

*County Council*  
Thursday, 2nd December,  
2021



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To: Members of Devon County Council

County Hall  
Exeter  
EX2 4QD

24 November 2021

## **AGENDA**

### **9. Cabinet Member Reports** (Pages 1 - 20)

To consider reports from Cabinet Members.



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 2 December 2021:

### **1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:**

It has been confirmed again recently that just one in five businesses and homes in county areas have access to gigabit broadband speeds, compared to over three quarters of London, with MPs warning that rural shires could be the 'poor relation' to cities in the government's gigabit rollout.

The findings come in a new report Levelling Up Digital Connectivity in Counties from the County All-Party Parliamentary Group, which explores the challenges in rural connectivity.

The study analyses the rollout of the government's flagship gigabit broadband scheme so far which aims to have 85% of the United Kingdom accessing gigabit speeds by 2025.

However the current data shows that just 21% of premises in county areas have access to gigabit broadband – 2.4m out of a total of 11.7m, based on the latest Ofcom data.

Can the Cabinet Member please update council on these important issues in Devon.

### **2. By Councillor Atkinson as follows:**

In a recent press release Cllr Gilbert, the cabinet member for the economy, said while £9.3m has been given to for thirteen innovative six-month pilot projects across Devon there is "very real disappointment over Devon's Levelling Up bids."

He suggests that Devon may be luckier in the next round of Community Renewal Fund bids from the £220 million UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

In the same press release Cllr David Worden, Chair of the Devon Districts Forum, said:

"There's no doubt the outcome of the Devon Levelling Up bids meant we were all feeling very let down and shocked. "We need to work with government and our Members of Parliament to better understand where Devon stands in Whitehall's thinking in terms of Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity Funding and potential for a Devon deal."

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In a subsequent press released on the shared prosperity fund Cllr Gilbert says:

If the Government allocated UKSPF funding to pan-Devon's local authority areas to at least match what they would have received from the EU, they would share around £83.5 million, £11.52 per head, for jobs, skills and business support spread over six years up until 2028.

But if the Government funded pan-Devon's most economically deprived areas on the same basis as Cornwall, they would benefit from an additional £540 million, £80.19 per head, in economic support over the same period. Supporting pan-Devon on a like for like basis with Cornwall would deliver up to £1.13 billion, £155.86 per head, in economic support.

Will the member for economy recovery and skills report on:

- How this disappointing news affects Team Devon's Prospectus 2020 **pledge to re-build the county's economy to be stronger, more inclusive and sustainable in the [prospectus for its COVID-19 Economy and Business Recovery Plan](#)** now that it has only obtained £9.3m of the £201.5m asked for in that report .
- How will this also affect and the HoSW LEPs Plan to Build Back Better
- Which of the programmes and projects listed in its prospectus with the potential to create 30,000 new jobs, 80,000 new training places and secure investment of £550 million, generating £2.8 billion of additional economic output will now be impossible to achieve?
- The government's plan to close down the HoSW LEP and their relationship to the shared prosperity fund
- If Devon's economy should get more than £500 million in additional Government support if the county's hardest hit areas are treated the same as Cornwall how would the aspirations in the Team Devon Prospectus be changed?

## **Response**

### **1. Levelling Up Digital Connectivity in Counties**

Fast and reliable broadband is critical for the prosperity of our businesses and communities and the County Council is making significant capital investment through the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) programme to support this aim. Devon's hardest-hit areas are among the most economically-deprived in the country as evidenced in the Team Devon briefing for Members on the need for Government to prioritise Devon for UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment, and the latest UK Competitiveness Index. Continued Government investment in improving digital connectivity in the County must be a key part of levelling up.

CDS has delivered connectivity to more homes and businesses than any other broadband programme in England and cost per premise is in the lowest quartile.\* To date the CDS programme has supported more than 300,000 premises receive superfast broadband, with circa 160,000 being in Devon. \*Source: *Building Digital UK*

New contracts are underway rolling out full fibre connections. Around 56,000 premises are under contract to receive a gigabit solution by December 2024, with over 35,000 of these being in Devon, and a further 8000 homes with full fibre in small rural communities and across North Western Devon, are being connected.

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We do however recognise that there remains a clear task to address the very hard to reach premises who have poor speeds, which is our key priority, along with upgrading county-wide superfast networks to deliver gigabit capable speeds.

The County Council, as part of the CDS partnership has contributed to a recent Government consultation on addressing the very hard to reach areas, stating a case for focusing on rural connectivity. Our response evidenced an increasing need for Government and wider public sector investment in digital connectivity in rural areas and that the very hard to reach areas (VHTRAs) are at risk of being left behind without it. Gigabit solutions are needed to remove the digital divide and support the levelling up agenda. A link to a briefing on our response is provided below:

[Briefing-Very-Hard-to-Reach-Premises-consultation-CDS-response.pdf \(connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk\)](#)

We await the outcome of the national consultation and an opportunity to work with Government on an approach to address the situation.

In respect to the conclusions in the APPG report, we largely agree with the findings and the position set out. Addressing new build is a point we support, and we continue to work with the market to invest and deliver gigabit capable solutions across the county. The report does however overlook a few key factors including market appetite to deliver within rural areas. Before the launch of the national superfast programme, central Government estimated only a third of rural areas in England would require public subsidy. In reality, CDS has had to support a much larger proportion of new networks in a number of rural areas due to the shortfall in market interest. Other limiting factors affecting rural areas include resourcing and supply chain constraints and some significant labour and skills shortages within the civil engineering sector. These are significant issues that also need to be addressed to level up the digital connectivity in rural areas and across counties. These points were also highlighted in our response to the VHTRAs consultation and our recommendations.

We are, through CDS working closely with Government to advance Project Gigabit and secure national investment to upgrade our digital connectivity. Project Gigabit is a centrally run programme, and new contracts and investments under this national programme will be managed by Government across the country, working with local bodies. We are gathering the evidence and data to support opportunities for Devon working collaboratively with Government officials and hope to begin the process of market engagement in the New Year. This will be led by Government, with our support, and will seek to test the market appetite to deliver gigabit solutions in Devon and Somerset which will help design new nationally-funded procurements. Our focus will be on targeting rural areas and supporting the areas with the poorest connectivity first not just uplifting those on good speeds to better speeds. The market is investing in gigabit solutions across Devon but is more focused on urban locations. We will seek to influence Project Gigabit to be designed to help address this imbalance and target national investment to communities with the poorest speeds.

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## 2. Devon's Levelling Up Bids

Whilst I thank Councillor Atkinson for the question/s raised, I believe some initial clarification about the status of the Shared Prosperity Fund and the background to the other statements highlighted may be needed in order to provide a succinct and accurate answer.

Firstly, I would highlight that the details of the Government's forthcoming £2.6bn Shared Prosperity Fund have yet to be announced, and as such, Devon County Council is unable to comment on the specifics. We currently anticipate some details of the fund, including its operation and distribution, will form part of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper in December 2021.

The Government has however made initial announcements on two related programmes over recent weeks, the £220m Community Renewal Fund, a pilot programme for the forthcoming Shared Prosperity Fund; and the first round of funding released as part of the Government's Levelling Up Fund, a separate £4bn capital pot focused on accelerating regeneration / community activity at the District Level.

For its part, Devon has had mixed fortunes through these funds over recent weeks. With regards the Community Renewal Fund, the Government recently announced an award of £9.3m for Devon, to be spent through 13 successful projects by June 2022. This was the largest allocation in England to a single authority, making up approximately 4.2% of the national pot, and will enable a mixture of skills, employment, business support, community development and environment enhancement activity to be taken forward over the next 7 months.

Devon District partners and the County Council were however unsuccessful in securing any projects through the first round of allocations for the Levelling Up Fund. This was despite several Devon areas having been identified by Government for intervention within the related programme prospectus, and considerable joint working across local partners to identify and develop a range of high-quality projects. We are currently working closely with related partners to secure feedback around their projects from Government, and to make a strong case for any subsequent applications submitted to round 2 of the scheme. This second round is currently anticipated to launch in spring 2022.

In addition to these programme-based announcements, Team Devon partners have also worked together closely over the past few months in seeking to make a renewed case to Government for a fairer share of any future socio-economic funding for the Devon area.

Following the announcement of the total value of the Shared Prosperity Fund at Budget 2021, and potential use of the previous EU funding regime map to allocate future funds, work has been ongoing to consider how this may affect the County. This has included supplementary analysis of the likely distribution based on previous EU funding patterns, and how funding levels may differ if Government were to instead consider a more equitable approach to distribution based on current levels of deprivation and economic performance at a District level.

This however is speculative work at present, with examples seeking to influence emerging thinking and highlight the challenges involved should Government seek to repeat the previous EU funding regime allocation process nationwide.

With this background in mind, and in response to the five questions raised, I can therefore report the following:

1) Devon County Council has yet to discover how much funding the County is to receive from the Shared Prosperity Fund, and is therefore unable to comment on its progress using these funds against the £200m of ambitions identified through the Team Devon Prospectus.

The County has however had some initial success in securing £9.3m from the Government's Community Renewal Fund Programme, which will now be spent on related projects through to June 2022. Prospectus aims and objectives are also being pursued through an array of other funding sources, including the Council's own recovery programme funding (£6m agreed by Council in March 2021), through the use of recovery funds held by the District Councils; additional education and skills funding awarded to our colleges and through the LEP over recent months by DfE; additional resources released for community development and placemaking by DLUHC; and the alignment of projects using the balance of funds available from the EU Structural Funding regime through to the end of 2024.

2) This is a question best addressed directly to the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, and / or through their Scrutiny Committee.

3) We do not yet know the outcome of the Shared Prosperity Fund allocation process for Devon, and therefore its likely impact on the shared ambitions set out through the Team Devon Prospectus. We anticipate being able to comment on this further following the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in December 2021 and the launch of the UKSPF fund later next year.

4) The Government has yet to announce the outcome of the review of Local Enterprise Partnerships, or the details of the Shared Prosperity Fund. We currently anticipate these matters will also form part of the Government's forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper. This question is best addressed to the LEP directly and / or its Scrutiny Committee.

5) Devon County Council does not currently know the outcome of the Government's plans for the Shared Prosperity Fund, nor the levels of funding likely to be involved. As such, it is too early to speculate on the flexibilities and usage of any funds likely to be awarded.

However, Team Devon partners have sought to work together closely on our priorities and programme ambitions over the past two years, seeking to focus on a selection of shared aspirations through our recovery prospectus and its underlying themes. This approach has been carried over into the operation of other programmes over the past year, including the development of the local criteria for the Community Renewal Fund. As far as practicable, the authority will be seeking to extend this commitment to collaboration and joint prioritisation into future processes and funding delivery, building on the positive partnership experience to date.

**Councillor Rufus Gilbert**

Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills





**Report of the Cabinet Member  
Children's Services and Schools**

I have been asked to Report as follows for Full Council on 2 December 2021:

**1. By Councillor Letch as follows:**

What Devon County Council (DCC) Children's Services, or other DCC services, are doing to identify, assess and help child carers.






**Response**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Section 96 of the Children & Families Act, (2014) defines a young carer as “...a person under 18 years who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances”.
- 1.2 Devon County Council (DCC) also applies the following definition “A Young Carer is defined as a person under 18 who provides practical support, personal care and/or emotional support to a family member or friend of the family”.

**2. Identification of Young Carers and the Young Carers Support Offer**

- 2.1 Where a child or young person may be a young carer, professionals are encouraged to signpost young carers and their families to the commissioned Young Carers Support Service where a young carer assessment will be undertaken by Devon Young Carers to identify and confirm any young carer support needs. Professionals can, with the consent of a family, make a referral to the service on behalf of the family. Equally, families or young carers can make a self-referral.
- 2.2 An assessment of a young carer and their needs can also be identified and incorporated into other assessments for a child or whole family. For example, as part of an Early Help Assessment looking to provide multi-agency support around the whole family; or as part of an assessment as a ‘Child in Need’ under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989).
- 2.1 Westbank, Devon Young Carers, our commissioned provider offers a range of support services for young carers with identified needs in Devon and oversight and monitoring of the contract for takes place on a quarterly basis.
- 2.2 At the end of September 2021, 1880 young carers in Devon were known to and being supported by Westbank, Devon Young Carers.
- 2.5 An overview of the contract for support services for young carers has been summarised overleaf.

<b>Provider</b> <a href="#">Westbank Devon Young Carers</a> 	<div> <div> <b>Service Support Summary</b>  Support offer differs based on the needs of young carers </div> <div> <b>Assessments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A young carer assessment to determine needs and support needed.</li> <li>Other assessments service can support for young carers &amp; families includes: - Early Help assessment and Section 17 assessments possibly*.</li> </ul> </div> <div> <b>Getting Advice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to information and self-help.</li> <li>Support to access opportunities and groups within their local community.</li> </ul> </div> <div> <b>Getting Help</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For young carers with greater support needs due to the impact of the caring role being undertaken.</li> <li>Access to trips, activities, support groups and mentoring and buddying opportunities. To help young carers have a break from caring roles and responsibilities, improve health and wellbeing and help achieve the best outcomes.</li> </ul> </div> <div> <b>Getting More Help</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For young carers with the most complex needs, where caring responsibilities are having a profound impact on the young carer's life.</li> <li>Multi-agency support co-ordinated through Early Help.</li> <li>One- to- support sessions with Devon Young Carers tailored to the individual needs.</li> <li>Possible support through Children's Social Care statutory services e.g., as a Child in Need and/ or where caring role may be leading to safeguarding concerns for the young carer.</li> </ul> </div> <div> <b>Support for young carers in Transition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help them prepare for adulthood.</li> <li>To manage periods of change or transition in their lives e.g., when moving from primary to secondary school.</li> <li>To continue with their caring role as adult from 18 years where the young carer chooses to, ensuring they receive any support as an adult carer going forward.</li> </ul> </div> </div>
<b>Annual Value</b> £225,000 	
<b>Contract Duration</b> May 2018 – March 2023  (option to extend up to March 2025) 	
<b>Geography</b> Young carers in Devon County Council footprint. 	
<b>Eligibility</b>  Children and young people, 0-18 years.  Caring for any family member with a range of needs.	

### 3. Awareness Raising of Young Carers.

- 3.1 Westbank, Devon Young Carers plays a key role acting as our champion for young carers across the system. They have a publicity and communications plan in place and have supported features with BBC Spotlight, Radio Devon and work in partnership with DCC communications to support communications for national events such as Young Carers Action Day.
- 3.2 Alongside promoting and raising awareness of young carers through commissioned services, there is a Devon Young Carers Multi-Agency Steering Group and Devon Carers Leads Group that also support raising the profile and awareness of young carers. For example, to support with during the national event Carers Rights Day, taking place on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the Steering Group are supporting with the production of a newsletter, launching a new logo which has been designed by young carers in Devon, as part of a competition. The newsletter shares best practice tips and examples to support practice across the partnership.

- 3.3 In addition, the majority of secondary schools in Devon have reported they have a 'Young Carer Champion' identified in their school. Many of the champions identified are in contact with Devon Young Carers. Building on this, next steps will include encouraging more primary schools and wider services to identify a champion building on the good practice being seen in secondary schools.

**Andrew Leadbetter**

Cabinet Member

Children's Services and Schools



## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport**

### **Introduction**

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 2 December 2021

#### **1. By Councillor Atkinson on:**

- progress in installing 400 electric vehicle charge points by the end of the year.
- the criteria for choice of location and
- the highways standards which must be achieved for installation with particular reference to clear street and accessibility standards and
- how many EV charge points will be required in Devon over the next 5-10 years to meet the Net Zero carbon targets and
- the plans for funding and installing these required to meet these targets
- who owns the charge points and is responsible for the repair and tariff setting
- how members of the public know where to find EV ChargePoint's

#### **2. By Councillor Hannaford on:**

Can I please request a cabinet member report on Devon County Councils official response to the DEFRA Beaver Reintroduction & Management In England consultation paper that has recently closed.

#### **3. By Councillor Hodgson on:**

A report into measures taken, funding allocated (i.e. including 106 monies) and spent, and an assessment of the outcomes in terms of air quality and behaviour change that DCC and its District Council partners have instigated to address air quality issues over the past 10 years in locations in the county with an Air Quality Management Action Plan. This would include the A385 corridor and associated AQMA through Totnes.

#### **4. By Councillor Hodgson on:**

An explanation of how the inclusivity requirements and policy is applied for Devon pedestrians.

### **Response**

#### **1. Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

The Devon Climate Emergency partners will have provided over 400 electric vehicle charging bays by the end of 2022. 90 are active already. Progress can be viewed on the [online map](#) that will be updated regularly.

The on-street charging locations were chosen by reviewing off-street parking provision, access to the electricity grid and suitability of the highway and pavement to maintain accessibility standards. In addition, the land used for off-street charging locations has to be under the ownership of a public authority. Each authority has been responsible for identifying off-street sites under their control as part of the consortium approach.

On-street charging units are being installed following the Government's [Inclusive Mobility](#) guidance. This means the units must be 450mm from the front of the kerb and there must be at least 1200mm between any equipment and other furniture or the back of the pavement.

At this stage, the Devon Climate Emergency partnership does not have a figure for the number of charge points needed to achieve net-zero. This will depend upon the rate of electric vehicle uptake by the public, the rate and type of charge point installation by the private sector, and how users of electric vehicles chose to charge their vehicles as they become more accustomed to electric motoring (e.g. at home, at a destination - such as a supermarket, on-street or off-street). Devon County Council (DCC) is conducting research which should provide an estimate of this complex situation.

DCC will continue to make use of government funds for charge point installation and explore investment models with the private and community sector.

DCC has granted the land for 10 years to charge point operators that own and operate the equipment. The operator is responsible for repair and tariff setting. The agreement includes minimum response times for repairs by the charge point operators and a commitment to keep the tariffs fair.

Various smart phone apps and websites are available to show the location of all charge points.

## **2. DEFRA Beaver Reintroduction & Management In England Consultation Paper**

Defra undertook a consultation on the government's proposed approach to further reintroductions of beavers in England and the management of the species in the wild. This related to future releases into the wild, current and future releases into enclosures and existing wild-living beavers. The 12-week consultation period closed on 17th October; responses will be used to inform final decisions on an approach to the reintroduction of beavers in England.

Devon County Council was well-placed to provide comment on this issue, having been closely involved in the River Otter Beaver Trial, which ran for the five year period through to 2020 and which culminated in the government announcing that these Devon beavers could remain in the wild. In the intervening period it has become apparent that beavers have become established along large lengths of the River Tamar and are believed to be present in at least one other Devon river. Enclosed beavers are also present in northern Devon and in Plymouth, with a current proposal for their release on the River Caen at Braunton.

A County Council response was submitted to Defra via their detailed online survey form, covering the 15 questions relating to the national approach to reintroductions, existing wild-living beaver populations, current and future beaver enclosures and beaver management issues.

This response strongly supported most aspects of the proposed approach to beaver reintroduction set out in the Defra consultation. In most respects, this approach mirrored those applied very successfully through the River Otter Beaver Trial, led by the Devon Wildlife Trust. The main area of concern relating to the consultation proposals is the suggested approach to funding for beaver reintroductions and the duration of this support. The scientific monitoring undertaken through the River Otter Beaver Trial demonstrated that there can be significant ecosystem and societal benefits from the reintroduction of beavers, although there can also be localised problems for landowners and others with riverine interests, which need to be addressed through appropriate mitigation and management. On this basis, our response called for national funding to be allocated for this process, with this provided over a sufficiently long 'project plan' period during the re-establishment of beavers.

### **3. Air Quality Management Plan**

The assessment of air quality, and the establishment of Air Quality management Areas (AQMA), is a district council function. The County Council's Transport Planning and Highways Development Management teams liaise closely with our district council colleagues to maximise the air quality benefits of transport and accessibility improvement schemes and Section 106 contributions. Therefore, whilst we do not specifically seek S106 contributions nor budget specifically for air quality management reasons, transport, accessibility and behavioural change benefits do often accrue as a consequence of this work.

Over the past 10 years, we've delivered improvements like the £8.5m Crediton Link Road, which has significantly reduced pollution levels on A377 Exeter Road. This year, Mid Devon expect to revoke the Crediton AQMA for the 24-hour mean particulates objective. In 2016, the County Council delivered the £0.5m Turk's Head junction in partnership with National Highways, which is expected to see the revocation of the Honiton AQMA, which is the only AQMA in East Devon. In South Hams, the County Council has recently delivered the £0.5m Western Road scheme to address air quality issues in Ivybridge and continues to secure contributions to support increased cycling in the town. In Totnes the S106 funds have been used for a number of measures as set out in Totnes Air Quality Action Plan put together by South Hams District Council including public transport support, electric vehicle charging points, enhancements to cycle/pedestrian routes and green travel vouchers. Investment in cycling, public transport and new rail stations serving Exeter to encourage mode shift for travel into the city continues to be a priority and we work closely with Exeter City Council on the Sport England Delivery Pilot to complement this investment with behaviour change initiatives targeting inactive people, schools and workplaces. Concentrations of pollutants across the city have shown a long-term downward trend with several sites no longer exceeding the air quality objectives (based upon 2019 pre-COVID data).

#### **4. Inclusivity requirements and policy for Devon pedestrians**

Manual for Streets is used by our designers primarily for the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets but it can also apply to existing streets. This was a key document that shifted away from design that focused on movement of traffic to placing a higher priority on meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. The guidance advocates inclusive design principles, which includes placing people at the heart of the design process and it acknowledges diversity and difference. Through the Committee approval processes (whether Cabinet or HaTOC), the reports require equality impact of schemes to have been assessed to aid Member decision-making.

**Councillor Andrea Davis**

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport



**Report of the Cabinet Member for  
Public Health, Communities and Equality**

**Introduction**

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 2 December 2021:

**1. by Councillor Atkinson as follows:**

The NAO report of 19<sup>th</sup> November found:

- The government was not fully prepared for the wide-ranging impacts that this pandemic had on society, the economy and essential public services. The 2019 Assessment recognised that an influenza-type pandemic could have extensive non-health impacts, including on communications, education, energy supplies, finance, food supplies and transport services. The government lacked detailed plans for several aspects of its response to COVID-19, including shielding, employment support schemes and managing the disruption to schooling (paragraph 3.12).
- The Cabinet Office told us that, as the pandemic started, the government's risk appetite changed, and it lowered the threshold for the health and societal impacts of the pandemic that it deemed acceptable (paragraph 3.7)
- A cross-government review of pandemic planning arrangements found that most plans were inadequate to meet the demands of any actual incident..... The then Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government told us that, while its liaison officers support and challenge local resilience forums, their role is obtaining reassurance rather than formal assurance over local resilience forums' readiness for emergencies (paragraphs 3.13 to 3.15)
- Prior to the pandemic, the government did not act upon some warnings about the UK's lack of preparedness from its past pandemic simulations. The government has taken forward many lessons learned from actual incidents and simulation exercises.

In view of the above conclusion can the Cabinet members for health community and economy report on the effect of government failures highlighted by this report has been on Devon's health economy and resilience forum and the lessons for local government in Devon and government?

**Response**

The Council, having supported its communities and businesses through the Pandemic, fully recognises the health, and socio-economic impact of the pandemic on Devon. The Council has constantly reviewed its response to see how services and resilience can be improved in the future. We are proud of our officers and our communities in the way they have gone above and beyond to provide support to the most vulnerable during this time. We have played an active part in the local resilience forum and are proud of our partners particularly the Voluntary and Community Sector who have worked with us shoulder to shoulder.

An outcome of our review, our search for continuous improvement and preparedness to future incidents is set out in the Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 that has been presented to Council for approval today. It sets out how we have learnt lessons from the pandemic and will help build on the resilience of local people and communities to create a fairer, healthier and more caring place.

The pandemic has had an impact on the Devon economy, similarly to much of country, with some key headlines including:

- Across the Devon County Council area we have noted that in the period between December 2019 and June 2021 30,400 people aged 50+ exited from our labour market. Some of this is due to demographics and an ageing population, with many people reaching retirement age. More significantly, however, in the aged 50-64 age group 13,100 have become economically inactive over the same period pointing to a jump in the number of people retiring early, or considering their options for the future linked to the pandemic.
- Early indications are that recruitment into lower paid care roles is currently proving difficult. Pre-pandemic there were a significant number of vacancies in the care sector in Devon and vacancies have risen since then.
- a lack of available long-term residential lets in many towns in Devon, especially focused in our coastal areas, is believed to be further impacting on the ability of employers in all sectors, including care, to recruit in these localities.
- We have seen employees on pay roll increase to levels higher than before the pandemic, but numbers of self-employed fall. At the same time universal credit figures remain higher than before the pandemic, signalling an increasing number of 'working poor' and when coupled with increased levels of house hold debt for some, rising cost pressures there is an heightened concern we will see more people falling into need for support and help.

**Councillor Roger Croad**

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality

**Report of the Cabinet Member**  
**Adult Social Care & Health Services**

I have been asked to Report on the following for Full Council on 2 December 2021:

**1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:**

Last week the government had its plans for a revised social care cap endorsed by parliament. The new cap will cover fees for personal care, like help with washing and dressing. However, it will not cover living costs such as care home fees, food or utility bills.

Research and analysis from the Health Modelling Foundation, indicates the following financial outcomes from the proposals;

- Starting assets £100,000 – Left with £20,000.
- Starting assets £270,000 – Left with £184,000.
- Starting assets £500,000 – Left with £414,000.

What work has been done to assess the impact of these changes for our local residents and our care system & market sufficiency in Devon?

**2. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:**

Concerns have been recently raised that care home residents are dying alone and their everyday needs are being “neglected” because staffing levels are at such a “dangerously low” level, research suggests. Furthermore people in residential care are being denied a dignified end to their lives as there are not enough staff to sit with them during the final hours, according to a survey by Unison.

The union surveyed 1,637 employees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland between October 13 and November 4 who work in care homes, or help people at home or in supported living. Respondents told of how people are not getting regular washes, some are not getting dressed until the afternoon and others are being put to bed early so staff can attend to other residents. They described care as “depressingly rushed” and said its quality is declining, with “unsafe” staffing levels on both day and night shifts.

- The union found that 31% of care workers said that staffing levels are dangerously low, getting worse and negatively affecting care quality, which is leaving carers feeling “exhausted, angry and upset”.
- Two thirds (67%) are considering leaving the sector, which Unison says is a “disastrous but inevitable” consequence of years of low wages and morale and underfunding.

- Almost all respondents (97%) said their employer is experiencing staffing shortages, with burnout, overwork and low pay among the main reasons cited.
- Some 47% agreed with the statement that shortages are having a negative impact on care, and 31% agreed staffing levels are also dangerously low and getting worse.
- A fifth (20%) said their workplace is managing despite the shortages, while 1% said their workplace is fine and is experiencing no serious staffing shortages.

Can the cabinet please update council on all these concerning issues in Devon.

## **Response**

### **1. Social Care Cap**

- The government has yet to publish its impact assessment of the proposals in relation to the care cap. When this becomes available, like all local authorities we will be in a better position to assess local impact.
- We will ensure that any local impact is communicated to central government when we respond to the national consultation on the proposals.
- In 2015 the Care Act introduced a duty for local authorities to offer Deferred Payment Agreements, prior to it had been a power.
- This is a mechanism that ensures people do not need to sell their home in their lifetime in order to pay for their care. Devon was one of a number of local authorities that were already using the power to offer Deferred Payment Agreement prior to the Care Act. We currently have 102 DPAs in Devon.

### **2. Social Care Shortage**

- The quality of the care providers in Devon, as rated by the CQC, is better than regional and national benchmarks, but workforce sufficiency remain the single biggest challenge in adult social care. It is also impacting significantly across many other sectors, including those competing for the same workforce as adult social care.
- Devon has recently received £2.4M as part of the national workforce recruitment and retention fund to invest in supporting our adult social care workforce over the winter period. This funded will be added to by the Integrated Care System Devon.
- We continue to develop our Proud to Care campaigns that remain our primary method of supporting our external providers to recruit and retain a sufficient workforce. We have produced a toolkit to support Members have conversations in their communities to encourage people into the caring workforce.
- The LoveCare programme is looking at a Team Devon 'Care Offer' where we are working with our public sector and local government colleagues in understanding what

we can do now and in the future in offering a range of benefits for those entering into the care workforce.

- Part of this work includes an Appreciative Inquiry taking place on the 3 Dec where health and social care leaders from across the UK, care workers, care providers, local political leaders will hear first-hand experiences of care workers on the frontline, and their employers, who deliver care into people's homes and in residential and other community settings.
- The VCSE also plays an important role. Devon Voluntary Action (DeVA) partnership used funding from the Infection Control Grant to provide training for 20 local voluntary organisations to enable them to deploy volunteers more confidently into people's homes and to enable care providers to focus on providing hands-on care and support.

**James McInnes**

Cabinet Member

Adult Social Care and Health Services

