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DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

To: Members of Devon County Council

County Hall
Exeter
EX2 4QD

29 November 2023

Your attendance is requested at the Meeting of the Devon County Council to be held at County Hall, Exeter on Thursday, 7th December, 2023 at 2.15 pm.

Chief Executive

AGENDA

11. Cabinet Member Reports (Pages 1 - 18)

To consider reports from Cabinet Members.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Policy, Corporate and Asset Management

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

By Councillor Hannaford on:

Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal

- 1) Can the Leader please update council on the announcement last month regarding the new Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal.

By Councillor Atkinson on:

2) Devolution and gender equality

- a) How many women representatives there will be on any proposed devolved authority.
- b) If none from elected representatives, how is it proposed to fix this gender deficit to make sure that women's representation is 50: 50 with men on the new devolved combined committee?
- c) What impact analysis will be undertaken with regards the impact of the lack of women's representation in the devolution proposals and its consequences for decision making (e.g. learning the lessons for the lack of women's representation on decision making with respect to Covid) before any decision is taken?
- d) How the gender and other equality impacts of policy proposals will be assessed and reported to the Combined committee and scrutiny?
- e) His view on the importance on women's representation in any devolved activity

Response

1. Will give a verbal response
2. The proposed Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DT CCA) would be established under the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The DT CCA's members would be existing councillors from Devon County Council, Torbay Council, Devon's district councils and the worlds of business, skills and education. I cannot predict how many members of the DT CCA would be women but I do agree with Cllr Atkinson that women are under represented in both politics and public life.
When the proposed Devon and Torbay devolution deal is announced, and subject to Cabinet's approval, there will be a public consultation early next

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year to gather views. As part of the consultation there will be a report to the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 25 January 2024.

The proposed DT CCA and devolution deal will be subject to an equality impact assessment which the Council will need to take into account alongside the findings from the consultation before making any final decision to submit the proposal to Government.

Councillor John Hart

Cabinet Member for Policy, Corporate and Asset Management

Report of the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023.

By Councillor Letch;

- 1) How much was the SEND overspend for the following dates - June 2022, September 2022, December 2022, March 2023, June 2023 and September 2023?
- 2) What plans does DCC have for reducing and indeed clearing the overspend by March 2026?

By Councillor Bailey:

- 3) Despite repeated reassurances provided by the leadership at Devon County Council about the improvement of its children services, the Local Government Ombudsman has upheld 26 decisions relating to SEND provision in 2023, 15 of these have been since June 2023. Please can the portfolio holder provide a cabinet report on these findings against Devon County Council.

Response

1)

Month	£ million	Notes
June 2022	119.1	
September 2022	123.8	
December 2022	127.5	
March 2023	125.4	
June 2023	152.2	Increase between financial years as budget pressure deficit recognised of £26.2 million
September 2023	162.6	This is the projected outturn position for 2023/24. It has been adjusted to recognise Management Actions that would not be achieved in Financial Year

- 2) The Department for Education have invited Devon into discussions for tranche 4 of the Safety Valve Intervention programme. The aim of the programme is to agree a package of reform to improve the performance of our high needs system whilst bringing our DSG deficit under control.

Our Safety Valve plans contain 20 projects which cover the four broad themes of early intervention, sufficiency, financial management & placement value and preparation for adulthood. These plans aim to bring the budget back in line and reduce the deficit over the next 5 years.

Cost savings and cost avoidance figures are being finalised, alongside project delivery plans. Devon will submit plans to the DfE by 15 December for review. There will be an opportunity to make any final amendments before submitting the final proposal on 12 January 2024.

There is statutory instrument in place until March 2026, at present, which keeps the DSG Deficit off of the Authority's accounts. There is no clarity if, to date, this will continue past then.

- 3) The Council have invested and continue to invest significant resources into the SEND improvement programme. A report has been requested in relation to the current Ombudsman findings. Information has been produced for the current financial year but the matters/finding relate to previous financial years.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) is an independent body that makes decisions on complaints about councils or adult care providers in England. In most cases, the complainant must have exhausted the relevant complaint process before the LGSCO will consider their complaint. If the LGSCO decide to investigate and they make a finding of fault causing injustice, the LGSCO will recommend the Council takes steps to put things right for the person (or people) affected. They might also recommend actions to improve services, to help prevent the fault from occurring again. Examples of the current recommendations include; issue an apology, staff training, issuing guidance to Officers on process, review policies and procedures and making a symbolic payment.

There have been 37 LGSCO complaints received in 2023-24 to date, and the table below details which services these related to.

LGSCO complaints received 2023-24	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
School Inclusion	1	3			4
SEN 0-25	14	19			33
Grand Total	15	22			37

There have been 28 findings made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to date in 2023-24; 21 of these were upheld with maladministration and injustice to the complainant, and one was upheld with maladministration but no injustice. Four were not investigated for various reasons and two were not upheld.

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

I have been asked to Report as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

Can the Cabinet Member please update council on the RACC Concrete situation in our Devon Schools, to include number of buildings effected, remedial works, and educational capacity and campus displacement issues.

2. By Councillor Bailey as follows:

It has emerged this week that there was a significant delay by DCC in the convening of a statutory safeguarding meeting in 2015/16 in relation to former district councillor John Humphreys. Humphreys was convicted in August 2021 of child abuse. Devon and Cornwall police have this week stated that they made a referral to DCC as the statutory safeguarding authority on 7th December 2015 as part of their criminal investigation into former Councillor Humphreys. Yet despite the clear urgency DCC waited three months to convene a statutory multi agency meeting. The meeting was not convened until more than 3 months later on 9th March 2023.

Please provide a cabinet report which:

- a) Explains why DCC did not convene a safeguarding meeting for three months despite a referral by Devon and Cornwall police. Particularly given the fact that the referral came from the police why did DCC not act with more urgency?
- b) Advises what discussions took place in those three months internally within DCC and between DCC any third parties.
- c) Explains why DCC's 'independent' report makes no reference of this delay.
- d) Sets out when then portfolio holder for Children's Services, the current portfolio for Children's Services, and the Leader of the Council first became aware of the allegations about John Humphreys And what actions did they take. (This is very straightforward question yet it has never been answered).
- e) Whether DCC be reviewing other cases where a referral has been made to it as the statutory safeguarding authority to identify issues including delays.

Responses

1. The latest with the RAAC investigations is as follows:

Of 164 DCC Maintained Schools at the beginning of the investigation process, we are down to a small number of schools which are due further invasive surveys in the coming weeks.

The final list to be inspected are the following 11 sites:

BISHOPSTEIGNTON SCHOOL
CAEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL-MAIN SCHOOL SITE

HAYTOR VIEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL-MAIN SCHOOL
SITE (QUEENSWAY)
HONITON PRIMARY SCHOOL
ILFRACOMBE CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL
IPPLEPEN PRIMARY SCHOOL-MAIN SCHOOL SITE
PILTON INFANTS SCHOOL
SEATON PRIMARY SCHOOL
STOKE HILL INFANTS & NURSERY SCHOOL
STOKE HILL JUNIOR SCHOOL
WEST CROFT SCHOOL

These inspections involve completing asbestos surveys in some cases and using specialist equipment at height so need to be conducted out of school hours.

The expectation is that no RAAC will be found based on initial surveys, but we are pushing for resolution with 100% certainty before the Christmas break.

This accounts for the DCC maintained estate only.

2.

- a) The LADO records indicate that the LADO was informed that there were historical complaints regarding Mr Humphries but that his employment role was not working with children, he was not a person in a position of trust (as defined by WT 2013), the victims were not in contact with Mr H, he did not have any children of his own and the police were conducting an investigation to gather further information. As such there was insufficient information to support a LADO meeting at that time. Discussions continued with the Police and the LADO in December and January 2015/16 while the police continued to investigate the matter. A meetings was arranged on 25 February 2016 for 3 March 2016, this was cancelled and re convened on 9 March 2016.
- b) As outlined above discussions were taking place between the LADO and Police.
- c) The minutes of the LADO meeting make no reference to when the matter was first referred by police to the LADO. It is not uncommon with LADO referrals for there to be a delay before the first meeting is held if there is no immediate risk to a child – the allegations were historical, and the alleged perpetrator is not in a position of trust in relation to working with children. Indeed, with historical abuse allegations, it is often beneficial for there to be a delay whilst information is collated.
- d) The LADO records do not provide an answer to this question – however, Mr Humphries was a district councillor rather than a county councillor. The LADO deals with sensitive confidential information and would not usually notify third parties not connected to the matter. East Devon District Council were contacted as the responsible body.
- e) Referrals relating to children who are thought to be likely to experience significant harm are monitored on a daily basis. The LADO process is regularly reviewed.

Andrew Leadbetter
Cabinet Member
Children's Services and Schools

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

1. By Councillor Biederman as follows:

Could the Cabinet Member for finance report on Devon County Council Policy for loaning other Local Authorities Money and what the process is for deciding to make the loan or not.

Response

The Council's investment policy is laid out in the Treasury Management Strategy approved each year along with the budget. The Council lends money to banks, building societies and other local authorities in order to obtain an investment return on its available cash balances. These cash balances are essentially positive cashflow where money has been received but is not immediately required.

The Treasury Management Strategy sets limits for the total amount that can be lent to an individual bank or building society or to an individual local authority. The maximum for an individual county, unitary or metropolitan council or a London borough is £10 million. The maximum for a lower tier district authority and Scottish and Welsh authorities is £5 million.

Inter local authority lending is a common practice. After the global financial crisis of 2009/10, it was seen as safer to lend to another local authority than to lend to a bank. Banks can go bust, local authorities can't. No local authority has ever defaulted on a loan, and there is no reason to expect that Woking are likely to default on the loan we have to them.

The loan to Woking Borough Council is for £5m which is in line with the county councils counter parties approved listing. The loan is due to be repaid on 13th March 2024 for which we will receive £222,500 in interest. This is an interest rate of 4.45% which was comparable to other 12 month deals at the time the loan was agreed (February 2023) and more favourable than the overnight rate at that time of 3.87%.

Officers do exercise judgement when considering loans to other local authorities. In Woking's case, the loan had been agreed in advance via brokers on February 17, well before the full extent of their financial difficulties became clear, and all the correct governance procedures were followed.

The investment of cash balances is an important source of income to support services across the authority including the young and vulnerable – interest receipts are expected to reach almost £8 million in the current year.

**Phil Twiss
Cabinet Member for Finance**

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

Introduction

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

1. by Councillor Atkinson as follows:

What progress is being made to find St Thomas Library a new home and why the DCC could not give the relevant guarantee to landlords to facilitate obtaining a lease on new premises.

2. by Councillor Connett as follows:

A recent BBC article reports on a ruling by the Supreme Court that councils do have the power to ban travellers from using council/public land and can take out injunctions in advance of any occupation. Can the Cabinet Member update council on the Supreme Court ruling and what implications it has for the county council's current policy.

Response

1. The lease on the building was due in November this year and following a rent review the landlord put the rent up and wanted a long-term arrangement on the building. Earlier this year the landlord attempted to gain planning permission to turn the building into flats we felt entering into a long-term arrangement when the future of the building was unclear would be wrong.

Having taken the difficult decision to not renew the lease on these grounds we regretfully closed St Thomas Library in November. As soon as we knew what was happening we engaged with local people on alternative locations both in the long and the short term. I am pleased to announce that a home has now been found at the Emmanuel Hall in St Thomas. Our provider Libraries Unlimited is preparing the space to open its doors and welcome its members before Christmas. I'd like to thank the residents of St Thomas, the excellent staff at St Thomas Library and local members for their help and co-operation and look forward to visiting the new St Thomas library.

2. Briefing Note: Unauthorised Encampments

Currently, it is the usual practice for DCC to tolerate encampments where there is a lack of adequate provision for sites for the UE to move on to. If the encampment is disruptive, or located on a high profile site, it is usual to deal with UEs by way of s. 77/78 procedure under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which is the most efficient procedure due to it consisting of two elements: firstly, issuing a Direction to Leave, and only if that is ineffective, DCC would apply as step 2 to the Magistrates Court for an Order for removal of persons and their vehicles unlawfully on land. These powers have been granted to the local authorities specifically to tackle UEs.

Other powers are available, for example, common law powers under Civil Procedure Rule Part 55. Enforcement must be justified and will only apply when the encampment is within a DCC-owned site, or on the public highway, and only when appropriate to enforce.

DCC takes a multi-agency approach and is in regular liaison with the communities, as well as other authorities, in order to address the issue adequately.

Supreme Court decision in Wolverhampton City Council and others (Respondents) v London Gypsies and Travellers and others (Appellants) [2023] UKSC 47

The above listed remedies can prove ineffective as they do not prevent another group of trespassers from taking possession of the parcel of land from which another group has been evicted. Under the Part 55 procedure, the original order may be restored if some of the “fresh” trespassers came from the same group and were defendants to the original order. However, that may prove difficult, especially when dealing with “Persons Unknown”, as is often the case with Gypsy and Traveller encampments.

Similarly, the s77/78 procedure is only effective for 3 months from the issuing of the s. 77 Direction and Order to Leave: re-entry is a criminal offence with the maximum fine being £1000. The same problem arises when another group enters who have not been a party to the original order of the Court.

Due to the lack of effectiveness of the available remedies, some authorities have applied to the Courts for wide ranging injunctions banning persons unknown from occupying land. These injunctions have been “called in” by the Courts to assess their validity, which has resulted in the Wolverhampton litigation and ended up in the Supreme Court. This decision upheld the injunction and provided a welcome clarification of the law as to whether injunctions can be made against “Persons Unknown” or “newcomers”. The appeal has an effect not only on the Gypsy and Traveller encampments, but that is its primary focus.

For better understanding, the “newcomers” are defined in para. 2 of the SC judgement:

“The appeal raises the question whether (and if so, on what basis, and subject to what safeguards) the Court has the power to grant an **injunction which binds persons who are not identifiable at the time when the order is granted, and who have not at that time infringed or threatened to infringe any right or duty which the claimant seeks to enforce, but may do so at a later date:** “newcomers”, as they have been described in these proceedings”

The issues raised in the course of this litigation, by those acting on behalf of the groups potentially affected, surround Human Rights and procedural unfairness in that the parties potentially affected by the injunction, who have not been a defendant in the interim injunction, do not have an opportunity to respond, and would not have notice of the final injunction hearing.

The Supreme Court considered the above in addition to the question on procedure, particularly, how would a claim for a “newcomer injunction” be validly served. As a general rule, the Court reminds us, an injunction order must describe the defendants with sufficient clarity and identify who is included and who is excluded – otherwise its effect would be to bind the whole world.

Para. 74 discusses issues with traveller injunctions granted over a wider geographical area, i.e., forcing Travellers out of a borough and causing strain on resources in boroughs which had yet not obtained an injunction. It also had impact on the traditional lifestyle led by Travellers which alleged had been recognised and protected by ECHR (right to private and family life).

The Court has taken great care in balancing these issues against the need for an adequate remedy to uphold the law, therefore providing a detailed guidance to the applicants within the judgement. This new type of injunction is to be viewed as an additional method of enforcement as generally there will be no question as to the rights of the defendant where it is clear that they are a trespasser. It is a new type of remedy which will exist alongside the currently available powers and must be used only where the existing remedies have proven ineffective – as a “last resort” option.

The Supreme Court placed the burden of proving why a “newcomer injunction” is necessary on the applicant authority. The Court will consider the below criteria, set out in Para. 167 of the judgement, before granting an injunction of this type:

“(i) There is a compelling need, sufficiently demonstrated by the evidence, for the protection of civil rights (or, as the case may be, the enforcement of planning control, the prevention of anti-social behaviour, or such other statutory objective as may be relied upon) in the locality which is not adequately met by any other measures available to the applicant local authorities (including the making of byelaws). This is a condition which would need to be met on the particular facts about unlawful Traveller activity within the applicant local authority’s boundaries.

(ii) There is procedural protection for the rights (including Convention rights) of the affected newcomers, sufficient to overcome the strong prima facie objection of subjecting them to a without notice injunction otherwise than as an emergency measure to hold the ring. This will need to include an obligation to take all reasonable steps to draw the application and any order made to the attention of all those likely to be affected by it (see paras 226-231 below); and the most generous provision for liberty (i.e. permission) to apply to have the injunction varied or set aside, and on terms that the grant of the injunction in the meantime does not foreclose any objection of law, practice, justice or convenience which the newcomer so applying might wish to raise.

(iii) Applicant local authorities can be seen and trusted to comply with the most stringent form of disclosure duty on making an application, so as both to research for and then present to the Court everything that might have been said by the targeted newcomers against the grant of injunctive relief.

(iv) The injunctions are constrained by both territorial and temporal limitations so as to ensure, as far as practicable, that they neither outflank nor outlast the compelling circumstances relied upon. (Note: It doesn’t mean the injunctions can only apply to one county or district. The action must be proportionate and flexible to fit the facts of a case.)

(v) It is, on the particular facts, just and convenient that such an injunction be granted. It might well not for example be just to grant an injunction restraining Travellers from using some sites as short-term transit camps if the applicant local authority has failed to exercise its power or, as the case may be, discharge its duty to provide authorised sites for that purpose within its boundaries.”

In summary, the “newcomer injunctions” are a new category of a Court derived remedy which the Courts can grant if the local authority can show they complied with the strict criteria set out in this judgement. It exists alongside the current powers available to the local authorities, such as common law procedure under Civil Procedure Rule 55, and more commonly used powers in Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1998 s. 77/78.

This new type of remedy can be used when all other options have been exhausted, which has a possible application to high profile sites often targeted by Unauthorised Encampments. Additional procedural requirements will apply to those already in place: we must make every effort to bring the intention of applying for such order to the affected communities, as well as disclose as fully as possible the circumstances affecting the UE, including those that may be detrimental to our position. Further, the Court placed emphasis on the need for continuing dialogue with the affected communities and adequate provision of sites, and expressly said that the lack of transit sites or scarcity of authorised Traveller sites may in itself be a reason for the Court to refuse an application for a “newcomer injunction”.

It must be borne in mind that these injunctions are very expensive to obtain and have a considerable impact on officer time due to the requirements set out in this judgement.

The judgement can be accessed at Supreme Court’s website: <https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/uksc-2022-0046.html>. The press summary is helpful in summarising the main points of the judgement.

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 7 December 2023:

1. By Councillor Connett as follows:

Will the relevant Cabinet Member report on the adequacy of funding for Hospice services in Devon, especially noting the concern of Hospiscare that it receives just 18% its funding via the Devon Integrated Care Board and faces a £2.5m funding gap and the implications for health and care services.

2. By Councillor Bailey as follows:

On 10th September 2023 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman upheld a complaint in relation to adult safeguarding failings by Devon County Council ref. 22 012 146 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

- a) Please can the cabinet member advise the extent to which similar adult safeguarding concerns have been raised with DCC over the care it has commissioned.
- b) Please can the cabinet member advise on the lessons learned, the changes it will be making to its processes going forward, and the extent to which it has complied with the LGSO's action points.
- c) Please can the cabinet member also explain why he did not ensure that reference to this case was included in any of the officers' reports for the Health and Adult Care scrutiny committee on 9th November.

Responses

1. Integrated Care Boards have a legal responsibility to commission health services that meet their population needs, including palliative care services. NHS Devon currently has grant arrangements in place which offer financial support to the four adult hospices operating inpatient beds within the NHS Devon footprint. These arrangements are historic having been established and evolved over many years, pre-dating the creation of the ICB.
Local authorities do not have statutory responsibilities for funding, commissioning or providing palliative care. As a County Council we play a role in the development of care plans for individuals approaching the end of life. This involves working with healthcare professionals, the individual, and their family to coordinate a personalised care package that addresses their needs and preferences.
We are committed to promoting dignity and choice in end-of-life care. This includes supporting individuals in making decisions about their care preferences, such as where they would like to receive care and the type of care they would like to receive. We work in partnership with the NHS to ensure a coordinated approach to end-of-life care. This collaboration may involve joint assessments and planning to meet the holistic needs of individuals.
As a partner in the ICS, we work with the ICB where relevant and appropriate to support the delivery of its statutory duty. It's only right the ICB has the opportunity to respond to questions relating to the level and adequacy of funding for end-of-life care.

2.

a. In 2022-23 the LGSCO upheld 4 complaints. In all complaints the LGSCO was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented the recommendations. None of the cases were in relation to adult safeguarding concerns.

In 2021-22 the LGSCO upheld 9 complaints. In all complaints the LGSCO was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented the recommendations. Two of the case were in relation to adult safeguarding concerns.

- [20 011 068 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#),
- [21 007 609 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

In 2020-21 the LGSCO upheld 4 complaints. In all complaints the LGSCO was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented the recommendations. None of the case were in relation to adult safeguarding concerns

All upheld decision relating to Devon County Council are published here. [Devon County Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

b. Restorative actions have been taken responding to the judgement made by the LGSCO. The case, and the subsequent judgement has been shared through our regular Practice Bulletin so that staff and managers understand the learning that needs to result and that they are clear on their practice standards.

Through the Quality Assurance and Improvement Team, the policy for responding to concerns raised about commissioned care has been reviewed.

The context of this particular case was COVID, and the significant changes that brought to peoples' lives and also the impact it had on adult social care practice. We have taken learning from that period and acted on it.

c. I have not previously highlighted individual complaints upheld by the LGSCO to the Health and Adult Scrutiny Committee, but the overall summary has been provided in our Annual Reports that are presented to committee annually, usually in January. The contribution and work of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee is extremely valuable, and I would welcome committee's increased oversight in this area and building into its work programme to challenge us on how we ensure and demonstrate learning.

James McInnes

Cabinet Member

Adult Social Care and Health Services

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

1. By Councillor Adams as follows:

In the light of our important role as corporate parents in ensuring that our care-experienced young people have the best and start possible in life, please may I have a report from the cabinet member responsible for the following:

How confident are we at DCC, that we can provide as many opportunities for work, apprenticeships, mentoring and work experience, for our care-experienced young people, as external organisations? The Talent and Aspiration Bank will be key to ensuring more care experienced young people have the employment support they need in a timely manner. Will the cabinet ensure that the resources needed to action the recommendations of the Talent and Aspiration bank will be provided expeditiously?

Response

1. Ensuring the best outcomes for Children who are or have been within our care is a crucial priority for Devon County Council, both ensuring that we are able to meet the aspirations and maximise the potential of our young people, but also support them to become successful, confident and independent adults. In line with this commitment to our care experienced young people, and as part of our ongoing effort to reinforce our role as a Corporate Parent, we have recently renewed our Corporate Parenting governance approach, restructuring our Corporate Parenting partnership around four key strands. One of these, Talented Me, brings together the authority with wider public sector partners, business and employer representative bodies and our colleges and wider training bodies to advance and promote employment and training opportunities for all young people below 25 seeking a next step.

As part of this approach, the Authority is currently pursuing a wide-ranging programme of activity across its activity, including:

- ***Provision of a growing programme of apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience places across the area***, with 7 care experienced young people already undertaking an apprenticeship across DCC or one of its suppliers, and formal offers of additional placements and apprenticeship roles offered by 9 of our suppliers to date in an ongoing push to extend and expand our leverage in this area.
- ***Ongoing work around the development of an extended programme of apprenticeship placements for care experienced young people with Exeter College***, seeking to secure up to 50 further apprenticeships opportunities for those who are in our care by the end of 2024.

- ***Seeking to leverage our purchasing and procurement power as an authority to secure additional training and employment opportunities for care experienced young people***, with 19 suppliers to date offering an extended menu of work experience, apprenticeship places, traineeships or wider engagement opportunities.
- ***Enhanced business engagement with Devon employers***, with a second roundtable due to be held shortly with businesses in Northern Devon to consider additional opportunities for our young people.
- ***Additional direct support for our care experienced young people*** seeking to transition into employment, training or other learning, with the provision / redeployment of 8 staff within the Childrens and Economy service over the last 18 months to work intensively with our care experienced young people on accessing training or employment opportunities. This has included over 1,400 engagements in the past 3 months alone, and 350 referrals / successes in supporting young people in their next steps.
- ***Development of the Talent and Aspiration Bank***, working across our young people to capture a single database of their areas of interest for future employment and training, and seeking to then match individuals up with opportunities they will value.

With regards the Talent and Aspiration Bank specifically, I am pleased to report that officers are currently working upon how to further resource this important project from within the Authority's, with the potential to roll out a comprehensive matching service in earnest after the Christmas break. I hope to be able to provide a more detail update on this initiative in the New Year.

Councillor Rufus Gilbert

Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills

**Report of the Cabinet Member for
Highway Management**

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 7 December 2023:

By Councillor Hodgson on:

Please can a full assessment be provided of the number of requests for repairs and potholes reported in this financial year to date, the number of road maintenance and repairs that remain outstanding and the number and value of claims for compensation due to road defects. Please could comparable data for the previous year also be provided.

Response

The number of potholes reported by the public in this financial year to date is 28,801.

As of 1st December 2023, there were 1,505 potholes awaiting repair with our contractor.

Since the 1st April, the organisation has received 1,229 claims for damage to vehicles or personal injuries due to road defects. The combined value of these claims is just over £1.1m; to date £48k has been paid.

At the same date last year, the service had received 38,851 public reports and there were 1,222 potholes awaiting repair with our contractor. The number of claims received was 966 and the combined value was £855k and had paid out £35k to date.

Councillor Stuart Hughes
Cabinet Member for Highway Management

