

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance

Introduction

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

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

Fair funding for Devon residents - whether Devon residents have received their fair share of the Conservative government's 2.1 billion 'levelling up' fund and whether Devon residents (including children) receive per capita fair funding overall from Central government.

Response

Levelling up

The Government ran a competitive bid process to award funds. This resulted in a number of projects being agreed across Devon and funding awarded to several districts and Devon County Council. Funding was not awarded on a formulaic basis.

The successful Devon County lead project was Destination Exmouth, £15.8m to extend Dinan Way and improve the Exmouth Gateway Transport hub, better cycle routes and footpaths to reduce congestion and improve journey times. In addition, Devon residents will benefit from investments in Torridge with the Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre at £15.6m and West Devon Transport Hub £13.4m. Overall geographic Devon has therefore benefited by £44.8m.

Overall Fair Funding

There is no single calculation methodology that allocates all grants issued to Local Authorities. Various formulas are used which are intended to recognise local circumstance or address specific local needs.

Specifically, for Childrens services there are very few dedicated funding streams, other than those relating to education. Children's social care is mostly reliant on the core spending power of local authorities, funded by a mixture of council tax, non-domestic rates and general government grants. The exceptions tend to be for pilot schemes or time-limited interventions.

With regards to Education funding Devon is a member of the f40 (The country's 40 lowest school funded LAs). This group lobbies Government for fairer funding for schools with a particular focus at the moment on the High Needs funding block within this.

The Schools Block sees us placed 121 / 151 LAs with average per pupil allocation of £5,410, compared to the South West average of £5,431 and England average of £5,648 High Needs Block places 118 / 151 LAs with average per 2-18 population allocation of £768.40, is compared to South West average of £806.97 and England average of £855.58.

Phil Twiss
Cabinet Member for Finance