

District Councillors Monthly report for August 2025

August has been a quiet. However, below is a list of MDDC achievements over the past two years – taken from a recent (July) Scrutiny report which I believe are worth circulating wider.

Over the past two years (2023/24 and 2024/25) the Council had seen the **satisfaction of their residents increase**, up to 52% in the most recent survey - an increase of 11% on that recorded in 2023/24, and residents who felt well informed about the Council was up to 60% - an increase of 15%.

- The Council was trying **new ways to work with their communities** – such as through the ‘Let’s Talk Mid Devon’ platform, and working closer with their town and parish councils –through initiatives such as the State of the District debate, creating a new Cabinet position with responsibilities **for Parish and Community Engagement**, and developing community resilience plans in partnership with the towns and parishes.
- The Council had supported all **1,573 households** who came to them experiencing homelessness in the past two years.
- Tenant satisfaction was strong and improving. **Overall tenant satisfaction was up** to 70%. 79% of tenants were satisfied that their homes were safe, and 72% of tenants were satisfied with the overall repairs service.
- The Council were building award winning, affordable, and energy efficient homes – helping to tackle the challenges of the housing crisis and the climate crisis
- The Council had advanced **towards the top 5% of national performance for their recycling** rate and reduction in residual tonnage (their 57.9% recycling rate put the Council 11th out of 197 District authorities and they were 9th for residual tonnage reduction). The Council was recognised nationally by The Office for Local Government for having one of the fastest increases in recycling rates nationally and were shortlisted for the National Local Government Chronical award for Environmental Services. Further options for additional recycling streams would be considered in the autumn following the successful Pots and Pans trial and the planned trial for recycling nappies and sanitary products.
- A £33.5 million funding package was signed, for the **Cullompton Relief Road**, in February 2025, with works due to start in 2026. This vital piece of long awaited infrastructure would be key to unlocking future development for the town. This, coupled with the recent announcement on the railway station, highlighted the hard work of Members and officers in bringing both of those initiatives forward.
- Over £1.8 million in funding had been secured over the past 2 years to support economic projects in the district, such as the delivery of the **Tiverton Work Hub**.
- Decision making **on planning applications** within Mid Devon continued to significantly exceed national targets, whilst the Council’s record of defending appeals against their decision making remained high reflecting sound justified decision making.
- The Council were 11th nationally in 2023/24, and up to 2nd in 2024/25 (99.83%) for the collection of **Business Rates**.
- The Council supported the vulnerable in the community, with around £550,000 paid out in food vouchers and energy vouchers via the **Housing Support Fund**.

- The Council's Leisure service had undergone a full rebrand to **Active Mid Devon**. It had reduced its operating costs by circa £560,000, and they now had memberships at an all-time high, at around 7,000 members.
- The Council was supporting care leavers, carers, and low-income households with free and discounted memberships to **Active Mid Devon**. The efficiency of the Council's leisure centres had been further improved (through winning further grant funding), whilst improving the interior of the sites too, with accessible toilets installed and major energy efficient upgrades.
- The Council continued to **expand their network of EV chargers** to support the transition to electric vehicles in the district, whilst also planting trees and increasing the biodiversity of the district.
- The Council had **reduced agency spend**, and seen staff turnover and sickness rates both decrease. All of this, and more, had been done whilst setting **balanced budgets** without the need to draw on reserves.
- The recent issues with **travellers at Cullompton** causing the extended leisure centre closure caused understandable concern. However, the Council were working closely with Devon County Council to find solutions and they were reviewing how they could protect their sports centres and car parks for the future.
- The Council was pressing the Department for Transport for clarity with regard to **Junction 28 improvements**.
- The Government's decision to raise the District's housing targets by over 60% had fundamentally changed the landscape for this and most local planning authorities in England. As a result, the Council was working on a **new Local Plan** to meet the new targets.
- There were ongoing discussions around the **local government review**, the Council continued to work collaboratively with other Councils across Devon toward the 4-5-1 proposal.
- The **State of the District** Debate was successful last year and this year's debate on Wednesday 17 September 2025 would focus on Local Government Reorganisation.