Homelessness Strategy in order to reduce homelessness. Review service delivery and demand at Honiton and Exmouth offices to ensure our triage arrangements and resourcing is 'fit for purpose'.	General Fund	Housing Solutions Manager	January 2022	January 2023
Develop and grow the re-use and recycling furniture programme to assist residents with setting up their home, recognising the increasing amount of people arriving in our homes with few possessions.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Solutions Manager	January 2022	January 2023
Develop our existing tenancy support and sustainability service who are tasked with pro-actively supporting tenants to maintain tenancies, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeting workshops New tenant induction workshops New tenancy 'sign up' briefings Consider the provision of floating Support for vulnerable tenants in sheltered and General Needs housing Annual visits to all tenants who reside in Council housing. 	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	January 2022	December 2022
Improve void turnaround times and review the Void Standard for properties being relet as part of our Price Per Void contract, and ensure that a suitable lettable standard is achieved for new tenants achieving 'right first time'.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	January 2022	December 2022
Ensure that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Integrated Asset Management Contract are closely monitored and standards set are met or exceeded.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing
Ensure that all of our major building components are loaded onto our asset database, and the database maintained as items get replaced and upgraded.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	January 2022	August 2022

Publish a five year planned maintenance and cyclical decoration programme to provide tenants with visibility of planned works.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	March 2022	September 2022
Maintain up to date Fire Risk Assessments and publish documents and renewal dates.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing
Develop and expand on Year 3 of the Integrated Asset Management Contract to further increase customer satisfaction. Look to implement the first series of social value objectives, review the Handyperson offer and consider the inclusion of the planned works programme under the contract.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	January 2022	December 2022
Implement a robust process for dealing with Disrepair Claims, ensuring that this is embedded into all team processes. Meet the requirements of the Homes Fitness for Human Habitation Act.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager and Housing Services Manager	January 2022	June 2022
Identify areas of Housing land that are being used by residents without permission and ensure the appropriate signage is posted at all entrances and exits to prevent future claims of easements over our land.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	January 2022	Ongoing
Carry out an updated Stock Condition Survey on our Council owned housing stock in order to collate up to date information, including energy performance, and use it to inform a new stock investment programme to decarbonise the Housing assets. Once the Stock Condition Survey has been completed we will use the data to update and inform the 30 year HRA Business Plan that includes detailed Asset Management considerations.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager Housing Service Lead	December 2021	December 2022
Undertake a complete review of the Home Safeguard service, to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future growth and marketing strategy • Review of office accommodation and location of the service. • Review of staffing to include provision of whether we continue to manage the service 24/7. 	General Fund	Housing Services Manager Housing Service Lead	January 2022	June 2022

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of management resources to ensure business continuity. Review of corporate contracts to ensure all requirements can and are being met. 				
Mobilise and implement the new Gas Servicing Contract to ensure compliance of gas servicing across 100% of the stock is maintained through-out the switchover.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	January 2022	April 2022
<p>Recruit and support the development of our Compliance team that will sit within the Property and Asset team. Ensure the Compliance Manager is supported to ensure appropriate resourcing and focus to embed and develop the new team.</p> <p>Embrace and prepare for the changes anticipated in the Building Safety Act, including the appointment of Building Safety Managers.</p> <p>Review compliance procedures by an external body to drive continuous improvement.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager Compliance Manager	January 2022	Ongoing
<p>Review the Service against the Social Housing Regulators Standards and ensure that we are fully compliant.</p> <p>Establish and publicise the roles and responsibilities required under the White Paper and Building Safety Act including who tenants needs to report fire safety concerns to.</p> <p>Deliver training to Members, tenants and staff to ensure they have a full understanding of the legislative requirements of the White Paper and Building Safety Act as well as having the required skillset and levels of competency as defined in the Legislation to discharge such roles/duties.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Leadership Team	December 2021	December 2022
<p>Continue to develop and enhance the Open Housing System including the change to One Housing in order to continually improve efficiency and the customer's experience of contact with our service.</p> <p>To include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of the tenant portal Data transfer/management of data: to inform the stock condition survey. 	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	January 2022	December 2022

Improve our approach to safeguarding by implementing the protocol developed for Registered Providers.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	January 2022	June 2022
Develop and consult tenants on an EDDC Home Standard that exceeds the Decent Homes Standard and that can be applied to all homes.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	March 2022	March 2023
Refresh and clearly define our offer of sheltered accommodation ensuring clarity and a commitment to the levels of support that can be offered.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	March 2022	March 2023
2) A greener East Devon (to include any climate change objectives from our climate change action plan)				
Accelerate decarbonisation and energy saving measures in the Council's housing stock, targeting the least energy efficient properties first. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an up to date stock condition survey to identify where interventions and improvements will have the greatest impact and where challenges will exist (example- it may not be possible to future proof some properties e.g some blocks of flats, the 300+ Cornish units) • Target the removal of solid fuel throughout the stock • Upgrade insulation to minimise fuel poverty • In line with the most recent Government funding bid adopt a 'fabric first, worst first and lowest regret' (insulation upgrade, window/door replacement) approach followed by the installation of technologies e.g Air or Ground source heat pumps, solar PV. 	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager Housing Service Lead	December 2021	Ongoing
Off the back of the success of gaining Green Homes funding through 2020/2021, continue to seek out, bid for and secure available	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing

funding to assist in the decarbonisation of the housing stock.				
Develop and acquire energy efficient Council housing or housing that can be improved to low carbon standards.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	Ongoing	Ongoing
Ensure that housing repairs and improvement contractors are actively reducing their carbon footprints when performing work on Council homes. This includes efficient work scheduling, right first time repairs etc.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to work with Countryside colleagues to implement Phase 2 of the #inhoniton project by working with tenants in Honiton to identify areas we can manage differently and re-wild. Identify Housing land for Nature Recovery Networks, re-wilding and wildlife improvement corridors and liaise with tenants to deliver blue heart areas. SWITCH groups to focus on climate changes issues and to encourage learning and appreciation of the natural world. The educational element links to our carbon reduction commitments.	Housing Revenue Account (funding Countryside to lead)	Housing Services Manager	Currently ongoing	Review July 2022
Invest in the improvement of the communal areas on housing estates, including tree planting and encouraging a greater diversity of wildlife through rewilding and nature recovery corridors.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	April 2022	Ongoing
Undertake a review of the use of paper across the service with a view to eliminating unnecessary use. Teams have identified practices that could be reviewed to eliminate the use of paper in some areas.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	April 2022	October 2022
Develop the re-use and recycling furniture programme to assist residents with setting up their home, recognising the increasing amount of people arriving in our homes with few possessions.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Solutions Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing
Develop the Fairshare project working with Supermarkets in the district and Nourish to collect food from the supermarket, cook and freeze it, and distribute to people with an identified need. Aim to do more for rural areas	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing

and link with other work e.g. new applicants for Universal Credit who have limited income for the first six weeks.				
We will work to pro-actively promote the green agenda with our residents, recognising our key role as a landlord and the influence we can have over positive lifestyle changes that will contribute towards a reduction in an individual households carbon footprint.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	Ongoing	Ongoing
3) A resilient economy				
Deliver the priorities from the poverty strategy and action plan.	Housing Revenue Account & General Fund	Housing Service Lead	Ongoing	Ongoing until all objectives are met.
Work towards a ratio of 70/30 spend on Planned to Responsive repair works.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	April 2022	Ongoing
Provide and enable budgeting advice for tenants through our own staff and partner organisations (HomeMaker and CAB) to reduce the incidence of poverty.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	Currently in place	Ongoing
Ensure procurement opportunities are available for local companies, continue to work with Advantage South West to access and benefit from local frameworks that directly contribute towards the local economy.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	Currently in place	Ongoing
4) Other relevant considerations				
The ability for us to recruit and retain the resources we need to continue to deliver the objectives above. This has been challenging through-out 21/22 and will continue to have a significant impact in our ability to deliver our priorities whilst we remain in a recruitment crisis.				
The pandemic continues to impact the housing service and requires constant monitoring to ensure the safety of our staff, our residents				

and the balance of service that we are able to offer.				
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Section 3 a – Looking forward: options for doing things differently – this section is vital due to the funding gap we face over the next few years.

Please outline any opportunities to do things differently.

Adapt to agile and remote working to deliver continuously improving tenant services as a response to the pandemic whilst ensuring that staff, contractors and tenants are covid secure.

There is the need to keep the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan under constant review to ensure we are managing debt appropriately, and due to the borrowing cap being lifted, looking for potential opportunities to deliver more affordable housing. We need to ensure we are maintaining strong links with potential partners and key stakeholders as there may also be opportunities to jointly deliver more affordable housing. The 'big ticket' items are tenant safety/new affordable housing/decarbonisation expenditure. The completion of the stock condition survey will be a key factor in this and will provide us with the data and evidence we need to make robust decisions around future investment.

Continue to implement the OpenHousing management system and launch One Housing. This potentially will cut down on demand for services in the current format (tenant portal) and will lead to a review of resources to make any necessary changes to service delivery. Open Housing should also be driving efficiencies with how we deliver services, ensuring that up to date data in relation to tenants and properties is stored appropriately to ensure ease of access to information.

Strengthen the 'housing hub' or 'customer and business improvement' concept as part of a focus on more generic working and a way of delivering more customer focused housing services.

Gather and analyse satisfaction surveys from across the service to drive improvement adopting a 'lessons learnt' approach.

Manage the Integrated Asset Management contract and work in close partnership with our contractors to continue to provide a focus on asset management principles as opposed to reactive response works. The contract needs to focus on a number of benefits in terms of a more customer focused approach to services. The contract will also set out to deliver some ambitious social value objectives that will benefit our tenants in a number of ways.

There is the need to undertake a complete review of the Home Safeguard service as a cost/benefit exercise to determine the best way forward for the service. We need to review the options for attracting more business at the same time as realistically assessing staffing requirements to ensure we can deliver a robust, reliable service given the critical nature of the service delivered. We need to carefully consider commercial opportunities as well as ensuring our business continuity plans are fully costed and fit for purpose.

The stock condition survey will inform future stock investment decisions, and maintain up to date stock data. It will guide decision making around planned work programmes and regeneration opportunities that we may need to consider.

Respond to the findings of the longitudinal survey as briefly summarised below;

- (1) Continuing to ensure we manage our repairs contract to a high standard since a satisfaction with the repair service and a good home is associated with happiness and less anxiety. The report also

offers an opportunity to look at planned works in a different and more flexible way. Whilst maintaining the planned aspect of the service a more discretionary service could work parallel where work could still be carried out should the repair be having a serious impact on their wellbeing/quality of life. Example was a family based in quite a rural area and they only had a bath but there were at least 4 adults living in the property. As you might imagine they could not afford the hot water for all to have a bath and often they went without washing. Their request to have a shower installed was denied. This was proving to be totally unsuitable for their needs and was having an impact on other aspects of their lives.

- (2) Where possible to continue putting pressure on private landlords to improve their homes and maintain standards, further understand those on the Devon Home Choice waiting list and ensure the right people are being housed in the right homes at the right time and for those who might not be eligible for a social home to find innovative ways to help them in their housing journey
- (3) Formalising the additional roles some officers are taking on – such as the rental officers providing financial advice and support. A demand which is increasing but also a service which is highly valued by our tenants
- (4) Understanding social housing is not the 'poor relation' when it comes to tenure choice but should be highly valued and although providing the bricks and mortar are crucial but we are in the unique position to do so much more for our tenants (and if we get this right) we can make a real difference to individuals, families and communities alike.

Consider a proactive approach to adapting sheltered housing units to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' rather than being reactive to needs as they arise.

Prepare for the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 and participating in county wide activities that support those who suffer from domestic abuse.

Expand the use of social media to communicate with our customers to raise the profile of the work of the housing service.

Continue to work with Environmental Health, StreetScene and Countryside on shared goals and aspirations as set out in the Council plan.

Improve complaint handling and resolutions through better communication and liaison with tenants, being proactive and adopting a stronger customer focus.

Maximise the benefits of our resident engagement strategy to ensure tenant input and involvement across all of our services.

Expand and maximise our membership of Advantage South West (ASW) to assist us in relation to resolving procurement challenges as well as other ASW housing driven projects.

Focus on decarbonising the housing stock as part of our climate change response and improve the energy efficiency of tenant's homes.

Provide a greater emphasis on poverty prevention, financial resilience, reduced indebtedness, affordable warmth, and financial equality.

Section 3 b – Looking forward: Changes to measures and performance indicators - what we will measure, how often and for whom

Measure/indicator	How often – monthly, quarterly, bi-	For whom? Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny	Link Council Plan priorities	Responsible Officer for production of	Retain this measure (yes/no) or new
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	annually, annually			management information	
1. Rent collected against rent due	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
2. Void period- end to end times	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
3. Integrated Asset Management contract suite of KPIs	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
4. Number of new affordable homes delivered/ number of homes lost through RTB	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
5. Housing Strategy	Annually	Scrutiny Committee and Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
6. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all A resilient economy	Housing Service Lead	Yes
7. Housing Revenue Account budget	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Service Lead	Yes
8. Allocations and changes in the Housing Register	Quarterly		Better homes and communities for all	Housing Solutions Manager	Yes
9. Number of Council tenants downsizing	Monthly	To be captured in quarterly KPI	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Solutions Manager	Yes

		monitoring report			
10. Number of Safeguarding referrals made (children's/adults)	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all	Housing Services Manager	Yes
11. Covid dashboard	Weekly	Housing Review Board	Better homes and communities for all A resilient economy	Housing Service Lead	Yes

**The quarterly housing KPI report will continue to be produced, this contains a breakdown of KPI from across the housing service.*

Section 4 – Resources and workforce planning

Full time equivalents/Headcount as at 01/04/2021	FTE = 91.15 Headcount = 101
Turnover (April 2020 to March 2021)	Voluntary Turnover = % Voluntary & Non Voluntary Turnover = %
Absence (April 2020 to March 2021)	Days lost per person: days

Section 5 – Training and development

Team based skills/development required – please identify training required that is not currently available	Who for	Expected outcome	When
All managers to ensure completion of mandatory management training modules	Managers	Awareness of all management policies to ensure implementation.	During the plan
Following a review of health and safety training, all staff must ensure completion of all mandatory health and safety training requirements as set out in the H&S training matrix	All Officers	Competent staff that can manage health and safety risks accordingly, ensuring safe systems of work.	During the plan
Customer Service and dealing with difficult customers and service requests/complaints	All staff	Improved customer service and complaint handling	During the plan

Equalities and poverty	All staff	Awareness of our responsibilities	During the plan
Safeguarding Children and Adults	All staff	Awareness of our responsibilities	During the plan
Prevent (radicalisation) and Countylines	All front line staff	Awareness of how to report concerns	During the plan
Data protection and information security	All staff	Awareness of the Council's policy and housing specific requirements	During the plan
Social media policy and use	Selected staff	Appropriate and positive use of social media	During the plan
Systems Thinking	Managers	Take forward the next series of reviews	During the plan period
Continuing professional development/ professional training as appropriate	Selected staff	Maintaining high standards of professional knowledge and conduct	During the plan
Open Housing document and mobile device training	All staff	All users able to benefit from the housing management system	During the plan
Mental Health awareness training	Selected staff	To ensure staff are competent and aware of our legal position in relation to dealing with tenants with mental health issues.	During the plan
Compliance training as required; to include but not limited to asbestos awareness/ fire safety/legionella and electrical safety.	Selected staff	To ensure staff are competent and aware of legal expectations in relation to the management of our buildings.	During the plan
Understanding and awareness of the legislative requirements of the White Paper and the Building Safety Act.	Selected staff	Ensure we have the skillset and level of competency as defined in the legislation to discharge roles/duties.	During the plan

Section 6 – Reducing our carbon footprint

In what ways is your service contributing to our carbon footprint	What can you do to reduce this impact
<p>Carbon emissions from the Council housing stock has a significant impact on the Councils carbon footprint.</p>	<p>We need to ensure we are investing in decarbonising our stock, this work has already begun with the work we have done as a result of the Green Homes Grant funding. Our stock condition survey will inform us of the stock that needs considerable investment by way of a retrofitting programme.</p> <p>We will continue to bid for funding as well as investing through our own HRA for greener technologies.</p> <p>We will consider phasing out the use of gas boilers and replace them with greener alternatives such as Air Source Heat pumps and Ground Source Heat Pumps.</p> <p>We will always consider our carbon footprint when making development decisions, we will actively seek to ensure this is considered through our acquisition programme as well as through development aspirations we have to build our own housing.</p> <p>We need to consider our role as a landlord and 'influencer' in helping tenants to live in their homes in the most efficient way possible. We need to pro-actively identify fuel poverty and look for solutions in order to help people.</p>
<p>The work undertaken through our Integrated Asset Management Contract, as well as contractual arrangements with a number of organisations.</p>	<p>We recognise that the carbon footprint of our contractors is a large part of our responsibility and on that basis we will always encourage, support and require our contractors to consider this on their own decision making.</p> <p>We will ensure these considerations are made when drawing up contracts to consider issues such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleet management • Office/building carbon emissions • Efficiencies of work force <p>We expect our partners to be role model organisations and to have prioritised the green agenda as part of their own values.</p>

<p>Officers travelling around the district carrying out their roles (albeit a reduced impact whilst currently being impacted by covid)</p>	<p>Consider carefully how we can be more efficient with travel.</p> <p>Consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of pool cars • Car sharing • Consider where travel really needs to happen or can we achieve the interaction through digital contact (as has been achieved through covid) • Better use of office spaces in areas where the work needs to take place, less commuting. <p>Adapting the service (due to covid) has resulted in a considerable reduction in the carbon footprint from our customers.</p>
<p>Use of paper</p>	<p>We should review our use of paper within each team in order to see what could be replaced with a digital alternative.</p>
<p>Concern over risks of waste materials/items at void stage, are we disposing of items that could be reused?</p>	<p>Review our void specification and consider where we could re-use materials/items that have been left behind by previous tenants.</p> <p>Continue to grow our furniture re-use and re-cycling scheme to assist with tenants needs when moving into our properties. Grow the scheme so it can help more people and encourage the re-use/recycle agenda.</p>

Section 7 – Risks			
New/emerging risks description – See attached Risk Register for current service risks	Impact [minor, significant serious, major]	Likely- hood [remote, unlikely, likely, very likely]	How managed/controlled What action will you take to reduce/minimise risk
<p>Pandemic implications on service delivery, rent collection and business continuity</p>	<p>Serious</p>	<p>Very likely</p>	<p>Response & Recovery Plans implemented. Agile working, risk assessed to protect staff and customers.</p>

Failure to protect against tenancy fraud	Serious	Very likely	Occupancy checks on tenants in temporary and general accommodation, Social housing fraud initiative, Tenancy 'sign up' checks, Tenancy Fraud Strategy.
Fraud in respect of Rent Collection, allocations and Right to Buy purchases	Significant	Unlikely	Internal procedures, Systems Thinking review, OpenHousing. Manual controls. Working in partnership with the fraud team to share information.
Loss of rental income	Serious	Very likely	New tenancy 'sign up', Systems Thinking Regime, Procedures for income management, Rent payment methods. Monitoring closely the impact of universal credit.
Right to Buy (sales differ from Business Plan expectations) and spend not in line with MHCLG agreement	Significant	Unlikely	Cancel agreement, Costs could be reduced, Loans could be increased.
Safeguarding adults and children	Serious	Very Likely	Safeguarding Policy. Risk Assessments, Mobile Support Officer's Procedure Manual, Devon County 'Pathways'. Regular team meeting agenda item. Contractor toolbox talks.
Sheltered housing improvements ensuring the stock is 'fit for purpose'	Significant	Unlikely	Funding availability, Tenant involvement. Liaising with Occupational Therapists to design sheltered housing appropriately at void stage.
A major homelessness incident	Major	Unlikely	Training for an emergency, Out of hours contact, Emergency and Rest Centre Plan, Devon County Council joint working.
Failure to achieve Housing Strategy targets	Major	Likely	Monitoring performance, Assign actions to lead managers, SPAR.net monitoring.
Failure to provide accurate or helpful housing/homelessness advice	Serious	Very likely	Staff training, Staff supervision, Scrutinise decisions, Procedures in place.
Failure to maintain a Housing Register	Serious	Very likely	Staff training, Policy and procedures, Devon Home Choice.
New-Build Council Homes/acquisition scheme failure	Major	Very likely	Robust development proposals, Development expertise, Homes England bids and grants, Joining

			Partnership South West development consortium.
Failure of Responsive Repairs contractor and failure to mobilise new contracting arrangements.	Serious	Very likely	Contract performance monitoring, Contract conditions.
A compliance failure on gas/solid fuel safety; fire safety; asbestos; health & safety; legionella	Major	Likely	Policies and procedures in place to ensure robust approaches taken to compliance. Priority given to this work. Competent contractors. Auditing and checking processes. Contract monitoring meetings
Loans taken out for self-financing	Serious	Unlikely	Set aside provision for repayment, Tracking Welfare Reform.
Unforeseen expenditure on council homes	Serious	Likely	Stock survey information required urgently, Insurance, Improvement programmes, HRA Business Plan refresh required.
Housing staff lone working	Major	Very likely	Policies in place to mitigate the risk, Home Safeguard monitoring, Health and Safety training, bespoke Lone Working arrangements.
Failure of private water supply	Serious	Likely	Water supply sampling, Risk assessments, Advice.
Fraud in respect of housing grants	Serious	Very likely	Capital expenditure monitoring, Monitoring of grant approvals.
Home Safeguard system failure/interruption to service. Failures due to digital switchover	Major	Very likely	Disaster recovery arrangements, maintenance contract, UPS system, staff trained on system failure. Joint agreement with Exeter City Council. Liaison with Telecare Services Authority to ensure position on digital switchover
Social Housing Regulator intervention due to a service failure	Major	Unlikely	Awareness of the standards expected by the Regulator with policies and procedures in place to achieve compliance. Housing Review Board, tenant involvement processes, customer complaint process
Services failure due to lack of staff in key positions. Significant challenges currently exist in recruiting into roles and many posts remain vacant. Increased demand on existing Officers is also of concern and could lead to service failure due to	Major	Very Likely	Ensure Managers are supporting Officers with all aspects of their work. Prioritising accordingly and being realistic on what can be achieved (saying no when required). Work with HR to consider a creative recruitment campaign to attract talent.

an inability for current Officers to achieve everything required.			The pay review will also assist in ensuring we are paying competitive salaries.
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Section 8 - Equalities and safeguarding		
New / emerging equalities risks	Impact Level [High, Medium, Low]	How managed/controlled
1. Housing Strategy	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the plan.
2. HRA Business Plan	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the plan.
3. Homelessness Strategy	High	Equalities Analysis refreshed with new strategy.
4. Devon Home Choice	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the Allocations policy.
5. Tenant Involvement Strategy	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the strategy.
6. Failure to raise a safeguarding concern	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the Safeguarding policy.
7. Poverty and mental health	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken as part of the research into the causes of poverty.

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 13th January 2022

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Draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2022/23

Report summary:

This report presents the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2022/23 for adoption by the Cabinet before consideration by a joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Housing Review Board.

Recommendations from these meetings will be presented back to Cabinet on 2nd February 2022 when members will finalise budget proposals to recommend to Council.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2022/23 are considered by the Housing Review Board with recommendations on its approval or any amendments being made to Cabinet.

Reason for recommendation:

There is a requirement to set a balanced budget and to levy a Council Tax for 2022/23

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance

- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

An analysis of budget changes has not highlighted areas that give rise to any equality issues that need highlighting. Key service changes have been addressed in separate reports to members and implications have been considered.

Climate change High Impact

The budget approval gives the Council the resources necessary to undertake its business which will significantly contribute to the carbon footprint of the Council. The Council is committed to reducing its carbon net emissions to zero by 2040 and resources have been factored into the budget to meet this priority.

Risk: Low Risk;

Risks have been considered in preparing the budgets and the financial implications have been assessed at the point of preparation. Various budget assumptions have been made including the treatment of inflation and interest rates; estimates on the level and timing of capital receipts; the treatment of demand led pressures; the treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains; levels of income; financial risks inherent in any new arrangements; capital developments; the availability of funds to deal with major contingencies and the need for any provisions. In each of these areas the Council's financial standing, management and track record have been considered in order to prepare robust budget proposals. Other specific areas of risk have been highlighted where appropriate within the report.

Links to background information

2022/23 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Book

Staffing resources request Streetscene

Staffing resources request Environmental Health & Car Parks

Staffing resources request Development Management

Voluntary, Community and Social enterprise support

Report to Scrutiny Committee 10th December 2020 (car park charges) ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Scrutiny Committee, 10/12/2020 18:00 \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

1. Process

- 1.1 The Constitution requires Cabinet to approve the draft revenue and capital budget prior to consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Housing Review Board will undertake the same function in relation to the Housing Revenue Account budgets.
- 1.2 Recommendations from these meetings will be presented back to Cabinet at its meeting on 2nd February, along with any comments from the business community. At this meeting members will be required to recommend to Council a budget and the Council Tax requirement for 2022/23.
- 1.3 At the same time as preparing the draft budget, draft service plans have been prepared for member consideration. Service plans and budgets are aligned and link back to the new Council Plan.

2. General Fund Budget

The Overall Financial Picture

- 2.1 Members will be aware this Council no longer receives Revenue Support Grant to help finance the cost of services it provides to the public. Instead costs are met through Business Rate income, New Homes Bonus Grant (NHB), Council Tax and mainly through fees and charges on services it provides.
- 2.2 The Government Spending Review, which is then followed by Local Government Finance Settlement are important elements in the Council's budget preparation. They detail the rules around key income streams and how much the Council can expect to receive from them. The exception being fees and charges which in the main the Council can determine itself.
- 2.3 The Government Spending Review (SR21) on the 27th October 2021 set out departmental budgets for 2022/23 and the following 2 years, including allocations to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) [Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021: documents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/autumn-budget-and-spending-review-2021-documents).
- 2.4 In line with the departmental budgets, individual authority allocations were then announced in the 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on 16th December 2021 [Provisional local government finance settlement: England, 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2022-to-2023) . This being a one-year spending round only which has been the case now for a number of years. Not providing details to authorities for further years significantly hinders future planning. The settlement put on hold again the planned reforms to the local government funding formula; the fairer funding review with changes to the business rate retention scheme (including the rebasing of any growth income authorities are receiving above their baseline) and changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme. Consultation on these reforms are now signalled to be in the New Year, presumably affecting 2023/24 onwards but this is uncertain.
- 2.5 The adopted Financial Plan which contains the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) estimated for 2022/23 a budget gap of just over £3m, this comprised £2.3m from losses in business rate income and new homes bonus payments from proposed Government funding changes and £0.7m from services costs increasing greater than income generated.

- 2.6 The delay in the funding reforms means that the £2.3m loss will now not materialise in 2022/23. So the focus for next year's budget is the funding gap of £0.7m.
- 2.7 The process of completing the detailed draft budget for 2022/23, working from the base up inevitably gives a different position to that calculated in the MTFP, which is prepared at an earlier stage, at a much higher level and before key Government announcements. The MTFP has proven again to be a good estimate and guide in preparing the Council's annual budget.
- 2.8 **The base draft budget proposed for members' does require £323k to be taken from the General Fund balance, it is estimated this will retain the Fund within the adopted range but does create a risk in taking it to the lower end of the range. By not addressing this deficit sum in the 2022/23 budget the amount will be added to the budget deficit that will be required to be found in 2023/24.**
- 2.9 **Members as part of the budget approval process are being asked to consider a revised increase in prime car parks which will then negate the need to use the Fund Balance and the requirement to find this deficit in 2023/24 budget process. If agreed, raising the hourly charge from the approved £1.20 in April 2022 to £1.50 will generate an estimated additional income of £339k balancing the books for 2022/23.**

These areas are covered more fully below.

Draft Revenue Budget 2022/23

- 2.10 A summary position of the General Fund draft budget is given below. Further details are contained in the Budget Book linked to this report showing the current budget and the draft budget proposed for 2022/23 alongside variation between years. The Budget Book provides a summary of the services we operate, the assets, resources involved in each area and portfolio graphs.
- 2.11 The draft budget includes key areas that align to the New Council Plan and details can be drawn from the service plans.

General Fund Revenue Budgets 2022/23

Portfolio Budget - Net Expenditure	Original 2021/22	Original 2022/23	Variation	%age Change	Notes
Corporate Business	152,640	175,750	23,110	15%	1
Corporate Services	1,728,601	1,754,304	25,703	1%	
Economy And Regenrtn Portfolio	364,010	205,760	-158,250	-43%	2
Environment Portfolio	1,585,734	2,085,980	500,246	32%	3
Finance	1,599,050	1,481,428	-117,622	-7%	4
Strategic Development & P'Ship	2,297,590	2,557,812	260,222	11%	5
Street Scene Portfolio	10,324,690	10,401,587	76,897	1%	6
Sustainable Homes & Communitie	767,940	900,220	132,280	17%	7
Portfolio Totals	18,820,255	19,562,841	742,586	4%	
Reversal of Capital Charges (Depreciation)	-3,057,560	-3,133,070	-75,510	2%	
Portfolio Totals Net of Capital Charges	15,762,695	16,429,771	667,076	4%	
Interest Receipts (Net of investment management fees)	-426,750	-392,130	34,620		
Interest Payable	300	300	0		
PWLB Interest & Principal Repayments	427,130	438,040	10,910		
Net Expenditure	15,763,375	16,475,981	712,606	5%	
Government Grants					
New Homes Bonus Grant	-1,500,000	-1,500,000	0		
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-225,590	-225,590	0		
Savings Target	-63,345	-70,000	-6,655		
Use of Reserves					
Use of Collection fund surplus	0	-197,680	-197,680		
Earmarked Reserves	-134,230	-284,400	-150,170		
Use of General Fund Balance for elections	0	0	0		
Use of General Fund Balance	0	0	0		
Budget Requirement	13,840,210	14,198,311	358,101	3%	
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	0		
Business Rate Baseline Funding	-2,720,660	-2,720,660	0		
Business Rate Retention Inflation Uplift	-2,000,000	-2,000,000	0		
Council Tax Support Grant paid to Parishes	0	0	0		
Parish Support Reserve	0	0	0		
Funding Position - General Fund Surplus		55,359			
Council Tax Requirement	9,119,550	9,533,010	358,101	4%	

Variations to highlight

1. Main element of increase is external investigation fees required by Monitoring Officer
2. £95k Economic Development Staffing (reserve to meet costs), £80k inclusion of Seaton Jurassic Centre. Additional costs offset by recharges.
3. £340k Employee costs increase in total comprising general inflation increase and minor amendments in hours and posts (previously agreed), main areas: Car Parks £69k, Arts & Culture £29k, Countryside £147k (includes additional Tree Officer & Ecologist Officer) & Public Health £104k. Other items to note inclusion of £50k outreach payment to LED.
4. Minor variations offset by savings in Revenue & Benefits.
5. No significant changes to highlight - general salary & price increase across the board offset in part by additional EZ income contribution for staffing costs.
6. Total employees increase of £182k pay inflation and grading restructure, other increases through contracts, inflation increases. Additional £38k on Exmouth Lifeguard Service (H&S issue). Offset by public toilet savings of £304k
7. Homeless costs net increase £124k, other general cost increase offset by Homesafeguard additional net income £66k through receipts and recharges.

2.12 **The above General Fund Summary shows a budget position of £55k surplus.** This draft base budget position **excludes key costs given below which will require a budget** but the precise amount is unknown at this stage.

- **Recycling and Refuse contract negotiations** are ongoing regarding additional crew and vehicles required to meet the demand of additional properties and increased recycling materials. A separate report will be coming to Cabinet and Council with the full details which will have both revenue and capital budget implications. Although members will be able to debate the details and possible range of costs and options involved, it is necessary to include a revenue sum in the budget as it is certain there will be significant additional costs which the Council will have no choice to meet in order to deliver this core service to the public. Discussions with the Service have given an indication of the costs and that they will not be incurred until part way through the year. **It is assessed that a budget should be included in the range of £400k to £600k** (full year could be an ongoing cost of up to £1.2m).
- **The Service Level Payment to LED** has been included in the draft budget at £944k (£894k service payment and £50k for outreach work), details will be presented through the LED Forum for debate but there is a risk that the final sum could be higher than that provided. Work is in place to review the total service but an interim budget based on existing services needs to be provided at the current time. LED are to present the service implications if the service payment remains at £894k and are signalling a higher sum will be required if no service degradation is to be seen. **It is proposed a sum in the range of £50k to £100k as additional budget may be required to give members the option to choose.**
- An **Authority wide independent pay review** has been instigated by Council, the review is in progress and the outcome is likely to be known in February 2022. Indications are that EDDC pay has fallen below the medium pay level in areas and the assumption is this review will recommend to Council an increase in the Council's pay bill. This will affect the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. It is considered sensible to consider **a budget sum with a range for the General Fund of £300k to £500k.**

These areas need to be considered more fully, with negotiations and decisions to be made by Council, it is assumed cost implications will be kept to the minimum possible whilst meeting the required objectives. Therefore it is proposed to include a budget sum at 75% within the bandings identified. This is considered prudent but also assumes a level of reductions will be made. This gives a budget sum required of £1.088m.

There will be future budget implications in the above items as they are continuing costs that will need to be factored in and addressed in the 2023/24 budget and the Financial Plan/MTFP.

2.13 The General Fund draft budget (as detailed in the budget book attached) gives a surplus position of £55k. The above expenditure budgets need to be added to that position giving a budget deficit of £1.033m. The settlement provided some adjustments and additional funding not reflected (because of timing) in the budget book and General Fund Statement above. This give us an additional income of £710k (details below) to bring into the equation, **giving a final draft budget position requiring £323k to be met from the General Fund Balance.** The £710k additional income comprises:

- An uplift in Business Rate base income by £166k to £2.886m

- Increase in Rural Service Delivery Grant by £11k to £237k
- Inclusion again of a Lower Tier Service Grant that was reported as a one-off last year £349k
- New services Grant given to all authorities stated as one-off £184k

2.14 The draft budget has been prepared on the basis of continuing to provide existing services, Service Leads, however, in some areas are highlighting additional staffing resources are required to maintain service levels and without the resources service levels will fall. These requests for additional resources **have not been included in the 2022/23 draft budget** as they are unaffordable unless additional income or savings are found within services. The requests are as follows with further details contained in the link papers to this report.

- **Streetscene request of £285k in base budget, summary from Service submission below:**

Streetscene are currently facing staffing and resource issues, proposals are outlined in the attached report to address the situation. Proposals to meet shortfalls so that rising service demand, statutory duties and ambitions set out in the council plan can be met effectively. Service demand has increased greatly over the last few years, with a notable uplift in visitors and tourism, and an exponential rise in housing developments across the district such as Cranbrook, meaning more residents and use of our towns, parks, beaches, and public spaces. Failure to invest in appropriate staffing resource, may result in the need to undertake a wider and more in-depth review as to what Streetscene carries out beyond its statutory duties going forward.

There has been no investment in staffing resource over the last 10 years through austerity, but at the same time demand, population and strain on our services has increased. Just last year, demand for seafront cleansing rose by 29%. The paper recommends the appointment of posts to match rising demand. This is reported as a stand-still position and does not account for inevitable future growth.

- **Environmental Health and Car Parks request £250k to £300k in base budget, summary from Service submission below:**

The report attached considers the future of both Environmental Health Service and the Car Parking Service against the capacity to meet council ambitions, customer expectations and statutory duties.

Recognising the scale of change being proposed and the potential cost, the Service has produced the paper as a discussion document.

- **Development Management request £129k in base budget, summary from Service submission below:**

The development management team have seen a rapid and sustained increase in demand for their services over the last 18 months or so. This increase in the number of applications received is then reflected in increases in demand across the other work streams including discharge of conditions, minor amendments and other enquiries. Whilst we have managed to increase the number of decisions

being issued it has consistently remained below the numbers received and hence a backlog has been built up such that we have gone from having around 500 applications on-hand to over 600. The 500 we had on-hand at the start of 2020 was already a record high.

Much of this backlog is a result of the high numbers of household extensions which has overloaded our householder team despite additional resources having been put in place. The report proposals additional staffing resources including an additional manager.

- **Arts and Culture request for £23k in base budget, submission below:**

A request for a new role of Theatre Supervisor at Manor Pavilion Sidmouth and a part time Box Office Assistant. The proposal requires a net cost of £23K if implemented with saving proposals. To provide the appropriate level of support for the Theatre Manager as the venue has no other supervisory staff who can be deployed to run the venue, manage performers and cover Health and Safety issues, facilities management issues etc. Therefore the theatre is "at risk" in the event of the Theatre Manager being absent. This also ensures we have a clear succession planning process in place. The current budget is for 1 Full Time manager 1 Part Time admin and 2 Part Time Box office. The proposed new structure 1 Full Time Manager, 1 Full Time Assistant Manager, 1 Part Time Admin and 1 Part Time Box office

2.15 **These requests totalling £737k are unaffordable** within the resources available if we are to continue to fund existing services as they currently are. This report proposes that Cabinet and SMT+ work closely over the coming months to understand the details of these requests, determine their priority against existing services and determine whether additional income/savings can be generated to support a proposal of supplementary budget being recommended to Council in year for part or all of these requests.

2.16 **A request for £60k for a Council Voluntary Service** has been made. **This has not been included in the draft budget as unaffordable** but members need to be aware. A more detailed paper is attached to this report.

East Devon is the only district within Devon that doesn't have a Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). A CVS is part of a national umbrella organisation that provides whatever support is needed by the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) in a geographical area. This was highlighted as a bigger issue at the start of the Coronavirus pandemic when other CVSs from throughout Devon led / coordinated their areas responses in terms of getting support to residents that needed it. Our VCSE sector did a fantastic job of supporting residents, and still are, but we want to help support them so they can be even better at what they do.

The money provided would be used to provide support such as the following to the VCSE sector within East Devon, as has been requested by them:

- Networking opportunities with other VCSE groups to enable the sharing of best practice and increase collaboration as well as other benefits.
- Training for the VCSE sector and their volunteers.

- Legal and financial advice on topics such as data protection, safeguarding, and changing structures.
- Representation for East Devon's VCSE sector on a wider stage.
- Support and guidance around accessing funding, finding and applying for it, including help to find longer term funding and finding funding for core costs.
- Advice and guidance on building resilience and sustainability.

We are not necessarily looking to help provide a Council for Voluntary Service. The mechanism it would be provided by is yet to be determined, by both working with the VCSE sector to get their input, and seeing what responses we get to an invitation to tender to provide the support. For example, it could take the form of being provided by the whole of a local grassroots organisation that already exists, by one person that sits within that organisation, by an organisation from outside of East Devon that's providing similar services elsewhere, by an individual or by someone employed directly by the council. Research has shown that getting the right person or people to deliver the VCSE support is much more important than the form that it takes.

2.17 A request for **£50K to deliver a detailed Tree Strategy** was made. **This has not been included in the draft budget as unaffordable** but members need to be aware.

The Strategy is to build on the outline/high level plan that is being worked on for the Council's work with trees. This is an area that members have asked to be prioritised. The scope would cover:

- Trees & development
- Pests & diseases – changing treescape in East Devon & how we can meet this huge challenge (right tree, right place)
- Tree planting as a carbon sink and offsetting approach to deliver EDDC Climate Change action plan targets
- Tree wardens & parish engagement – setting up a robust monitoring framework for our tree stock

2.18 Council Tax

The draft budget assumes the Council will increase the Council Tax for 2022/23 by £5 a year. This is in line with the MTFP and assumptions made by Government on funding available to the Council. This gives a precept for the Council of £9,533,010 raising the current annual council tax charge from £151.78 to £156.78 for a band D property, a 3.29% increase. This is the maximum increase allowed within the Referendum regulations.

This is based on the Council Tax Base of 60,805 band D properties; an increase of 721 compared with the current year.

2.19 General Fund Balance

The Council has an adopted range for the General Fund Balance of between £3m to £3.8m which is still considered appropriate. Latest budget monitoring reported to Cabinet estimates the Fund at the end of 2021/22 will be £3.483m, **these budget proposals for 2022/23 require a further £323k to be used from the Fund bringing the estimated Balance down to £3.160m; still in the adopted range but close to the minimum level and restricting the ability to deal with in year volatility or in year requests for funding.**

2.20 Car Park Charges

In light of this financial position it has been suggested by members in sessions leading to the draft budget preparation through the Budget Setting and Capital Allocation Panel and work of the Finance Portfolio Team that the Council may wish to reconsider the decision taken to increase the hourly charge on 19 car park sites classified as prime car parks from £1 to £1.20 to be implemented in April 2022. A number of reports were presented considering car park charges at the time and linked to this report is the December 2020 Scrutiny paper which summaries the position. Consideration was given at the time to a range of increases including whether a £1.50 hourly charge was appropriate bearing in mind the hourly charge had not been increased for over 10 years, the effect of inflation over that period and the Council now loses 20% of the income in VAT which was not the case 10 years ago due to VAT changes.

Members at the time after much debate decided to increase the charges to £1.20 and delay implementation for a year (until April 2022). There now seems to be a change in view in light of the Council financial position, particular financial pressure on core service delivery and the demand we have seen in these car parks during the holiday periods and with the ability for residents to purchase annual tickets at a significantly reduced parking rate. The report to Scrutiny and assumptions made are still considered valid by the Service Lead with an estimated additional income to be achieved of £339k if the hourly charge on these car parks were increased instead of £1.20 but to £1.50. This is of course only an estimate and customer demand may change if an increase is applied and the actual position would have to be monitored carefully.

2.21 Business Rates

The 2022/23 budget uses the Government's funding calculation at £2.886m as the income to be derived from Business Rates; to this an additional £2m has been added to reflect the Council's own rate estimate which is higher and includes business rate growth in the district over a number of years. The Council does hold a Rates Volatility Fund of £0.639m accumulated from previous Business Rate surplus to mitigate the risk if Rates do not achieve this full level and it helps smooth out year on year fluctuations.

2.22 New Homes Bonus (NHB)

The Government intention is to end the NHB scheme, the grant for 2022/23 is £2.137m, the draft budget uses £1.5m of this to support the General Fund with the balance being directed to part finance the Capital Programme.

We still await details from Government on this scheme going forward beyond 2022/23.

Budget Strategy for future years

2.23 The adopted Financial Plan 2021 – 2031 has informed the preparation of the 2022/23 budget. Work now needs to begin on future year budgets and factoring in the significant ongoing costs highlighted above in the report; the rise in recycling and refuse costs (initial request given at £1.2m per annum in revenue, only part factored into 2023/24 budget) and understanding the final outcome of the pay review. Added to this are the staff resourcing

pressures which have not been included in the draft budget as they are unaffordable at this stage.

2.24 In broad terms the underlying service costs were already likely to be in the order of £400k to £500k above available income for 2023/24 to this can be added taking worst case scenario;

- £323k unbalanced expenditure from 2022/23 now taken into 2023/24, unless additional car park income approved.
- £600k additional costs for recycling and refuse contract – to factor in full year effect.
- £737k staffing resource requests currently excluded from the draft budget position.

There are clearly debates and decisions to be had around these items, but the implications need to be highlighted and need to be addressed early on for the 2023/24 budget year.

2.25 There are still the implications of proposed Government funding reforms, initially assessed at a possible reduction in total income of over £3m. We are no further forward in understanding the timing and implications of these at this stage and members will be alerted to these details as they are known.

3 Housing Revenue Account Budget

The Overall Financial Picture

3.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is underpinned and influenced by a business plan, this plan needs a refresh which continues to be delayed with other work commitments. The revised Plan needs to:

- Undertake a full conditions survey to inform future programme costs.
- Consider the implication of the new maintenance contract.
- Reflect additional work on asset management planning and compliance requirements,
- Consider the end of rent reductions.
- The implication of Universal Credit,
- Reconsider the debt level and use of Right to Buy Receipts linked to future development ambitions, and
- The implications of the climate change action plan.

This work is progressing and the picture for the draft 2022/23 budget is very much a stand still budget in that it continues to invest in our existing properties at a similar level although it does set aside £880k for climate reduction investment; it still provides an acceptable surplus which will need to be prioritised between competition demands:

- The purchase programme to counteract the impact of continuing Right to Buy (RTB) sales and the development ambitions to significantly add to our stock/social housing. This is a key priority in the new Council Plan.

- To ensure new compliance requirements are met.
- Additional carbon reduction actions.

3.2 In accordance with central government policy, the increase in any individual tenants rent is limited to inflation + 1% for the forthcoming financial year. Inflation is taken as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate at the prevailing rate for September 2021, which was official registered at 3.1%. The draft budget assumes an increase in Council House rents of 4.1% with a factor included for a reduction in stock numbers and voids giving £18.6m, an increase of £0.778m. No increase is proposed on garage rents.

Draft Revenue Budget 2022/23

3.3 The budget book details the draft estimates for 2022/23.

3.4 The budget has been prepared to maintain council homes to a high standard with a comprehensive planned programme of expenditure, adaptations and routine repairs. The 2022/23 draft budget maintains significant sums for:

- Major repairs totalling £4m covering new doors, boilers, kitchens and bathrooms, including change of tenancy expenditure, replacement of wooden fascias with uPVC and roof replacements.
- Day to day repairs, programme maintenance and one off works totalling £4.4m.

3.5 A new budget line with an amount of £880k has been created as a standalone project within our budgets for carbon reduction. This is challenging, as many of the costs will be absorbed into our standard housing maintenance, planned works and capital programmes. However we have added a budget line for any works funded by external grants and this will also show any match funding we have apportioned to the specific delivery programme.

When rationalising the costs linked to the decarbonisation of our housing stock we have used an industry best practice 'Fabric First, Least Regret' methodology as explained below

- Fabric First – is about addressing issues with and upgrading the actual building such as; insulation, windows, doors, roofing structures etc. in readiness for sustainable heating and hot water solutions. Due to the age and condition of our stock this is by far the most expensive part of the carbon reduction process. This approach has the added benefit of making the current heating systems much more effective and efficient for our tenants. The Stock Condition Survey will give us the data needed to schedule these works appropriately. These costs will sit predominantly within our maintenance/repairs, planned and cap works budget lines.
- Least Regret – relates to the replacement of systems and components, within each building, at point of 'failure' (expected replacement date). So following on from the above works and again using the Stock Condition Survey data, we will plan the incremental upgrade of all our heating systems in line with each systems/boilers expected replacement date. So for example, when a gas boiler is due for

replacement we will remove it and fit a sustainable system in its place, reducing the cost implications of carbon reduction as we will effectively be just bridging the gap in cost between replacing a standard gas boiler and with the cost of fitting an Air Source Heat Pump for example – these costs will sit largely within the planned works budget lines as it is work we would have delivered anywayalbeit in a different way.

HRA BUDGET SUMMARY by SERVICE LINE & ACCOUNTING TYPE			2021	2022	Variance	
			£	£	£	
Sum of Budget			Data			
Rep Cat 1	Rep Cat 2	Rep Cat 3	2021 YTD	2022	2022	Note
1 INCOME	1 Gross Property Rent inc Garages	1 Gross Property Rents	-17,831,260	-18,609,260	-778,000	1
		2 Garage Rents	-336,180	-215,990	120,190	2
	2 Other Income	1 Other Income	-603,680	-619,600	-15,920	
1 INCOME Total			-18,771,120	-19,444,850	-673,730	
2 EXPENDITURE	1 Repairs And Maintenance - General	1 Responsive Maintenance	1,953,350	2,050,770	97,420	3
		2 Annual Programmed Maintenance	1,033,300	1,019,810	-13,490	
	2 Repairs And Maintenance - Special	1 Compliance	790,050	791,750	1,700	
		2 Other	560,730	532,000	-28,730	
	3 Supervision And Management	1 Supervision And Mgt General	4,418,290	5,266,350	848,060	4
		2 Supervision And Mgt Special	1,994,300	1,852,110	-142,190	
	4 Other Expenditure	1 Other Exp non Sewerage	231,700	234,250	2,550	
		2 Sewerage	54,390	44,250	-10,140	
	5 Capital Charges & Bad Debt	3 Major Repairs Expenditure	4,226,000	4,056,780	-169,220	5
		2 Reval Deprn and Impair	950,420	950,420	0	
2 EXPENDITURE Total			16,212,530	16,798,490	585,960	
3 FINANCING	1 Interest on Balances	(blank)	-23,700	-24,170	-470	
	2 Loan Principal & Interest repayments	(blank)	2,547,440	2,532,740	-14,700	
	3 Other	1 Gain on Disposal	-3,161,910	-3,161,910	0	
		2 Loss on Disposal	2,001,980	2,001,980	0	
		4 Other	-10	-10	0	
	4 MIRS	1 Rev Gain on Disposal	3,161,910	3,161,910	0	
		2 Rev Loss on Disposal	-2,001,980	-2,001,980	0	
		3 Rev Rev, Dep & Impair	-950,420	-950,420	0	
		5 Cont to Capital	0	880,000	880,000	6
3 FINANCING Total			1,573,310	2,438,140	864,830	
Grand Total			-985,280	-208,220	777,060	

- Rents on council dwellings have been inflated at the Government capped percentage increase of September CPI (3.1%) plus the additional 1% to total 4.1%. Management and other charges have been inflated at September CPI (3.1%) with a review of lost rent due to voids also undertaken and correctly apportioned to garage rents where appropriate.
- Due to the high void levels in garages no rent increases have been proposed and Void levels have been reviewed to be more in line with current lost income levels.
- The Asset Management contract with Ian Williams is not subject to an inflationary uplift in 22/23 by mutual agreement. The annual increase reflects revisions with regards to costs driven by exclusions to the PPP contract and expenditure on buildings/areas that fall outside of Price Per Property.
- The increase in management charges relate to both Staff related costs, premises costs and increases in overhead recharges back to the general fund for premises and services. Staff and agency/consultant costs have been based upon a revised predicted establishment provided by the Housing Management Team and the expected salary, pension and national insurance uplifts resulting in a year on year increase of approx. £160k. Premises costs have also increased most notably with revised insurance estimates requiring an additional £140k of budget in 2022/23. Overhead recharges explain the remainder of the increase with the impact of significant inflationary uplifts and pressures on central and support services to the HRA that reside within the general fund driving increases.
- The planned maintenance and major repairs expenditure has been kept relatively consistent year on year due to the unknown factor of the stock condition survey and the subsequent release of the large planned maintenance reserves for catch up costs made in 19/20 and predicted for 20/21 are better understood in 22/23. The notable exception to this holding pattern of a budget is the Void expenditure which has been decreased in line with savings made through efficiencies within the Ian Williams contract.
- A large contribution to capital has been budgeted for in 22/23 for continued climate change work on the council stock. This relates to the application submitted to the first wave of the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund to build on the work already undertaken through the Green Homes Grants and ringfences the amount the HRA is committed to match fund to receive the central government contribution.

3.6 The HRA draft budget currently shows a surplus of **£0.208m**; The HRA Balance is currently predicted to be significantly above the £3.1m level at the end of 2021/22 with decisions to be made by members at year end on where to allocate the additional balance. As explained, there are competing priorities that members will have to consider. Assuming these decisions are made then the Balance will be back at year end to £3.1m and the £208k surplus identified for 2023/24 can be allocated to priority areas at the end of 2023/24. There is an additional £1.6m being held in the HRA debt Volatility Fund which remains unchanged.

- 3.7 The draft HRA budget will be reviewed by the Housing Review Board (HRB) on 13th January 2022.

4 Capital Programme

The Overall Financial Picture

- 4.1 The draft Capital Programme for 2022/23, after in year available resources are used, gives an overall funding need of £2.276m. The funding position across years will be managed in the most efficient manner considering the Council's overall Treasury Management position.
- 4.2 Any underfunded capital is factored into the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation (the amount required to be charged to the revenue account for unfunded capital) in line with the Council MRP Policy. In addition there will either be interest on any external loans required to be factored in, or the loss of investment interest on any internal borrowing used. This has been factored into the 2022/23 draft budget. The higher the unfunded element of the capital programme the greater cost to the General Fund.
- 4.3 The preparation of the draft Capital Budget has been directed by the Budget Setting & Allocation Panel who met on 2nd December 2021 to consider scheme proposals. The Panel considered funding resources available, the capital appraisal process and then each scheme proposal in turn. Minutes of this meeting are presented to Cabinet.
- 4.4 The capital appraisal process has been used to build a capital programme aimed at delivering the Council's stated priorities and ensuring schemes meet set outcomes. Each scheme is given a score against a set criteria such as how the project meets the Council Plan, the risk involved, any part funding, invest to save, service provision and carbon implications; scoring schemes higher which contributed to a reduction in carbon. This scoring is used to measure priority against the funding available.
- For each scheme proposed an Initial Project Proposal Form was completed as governed in the adopted "Guide to Project Management".

Draft Capital Budget 2022/23

- 4.5 The attached booklet details the draft capital programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26; scoring information is included against the new capital bid items.
- 4.6 A summary of the capital funding position is given below:

Capital Programme Financing	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£	£	£
Net Expenditure to be Financed (GF & HRA)	19,202,573	7,918,664	5,925,540	4,763,345	5,136,165
Adjust for unused income from grants/contributions:					
	19,202,573	7,918,664	5,925,540	4,763,345	5,136,165
Financing:					
General Fund Capital Receipts	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)
HRA Released RTB and Misc Capital Receipts	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)
HRA contribution - From Major Repairs Reserve	(2,947,280)	(3,127,280)	(3,127,280)	(3,127,280)	(3,127,280)
HRA Cont "Deprn"	(1,278,720)	(1,278,720)	(1,278,720)	(1,278,720)	(1,278,720)
HRA funding	(4,726,000)	(4,906,000)	(4,906,000)	(4,906,000)	(4,906,000)
New Homes Bonus Funding	(1,000,000)	0	0	0	0
(Use of) /contribution to capital reserve					
Beer Community Land Trust Loan	(900,000)	0	0	0	0
EZ - Park & Change	(294,492)	0	0	0	0
EZ - Long Lane	(2,388,895)	0	0	0	0
EZ - Open Innovation Building	(160,000)	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0
Net (internal borrowing) / Transfer to Capital Reserves balance	(9,633,186)	(2,912,664)	(919,540)	242,655	(130,165)
GF Loans/Internal Borrowing	(13,376,573)	(2,912,664)	(919,540)	242,655	(130,165)
Total Funding	(19,202,573)	(7,918,664)	(5,925,540)	(4,763,345)	(5,136,165)
Shortfall / (Surplus)	0	0	0	0	0
Please Note:					
New Homes Bonus figures based on worst case scenario of no new funding for 2022/23 and beyond.					

4.7 The draft capital budget for 2022/23 totals £7.918m (net of direct grants), schemes are detailed in the budget book. The required funding need of £2.913m taken from the budget book excludes £637k New Homes Bonus (NHB) available to fund the capital programme. Total NHB for 2022/23 was announced in the Local Government Settlement came too late to reflect in the above Statement. This additional income reduces the funding need to £2.276m.

4.8 NHB monies is helping to fund the capital programme in 2021/22 by £1m and £637k in 2022/23, no funding is assumed in 2023/24 onwards. This will put significant pressure on the funding of future programmes, if a similar level of investment is still to be maintained this will affect the revenue budget in MRP charges. As discussed elsewhere in this report we still await details of NHB or a replacement scheme going forward.

5 Other Balances & Reserves available to the Council

5.1 The Council holds a number of earmarked reserves set aside for specific purposes, the use of such reserves in the 2022/23 draft budget are detailed in the budget book for members' information. In addition, members have ring-fenced the use of the Transformation Fund to support the decisions made over public toilet provision - implementation costs, continued running costs whilst transfers/disposals are completed and to assist with legal fees incurred by town and parish councils. The sum proposed is £175k.

6. Robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves

- 6.1 This part of the report deals with the requirement of Section 25 (2) of the Local Government Act 2003 in that the Council's Chief Finance Officer (CFO) must report on the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of reserves for which the budget provides.
- 6.2 In terms of the robustness of the estimates, all known factors have been considered and the financial implications have been assessed at the point of preparation. Various budget assumptions have been made including the treatment of inflation and interest rates, estimates on the level and timing of capital receipts, the treatment of demand led pressures, the treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains and levels of income, financial risks inherent in any new arrangements and capital developments and the availability of funds to deal with major contingencies and the need for any provisions. In each of these areas the Council's financial standing, management and track record have been considered in order to prepare robust budget proposals.
- 6.3 The proposed draft budgets for 2022/23 maintain both the General Fund balance and the Housing Revenue Account balance at adopted levels provided actual net expenditure is at, or below, the level forecast. Continuous monitoring and reports to Cabinet will highlight and make recommendations on any corrective action necessary to achieve this during 2022/23. Particular risks have been highlighted in the report with the General Fund position being at the bottom end of the adopted range with budgets included on key spend where details are currently uncertain (Recycling and Refuse Contract and Pay Review) there are also a number of staffing resource pressures which have been excluded from the budget that need early debate.

7. Prudential Code

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 2003 also requires under regulation for local authorities to have regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) when setting and reviewing their affordable borrowing limit.
- 7.2 The key objective of the Code is to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable. A further key objective is to ensure that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in a manner that supports prudence, affordability and sustainability.
- 7.3 To demonstrate that local authorities have fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the indicators that must be used and the factors that must be taken into account. These indicators will be presented to the next Cabinet meeting when a recommendation will be made on the budget for 2022/23, Council Tax levy and Council House Rents.
- 7.4 A Capital Strategy is required to be approved by Council annually to consider any investment property the Council holds or likely to hold, what this means in terms of financial exposure and risk. This will be presented along with the documents above at the next Cabinet for onward approval by Council in February 2022.

Financial implications:

Details are contained in the report

Legal implications:

No legal observations are required

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 13th January 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Housing Management System Upgrade

Report summary:

The Council's Housing Service have investigated options for upgrading and modernising its Housing Management IT system in order to ensure our systems remain fit for purpose and able to meet the flexible and agile working needs of the service in the years ahead, and to enable and support the Council's obligations under the Social Housing White Paper 2021 and the Building Safety Bill 2021.

This paper sets out the proposed upgrade route, the implementation method and anticipated timescales, the high level benefits and risks, other options considered, and the costs of this proposal.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

- (1) That Housing Review Board note the proposed upgrade route for the Council's Housing Management IT system to Capita's One Housing and One Assets solutions.
- (2) That Housing Review Board note the additional capital and revenue budget requests of £134,927 and £6,060 respectively to implement this IT system upgrade.
- (3) That Housing Review Board recommend to Cabinet the proposed upgrade and budget requests.

Reason for recommendation:

The proposed solution provides a modern, flexible, and integrated system that meets the aims and objectives of the Housing Service at minimum cost, risk, and disruption to the organisation and to service delivery.

Officer: Steve Gammon – Housing Systems Manager, sgammon@eastdevon.gov.uk, 07771 574391

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning

- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The proposed upgrade and migration of Open Housing to One Housing and One Assets is low migration risk because both systems are known quantities to Capita, is low operational risk because the current Open Housing system will remain operational until full testing sign-off of the new systems is achieved, and low financial risk due to the fixed price terms of the proposed contract.

Links to background information N/A

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
-

Report in full

1. Current Situation

- 1.1 The Council's Housing Service currently use the Capita "Open Housing" housing management IT system to provide management and maintenance of its housing stock, estates, and tenancies, comprising over 4,200 rentable dwellings, over 700 garages, 160 leasehold (sold) apartments, and numerous other property assets.
- 1.2 The system was procured using an OJEU competitive tender in December 2013 on a perpetual licence, and for a minimum contract term of 5 years. System implementation ran through 2014 and 2015, and the system went operational from February 2016 providing an integrated Windows based solution replacing a patchwork of smaller 3rd party systems, Access databases, spreadsheets, and a legacy in-house Housing system.
- 1.3 Open Housing provides a core set of modules including Allocations, Rents, Repairs, Antisocial Behaviour, Right to Buy, and Contact Management. Whilst providing an integrated solution for these functions and a step change from what preceded, its desktop / Windows design and navigation systems are now showing their age, meaning use of the system is not as efficient as modern systems and this imposes practical limits to developing further cross-working and agile process design and working methods that are needed in order to remain an excellent service provider.
- 1.4 Whilst Open Housing provides repair, servicing, and programmed works functionality, the more stringent requirements of the Social Housing White Paper and the Building Safety Bill impose a greater rigor, governance, and data driven approach to the safety, maintenance, and improvement of the Council's Housing stock and our assets. These higher requirements, and the now even greater need to confidently evidence our compliance, maintenance histories, and data-driven decisions behind our improvement programmes mean these activities would benefit from a purpose designed Asset management solution.

2. Proposed Solution

2.1 In recognition of the developing market place and the need for their clients to work in a more dynamic and agile way, Capita have developed a new evolution of their Housing management solution, branded as “One Housing”. This builds on the success of their Open Housing product, providing enhancements to functionality, and significantly overhauling the user interface / the front-end look and feel, and user navigation through the system. One Housing is designed to be accessed through a web browser, making the system more accessible and able to be used remotely. The improvements to the look and feel, navigation, and ability for users to customise layouts and format displays and extract data more easily, make the system and information within it much more accessible and easy to use, and showcases the system’s integrated design. Capita launched One Housing for general release in September 2021, and offer the move from Open Housing to One Housing as a chargeable upgrade.

2.2 At the time of procuring Open Housing, a sister product was Open Assets providing a full function asset management solution with full integration to and from Open Housing. At the time of procurement, the core asset functionality within Open Housing was judged sufficient, and so the option (and time and cost) of implementing Open Assets was not pursued. However with the advent of the Social Housing White Paper and Building Safety Bill, the additional integrated functionality and stringent governance that an asset management solution would provide, are now very beneficial to meeting and demonstrating compliance with our new obligations. In parallel to developing One Housing, Capita have applied the same technology and design principles to their assets solution, now branded as “One Assets”. This new assets suite includes:

- Stock Condition
- Asset Register
- Planned Works
- Compliance Manager
- Asbestos Register
- Scheme Management
- H&S Rating Systems
- Scenario / Budget Planner
- All Housing Quality Standards
- Servicing
- RdSAP
- Developments
- Repairs and Maintenance

2.3 During 13th and 14th October 2021, Capita provided the Housing service with interactive demonstrations of their integrated One Housing and One Assets solutions, enabling Housing to evaluate these products. Each element of the two products was judged and scored against requirements and existing solutions in place. These scores were then assessed, with the results showing that both One Housing and One Assets exceeded requirements and expectations. Commercial negotiations with Capita then intensified through the remainder of October to ensure the Council receives best price and best value for money.

2.4 The proposed and recommended solution is therefore that Open Housing is upgraded to One Housing, and One Assets is purchased and implemented as a complimentary and integrated addition to One Housing.

3. Procurement Assurance

- 3.1 IT system procurement support and assurance is provided through our IT support provider, Strata Service Solutions Ltd.
- 3.2 Strata Procurement Support (“SPS”) have confirmed the Capita One Housing and One Assets products are available under the KCS (Kent Commercial Services) framework and the CCS (Crown Commercial Services) framework, both having an OJEU notice and a compliant route to market.
- 3.3 SPS support a direct award under these frameworks as providing the Council best value for money, supporting a new contract term of 5 years, with proviso that a procurement exercise and market testing is then undertaken when the new term approaches its end.

4. Implementation Method and Timescales

- 4.1 Installation of the new One Housing and One Assets solutions will be performed on new / different servers to the current Open Housing installation, and data migrated from the old Open Housing server to the new One Housing servers. This allows for an incremental and iterative installation, data migration, and testing process to be undertaken without disrupting the current service. Once fully installed, configured, tested, and staff have been trained, operation will then switch to the new environment.
- 4.2 The old Open Housing servers will be retained for a short period of time after go-live of One for contingency should an issue arise where the old system or data needs to be referenced, before these old servers are ultimately retired.
- 4.3 Due to the integrated design of the One Housing and One Assets products, these will be implemented, tested, and go-live in parallel to provide one integrated solution upon go-live.
- 4.4 Implementation, allowing for budget approval and various Council year-end processes, is anticipated to start mid-2022 aiming to be no later than 1st July 2022, with an expected go-live date during December 2022 – these timescales are subject to further detailed planning following contract award and may vary.

5. Benefits of Proposal

- 5.1 Benefits to the Council of upgrading its Housing management IT system to One Housing and implementing One Assets to provide an integrated solution include:
 - Capability for improved flexible and mobile access to the system for staff.
 - Mobile Working – System access via a web browser enabling mobile use of the systems eg when visiting tenants homes.
 - Mobile Working – TotalMobile electronic forms, for use on tablets or smartphones, enabling data capture and updates in areas that do not have reliable mobile phone signal.
 - Improved efficiency, ease of use, and cross-working amongst teams through improved and easier access to information.
 - Improved Direct Debit processes, providing greater payment flexibility for tenants and streamlined admin processes for staff.
 - Improved tenant engagement, participation, and surveying capability – a requirement under the Social Housing White Paper 2021.
 - Enhancements to the Tenant Portal online 24 / 7 self-service facility including the improved survey and direct debit services. The Tenant Portal enables tenants to review and update their personal and household details; review their rent charges,

rent statements, and make payments; request and see their history of repairs; submit compliments and complaints; communicate with Housing teams; and provide sign-posting to other Council and online services.

- New embedded mapping functionality enabling staff to readily view the location of properties and ability to spatially search or select assets.
- Integration to CORE Digital to improve efficiency of statistical returns.
- Comprehensive and audited asset management including Stock Condition and Compliance Manager enabling improved processes, governance, and performance information – requirements of the Building Safety Bill 2021.
- Integrated works planning, budgeting, ordering, and invoicing processes within one system.
- Minimising risk while benefiting from step change usability and functional improvements by upgrading existing proven systems.
- Minimising cost, time, disruption, and re-training, through investment in improving and enhancing current systems to meet our new statutory obligations.
- One Housing and One Assets also has ability to allow secure and ring-fenced access to different sets of tenants and assets for different groups of users, thereby providing potential for these systems to be utilised by other service areas of the Council.

6. High Level Issues and Risks

Item	Description	Impact	Mitigation
1.	One Housing having been released in September 2021 is not yet a mature product and therefore may contain early faults that require fixing.	Low	The code-base and functionality of One Housing and One Assets is built upon the existing foundations of Open Housing and Open Assets, and therefore core functionality has not needed to be re-written. The proposed implementation start of mid-2022 and go-live Dec-2022 allows time for the product to be tested and proven with early adopters and any early issues to be resolved.
2	Implementation costs prove higher than initially quoted.	Low	Capita quotation is provided on a "Project Cost" (fixed price) basis. Variation to requirements (project scope) are considered unlikely because the Council is not implementing One Housing as a virgin installation, but is upgrading from its existing Open Housing system (a known quantity to Capita), and the Council is implementing the entire One Assets suite.

Item	Description	Impact	Mitigation
3	Implementation timescales overrun.	Low	Contract negotiations will include a detail planning phase to match resource requirements against resource capacity within Housing and Strata. This will set the implementation parameters and these will be routinely monitored by the Project Board throughout implementation. The fixed price nature of the contract also incentivises completion to plan.

7. Other Options Considered

Item	Option	Comments
1	Do not upgrade to One Housing and One Assets.	<p>Effectively the “do nothing” option. Risks and issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Challenges in meeting our obligations under the Social Housing White Paper and Building Safety Bill, needing to employ out-of-system solutions that are not joined up, are expensive and inefficient for staff, risk errors or omissions, and unable to demonstrate the Council operates robust integrated processes. b. Capita de-support of Open Housing is currently planned by April 2026, and will therefore require procurement and implementation of an alternative system before that time. <p>Conclusion: Not recommended.</p>
2	Upgrade Open Housing to One Housing, but use or purchase a different Asset management system.	<p>A key benefit of the proposed solution, and an operational requirement, is the seamless integration between the Housing and the Assets arms of the solution. An inextricable link exists between management of the tenancy, the tenant, and their rent and charges; and the responsive, planned, and programmed repairs and improvements to their dwelling. Whilst these two arms could be separated, the inefficiency and overhead this would place on all aspects of the Housing service would outweigh any savings achieved in system costs.</p> <p>Conclusion: Not recommended.</p>

Item	Option	Comments
3	Procure a different Housing and Asset management solution.	Procurement and implementation of alternative systems would be a large and expensive process involving significant business change. Indicative timescales and costs are likely £350k-plus for an integrated housing and assets solution, and indicatively 18-24 months end-to-end from start of procurement to go-live, meaning this option fails to satisfy the Council's White Paper and Building Safety obligations. Conclusion: Not recommended at this time.

8. Costs of Proposal

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
One Housing Upgrade from Open Housing Implementation Services *		32,063				
Annual Maintenance (continued from 2020/21) #	20,553	21,170	21,805	22,459	23,133	23,827
One Assets Purchase and Implementation						
One-time Licence Fee		36,000				
Implementation Services *		61,824				
Annual Maintenance #		6,060	6,242	6,429	6,622	6,821
One User Training (Train the Trainer) *		1,800				
TotalMobile and Insight Implementation *		3,240				
Existing Costs: Revenue	20,553	21,170	21,805	22,459	23,133	23,827
New Costs: Capital		134,927				
New Costs: Revenue		6,060	6,242	6,429	6,622	6,821
Cumulative New Costs		140,987	147,229	153,658	160,280	167,100

Notes:

* Implementation costs are quoted by Capita as a Project (fixed price) cost.

Annual revenue costs assume average 3% RPI uplift per annum.

Financial implications:

One of the core elements to the management of a Housing Revenue Account is to have a robust asset management strategy. One of the hindering factors to East Devon achieving this has been the legacy system. It is imperative that once the Stock Condition survey is underway the data can

be captured, utilised and further enriched so that all costs are allocated to stock to influence financial decision making.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment.

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 13 January 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Updated Housing Policies

Report summary:

This report is to inform members that the following housing policies have been reviewed by the relevant housing manager to ensure that they continue to reflect current practice and legislation.

Policy name	Responsible Reviewing Officer
Income Management including Debt Collection Policy/Strategy	Housing Rentals Manager

Summary of changes to policies

Policy name	Summary of Changes
Income Management including Debt Collection Policy/Strategy	Minor changes made following tenant consultation and addition to reflect Breathing Space legislation. The Data Protection Statement has also been added

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. That members agree the updated policies detailed in this report
2. That members recommend to Cabinet that the policies are formally adopted by the Council

Reason for recommendation:

The changes made to policies are either minor administrative adjustments, improve clarity for the reader or are required reflect wider national guidance and/or regulations

Officer: Sue Bewes, Housing Services Manager, Sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergencies
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- Democracy and Transparency

- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; Policies are required to reflect current legislation, and can be used as evidence in disputes arising in cases of breaches of tenancy agreements

Links to background information

[Housing Income Management Policy](#)

[Possession of Council Homes and Garages Policy](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Financial implications:

No financial implications

Legal implications:

There are no legal comments

East Devon District Council

Income Management including Debt Collection Policy/Strategy

Version 2

Officer Responsible: Rentals Manager

Authorised by the Housing Review Board on 8th March 2018

1 Previous Policies/Strategies

2 Why has the council introduced this policy?

2.1 This document outlines East Devon District Council's (EDDC), Rental section's approach to the management of rent collection for Council dwellings, garages, and other related service charges. The aim of this Policy is to create a rent payment culture, ensuring that rent and charges are collected quickly and effectively, whilst supporting our tenants in matters relating to financial inclusion and the ability to manage their money.

3 What is the council's policy?

3.1 Background

3.1.1 This policy applies to how the Rental section will oversee the management and recovery of arrears and other unpaid sums. A firm but fair approach to recovery of rent arrears will be adopted, which is sensitive to the individuals' circumstances.

3.1.2 The Council's primary concern is to recover rent not to gain possession. We will consider eviction only as a last resort if all other action has failed.

3.1.3 Proactive steps are to be taken to prevent and minimise the build-up of unpaid sums on rent and sub accounts where possible, recognising that from time to time tenants may experience financial difficulties. In these circumstances, Officers aim to support and work with tenants at the earliest opportunity to help tackle financial exclusion and to provide assistance to individuals experiencing financial difficulty.

3.1.4 This policy also covers the following points and should be read in conjunction with the related documents as stated below:

- Possession of Council Homes and Garages Policy
- Devon Home Choice Policy
- Garage Management Policy

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 for the purposes of this policy:

- **Rent** is defined as "a payment amount, fixed by a tenancy/licence agreement, by which a tenant is liable to pay at specified intervals in return for the right to occupy or use a dwelling, garage or support service".
- **A current tenant arrear** is when a tenant(s) owes the Council outstanding rent or charges for a dwelling or a garage on a tenancy/licence which is still in place.

- **A former tenant arrear** is when a former tenant(s) owes the Council any outstanding rent or charges from a terminated tenancy.
- **Unpaid sums** are any monies outstanding for rent or a service received, for example alarm charge, court costs.
- **Charges** include court costs, sewage, heating, water, alarm or support charges.

3.3 Payment arrangements

- 3.3.1 It is the responsibility of the tenant to pay their rent and charges on time even if they are in receipt of benefits.
- 3.3.2 Rent and charges are payable by tenants over 52 weeks of the year, unless the year has been extended to 53 weeks to keep in line with the current tax year. Rent weeks begin on a Monday and this means that every seven years there will be an extra week in the year. Tenants who pay their rent weekly, need to pay on the Monday each week and tenants who pay it on a fortnightly or monthly basis need to pay in advance.
- 3.3.3 There are a number of methods by which tenants can make payments, for example, direct debit, online payments, automated telephone service, telephone calls to the office, standing order, Post Office or Payzone outlets. Deduction direct from salary is also an option for employees of EDDC.
- 3.3.4 Officers will promote all payment methods to tenants.

3.4 Prevention of arrears

- 3.4.1 The Rental section will take preventive measures to reduce arrears and prevent them escalating.

3.5 Early contact

- 3.5.1 Tenants will be contacted as soon as their rent account falls into arrears. They are expected to work with us as soon as there is a missed payment.

3.6 New tenants

- 3.6.1 When an offer of accommodation is accepted, the prospective tenant will be provided with clear information on their responsibility to pay rent on time, payment methods available to them, how to claim benefits for housing costs and the amount of rent and other charges payable. They will also be offered budgeting advice and help to make an application for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit if they are unsure of how to do this.
- 3.6.2 In order to build a payment culture, the Council will ask new tenants to pay a minimum of two weeks rent and/or charges in advance, on the day they sign-up for their tenancy/licence. If the new tenant is in receipt of benefits for housing costs, then the Council will ask for a small contribution towards the rent for the first week of the tenancy.
- 3.6.3 We will invite new tenants to accept a home appointment approximately six weeks after they signed for their new home to see how they are settling into their new home including discussing rent payments and benefit claims. These appointments are carried out with Estate Management Officers.

3.6.4 If it is not possible to meet with the tenant at that time, they will carry on trying to make contact. Tenants will be given the opportunity to be signposted to agencies that provide financial and debt advice where it has been identified that they may need assistance.

3.7 Applicants on Devon Home Choice with Rent Arrears

3.7.1 Where an applicant, or a member of their household, has rent arrears to any social landlord above £500 their application will be placed in the no housing need band (E), or removed from the Devon Home Choice register in those local authority areas which do not register households with no housing need. Both will apply unless there are exceptional circumstances. People who are in doubt about whether they are eligible should seek detailed advice from their local authority's Housing Advice Team.

3.7.2 Households with significant rent arrears that led to a local authority or housing association, in the previous 2 years, obtaining an outright possession order under section 84 of the Housing Act 1985 in relation to Grounds in Part 1 of Schedule 2 other than Ground 8, will normally be excluded from the Devon Home Choice register. Please see the Devon Home Choice Policy for a full break down of individual circumstances.

3.8 Information and advice

3.8.1 Information will be provided about rent accounts through the issue of quarterly rent statements. Up-to-date statements can also be requested at any time.

3.8.2 All tenants will be advised of any changes to the rent or charges payable and reason for the changes; for example, we have a statutory duty to inform tenants 4 weeks in advance if we plan to increase their rent at the start of the new financial year.

3.8.3 Officers aim to reach an agreement (repayment plan) with the tenant to pay off any unpaid sums over a reasonable period of time. This must be both achievable for the tenant and acceptable to the Rental section.

3.8.4 The Rental section will work in partnership with agencies to facilitate the provision of independent advice to tenants about money management, debt, and housing and welfare benefits.

3.9 Recovery of current rent arrears

3.9.1 The recovery of arrears will be dealt with in accordance with the Rental section's Rent Arrears Management Procedures, with an emphasis on maintaining regular personal contact via telephone, email, letters and home visits throughout the recovery process. All contact made with a tenant will be recorded on our housing management system.

3.9.2 Personal contact allows Officers to gain a greater understanding of the circumstances of tenants who may be finding it hard to pay their rent or charges. Where necessary, text and email may be used as methods of contacting tenants.

3.9.3 Where a tenant is claiming the housing cost element of Universal Credit and falls into rent arrears, contact will be made with the tenant. They will be advised that if they continue to remain in arrears then an application will be made to the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) to claim direct payments by way of alternative payment arrangements (APAs).

- 3.9.4 If a tenant is in receipt of Housing Benefit and falls into rent arrears, a repayment plan will be sought with the tenant. If the repayments aren't kept up with or we cannot contact the tenant then the Council will ask for deductions to be made from other ongoing benefits in respect of the debt at the applicable rate.
- 3.9.5 Legal proceedings will commence where there is a record of persistent arrears and the tenant does not make or adhere to an agreement to reduce the arrears. This action will be used as a last resort.
- 3.9.6 Rent arrear cases are referred to the Rental manager prior to applying to court for possession or eviction to ensure that the Officer managing them has followed procedure and done everything possible to recover the debt. Cases are discussed in detail and a decision is made as to whether or not they should be referred to court. The Rental section will ensure that all cases progressed to court comply with the Pre-action protocol for possession claims based on rent arrears and relevant statutory requirements.
- 3.9.7 If a support agency is involved with a tenant, no progression to Court will be made until the support agency provides an update on their financial and other circumstances, as appropriate. Where it is known, or we have any suspicion, that a tenant is vulnerable we will involve the Homelessness Team of our action at the earliest possible stage.
- 3.9.8 At all stages of the legal process the tenant will be informed of the reasons for the action and where they can seek support and advice.
- 3.9.9 During legal proceedings, Officers will request a Possession Order and court costs will be recharged to the tenant. Where the court grants an Order for Possession, Officers will also seek to obtain a money judgement order, allowing further recovery of the debt after eviction.
- 3.9.10 It is the tenant's responsibility to notify us of any changes in their circumstances which may affect their ability to pay their rent.
- 3.9.11 Where a tenant holds an introductory tenancy and a Notice of Possession Proceedings has been served, they will have the right to appeal and have their case heard by the Strategic Lead – Housing and Environment, or his/her appointed officer, neither of whom will have had any previous involvement in the decision to serve the notice.
- 3.9.12 The appeal will be dealt with by written representation unless the tenant requests an oral hearing. If the tenant requests an oral hearing, she/he has the right:
- to be heard and to be accompanied or to be represented by another person
 - to call any person to give evidence, and ask her/him any questions.
- 3.9.13 Garage licences are non-essential expenditure, therefore, failure to pay will result in proceedings to terminate the licence.
- 3.9.14 Once garage rent of 4 weeks is owed we will serve a Notice to Quit and at the end of that notice period (minimum of 7 days), we will change the locks and repossess the garage.
- 3.9.15 Rent arrears will be put on hold if a Breathing Space application has been sent to us via the internal memo system. (Please see section 3.14.5 for further details regarding Breathing Space) Any chasing of the arrears will be held until the Breathing Space officially ends.

3.10 Recovery of former tenant rent arrears

- 3.10.1 All former tenant arrears will be pursued. Every effort will be made to trace and contact debtors and make an arrangement to recover the debt. Where the debt remains unpaid the Rental section may use debt recovery agencies or initiate proceedings through the County Court to recover any unpaid sums. This may affect a tenant's credit rating.
- 3.10.2 When a tenant terminates their tenancy, Officers will make contact with the tenant prior to the tenancy ending to advise of any amounts that need clearing prior to termination. If it is not possible for the tenant to pay the balance in full, a repayment plan that is affordable and sustainable will be agreed.
- 3.10.3 Former tenants will be signposted to where they can seek independent advice and support at their request.
- 3.10.4 If there is an outstanding debt relating to a deceased tenant, the next of kin, administrator or executor will be notified that there will be a claim against the estate. If the Rental section receive written confirmation that there are no funds in the deceased estate, the debt will be written off.

3.11 Recovery of other charges

- 3.11.1 The Rental section are responsible for recovering other charges, for example court costs, sewage or alarm charges.
- 3.11.2 If there is a sub account, for instance if a tenant has a debt relating to an outstanding court fee, they will be expected to clear any outstanding arrears on their main rent account first. Once arrears from the main account have been settled, the tenant must make arrangements to clear their sub account/s; failure to do so may result in the Council re-applying to court to recover the outstanding balance.
- 3.11.3 If there are no outstanding arrears on the main rent account but there is an unpaid sum on a sub account then the tenant is expected to pay or make an arrangement to clear any amounts outstanding.
- 3.11.4 Payment of sheltered alarm charges are due weekly in advance. When a tenant falls into arrears with their alarm charge and they have failed to engage with us or make an arrangement to clear any unpaid sums, this will be treated as a breach of the tenancy conditions and dealt with in the same way as rent arrear cases.

3.12 Arrangements

- 3.12.1 When arrears are present, Officers will consider the circumstances of the tenant, their payment history, current financial situation and their ability to pay when agreeing a repayment plan. A tenant may work with a partner agency who will complete a common financial statement and this will be taken into account if passed to our Officers. This is to ensure that the arrangement is affordable and manageable.
- 3.12.2 Tenants will be advised that court action may be taken to recover unpaid sums if payments are not made on a regular basis or an agreed arrangement is broken.

3.13 Claiming benefits and overpayments

5

Version 1

- 3.13.1 It is the responsibility of the tenant to make a claim for benefit to cover their housing costs. It is important that tenants talk to Officers straight away if they experience benefit delays or if they require any help with making a claim
- 3.13.2 Where a tenant is claiming the housing cost element of Universal Credit, the Rental section will provide the relevant paperwork to the tenant to support any claims they make. The tenant must give express consent to the DWP if they wish any council officer to be able to speak directly to the DWP regarding their Universal Credit claim. If a tenant is claiming Housing Benefit, the Rental section can only liaise with Officers in the Benefits team about the case if the tenant has authorised this. Therefore, tenants must not assume that any issues relating to their Housing Benefit or Universal Credit will be resolved without any input from them.
- 3.13.3 Joint tenants are 'jointly and severally' responsible for paying rent and any charges on time as well as any unpaid sums. This means that if one joint tenant does not pay, the other is fully liable. This will still be the case where Universal Credit is only paid to one member of the household, or where one joint tenant has left the property. Where there are any changes within a household, either financial or physical it is the tenant's responsibility to inform the relevant benefit agency so that any overpayments to any benefits can be minimised.
- 3.13.4 The rent arrears process will still be followed where there is a debt due to an outstanding benefit claim or delay. However, cases will be referred to the Rental Manager where a decision will be made whether or not court proceedings will commence. Where a tenant is entitled to benefit to cover their full rent and they have not been responsible for the delay and can satisfy us that they have provided all supporting evidence to support their claim, court proceedings will not commence.
- 3.13.5 Tenants are expected to pay any rent due, which is not covered by benefits, on time.
- 3.13.6 Tenants are responsible for paying back any overpayment of benefit that covered their housing costs.

3.14 Insolvency Arrangements

- 3.14.1 Insolvency arrangements include Bankruptcy, Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA) and Debt Relief Orders (DRO)
- 3.14.2 Where a tenant has an insolvency arrangement they remain liable to pay current rent as usual. Written confirmation of any arrangements will be required and once received, Officers will update the rent account with details. This is because people subject to such arrangements are advised not to contact their creditors, instead, EDDC should be working with the Receiver who can provide all relevant information.
- 3.14.3 Where a tenant is bankrupt, rent arrears are not written off automatically. Any repayment of rent arrears will be dealt with direct with the Official Receiver and may then be discharged after a year. Ongoing rent charges remain the responsibility of the tenant and must be paid in accordance with their tenancy agreement.
- 3.14.4 Rent arrears accrued prior to a DRO being granted will be dealt with differently. If there is a DRO, creditors are prevented from pursuing debts for a period of 12 months. Tenants with a DRO are still liable to pay rent, and rent arrears incurred after the DRO has been made are

not covered by the suspension. Repayment of these arrears will be dealt with in accordance with the Rent Arrears Management Procedures.

3.14.5 The Government introduced a new statutory breathing space scheme on 4th May 2021. The scheme provides a legally authorised period of delay in the payment of a debt, it is a waiting period set by the Government, with a suspension of recovery of the debt, for that fixed period. The scheme aims to help people in problem debt to better manage their finances, to seek professional debt advice and reach sustainable solutions to take control of their finances. If a tenant wishes to take up the breathing space scheme they must go through a registered professional such as CAB or Stepchange. The Rental Team will not chase any debts placed under the scheme until the period of delay has been reached.

3.15 Write offs

3.15.1 In some circumstances, we will write off irrecoverable debts where they are uneconomic to pursue, for example where there are arrears outstanding after the death of a tenant and there is no estate to recover the debt.

3.15.2 Prior to any unpaid sums being written off, Officers will carry out the relevant recovery actions before seeking approval to write off the debt. The Head of Finance will be responsible for signing off any amounts to be written off.

3.16 Legal action

3.16.1 Tenants will be referred to court to secure formally any amounts owing where they have failed to engage with us, or keep to an arrangement. This is a serious step which puts their tenancy at risk and will result in the tenant having to pay for court costs.

3.16.2 Procedures laid out by the Pre-Action Protocol for possession claims (see Appendix 1) based on rent arrears will be followed by Officers when court action is being considered.

3.16.3 In cases where the tenant has failed to keep to a court order and where it is deemed appropriate, possession proceedings will be undertaken. Tenants will be encouraged to attend court and will be signposted to where they can seek independent advice and support.

3.16.4 Legal action is only used when all other attempts to engage and support the tenant with their debt has failed.

3.17 Changing possession orders

3.17.1 A tenant may be able to request a possession order be varied. This will depend on whether or not the judge had a choice when making the possession order in the first instance, for example in some situations the judge has no choice about making an order and cannot change it once made, as long as the landlord followed the correct legal procedure to obtain the order (This applies to introductory or demoted tenancies).

3.17.2 Where a tenant requests to make a change to a possession order, they will be advised to seek independent advice about applying to the court to either have the possession order set aside, suspend or postpone the date for possession or vary the terms of the order. It will be the responsibility of the tenant to supply the relevant evidence (for example the reason they missed a rent payment, details about change in income, details of an outstanding housing cost claim) in their application to have a case re-heard or the possession order to be varied, set aside or delayed.

3.17.3 Any application to the court to set aside a possession order, does not automatically stop the court bailiff carrying out an eviction. It is the responsibility of the tenant to request the court to stay or suspend any warrants at the same time they apply for an order to be set aside or varied.

4 Equality impact considerations – the policy is high relevance to equality if it has a big impact on residents and users of the service

High

4.1 The Rental section will tailor its service to meet the diverse needs of individuals. They will foster good relations with people when providing their services to eliminate discrimination and promote opportunity of equality.

5 Data protection considerations

b) The collection and use of tenant's personal data will not exceed that agreed to in their tenancy agreement

The [EDDC Data Protection Policy](#) provides further information on how we store and use personal information.

The following privacy notice(s) provide further information on how we will use tenant's personal data, how it is gathered, and how long we will retain this information, and what rights tenants have in relation to this.

Rental - Collection of housing rent

Housing Allocations - Processing Devon Home Choice applications

Housing Services - Enforcing conditions of tenancy agreement

All our privacy notices can be found on the EDDC website (<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/access-to-information/data-protection/privacy-notices/>)

6 Appendices and other relevant information

Appendix 1 – Pre-Action Protocol for possession claims

7 Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation.

Housing Review Board – 8th March 2018

8 Related Policies/Strategies, Procedures and Legislation

- Corporate Debt Collection Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Pre-action Protocol for Possession claims by Social Landlords
- Rent Arrear Management Procedures
- Housing Service Plan

9 Policy date for review and responsible officer

- 8.1 This Policy has been written in line with good practice and current relevant legislation. Unless there are any changes to such legislation beforehand, the next review of this Policy is due October 2025 and every four years thereafter.

Appendix 1

Pre-Action Protocol for Possession Claims by Social Landlords

Table of contents	Paragraph
Aims and scope of the protocol	1
Possession claims based upon rent arrears	2
Initial contact	2.1
After service of statutory notices	2.8
Alternative dispute resolution	2.10
Court proceedings	2.11
Mandatory grounds for possession	3

PART I AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE PROTOCOL

1.1 This Protocol applies to residential possession claims in England and Wales brought by social landlords (such as local authorities and housing associations). This Part sets out the aims and scope of the protocol. Part 2 relates to claims which are based solely on rent arrears. Part 3 applies to claims brought by social landlords where the court must, in principle, grant possession and where s89(1) Housing Act 1980 applies. The protocol does not apply to claims in respect of long leases.

1.2 Part 2 reflects the guidance on good practice given to social landlords in the collection of rent arrears. It recognises that it is in the interests of both social landlords and tenants to ensure that rent is paid promptly and that difficulties are resolved, wherever possible, without court proceedings.

1.3 Part 3 seeks to ensure that, in cases where human rights, public law or equality law matters are or may be raised, the necessary information is before the Court at the first hearing so that issues of proportionality may be dealt with summarily, if appropriate, or that appropriate directions for trial may be given.

1.4 The aims of the protocol are:

- (a) to encourage more pre-action contact and exchange of information between landlords and tenants;
- (b) to enable the parties to avoid litigation by settling the matter, if possible; and
- (c) to enable court time to be used more effectively if proceedings are necessary.

1.5 Courts should take into account whether this protocol has been followed when considering what orders to make. Social landlords should also comply with guidance issued from time to time by the Regulator of Social Housing, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and, in Wales, the Welsh Ministers.

(a) If the landlord is aware that the tenant has difficulty in reading or understanding information given, the landlord should take reasonable steps to ensure that the tenant understands any information given. The landlord should be able to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the information has been appropriately communicated in ways that the tenant can understand.

(b) If the landlord is aware that the tenant is particularly vulnerable, the landlord should consider at an early stage—

- i. whether or not the tenant has the mental capacity to defend possession proceedings and the extent to which CPR 21 applies;
- ii. whether or not any issues arise under the Equality Act 2010; and
- iii. in the case of a local authority landlord, whether or not there is a need for a community care assessment in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

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PART 2 POSSESSION CLAIMS BASED UPON RENT ARREARS

Initial contact

2.1 If the tenant falls into arrears, the landlord should contact the tenant, as soon as reasonably possible, to discuss: the cause of the arrears; the tenant's financial circumstances; the tenant's entitlement to benefits; and repayment of the arrears. Where contact is by letter, the landlord should write separately to each named tenant.

2.2 The landlord and tenant should try to agree affordable sums for the tenant to pay towards the arrears, based upon the tenant's income and expenditure (where such information has been supplied in response to the landlord's enquiries). The landlord should clearly set out, in pre-action correspondence, any time limits with which the tenant should comply.

2.3 The landlord should provide, on a quarterly basis, rent statements in a comprehensible format showing rent due and sums received for the past 13 weeks. The landlord should, upon request, provide the tenant with copies of rent statements in a comprehensible format, from the date when arrears first arose, showing all amounts of rent due, the dates and amounts of all

payments made (whether through housing benefit, discretionary housing payments or directly by the tenant) and a running total of the arrears.

2.4 If the tenant meets the appropriate criteria, the landlord should apply for arrears to be paid by the Department for Work and Pensions ['DWP'] by deductions from the tenant's benefit.

2.5 The landlord should offer to assist the tenant in any claim that the tenant may have for housing benefit, discretionary housing payments or universal credit (housing element).

2.6 Possession proceedings for rent arrears should not be started against a tenant who can demonstrate that –

(a) the local authority or DWP have been provided with all the evidence required to process a housing benefit or universal credit (housing element) claim;

(b) there is a reasonable expectation of eligibility for housing benefit or universal credit (housing element); and

(c) they have paid other sums due that are not covered by housing benefit or universal credit (housing element).

The landlord should make every effort to establish effective ongoing liaison with housing benefit departments and the DWP and, with the tenant's consent, make direct contact with the relevant housing benefit department or DWP office before taking enforcement action.

The landlord and tenant should work together to resolve any housing benefit or universal credit (housing element) problems.

2.7 Bearing in mind that rent arrears may be part of a general debt problem, the landlord should advise the tenant to seek assistance from citizens advice bureaux, debt advice agencies or other appropriate agencies as soon as possible. Information on debt advice is available on the Money Advice Service website <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk>.

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After service of statutory notices

2.8 After service of a statutory notice, but before the issue of proceedings, the landlord should make reasonable attempts to contact the tenant to discuss: the amount of the arrears; the cause of the arrears; repayment of the arrears; and the housing benefit or universal credit (housing element) position. The landlord should send the tenant a copy of this protocol.

2.9 If the tenant complies with an agreement to pay the current rent and a reasonable amount towards arrears, the landlord should agree to postpone issuing court proceedings for so long as the tenant keeps to such agreement. If the tenant ceases to comply with such an agreement, the landlord should warn the tenant of the intention to bring proceedings and give the tenant clear time limits within which to comply again and avoid proceedings.

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Alternative dispute resolution

2.10 The parties should consider whether it is possible to resolve the issues between them by discussion and negotiation without recourse to litigation. The parties may be required by the court to provide evidence that alternative means of resolving the dispute were considered. Courts take the view that litigation should be a last resort, and that claims should not be issued prematurely when a settlement is still actively being explored.

2.11 The Civil Justice Council and the Judicial College have endorsed The Jackson ADR Handbook by Susan Blake, Julie Browne and Stuart Sime (2013, Oxford University Press). The Citizens Advice Bureaux website also provides information about ADR

Information is also available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-civil-mediation>

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Court proceedings

2.12 Not later than ten days before the date set for the hearing of the possession claim, the landlord should–

(a) provide the tenant with up-to-date rent statements; and

(b) disclose what knowledge it possesses of the tenant's housing benefit or universal credit (housing element) position to the tenant.

2.13 (a) The landlord should inform the tenant of the date and time of any court hearing and provide an up-to-date rent statement and the terms of the order that will be applied for. The landlord should advise the tenant to attend the hearing as the tenant's home is at risk. Records of such advice should be kept.

(b) If the tenant complies with an agreement made, after the issue of proceedings, to pay the current rent and a reasonable amount towards arrears, the landlord should agree to adjourn the court proceedings for so long as the tenant keeps to such agreement.

(c) If the tenant ceases to comply with such agreement, the landlord should warn the tenant of the intention to restore the proceedings and give the tenant clear time limits within which to comply again and avoid restoration of the proceedings.

2.14 If the landlord unreasonably fails to comply with the terms of this protocol, the court may make one or more of the following orders–

(a) an order for costs;

(b) an order adjourning the claim; or

(c) an order striking out or dismissing the claim (other than a claim based on a mandatory ground).

2.15 If the tenant unreasonably fails to comply with the terms of this protocol, the court may take such failure into account when considering whether it is reasonable to make a possession order.

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PART 3 MANDATORY GROUNDS FOR POSSESSION

3.1 This Part applies in cases where, if a social landlord proves its case, the court must, in principle, grant possession and where s.89(1) Housing Act 1980 applies

3.2 Before issuing any such possession claim a social landlord—

(a) should write to the occupants explaining why it currently intends to seek possession and requiring the occupants, within a specified time, to notify the landlord in writing of any personal circumstances or other matters which they wish to have taken

into account. In appropriate cases, such a letter could accompany any notice to quit or notice seeking possession and so would not necessarily delay the issue of proceedings; and

(b) should consider any representations received and, if they decide to proceed with a claim for possession, give brief written reasons for doing so.

3.3 The social landlord should include with its claim form, or in any witness statement filed under CPR 55.8(3), a schedule stating—

(a) whether it has (by a statutory review procedure or otherwise) invited the defendant to make representations of any personal circumstances or other matters which they wished to be taken into account before the social landlord issued the proceedings;

(b) if representations were made, whether and how they were considered and with what outcome; and

(c) brief reasons for bringing proceedings.

Copies of any relevant documents which the social landlord wishes the court to consider in relation to the proportionality of the landlord's decision to bring the proceedings should be attached to the schedule.

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Updated: Thursday, 19 August 2021

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 13 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Mental Health Strategy for Housing 2021 -2025

Report summary:

A report examining the Mental health strategy for housing that has been developed over the last two years. This strategy is designed to deal with the increasing demand upon housing services which are mental health related and has been previously reviewed and agreed by a panel of our tenants.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

To agree the contents and aims of the strategy as set out within the document.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Housing Service is meeting the current and future mental health and well-being needs of our tenants. That as a provider of social housing East Devon District Council (EDDC) fulfils its obligations as set out in Chapter 5 paragraph 93 and Chapter 6 Paragraphs 115 to 119 of the Social Housing White Paper. The Housing Review Board is responsible for maintaining oversight of EDDC's compliance with the Social Housing White Paper and any future legislation arising from the White Paper. This strategy was produced in consultation with representatives of the tenants of EDDC.

Officer: Adam Cornish, Sheltered Housing Manager acornish@eastdevon.gov.uk 07596888434

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; As no legislation has been enacted the risk of non-compliance could be considered low. However, once legislation is in place regulatory action can be taken against EDDC if we are still non-compliant. Therefore, the onus is on EDDC to work towards compliance now so that when legislation comes into force EDDC is ready.

Links to background information [The charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Mental Health Strategy](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

1 Introduction

1.1 Mental Health problems are widespread but very often hidden from the public eye. One in four adults experiences at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any given year, Mental health represents the largest single cause of disability in the UK (NHS England, 2016). In children we are seeing one in ten aged 5-16 having a diagnosable mental health condition. The support for both adults and children is severely lacking and our professional services are not able to adhere to the demand and support individuals appropriately and, in many cases, convincingly.

1.2 As a housing authority we have been increasingly providing accommodation for people with mental health issues in accordance with our statutory duties. With limited stock of properties and no specialist supported housing other than sheltered housing in our ownership, and very little with other providers, we place as best we can in homes. This can quickly turn into neighbour issues with clashes in lifestyle and we have to try and manage the situation as best we can. Invariably there is no support from other specialist agencies responsible for mental health services and situations escalate, becoming difficult and time consuming for officers to deal with.

1.3 This problem has got gradually worse over the last few years as mental health services and the county's supported housing has been unable to meet the demand, leaving us as a landlord to manage the tensions this creates in the community.

1.4 At the same time these tensions are raised by front line staff who are not ideally equipped to deal with emerging situations, and have been well documented at staff focus groups run across the Housing Service by Karen Jenkins and Mark Williams. We are working to ensure that all our tenants enjoy their home peacefully in accordance with the tenancy conditions we set.

2 Our Mental Health Strategy

2.1 One possible and partial solution has been identified in the form of a specialist worker, experienced in the field of mental health, to carry a small caseload and act as liaison between Housing and Mental Health teams, as well as providing a source of assistance and guidance for staff across all Housing teams. This has already been agreed by the Housing Review Board and provision of £29,577 for a grade 7 officer made in the Housing Revenue Account for the coming year. This post is currently being advertised and it is hoped that we will be able to recruit into the position before Christmas, with the successful applicant commencing in post in the New Year.

2.2 The Housing Mental Health Strategy 2021/2025 contains this objective as well as others designed to help us formalise our approach and focus more intently on this critical area of our work. Some of the objectives we have already made good progress on, for example we have now held our first Mental Health conference which was reported to be welcomed and useful to participants, and we have started to forge positive links with mental health teams in the Health Service.

2.3 As we move into a post pandemic way of working again, wellbeing and mental health must be at the forefront of our re-engagement programmes and working approach across all Housing

teams. Communities have been without social context, community bonding and crucial 'in person' council-to-tenant contact, which encourages trust, positivity and good mental wellbeing. We are pleased to now be regaining these inter-personal relationships and look forward to building them in a positive way over the coming months.

Financial implications:

The financial implications are discussed within the body of the report and mental health has been a consideration in recent budget setting discussions as a reason to increase staff training budgets.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to specifically comment within the report, however all staff should ensure that they continually update their knowledge of the requirements under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 so that they are enabled if and when they interact with our tenants and their households.

Mental Health Strategy for Housing 2021-2025

“A Housing Department supporting East Devon residents to achieve and maintain the best possible mental health and wellbeing”

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1. Introduction

1.1 Mental Health problems are widespread but very often hidden from the public eye. **One in four adults** experiences at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any given year. Mental health represents the largest single cause of disability in the UK (NHS England, 2016). In children, we are seeing **one in ten** aged 5 – 16 having a diagnosable mental health condition. The support for both adults and children is severely lacking and our professional services are not able to adhere to the demand and support individuals appropriately and in many cases, convincingly.

1.2 The South West has the highest percentage in England for individuals reporting to have a common mental disorder (CMD).



1.3 We know in East Devon we are dealing with an increasing demand on our services from tenants who require mental health support and signposting.

1.4 From within our housing department we can highlight the importance of our homes in maintaining good mental health and creating a safe environment for those experiencing mental health issues. For individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, it is highly likely mental health problems can, and will, occur, with underlying conditions such as stress, anxiety, and depression common. These three wellbeing issues are also common in other groups such as those using foodbanks, unemployed people, and those living alone.

1.5 This strategy will reflect the intentions of East Devon District Council's Housing Department, as a whole, to provide improved and sustainable provisions for tenants and residents to support good mental health and ensure that we account for the needs of those with mental health issues in providing housing and homelessness services. We need to bring together local housing and mental health knowledge and expertise with information and evidence from public health, mental health services, and wider mental health support groups in East Devon.

The development of this strategy was in the context of:

- the Mental Health and Housing Policy Paper 2016 (MHF)
- the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health 2016 (NHS England) focusing on prevention, equality and strengthening community support
- the NHS Long Term Plan 2019-2029 promoting integrated care systems working with Local Authorities on preventative activities that support self-help and build resilience, linking patients in primary care with support in the community
- Devon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2020-2025) highlighting poor mental health and wellbeing, social isolation and loneliness, and housing issues, as two of the main areas of concern within Devon
- EDDC Public Health Strategic Plan 2019-2023
- Devon-wide strategies for safeguarding, dementia, carers, learning disability, early help, drugs and alcohol, and domestic violence

1.6 Our [Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019 – 2023](#) identifies poor mental health as a potential cause and consequence of homelessness. The corresponding action plan gives a commitment to:

- Work more closely with Devon Partnership Trust and the local agencies providing support for drug and alcohol addiction
- Explore the Housing First model and supported housing for the most vulnerable people to address the issues impacting negatively on their health and wellbeing
- Implement relevant actions from this Housing Mental Health Strategy

1.7 Reducing pressure on services is a key focus within this strategy, facilitating and delivering better and earlier prevention whilst ensuring better value for money. Activities and ways of working that have sustainable and consistent benefits to the community will be encouraged and adopted in relation to mental health prevention and intervention.

2 Factors affecting emotional and mental wellbeing

2.1 Living with a mental health condition is the product of a combination of factors. Personal circumstances, physical health difficulties and the stimuli an individual encounters in their day-to-day routine are all influences on mental health issue development. Things like poverty, living conditions, housing, relationships, and employment all influence an individual's wellbeing. The negative effects of one or more of these factors can increase the risk of mental ill health and we have to ensure that our housing services and support are sufficiently robust to address the increasingly complex needs of those on our housing register, homeless people and those at risk of homelessness, and our tenants.

2.2 Stigma is a major issue for those with ongoing mental health issues. The negative impact that it can have is a key barrier for many. It can lead to social isolation and exclusion from social belonging, which many require to build confidence, self-worth and personal development.

2.3 Whilst mental ill health is common and can affect anyone at any time in their life, there are a number of identified groups in society with an increased likelihood of acquiring mental health conditions including:

- **Older People**
- **Homeless People**
- **Children**
- **Young People**
- **Those serving in the armed forces and ex-service personnel**
- **Bereaved people**
- **People with dementia**
- **Carers**
- **Young Carers**
- **People living in particularly rural areas**
- **People with a physical or mental disability or special learning need**
- **Travellers**
- **People who have experienced traumatic events**
- **LGBTQ+**
- **Those involved in drugs or gang culture**

3 East Devon District Council's long-term commitments

3.1 East Devon District Council is proud to present our first mental health strategy outlining our aspiration to support a whole person, whole life, and whole community approach that works for our residents and tenants across East Devon.

3.2 Using both holistic and strategic approaches, we must ensure that multiple opportunities for people to engage exist, including support from the relevant professionals and officers that can contribute to improving mental health and wellbeing. In providing better choices, we create a sense of belonging and value within society. Working collaboratively with existing mental health peer-support groups, Primary Care Trust, the Community Mental Health Team, and other wellbeing services across East Devon, we look to build an integrated system that not only works for us as a council, but also works for our residents living in our - and their - communities. This process has to be coherent using a system-wide leadership approach through the services available.

3.3 The priorities and themes identified in this strategy will be of significant importance in achieving our goals:

- **Keeping our residents safe and independent in their own homes, wherever and whenever possible, creating community strength, strong friendships and positive dynamics, whilst reducing social isolation**
- **Supporting people to build stronger resilience through awareness, prevention work and appropriate sign posting**
- **Working closely with voluntary and community sectors in particular to support people with mental health needs to increase employment opportunities, training and volunteering**
- **Adopting asset-based community approaches to front line work to identify mental health problems early on**

3.4 As part of East Devon District Councils first Mental Health Strategy, and in line with its commitment to utilise holistic and strategic approaches, it is committing to implementing psychologically informed environments (PIEs) across its housing and homelessness services. To achieve this aim East Devon District Council will seek to adhere to the five key elements of PIEs as set out below:

The Five Key Elements

- **Relationships** - East Devon District Council will maintain an open dialogue with both tenants and staff regarding roles and the impact of relationships on the work that we engage in. Staff will be encouraged to reflect on how they communicate with an emphasis on respectful, thoughtful and non-threatening communication approaches.
- **Staff Support and Training** - East Devon District Council will ensure that its housing and homelessness services reflect on their working practices to encourage a process of continuous improvement and the ongoing development of staff competencies when supporting tenants in maintaining their mental health and wellbeing. EDDC will develop a core-training programme to support the implementation of psychologically informed practice across the housing and homelessness services.
- **The Physical Environment and Social Spaces** - East Devon District Council recognises that the spaces in which our tenants live and our staff work can and do influence the mental health and wellbeing of all and that poorly maintained spaces could have a negative impact. Therefore, East Devon District Council is committed to maintaining its housing stock, offices and other buildings to a high standard. That all external areas and internal communal areas are kept in a good state of repair are fit for purpose and looked cared for. East Devon District Council will also consider the creative use of its outside spaces and gardens to support mental health and wellbeing.
- **A Psychological Framework** - East Devon District Council is committed to identifying and introducing the principles and insights from one or more psychological disciplines to provide a framework for our service approach to supporting individuals to maintain their mental health and wellbeing. Once identified these principles and insights will also inform the development of the core-training programme supporting the implementation of psychologically informed practice across the housing and homelessness services.
- **Evidence Generating Practice** - By introducing a psychological framework, East Devon District Council will be able to identify and monitor changes as they occur. East Devon District Council will seek regular feedback from tenants and staff on their sense of wellbeing and mental health to measure and evidence change as result of the impact of working towards providing psychologically informed environments.

4. Key priorities

4.1 [‘Healthy and Happy Communities’](#) Devon’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-25 identifies health and wellbeing challenges and priorities for the county.

4.2 One of the 10 challenges is poor mental health and wellbeing, social isolation and loneliness. As a provider of social housing, East Devon has an opportunity to play a major role in addressing this challenge by identifying, working with, and supporting our tenants who are likely to be some of the most deprived and vulnerable residents of the district.

4.3 Priority 3 of the joint strategy is to focus on mental health, building good emotional health and wellbeing, happiness and resilience to achieve the following outcomes:

- a) Reduce loneliness in all age groups
- b) Identify people at risk and intervene to improve poor mental health as soon as possible
- c) Proactively address the mental health consequences of trauma and adverse childhood experiences
- d) Promote a positive approach to mental health and wellbeing.

4.4 Our Housing Mental Health Strategy will identify how we can contribute to a, b and d, working in partnership with health and social care colleagues, our tenants and communities, and local organisations working to improve mental health and wellbeing.

4.5 The purpose of this strategy is to deliver:

- 1. A consistent approach across Housing teams to support East Devon to become a suicide safe and mental health friendly Council**
- 2. Access to housing for residents with ongoing mental health conditions on an equal basis with other residents**
- 3. Community wide and whole family approaches to improving resilience and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing.**
- 4. Effective partnership working internally across Council Departments, and externally to ensure the need for mental health support is recognised by staff, and appropriate signposting and referrals are made**

5. East Devon context

5.1 Local Context

East Devon Population Key Facts
142,300 people (2017 mid-year estimate)
Average Age 50.7 years (Nationally 40.1)
Average life expectancy is 82 years
Across Exmouth there is a difference of 15.5 years in life expectancy
98.41% have a white British background
Average household size is 2.2 residents
18.3% of households are single occupancy aged 65+
Over the 10 years 2017-27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The population is expected to rise by 10% 65+ age group will increase the most 30.1% to 32.5% (and to 36.1% by 2037)

East Devon Income & Affordability Factors
Average household income in 2017 - £29,300 (below national average of £34,300)
Average weekly pay is £486.30 (Devon £496.50; national £571.10)
In the top 25% nationally of all districts for house prices
In the bottom 25% nationally in the affordability index
Private rent levels are amongst the highest in Devon

East Devon: Areas of Deprivation from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exmouth Littleham Exmouth Town Centre Exmouth Withycombe - Raleigh Moorfield Road Honiton Dowell Street area near High Street Cranbrook

East Devon Property Key Facts
68,950 properties 59,071 households
74.9% homes are owner occupied
13.6% homes are privately rented
9.3% homes are social rented
3.8% (2400) are holiday homes
387 empty for 6 months+ (1 April 2018)
94 empty for 2 years + (1 April 2018)
EDDC owns 4200 properties (December 2018)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2855 are general needs properties 1345 are sheltered properties
10 Housing Associations provide 2186 homes
High % (15.3%) in Council Tax Bands F, G, H
Lowest % in Devon are in Band A (9.2%)

Proportion (%) of the population by age range 2017						
	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-65	65+	Average Age (years)
East Devon	14.92	8.68	18.83	27.52	30.06	50.7
National average	18.07	11.95	26.38	25.57	18.03	40.1

6. Priorities and Actions

Priority 1

6.1 A consistent approach across Housing teams to support East Devon to become a suicide safe and mental health friendly Council.

6.1a Suicide Safe

6.1.1 Suicide is the biggest killer in men under the age of 50 across the UK. According to the Office for National Statistics in 2017/2018, there were 5821 registered suicides.

6.1.2 In 2017, one in eight deaths investigated by coroners in the whole of the South West is a suicide, the highest proportion in England and Wales. This statistic pinpoints the need for more focus on the following priorities, championed by Safer Devon:

- Reducing the risk of suicide in high risk groups
- Tailoring approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
- Reducing access to the means of suicide
- Providing better information and support to those bereaved by suicide
- Supporting the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
- Supporting research, data collection and monitoring
- Reducing the rates of self-harm as a key indicator of suicide risk

6.1.3 Across East Devon, the volume of call outs related to suicide/attempted suicide has risen 16.7%.

Ambulance Call outs in East Devon to Suicide/Attempted Suicide

July 2017 to June 2018 – 1433

July 2018 to June 2019 – 1673

16.7% increase in volume

6.1.4 Reducing the risk of suicide in high-risk groups is key to improving these figures. In East Devon we have a number of groups that could be deemed ‘high-risk’ such as young people, the elderly, those involved in drug and gang activity, individuals living in isolation, and those living in rural areas.

6.1.5 Suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility and requires a community-wide approach. No one person or agency can reduce suicide rates in isolation. It requires input from the public as well as a collaborative approach from statutory, voluntary and community groups, police, fire, ambulance, public health, substance misuse services as well as children and young people's services.

6.1.5b Action to become Suicide Safe

- We need to develop our understanding of suicide and high risk groups in East Devon. We will work closely with the Community Safety Partnership coordinator to identify and collate data and information to inform and develop plans to target these groups.
- In working towards making our communities in East Devon suicide safer, we will ensure the staff of the Housing Department improve their understanding of suicide and those who may be at risk, so they recognise when action needs to be taken and what to do.
- We will identify appropriate training such as SafeTALK and ASIST to equip our staff to respond to customers identified as being at risk of suicide, or experiencing suicidal tendencies. Some front line roles may require more intensive training and support through supervision to ensure staff maintain their own personal wellbeing.

6.1.6 Mental Health Friendly

6.1.7 Becoming a strong and consistently mental health friendly Council requires clear direction and targeted work across all teams, supported by integrated policies, procedures and guidance for staff. Residents who come to us for housing advice and provision, people experiencing homelessness, and our tenants are all customers of the Housing Department, and are at the centre of the work we do. We need to ensure they feel supported by the Housing Department, taking account of their mental health needs, if required.

6.1.8 Poorer mental health outcomes are prevalent in Devon including suicide rates, social connectedness, and mental health outcomes for vulnerable groups. In line with its role as a provider of social housing, East Devon designed its allocation policy to help those whose housing need is greatest. These are likely to be the most economically deprived and vulnerable in our community, including those with physical and mental ill health and disability. From the current housing register of around 4500, there are 704 individuals in 635 households citing a mental health illness or disability in their Devon Home Choice application.

6.1.9 In Devon, rates of admission for self-harm have increased and are above the national average, with the highest rates in young people aged 10 to 24, women, and those living in more deprived areas. East Devon’s most deprived wards (see summary at 5.1 above) are in areas with significant Council housing stock, so the need for targeted action in these areas to reduce self-harm is likely to be needed.

6.1.10 Lower employment rates and higher mortality rates for people with mental health conditions are prevalent in Devon compared to the England average. It is difficult to source East Devon specific data. However, Devon-wide we are able to see the situation we are in. These figures come from the Department for Work and Pensions, based around benefit claiming and those unemployed.

BENEFIT	EAST DEVON	ENGLAND
Jobseekers Allowance (only)	1.2%	3.3%
Incapacity Benefits (IB or ESA)	1.7%	2.4%
Any Benefit (includes in work benefits)	10.4%	13.5%

6.1.11 Loneliness and poor mental health have a considerable impact on demand for a wide variety of health and care services across Devon. Our front line staff in Landlord Services including rentals, mobile support and estate management are experiencing increasing demands and pressure from tenants with increasingly complex needs, many of which are in relation to poor mental health.

6.1.12 The year 2 report of a joint 3 year study [“Your Home, Your Wellbeing”](#) with the University of Birmingham has provided comparative data on feelings of wellbeing amongst our tenants and those of another social housing provider, and people on the Housing Register. Appendix 3 provides the extract from the year 2 report.

6.1.13 The Devon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) data produced by public health provides the evidence base for identifying health priorities across Devon. The mental ill-health estimates for East Devon, which inform our strategy, are included in Appendix 1. Nationally conducted surveys relating to mixed anxiety and depression, anxiety and depression, dementia and self-reported wellbeing provided the basis for these estimates.

6.1.14 Dementia is a significant factor in East Devon and the impact will continue to increase with our older than average age profile and increasingly aging population. Dementia predominantly affects people over 65. Prevalence rates increase rapidly with age, with 1 in 1400 affected under the age of 65, compared to more than 1 in 5 in those aged 85+. Combined with longer life expectancy, this means women with dementia outnumber men by more than two to one in the 85+ age group. There were 3,311 people with dementia in East Devon in 2013, with numbers projected to rise to 4,128 by 2025, and 5,516 by 2035.

Age	Female	Male	Persons
60 to 69	149	124	273
70 to 74	148	140	287
75 to 79	245	187	432
80 to 84	371	264	635
85 and over	1,246	437	1,684
Total	2,159	1,152	3,311
Percent	7.79%	5.00%	6.52%

Estimated prevalence of Dementia (aged 60+)

6.1.15 The top five wards for dementia prevalence in Devon are in East Devon (in 2013), with the highest rate in Sidmouth Town ward.

6.1.16 Action to become Mental Health friendly

6.1.17 We need to ensure that current housing policies and procedures take sufficient account of mental health needs across the range of services and contacts with customers. We will review internal housing procedures to ensure a common approach where mental health issues are identified, including:

- Handover from one team to another
- Information on mental health support needs recorded on Open Housing, including any support plans in place and any risks associated with individuals
- Consideration of whether housing needs to be included in an existing support plan compiled by another agency
- Consideration of whether housing needs to instigate mental health support as part of a personal housing plan (Housing Options Team) or tenant management plan (Landlord Services)

- 6.1.18** Guidance is in development for all staff to raise awareness of mental health needs and to ensure that they are equipped to respond appropriately to customers with mental health needs, including escalation procedures where there is concern about an individual's behaviour.
- 6.1.19** We will explore the potential for employing/accessing specialist mental health advice to support our front line staff in dealing with increasingly complex mental health needs amongst our customers.
- 6.1.20** We will define core mental health training requirements for staff in our housing teams and deliver an annual programme of training to bring all staff up to a minimum level of awareness and skills appropriate to their roles. For example, Mental Health First Aid courses to provide basic awareness of mental health and mental illness and how to recognise and provide non-clinical support and guidance to those in need, including signposting vulnerable individuals to the correct services and support agencies.
- 6.1.21** Consideration for the needs of tenants with dementia will inform plans for Home Safeguard support services in our sheltered housing.

Priority 2

6.2 Access to housing for residents with ongoing mental health conditions on an equal basis with other residents

- 6.2.1** East Devon District Council currently owns 4214 properties (August 2018). Classification of 2871 properties is as general needs, and 1343 are sheltered properties where residents have access to alarm and support services through Home Safeguard. Ten Housing Associations with 2186 homes in East Devon also provide Social Housing.
- 6.2.2** The distribution of EDDC's housing stock is across the district, with the main towns of Exmouth, Sidmouth, Axminster, and Honiton having the highest number of general needs homes (over 1700). Exmouth, with around 450, has the most sheltered housing, with a further 470 spread across Sidmouth, Honiton, Axminster, and Seaton (see map at Appendix 2).

- 6.2.3** EDDC is a partner of Devon Home Choice, alongside other Devon districts and Housing Associations, to determine policies and manage the allocation of social housing for local residents. Those requiring housing complete an application. The application is then banded A – E according to need. The Council also receives homeless approaches through the Housing Options Team.
- 6.2.4** It is a vital that we accommodate our tenants in the most appropriate and suitable homes for their needs. Sheltered housing is allocated to those who have a support need and have access to an alarm system through Home Safeguard and regular support from mobile support officers. EDDC recognises that those allocated supported housing are presenting with increasing mental health needs. Not all MSOs have training, or have experience, in dealing with these needs. This is creating increasing pressures on staff and local residents.
- 6.2.5** We also have an indication of the level of mental ill health from our Housing Options team who deal with homelessness and from households on the Housing Register where records of any specific needs form part of the applications to join Devon Home Choice:
- 6.2.6** Since April 2018, there have been 1201 homelessness applications to housing options where an assessment was completed. 355 (29%) have a history of mental health issues reported in the support needs section of the application. The largest proportion of these is young adults, 18 – 29 (29%), with a further 23% aged 30 – 39, and 11% under 18.
- 6.2.7** Of the 4914 households (applications) on the East Devon register, 777 (16%) reported at least one household member with a mental illness; some households have more than one member with mental health needs. Of the 10,858 individuals on the Housing Register, 854 stated that they have a mental illness.
- 6.2.8** A high proportion of rough sleepers have mental health, drug or alcohol addiction problems, which are likely to have contributed to becoming homeless. Breaking out of that situation is extremely difficult without help and support. Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019 – 2024 and action plan addresses those specific needs in more detail.

6.2.9 Actions

- 6.2.10** We will review our allocation policies and procedures to ensure that we take sufficient account of mental health issues, especially when an individual or household is moving through the system from the responsibility of one team to another, or when several teams are working with one customer.
- 6.2.11** Abide by and follow regulations surrounding the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) to ensure appropriate access and support at service level.
- 6.2.12** Improving our understanding of each tenant's history and his or her experience of mental illness is important. It will help us to assess what housing and support they need to achieve a sustainable tenancy. Improved training and awareness of mental health and identifying behaviours will underpin this improvement.
- 6.2.13** We will consider links between support packages agreed by community mental health teams, housing allocations, and housing options to coordinate efforts in supporting individuals to manage their mental health and sustain a tenancy.
- 6.2.14** Under the housing staff remit plans are in place to recruit a clinically trained mental health support worker who will support MSO's and T&C with advice and some case loads

Priority 3

6.3 Community wide and whole family approaches to improving and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing

- 6.3.1** Poor mental health and wellbeing has a considerable impact on quality of life and is a major contributor to premature death. There are close links between mental and physical health problems. Loneliness is often a precursor for mental health problems and occurs across the life course and most frequently in younger adults. Prevention, coupled with early detection and treatment is vital, and the 'five ways to wellbeing' highlight the importance of being active, taking notice, learning, giving and connecting with others.

- 6.3.2** The Devon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-25 identifies that many communities have a high risk of loneliness, and younger renters with little sense of belonging to their area, unmarried middle-aged people with long-term conditions, and widowed older people living alone with long-term conditions are at increased risk.
- 6.3.3** The population of East Devon covers a wide geographical area, with many rural towns and villages, and relatively few large population centres. Local services, facilities, and public transport can be poor or non-existent in the more rural areas.
- 6.3.4** The average household size in the district is 2.2 residents. The main household composition for East Devon is a one-person household with a resident aged 65 and over, making up 18.3% of all households. Since the 2001 census, the household type that has grown the most is the one-person household increasing by 2.7%, nearly 2000 households.
- 6.3.5** 8,700, (20%) of over 65 year olds in East Devon experience mild loneliness. A further 8 – 10% (3,480 – 4,350) experience intense loneliness. Those with no friends report the highest rates of social isolation and loneliness.
- 6.3.6** In 2015, Age UK produced loneliness heat maps predicting the risk of loneliness in local areas. The East Devon Wards with the highest risk level of loneliness are Axminster Town, Budleigh, Exmouth Brixington, Exmouth Littleham, Exmouth Town, Exmouth Withycombe Raleigh, Honiton St Michaels, Honiton St Pauls, Seaton, and Sidmouth Town.
- 6.3.7** The Community Development team functions within housing at East Devon to address community dynamics and improve interactions between tenants and front line officers. Building trusting, and supporting, relationships with our tenants is imperative, as we are then able to enable and empower our communities to make better decisions and build strong resilience. Local communities are a vital aspect of an individuals, or families, belonging and as therefore is a key focus of the work done by our community development officers.

6.3.8 Existing Groups

6.3.9 In East Devon there are several mental health groups that are run by community volunteers to give individuals safe, supportive space to interact and help improve their mental health circumstances. We recognise the good work accomplished through community initiatives such as Open Arms East Devon in Honiton, operating out of our community building Dunning Court. We also have initiatives like Men Shed, bringing men together for life skill development through practical activities but with a strong focus on men's wellbeing and providing a community and sense of belonging for men to talk about their emotions and feelings.

6.3.10 Actions

6.3.11 We need to ensure that we assess the impact of our community development work on improving the wellbeing of our tenants and the wider community, using available data to cross-reference risk factors leading to social isolation and identify targeted actions in areas that have groups at highest risk of mental ill health.

6.3.12 We need to develop ways to assess how our customers are experiencing the impact of our activities to support them with mental health issues.

6.3.13 We need to effectively share local community intelligence on formal and informal support networks and ensure our staff are aware of what exists at local level for signposting and referrals.

Priority 4

6.4 Effective partnership working internally across Council Departments, and externally to ensure staff recognise the need for mental health support, and appropriate signposting and referrals made.

6.4.1 Internally

6.4.2 Within Housing, Mobile Support Officers provide direct tenancy support to the sheltered tenants of East Devon in collaboration with the services of Home Safeguard. Linking Private Sector Mobile Support Officers in with Home Safeguard through their general need and private properties would be beneficial

- 6.4.3** The Countryside officers deliver educational activities and events promoting positive wellbeing in our areas of natural beauty, for example Seaton Wetlands and the Knapp. Activities such as bug hunts, bird box making, outdoor adventure sessions and family interaction challenges designed to improve wellbeing, connect individuals with the outside space and environment and reduce social isolation and exclusion.
- 6.4.4** Projects such as the Family Adventure Days are joint working between Countryside and Community Development, where they take some of our most vulnerable and in need families from Sidmouth to locations across East Devon to break down social barriers and improve family dynamics, both for parents and children. Links with Thelma Hulbert Gallery also exist whereby the running of activities, particularly for our young people within the council's SWITCH Youth project, involving arts and crafts and creative ideas, which have proven to have valuable impact on the wellbeing and behaviours of our young people that are enrolled within the provision.
- 6.4.5** Tenant Participation and Resident Involvement have annual events such as the Garden Competition, which encourages tenants of all ages to get involved with outdoor and garden orientated activities. The impact on individual wellbeing is positive with categories such as disability and learning difficulties.
- 6.4.6** **Externally**
- 6.4.7** The NHS Long Term Plan 2019-2029 promotes new service models based on integrated care systems. It identifies a key role working with Local Authorities on preventative activities and the expansion of practices that support self-help and build resilience, linking patients in primary care with sources of support in the community. This comes at the right time to facilitate joint work on the actions needed to implement this strategy, and we want to be directly involved with our NHS partners at local level to prevent and reduce the impact of mental ill health.
- 6.4.8** The need to ensure a coordinated approach with other local support services, primary health care, and the community mental health team has become increasingly important in addressing local needs.
- 6.4.9** We need to develop our working relationships with GPs and Primary Care Teams, and the Community Mental Health Teams based at St Johns Court

(Exmouth) and Hayden's Court (Honiton). They respectively cover the East Devon district and provide our residents with primary and secondary clinical mental health support if required.

6.4.10 Furthermore, regular analysis of the [NHS Long Term Plan](#), with specific focus on the [Mental Health Implementation Plan 2019-2024](#) will be imperative to assessing the work done locally in East Devon to that of the national standards.

6.4.11 Actions

6.4.12 To review and update the role of MSO's

6.4.13 Annual housing team meetings where all front line officers come together to discuss and update each other on work and events regarding mental health and wellbeing

6.4.14 Continue to develop the role of the Mental Health East Devon Group between managers of the Community Mental Health Team, and Housing.

6.4.15 Take proactive steps to engage with GP practices across Devon by identifying local GP leaders to agree actions to promote closer working relationships between housing staff and East Devon GP practices.

6.4.16 Initiate discussions on extending the "duty to refer" under the Homelessness Act 2017 to GPs in East Devon.

6.4.17 To use the Mental Health Networking Conference to promote this strategy and identify key partners to work with on ensuring its sustainability

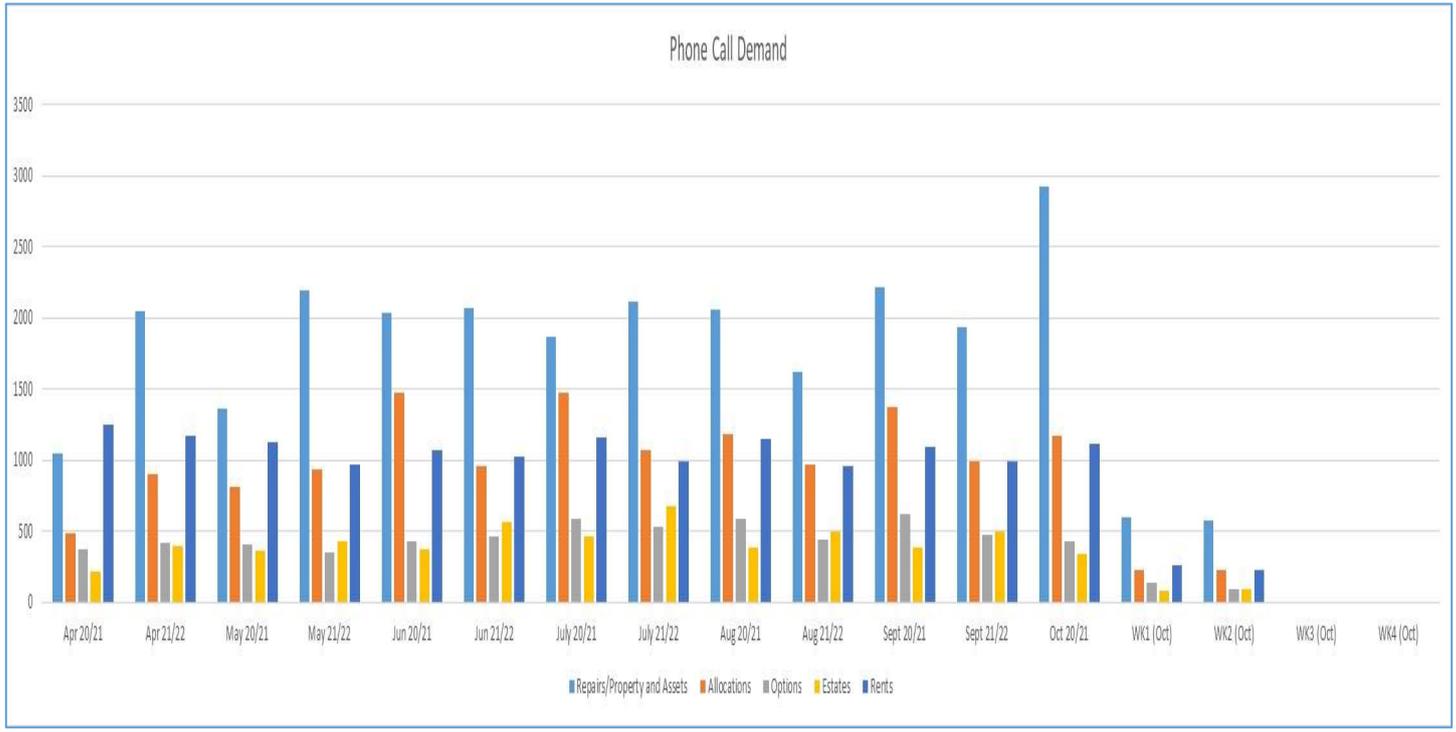
6.4.18 An Annual review of employee safety data base will be mandatory

6.4.19 With each scheme change of Mobile Support Officer's (*every 3 months*) cluster teams need to identify and update colleagues on any concerns regarding individuals and their behaviours, in addition adjusting the employee safety data base accordingly

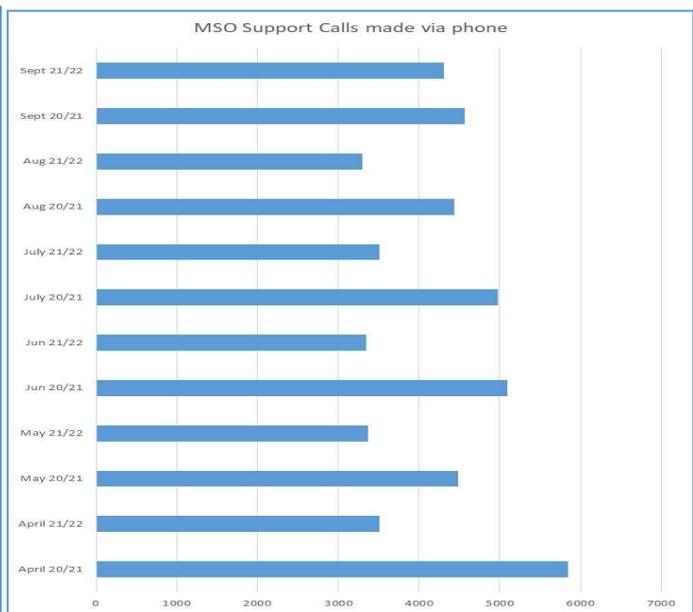
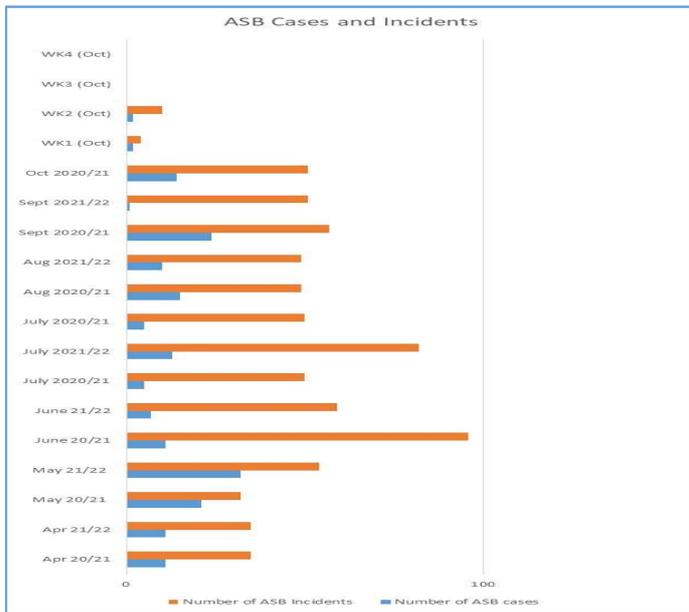
7 In Summary

- 7.2** As we move into a post pandemic way of working again, wellbeing and mental health must be at the forefront of our reengagement programmes and working approach. Communities have been without social context, community bonding and crucial council-to-tenant contact, which provides trust, positivity and good mental wellbeing.
- 7.3** A crucial step forward within the Housing department is the employment of a professionally qualified Mental Health Practitioner. The service has recognised a growing demand on mental health and as a result, the recruitment into the Housing Services Team, of a mental health specialist was proposed. This would directly address some of the issues highlighted in this document and as recognised previously. Further consideration into the new role was required with preparation of a relevant job description and personal specification that would fit the required outcomes.
- 7.4** ‘Cabinet approve additional funding (£37,500 – Grade 6 with associated costs) is designated from the Housing Revenue Account. Proposals have been submitted for a number of edits on this role and with further scope to ensure maximum recruitment potential and desired purpose’
- 7.5** We are now awaiting fulfilment of this employment, pending interview and selection.

Phone Call Demand



Landlord Services



Number of welfare calls to General Need Tenants

Month	2020/21	2021/22
May	21218	137
June	1517	119
July	641	144
Aug	316	130
Sept	142	103

Voids

99 open voids* (0 move on accommodation - Morton Road as at 21 Oct 2021)

*Please note a breakdown of these voids as at 12 Aug 2021

- 10 new properties
- 4 long term/major work voids
- 5 unlettable
- 2 hard to lets
- 0 move on accom

Table 1: Number of open voids by mgt type

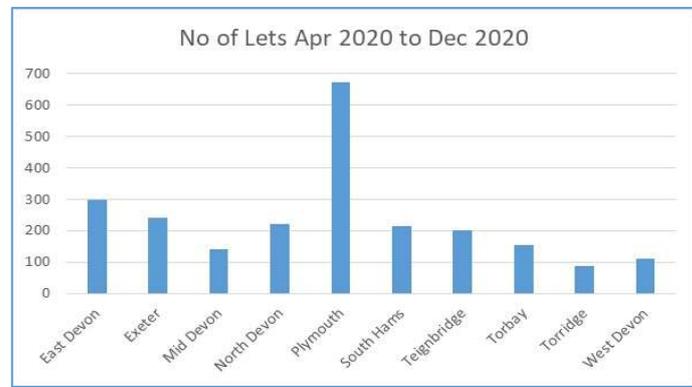
	General Needs	Sheltered
As at 17 Oct	54	45

*not include move on accommodation

33 voids started between 01 Sept 2021 and 30 Sept 2021 compared to **24** in Sept 2020.

Allocations

Month	2020/21		2021/22	
	coc	new	coc	New
July	129		154	93
Aug	111	88	151	83
Sept	210		141	73
Oct				
Nov				
Dec				



- 10% reduction in Band A-D and 2% reduction in Band E-
- 56% of applicants in Band A-D require 1 bed accommodation
- 227 new applications received on average per quarter
- 45% of GN properties let to those in Band B/80% of sheltered properties let to those in Band B
- 54% of those on the register have not logged on or bid during past 6 months
- Q2 2020-21 DHC Wide – 33,950 bids placed - 6,800 more than Q2 2020/21

24 voids are with IWS as jobs as at 21 Oct 2021

42 are at preinspection stage as at 21 Oct 2021.

15 are with allocations as ready to let at 21 Oct 2021.

*presinspection stage – properties still tenanted

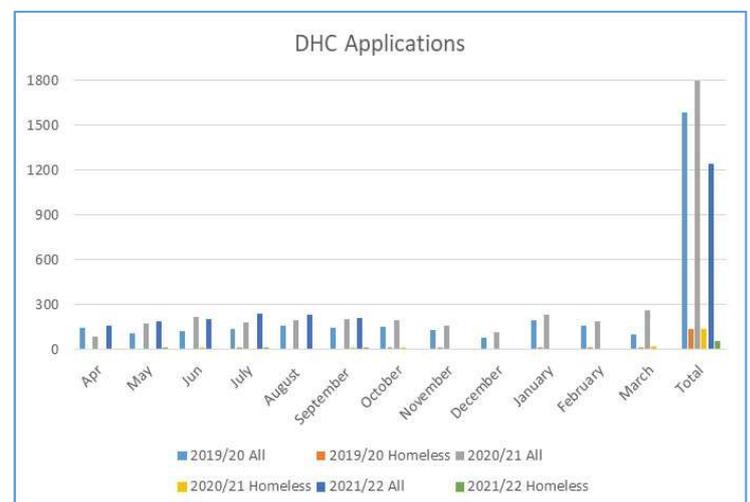
Void Loss £ by year and posting week

	£ Void Lost 2021/22	£ Void Lost 2020/21	£ Void Lost 2019/20
Posting Week 4	£41,845	£45,800	£31,507
Posting Week 6	£63,624	£66,263	£63,977
Posting Week 7	£74,215	£86,822	£72,616
Posting Week 8	£84,976	£97,425	£72,616
Posting Week 9	£95,974	£107,873	£81,124
Posting Week 10	£106,684	£118,274	£98,621
Posting Week 15	£160,736	£168,745	£133,527
Posting Week 16	£171,076	£171,069	£136,960
Posting Week 17	£181,703	£181,221	£145,697
Posting Week 19	£205,275	£201,913	£163,539
Posting Week 21	£228,671	£223,432	£181,644
Posting Week 24	£266,218	£256,765	£207,231
Posting Week 26	£292,028	£267,830	£217,147
Posting Week 28	£316,453	£300,083	£257,154

Number of DHC Applications (including updates to form)

*since date of extraction some applicants would have withdrawn, been housed etc

	2021/22		2020/21		2019/20	
	All	Homeless	All	Homeless	All	Homeless
Apr	149	7	88	2	161	7
May	113	9	172	5	191	11
Jun	125	10	219	13	205	8
July	141	14	185	6	239	12
August	161	10	199	7	235	10
September	148	8	202	13	212	11
October	155	14	194	12	103	5
November	130	17	158	8		
December	80	5	117	6		
January	199	17	233	8		
February	157	14	189	7		
March	102	13	265	19		
Total	1588	140	1802	136	1346	64



Options Team

As at 21 Oct 2021 **42** (incl 3 legacy cases) households are in temporary accommodation (5 more than end of Sept) **886** approaches between April 1 2020 and 31 March

2021 and **517** since 1 April 2021 (**58** Oct 2021)

As at 21 Oct 2021 **290** cases.

70 approaches due to COVID19 since April 2020

HHlds in Temp Accom

Month	2020/21	2021/22
July	14	21
Aug	24	14
Sept	22	15
Oct		

259 hhlds going into temporary accommodation in 2020/21 compared with **238** 2019/20.

Rents

2020/21	2021/22	
98.7%	101.2%	As at 02 May 2021
92.1%	95.9%	As at 16 May 2021
97.9%	102.2%	As at 30 May 2021
91.5%	97.9%	As at 13 June 2021
93.0%	94.1%	As at 27 June 2021
91.5%	97.6%	As at 18 July 2021
99.8%	100.5%	As at 01 Aug 2021
97.6%	98.6%	As at 15 Aug 2021
100.2%	96.3%	As at 29 Aug 2021
98.6%	98.2%	As at 19 Sept 2021
96.9%	100.0%	As at 04 Oct 2021
98.7%	98.7%	As at 17 Oct 2021

*rent collection rate fluctuates across months for a number of reasons including when UC payments are made. Rent collection excludes arrears
*Please note collection rates may differ depending on when date data is extracted.

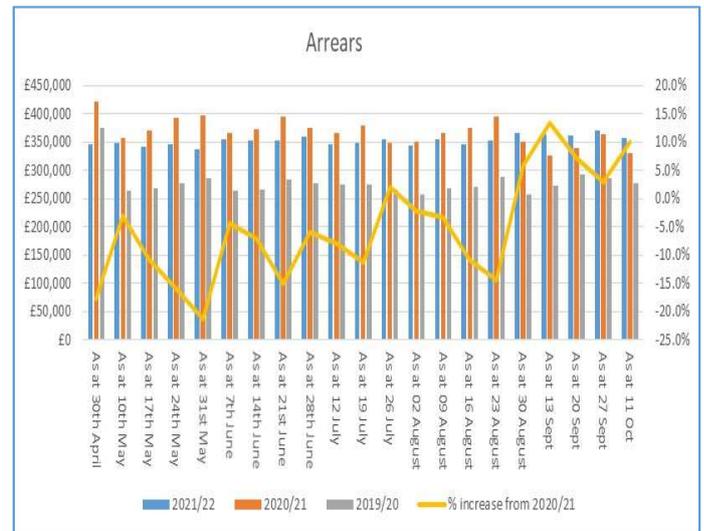
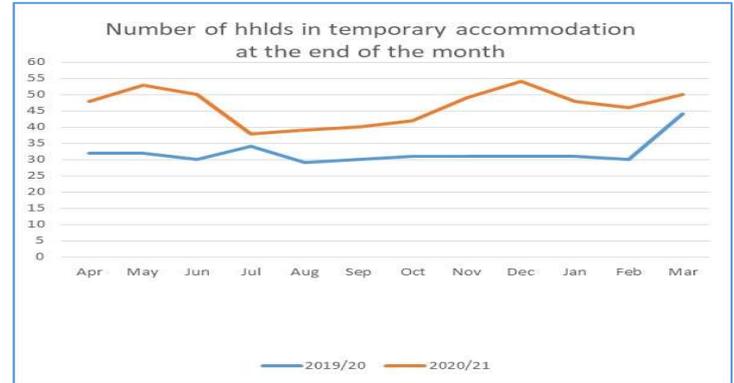
As at 27th September 2021, of the arrears £149,575.31 is from tenants on UC compared with in 2020 when it was £154,374.69. This is a decrease of **£4,799.38**. Since

Sept 2020 there has been increase of **503** UC claimants.

Unlike housing benefit, which hits the rent account at the start of each week and means if the tenant receives full benefit they will never show a rent arrear, the Universal Credit is paid in arrears every 4 weeks. Tenants will be in arrears initially until we get this payment from the DWP which puts a lump sum for the month into their accounts. In the fourth week of our collection figures you can see where this lump sum hits the accounts and collection is increased. The tenants also have a lead in time of 5-6 weeks between making their claim and receiving the first payment, so will automatically be in arrears unless they have some savings to pay us with. We cannot apply to have UC paid directly to us until the tenants has arrears of 8 weeks or more outstanding, so payment is generally reliant on the tenant themselves. Any arrangements we have had with the DWP to also pay an amount on top of the rent to clear arrears was stopped temporarily in March/April 2020 while the DWP redeployed staff to cope with the influx of new claims, as this was a manual process for them so they didn't have the manpower to continue it. This also caused a temporary drop in our collection, which will increase again slightly when they are able to take these on again in July/August 2020. The DWP will shortly be introducing a payment system which means we will receive the 4 weekly direct payment on the same date that the tenant receives their UC payment, which

Top reasons for approaching in Sept 2021/22

- End of private tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy
- Family not willing to accommodate
- Relationship with partner breakdown (non violent)

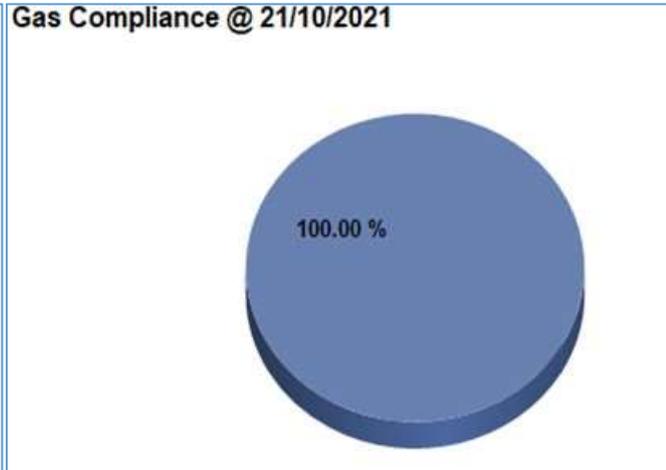
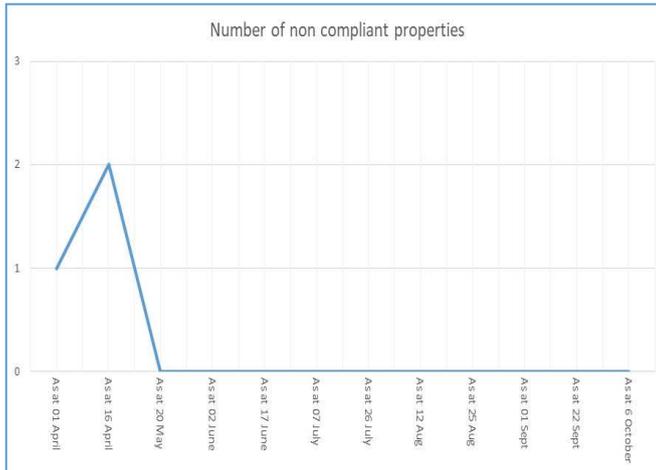


Month	No. of UC claimants	No. of UC claimants
Apr	519	936
May	531	953
June	555	967
July	543	975
Aug	514	1000
Sept	514	1017
Oct	859	
Nov	892	
Dec	863	
Jan	887	
Feb	906	

will mean our income stream becomes more steady and we will no longer have the lump sum from all our direct payment cases on one date of the month.

March	927	
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Compliance



As at 21 October 2021

- 0 properties non compliant

Repairs

- 1479 open repair jobs as at 21 Oct 2021 (570 Oct)

Table 1: Routine Repair Jobs Completed as at 21 Oct 2021

	2019/2020		2020/2021		2021/2022	
	Total	% Jobs In Target	Total	% Jobs In Target	Total	% Jobs In Target
TARGET STATUS						
In Target	9050	88.47	10258	88.29	5852	85.95
Not in Target	1180	11.53	1361	11.71	957	14.05
Total	10230		11619		6809	

Housing Service

Quarterly Performance Indicator Report

Quarter 2 2021/22 Financial Year

DRAFT

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Background Information

Performance against 2020/21 quarter has been included to provide some context to the statistics.

	Performance is worse than 2020/21 quarter figure by over 5%
	Performance is within 5% of 2020/21 quarter figure
	Performance is better than 2020/21 performance figure

0.0 Summary

Description	2020/21	2021/22					Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
Total supply of social rent housing and intermediate housing	180	63	52			115	
Total New ASB Cases	269	123	91			214	
No. of stage 1 complaints	96	32	27*			32	
Calls answered under 1 minute (%)	98.2	#	#			#	#

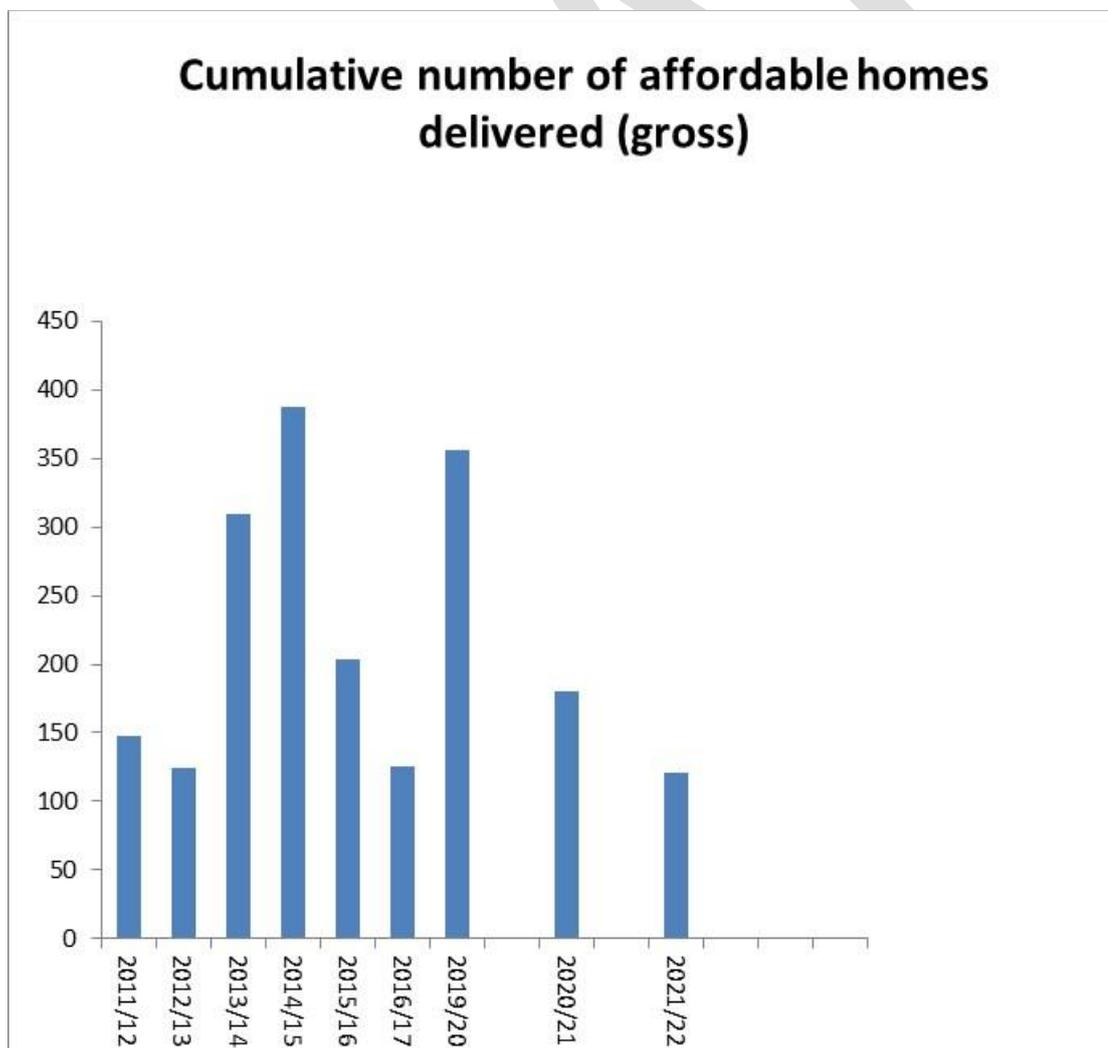
Description	2020/21						Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr - Dec	Apr- Mar	Cumulative Total	
% of rent due collected from current & former tenants (property (incl garage) is occupied & not including all arrears brought forward & prepaids) - Year to date	100.4%	100.2%	96.7%			96.70%	
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	91.7%	81.7	84.6%			83.2%	

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1.0 Affordable Housing Completions

Performance Indicator	2020/21	2021/22				2021/22	Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA)	165	63	52			115	
EDDC Acquisitions	15	3	3			6	

Source: SPAR.net



2.0 Anti-social behaviour

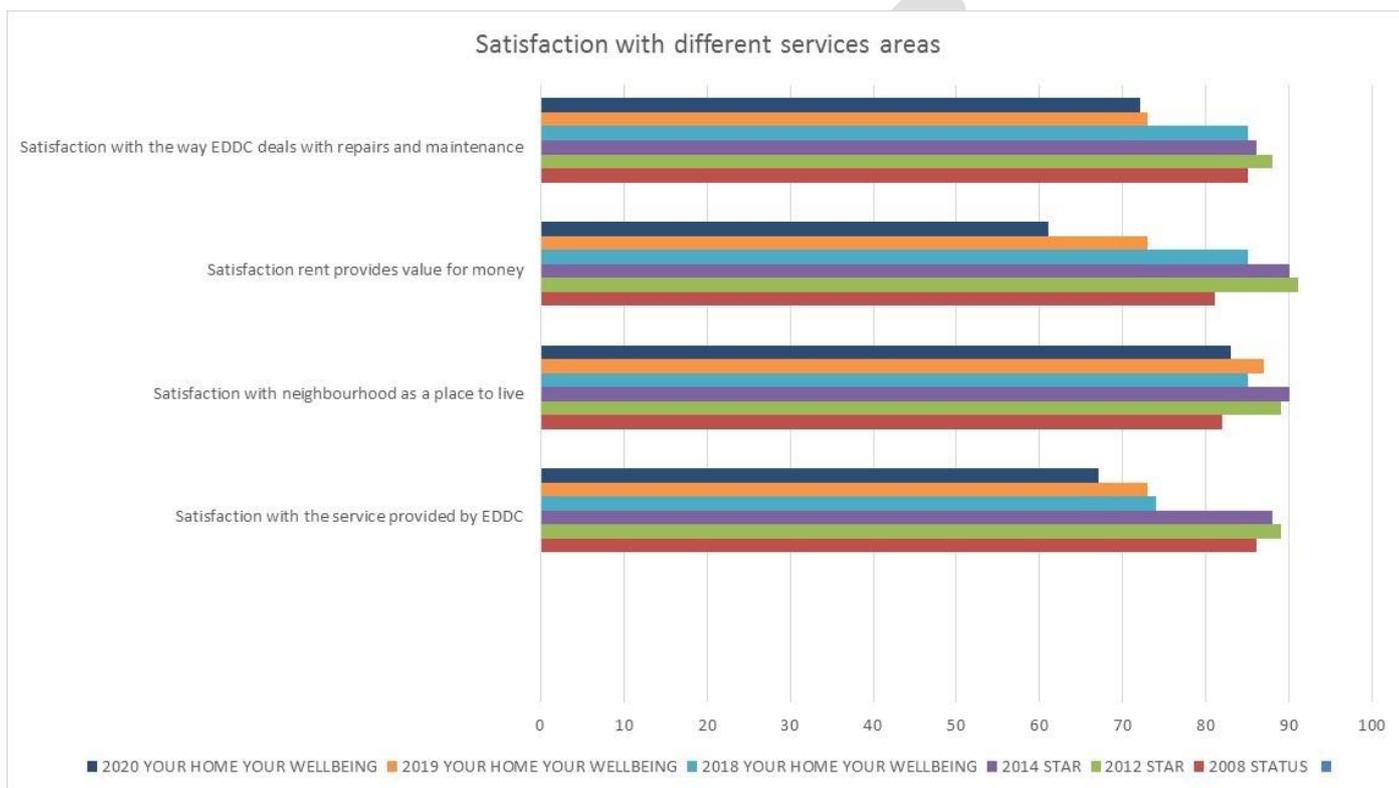
Performance Indicator	2020/21	2021/22				Cumulative Total	Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan-Mar		
No. of new ASB cases							
Alcohol related (H)	2	1				1	
Child behaviour*	1	3				3	
Communal Fire*	7	1	1			2	
Communal Garden*	3	10				10	
Communal Internal*	3	2				2	
Communal Open Space*	16	5	5			10	
Condition of Garden*	18	10	12			22	
Condition of Property*	69	24	17			41	
Criminal Behaviour (O)	11	6	4			10	
Dangerous Animal	4					0	
Domestic Abuse (I)	2		3			3	
Drugs, substance misuse, dealing (G)	6	6	6			12	
Garden Nuisance (L)	25	6	6			12	
Harrasment*	8	1	1			2	
Hate Related (C)	2		1			1	
Illegal Occupation, Squatter*	10	1	4			5	
Litter, Rubbish, Fly Tipping (K)	1	6	1			7	
Misuse of Communal Areas (M)	0					0	
Noise (A)	36	21	9			30	
Nuisance from Vehicles (F)	0					0	
Parking Dispute*	9	2	3			5	
Pets & Animal Nuisance (E)	2	5	4			9	
Physical Violence (J)	11	2	4			6	
Prostitution, Sex Acts (N)	0		1			1	
Untaxed Vehicle*	6					0	
Vandalism & Damage to Property (D)	2	3				3	
Vehicle Nusiance*	3		4			4	
Verbal Abuse (B)	15	8	5			13	
Total New ASB Cases	269	123	91			214	

3.0 Complaints

Description	2020/21	2021/22				2021/22	Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
No. of stage 1 complaints	96	32	27*			59	
Allocations complaints	10	2				2	
ASB complaints	8	4	3			7	
Estate services complaints	5	3	2			5	
Tenancy management complaints	6	2				2	
Rents and service charges complaints	2	0	1			1	
Repairs and maintenance complaints	53	18	16			34	
Staff & customer service complaints	4	1				1	
Other complaints	8	2	5			7	
Average time in calendar days to issue full response to all Stage 1 complaints	26.2	30.25	19.18**			24.7	

4.0 Customer Satisfaction

Description	2008 STATUS	2012 STAR	2014 STAR	2018 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2019 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2020 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING
Satisfaction with the service provided by EDDC	86	89	88	74	73	67
Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	82	89	90	85	87	83
Satisfaction rent provides value for money	81	91	90	85	73	61
Satisfaction with the way EDDC deals with repairs and maintenance	85	88	86	85	73	72



Source: STATUS and STAR surveys and Your Home, Your Wellbeing Survey (2018,19,20). NB: The STAR results are based on valid responses only, STATUS on non-valid and valid responses – they are therefore not directly comparable.

5.0 EDDC Stock

Stock Housing Type	2020/21	2021/22								Cumulative Total
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun		Jul-Sep		Oct - Dec		Jan - March		
		GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	
Bedsit	42	25	17	25	17					42
Bungalow	979	197	782	196	782					978
Flat**	1175	643	534	643	534					1177
House	1981	1967	14	1968	14					1982
Maisonette	6	6	0	6						6
Room*	14	14	0	14						14
Total	4197	2852	1347	2852	1347					4199

Source: Open Housing

* 14 Morton Road and 102 St Andrews Road

** Includes 10 St Andrews Road flats

6.0 Homelessness

Performance Indicator	2020/21	2021/22				
Description	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	Cumulative Total
Approaches: Number of people who indicate that they are homeless or about to become homeless	888	196	263			459
Acceptances: Number of people who EDDC have accepted as homeless	16	4	4			8
Successful Prevention Outcomes	279	74	69			143
Successful Relief Outcomes	143	29	28			57
Verified rough sleeper count*	#	5	11			#
No of households living in temp acc at the end of the quarter*	#	35	37			#
No of households placed into temp acc in the quarter*	#	53	40			#

Source: Jigsaw

7.0 HomeSafeguard

New system – awaiting reports

Source: HomeSafeguard

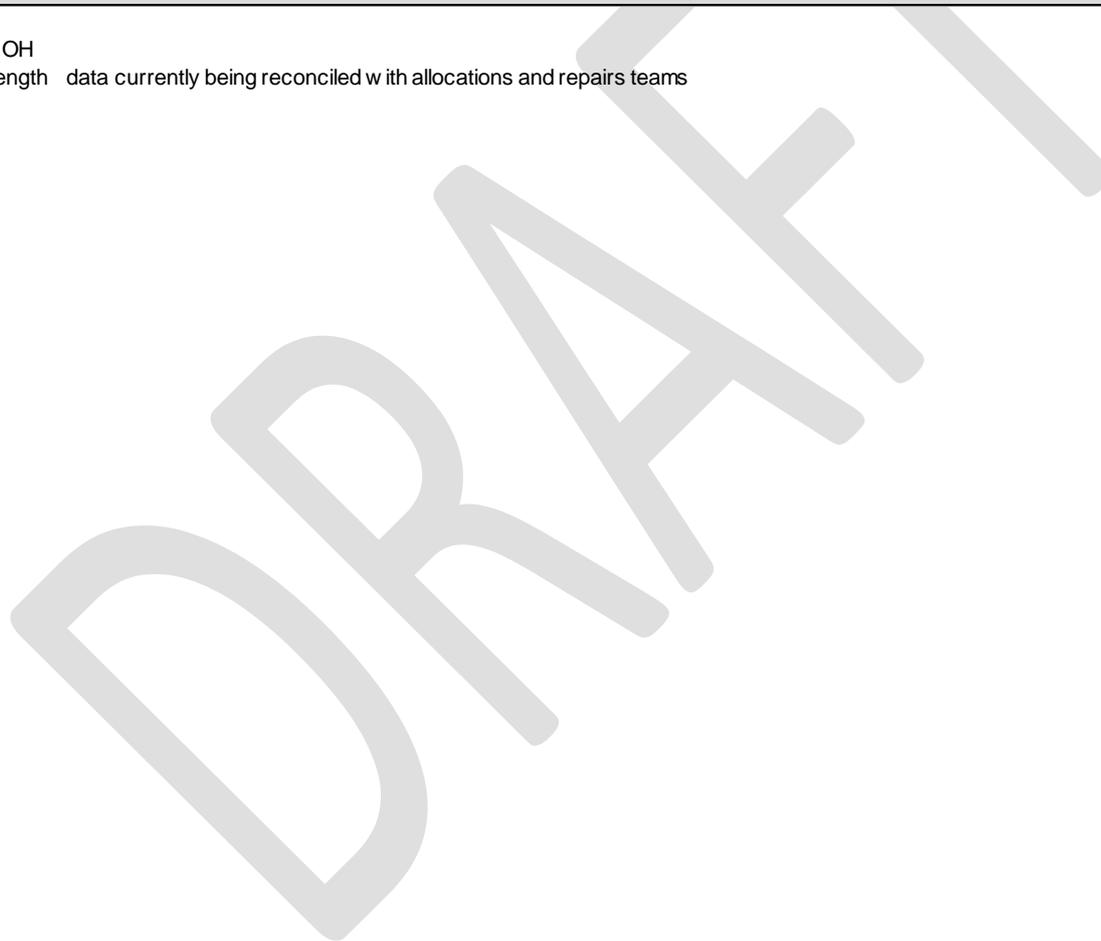
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8.0 Lettings

Performance Indicator	2021/22			
	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Total number of units vacant at the end of the period	58	92		
Number of voids started in period	59	50		
Number of voids completed in period	21	80		
The average re-let time in days General Needs for voids completed in period*	#	#		
The average re-let time in days Sheltered Housing for voids completed in period	#	#		
Total number of re-lets during the period benchmarked (incl mutual exchanges)	64	80		
*Please note this includes the 12 rooms which have become available in this quarter and are to be used as temporary accommodation & LT voids				

Source: OH

void length data currently being reconciled with allocations and repairs teams



9.0 Number of Households on the East Devon Housing Waiting List

Performance Indicator	2020/21	2021/22			
	End of Year Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Apr-Mar
Band A - Emergency Housing Need	3	2	2		
Band B - High Housing Need	333	339	324		
Band C - Medium Housing Need	836	863	805		
Band D - Low Housing Need	1480	1529	1337		
Band E - No Housing Need	2254	2328	2823		
Total	4906	5061	5291		

Source: Devon Home Choice

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10 Private Sector Housing

Removed in Q1 2021/22 as private sector housing now not part of the housing team

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11 Rental

Performance Indicators	2020/21	2021/22			
	Apr-Mar	Apr-Jul	Apr-Sep	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar
Debit less voids	£19,264,048.87	£4,740,406.10	£9,110,576.95		
Voids	£551,216.00	£139,161.54	£279,233.16		
Adjustments	£52,747.00	£23,527.31	£39,284.06		
Court Fees	£2,297.50	£394.50	£1,183.50		
Less write offs	£9,742.00	£3,259.00	£3,228.05		
Total to collect	£19,178,935.12	£4,740,406.10	£9,389,810.11		
Arrears Cfwd	£351,260.27	£405,819	£371,288.22		
Housing Benefit	£7,632,020.37	£1,859,901.50	£3,537,782.39		
Income	£11,080,812.50	£2,911,685.45	£5,314,991.93		
Prepaid B/Fwd	£348,930.00	£439,530.00	£437,165.67		
Prepaid C/Fwd	£613,693.00	£348,949.00	£338,866.65		
Total credit (minus adjustments)	£19,252,009.37	£4,748,059.64	£8,813,490.26		
% Rent Collected (without arrears)	100.38	100.16%	96.74%		
% Rent Collected (with arrears)	98.6	92.3	90.3		
Total number of evictions due to rent arrears year to date	4	1	2		
Number of tenancies at the start of the period	4137	4148	4086		
Number of tenancies at the end of the period	4148	4086	4095		

As at 28th September 2020, of the arrears £154,374.69 is from tenants on UC compared with in 2019 when it was £77,965.16. This is an increase of £76,409.53.

Month	No. of UC claimants	No. of UC claimants
Apr	519	936
May	531	953
June	555	967
July	543	975
Aug	514	1000
Sept	514	1017
Oct	859	
Nov	892	
Dec	863	
Jan	887	
Feb	906	
March	927	

Source: OH, Rental Team *Please note collection rates may differ depending on when date data is extracted.

12 Repairs

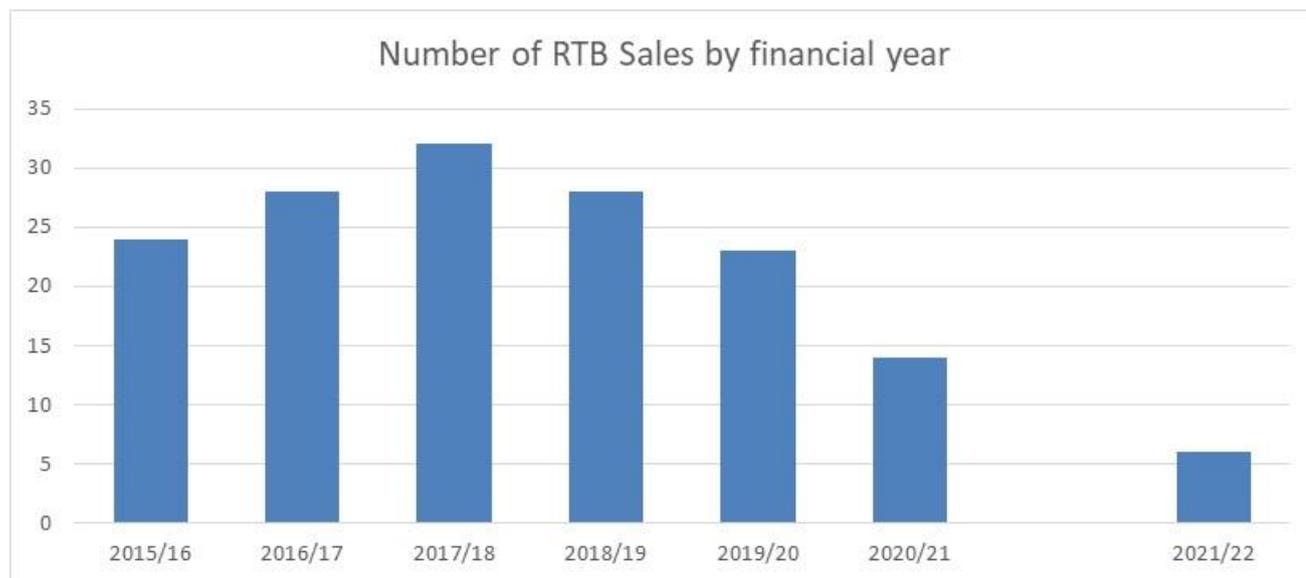
Performance Indicator	Cumulative Total 2020/21	2021/22					Progress against 2020/21 quarter 2
		Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative	
		PPP	PPP	PPP	PPP	PPP	
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date	1560	652	575			1227	#
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	1537	632	563			1195	#
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target time - Year to date	98.5%	97%	98%			97.4%	
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date	8740	2432	2556			4988	#
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	7654	1988	2163			4151	#
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	89.4%	81.7%	84.6%			83.2%	
The percentage of properties, requiring a landlord gas safety record, that have a valid landlord gas safety record	99.9%	100.0%	100.00%			100.0%	

Source: Open Housing

*Jobs include OOHOURS, PPEXCL, HANDPERS, PPP & NONPPP

13 Right To Buy

Performance Indicators	2020/21	2021/22				2021/22
	Cumulative	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Number of completed RTB sales	14	5	1			6



Source: Open Housing