

County Council
Thursday, 7th October, 2021



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DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

To: Members of Devon County Council

County Hall
Exeter
EX2 4QD

29 September 2021

AGENDA

9. Cabinet Member Reports (Pages 1 - 36)

To consider reports from Cabinet Members.

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

I have been asked to Report on the following for Full Council on 7 October 2021:

1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

Over 1,000 more people are urgently needed to join the care workforce in Devon. Devon's 23,000 care workers in the county council area have done an exceptional job to keep vulnerable people safe and well throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, with the entire health and care system at full stretch, the situation is becoming unsustainable, and more additional workers are now needed to join the care workforce, and for families and communities to do all they can help ease the pressure.

In Exeter around 300 care workers are needed. In North Devon and Torridge, another 300 people are needed, 300 more in care roles across Teignbridge and South Hams, 150 in both East Devon and Mid Devon areas, and around 100 in West Devon.

It means vulnerable people are at risk of not receiving the care they need when they need it. And that more people are finding themselves as unpaid carers, caring for loved ones and friends or neighbours, in the absence of there being enough paid care staff available.

Can the Cabinet Member please update Council on the work we are doing to address this vital issue and the progress that has been made so far?

2. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

The Government has announced a 1.25% tax rise in order to increase funding for health and social care by £36bn over the next three years to help address the "catastrophic costs" for social care. This will begin as a rise in National Insurance, before becoming a separate tax from 2023. It will also apply to working people who are above the state pension age.

There is a widespread concern that these measures will be "much pain for very little gain". In terms of hiking up general taxation disproportionately for those on low and fixed incomes, younger people renting in expensive private accommodation, those trying to get on the property ladder, and also pensioners still in work. Whilst still not addressing the very long standing fundamental areas of concern such as high care cost thresholds, care home viability, family houses being forcibly sold off, domestic finances being ruined, and still no integration of health and social care.

Can the Cabinet Member please update Council on how we think these changes will generally impact on individuals, families, care providers and the wider community in Devon.

Specifically, what is our analysis of the following changes for Devon;

- *It is estimated that only £5.4bn of the funding will go to social care over the initial three-year period, beginning in 2022-23.*

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- *From October 2023, the government will also introduce a lifetime cap of £86,000 on care costs for individuals starting adult social care after this date.*
- *Anyone with assets of less than £20,000 will not have to make any contribution for their care from their savings or the value of their home.*
- *Those with assets of between £20,000 and £100,000 will be able to access “some means-tested support”, but will not have to contribute more than 20% of their chargeable assets per year.*
- *The upper £100,000 limit is more than four times the current limit of £23,250, but still represents a huge financial burden.*

Lastly the Prime Minister has also promised a white paper on reforming social care and integrating it with healthcare “later this year”, is there now any indication when and how this will be achieved, and what Devon specific representations have we made to help influence this historic change?

3. By Councillor Letch as follows:

On arrangements made by the NHS in Devon to connect the parents of babies born with additional needs or disability or difference with the relevant support organisations and charities.

Response

1. Care Worker Recruitment Campaign

Devon County Council recognise the recruitment and retention challenges facing adult social care providers in Devon and across the UK. We have longstanding Proud to Care campaigns that support providers with recruitment. Members are kept informed of these campaigns and are asked to support and promote in their communities.

The latest [Proud to Care recruitment campaign](#) will run from late September 2021 until January 2022 to attract a wide variety of people to entry level roles in care. Jobseekers may also access free training via the European Social Fund (ESF) Health and Social Care Skills Accelerator Programme. This training includes an introduction of health and social care, employability courses to support candidates back to work up to Level 3 qualifications. This free training is available to people wanting to start a career in care, as well as those already working in the sector, aiming to improve both recruitment and retention.

The new Proud to Care campaign will show the range of opportunities in adult social care including working in residential care, domiciliary care, supported living and enabling services.

Through our LoveCare programme we are providing strategic leadership and influence centrally and nationally to try and improve the recruitment challenges in the long term. Part of this work will include an Appreciative Inquiry this autumn that will seek to explore what terms and conditions of employment have an impact on drawing in and keeping people in the caring workforce.

2. Health & Social Care Levy and Integration Proposals

The recent announcement by the government on the planned reforms to adult social care is the start of process that will lead to new legislation commencing in October 2023, some two years away. The government has given this timeframe to allow local authorities sufficient time to understand, analyse and prepare for the complex undertaking.

At the moment we have more questions than the government has answers for, but we expect this to change with the pending consultation documents that will set out the detail behind the headline announcements and figures. It is at this point that we will have a better understanding of the requirements and the local impact and action required.

What we do know is that there will be a financial impact on DCC from the 1.25% NIC tax rise; both as an employer and as a commissioner of adult social care providers.

The consultation document is the White Paper that the question refers to. This is different to the [Health and Care White Paper](#) that was published earlier this year and concerns the integration of Health and Care.

3. Babies with Additional Needs

1.0 Background

Devon County Council and the NHS in Devon, commission and provide a number of children's services which ensure that parents with babies who are born or children who are identified as having any additional needs or disabilities are offered the support they require and connected to the relevant support organisations and charities. The report outlines the range of services, support organisations and charities.

2.0 DCC commissioned services

2.1 Public Health Nursing

Health visitors are specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN). They specialise in working with all families with a child aged 0 to five to identify health needs as early as possible and improve health and wellbeing by promoting health, preventing ill health and reducing inequalities. They are in a unique position whereby they assess all families with local communities to identify health needs from the antenatal period. The health visiting service has a neurodevelopmental pathway that ensures that all babies who are born with complex health needs are supported and referred into specialist services in a timely way.

Support and referral includes: -

- Referral into the NHS 0-19 services provided by Children & Families Health Devon (CFHD) Audiology, Ophthalmology & Rehabilitation Officer for Visually Impaired Children (ROVIC).
- PHN to signpost families to Devon Information & Support Service (DIAS) <https://www.devonias.org.uk/>
- PHN complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and in conjunction with the family, develop a family plan and Team around the family to provide help and support from a range of services.
- PHN request for Specialist Child Assessment Team (SCAT) & Early Years Complex Needs Team (EYCN) assessment group.
- Children Centres support families in managing their children's condition prior to formal diagnosis of SEND or disabilities.
- The Early Years and Complex Needs Team (EYCN) provide support for families and children at transition into an Early Years setting.

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2.2 SEND local offer

The SEND local offer gives children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families information to help them find the right help and support in their area. It has two main purposes:

1. To provide clear, comprehensive, and accessible information about the support and opportunities that are available.
2. To make provision more responsive to local needs.

The Local Offer brings together information about education, health and care services, voluntary agencies, leisure activities and support groups in one place. It includes:

- Education – support in early years, schools and college, including transport.
- Health – specialist clinics, support and advice for children and young people with medical needs.
- Social care – support for personal care and practical assistance, short breaks and personal budgets.
- Transitions – moving between phases of education and preparing for adulthood.
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) – the statutory EHCP process explained, including applying for a plan, transfers and reviews.
- Information, advice and support – where to get impartial and confidential information, advice and support.

2.3 Disabled Children's Service

On receipt of a contact about a baby with additional needs, the service will review the request and consider with the family whether short breaks assessment, or a statutory single assessment to meet need is appropriate. The family are also supported with further signposting to other organisations and charities.

Following an assessment, it would be determined whether the threshold for further support applied and there would then be discussion regarding the potential offer of support. This is in accordance with the needs identified, but for many families in Devon may include access to short break support (activities, enabling or direct payments), or a more focused intervention with the family.

2.4 Devon Early Years Complex Needs Service (Previously Portage)

Devon Early Years Complex Needs Service is a year-round education service for children aged 0-5 and their families with the most severe and complex developmental needs. The service supports children to achieve success using a small-steps, play-based, child-centred approach.

The service works in the home and in community settings with parents and partner agencies to promote inclusive practice and to build confidence and resilience.

The service is registered with the National Portage Association (NPA) which is identified in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice as an early intervention service for children with significant and complex needs aged 0-5 and their families.

What does the service do?

- Works with families to help them develop a quality of life and experience, for themselves and their young children, in which they can learn together, play together, participate and be included in their community in their own right.
- Plays a part in minimising the disabling barriers that confront young children and their families.

- Supports the development of inclusive services for children.

2.5 Children Centres

Devon Children Centres deliver a number of 'Step by Step' groups across Devon which are support groups for parents/carers and children who have additional needs that require extra help and support to their pathway of development progression. Predominantly the support is for the 0-5 age group but there are occasionally children of school-age that also attend. This group provides parents/carers with the opportunity to develop peer support networks with others in a similar situation to themselves. It also enables them to receive support through shared strategies, sign posting and emotional comfort and a reduction in the feeling of isolation.

Other services

- The Incredible Years programme specifically for children on the autistic spectrum or with language delay. This programme is offered to parents/carers of young children aged 2-5 years who have a significant indicator of being on the Autism spectrum with language delays in order to promote children's emotional regulation, social competence, language skills, school readiness, and relationships with others.
- Video Interactive Guidance (VIG) to parents/carers in relation to enabling them to develop an understanding of communication and provides a process for building communications and interaction skills using a strength-based approach.
- Childrens Centres in Devon are an integral part of Early Help providing support to families that require additional support and Children Centres attend daily Early Help triage meetings.

2.6 Pinpoint Devon

Pinpoint Devon is a searchable online directory of community services available in Devon. This online directory is a resource for your requirements, services and community groups including, Young people, Parents and Families and Carers across Devon.

Website: <https://www.pinpointdevon.co.uk/>.

3.0 Specialist Children's Community Nursing Service, Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD)

The Community Children's Nursing Service supports children with a wide range of complex health conditions who require expert and specific nursing advice and support. They facilitate the promotion of health needs and the delivery of medical care and treatments for children with complex health needs. Referrals into the service come from hospital, GP, or direct from families.

By working with children and young people within their usual environment, they are able to reduce the number of hospital stays/visits. This helps towards ensuring that the child or young person has access to the same care opportunities as those without additional needs.

4.0 Support Organisations and Charities

There are a number of local and national support organisations and charities that are available to support families, carers, children and young people - the organisations listed below is not exhaustive but contains the sites which are commonly signposted to by services across Devon.

- NHS 0-19 services provided by **Children and Family Health Devon** - information about the services provided, includes a wide range of helpful toolkits, factsheets, guides and videos including the Good Referral Guide. <https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/>

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- **Quids for Kids (Q4K)** – This service is funded by Devon County Council and delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureau. You can call for a free entitlement check and confidential advice Tel: 0300 5000 404, Website: <https://www.cabdevon.org.uk/quids-for-kids/>
- **Devon Information & Support Service Devon Information, Advice and Support Service (DIAS)** - a dedicated team supporting children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers. The service is impartial and confidential. offering legally-based and easily accessible information and advice about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). A free, confidential and impartial service which is funded by Devon County Council Tel: 01392 383080 <https://www.devonias.org.uk/>
- **SW Hospice: Little Bridge House** <https://www.chsw.org.uk/our-care/our-hospices/little-bridge-house>
- **Pinpoint Devon** A searchable database of activities, services and support groups in Devon <https://www.pinpointdevon.co.uk/>
- **Parent Carer Forum Devon** - Parent Carer Forum Devon is an organised group of parents and carers of Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within Devon local authority. Their aim is to make sure that the services provided from education, health and care meet the needs of children with SEND and their families. Email: Admin@parentcarerforumdevon.org Tel: 07307237720. Website: <https://parentcarerforumdevon.org>
- **Turn2Us** has grant search and benefits checker facilities on their website: <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>
- **Family Fund** accept grant requests for essential items for families with disabled or seriously ill children. Once a grant has been awarded families can reapply every 12 months: <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/faqs/how-do-we-apply>
- **Contact for Families with Disabled Children** have a wide range of information and resources on their website, they also have a free parent helpline, Tel: 0808 808 3555, Website: <https://contact.org.uk/>
- **My Family Our Needs** This website offers a wide range of information including supporting yourself and your family. Aimed at parents and carers of children with additional needs, there are sections such as: Ask the experts, events, latest updates and a directory of local and national organisations on hand to offer help. They also provide a monthly newsletter that you can sign up for. To find out more go to: <https://www.myfamilyourneeds.co.uk>
- **SCOPE** The disability equality charity in England and Wales. We provide practical information and emotional support when it's most needed, and campaign relentlessly to create a fairer society. <https://www.scope.org.uk/>
- **Down Syndrome Association** <https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/>
- **Cerebra** The charity dedicated to helping families with children with brain conditions. Working wonders for children with brain conditions and their families <https://cerebra.org.uk/>
- **Contact** We are Contact, the charity for families with disabled children. We support and bring families together and help them take action for others. <https://contact.org.uk/>

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- **Unique** Provides support, information and networking to families affected by rare chromosomal and gene disorders. <https://rarechromo.org/>

James McInnes

Cabinet Member

Adult Social Care and Health Services

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

Introduction

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 7 October 2021:

1. by Councillor Hannaford and Atkinson as follows:

The government has announced that under its Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme thousands of Afghan women, children and others most in need will be welcomed to the UK.

Those who have been forced to flee their home or face threats of persecution or even death from the Taliban will be offered a route to set up home in the UK permanently.

The UK government's ambition is for the new scheme to resettle 5,000 Afghan nationals who are at risk due to the current crisis, in its first year.

Priority will be given to women and girls, and religious and other minorities, who are most at risk of human rights abuses and dehumanising treatment by the Taliban.

This resettlement scheme will be kept under further review for future years, with up to a total of 20,000 in the long-term. The ambition is to provide protection to thousands of people fleeing Afghanistan, in the context of the complex picture on the ground that means there will be significant challenges delivering the scheme.

This new route is modelled on the successful Syrian vulnerable persons resettlement scheme, which resettled 20,000 Syrian refugees over a seven-year period from 2014 to 2021.

The government will work with stakeholders, including devolved administrations and local councils, to ensure that Afghans who will be rebuilding their lives in the UK have the support they need.

- a) Can the relevant Cabinet Member please update council on the work that we are doing locally to support this crucial new initiative; including how many refugees from Afghanistan will be welcomed and given sanctuary in Devon? How the Council is working with district councils and what will be the arrangements for their support and integration?**
- b) Can the relevant Cabinet Member please update and assure council what additional support and help we are providing for girls and women who have been subjected to female genital mutilation.**
- c) Can the Armed Forces Member Champion please update council specifically on the work that we are doing to help facilitate the Locally Employed Staff Resettlement Scheme for former Afghan interpreters and**

translators and their families, who were bravely working with our British Armed Forces.

2. by Councillor Letch as follows:

How Devon Registration Service engages when babies are being registered, to suggest if additional support is needed and signpost parents to relevant organisations.

3. by Councillor Hannaford as follows:

The Department for Work and Pensions has announced a new £500million Household Support Fund scheme aimed at helping the poorest members of society.

It will be distributed by councils in England which can assist the community through small grants to meet daily needs such as food, clothing, utilities and power bills.

How much money will Devon County Council receive and how will we work with others to make sure that our allocation gets out into our county to help those most in need?

4. by Councillor Leaver as follows:

Having read the report and strategy presented to the Corporate, Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee of 23 September 2021 (agenda item 11) can the relevant Cabinet Member provide Council with a report about the provision of, and demand for, safe accommodation for Devon residents who are victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse in Devon, and relevant support services over the last six years.

Response

1. Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme

- a) DCC and Devon's district councils are using the existing partnership for Syrian refugee resettlement as the basis for a response to the Afghan Locally Employed relocation scheme. District councils source housing, usually through appeals to the private rented sector. DCC commissions direct support to help families integrate on arrival. Each district council takes its own decision on whether and how to source housing. Two firm property offers have been made (Teignbridge DC), though the Home Office have temporarily suspended the matching of available properties to families for resettlement so we are awaiting confirmation for when this property can be utilised. Potentially viable property offers have been passed to East Devon and Mid Devon for consideration. However, all district councils highlight an acute and rapidly intensifying shortage of affordable housing across the county.

The Government's priority request to local authorities is to offer housing to the Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) relocation scheme. The scheme is open to Afghans who worked with UK armed forces and organisations. Many of these citizens and their families have been evacuated. The government has not confirmed the exact number who have arrived but it is understood that it is substantially more than the 3,000 originally estimated. Families enter Covid-19 quarantine on arrival and are then moved to "bridging hotels" waiting to be matched to a local authority property offer.

The media coverage of the crisis is prompting a steady stream of offers of accommodation from members of the public. A high proportion of these offers are for shared accommodation (spare rooms). These offers cannot be accepted because the overriding need is for long-term self-contained accommodation.

DCC is finalising an integration support contract with a local provider, which will be able to support Afghans arriving under ALES in much of Devon. Learning from our experience, we aim for families to be housed in major towns to reduce the risk of isolation and increase the speed of integration and moves towards employment.

In addition, the Council, alongside key partners, is currently supporting temporary bridging arrangements for 16 Afghan families in an Exmouth hotel as part of Home Office arrangements made direct with a series of hotels across the country. These arrangements and the relevant contracts with hotels have been completed with limited engagement with local authorities – in this case DCC was notified of the arrival of these families with around 24 hours' notice. It is important to note the distinction between the often immediate and complex support required for families in bridging hotels, to the needs of families within a wider planned resettlement programme as above.

Any potential allocations in Devon will be made from refugees currently in bridging accommodation across the country. There are no assumptions that families currently staying in Exmouth would be re-located for resettlement locally, even if accommodation could be found. Several members of families in Exmouth have links with relatives in other parts of the UK for example and therefore may not choose to stay in the South West.

The families, (most of whom arrived on 17/9 – with a further family arriving on 24/9) have received a warm welcome locally, and generally settled well. They have already received health, educational and wider wellbeing assessments. They have been given support to access the UK benefits system, and had support around ID and bank accounts, and have been given access to cash from the Home Office support arrangements. English language (for those who need it) and educational support is now starting to be delivered.

On 1 October Home Office confirmed its intention to move a further 67 Afghans to a bridging hotel in central Exeter. It is anticipated that these families will start to arrive in mid-October.

- b) This is a difficult question to answer as no single service or organisation is responsible for, or has a clear picture of **female genital mutilation** (FGM) in Devon – e.g. Police, Health, Children's Services (MASH) and specialist support services such as Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services (DRCSAS) are

all potentially a 'front door' for disclosure regarding FGM and recording any response and support. Understanding what medical support has been provided would be on individual patient records. Any child protection response that would be in MASH records. FGM is addressed in our DCFP safeguarding training and there is information about it on the DCFP website: [Worried about Female genital mutilation \(FGM\)? How to spot the signs \(dcfp.org.uk\)](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/worried-about-female-genital-mutilation-fgm-how-to-spot-the-signs/) with a 'Getting Help' section towards the end of the webpage. Although Splitz are not commissioned to specifically offer specialist FGM support – DRCSAS offer FMG support for 13 year olds + ([Who Do We Support? – Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/who-do-we-support-devon-rape-crisis-and-sexual-abuse-services/)). The Gov.uk page on the DCFP webpage has a link to: [National FGM Support Clinics - NHS - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/national-fgm-support-clinics/) – showing Bristol is our nearest and only one dedicated support clinic in the South West.

In terms of prevalence of FGM in Devon, the DCFP have not been able to find any record of rates to date (ongoing enquiry) and a Devon and Cornwall Police 'Freedom of Information request' dated May 2018 (latest searchable data) asking: **Can you please tell me, how many files regarding cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) Devon and Cornwall Police have sent to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for charging decisions in the last 5 years?** states **The Performance & Analysis Department have confirmed that, each of the last 5 full calendar years – 2013 to 2017, there were no recorded offences of FGM in Devon & Cornwall.**

- c) As above. We are aware that some members of the families in Exmouth have served alongside British armed forces.

2. Devon Registration Service

All birth registrations take place face to face. The new parents are given a library card and a book start pack which contains useful contacts. If a parent appeared distressed/voiced that they were struggling then contact information for family/children's services would be sought for them.

3. Household Support Fund

To date the Council has still not received any further information regarding the Household Support Fund scheme beyond that which was made publicly available last week. [Government launches £500m support for vulnerable households over winter - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-500m-support-for-vulnerable-households-over-winter). The size of local allocation is not yet known. The Council would anticipate further closer working as Team Devon to draw together learning from the 2020/21 Covid Winter Hardship Fund, wider hardship and welfare funding, and expertise and experience from across Devon's district councils.

4. Safe accommodation for Devon residents who are victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse

The strategy for Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation in Devon outlines the current availability of safe accommodation in section 5. Devon County Council has not commissioned safe accommodation for the last six years and prior to the Domestic Abuse Act has not required to collect data on the demand for safe accommodation. This data is collected and held by District Councils who still retain a duty to provide people who are homeless, including those fleeing domestic abuse with accommodation. North Devon Against Domestic Abuse has provided a refuge for the last six years and a variety of providers have had Places of Safety over the last three years.

Councillor Roger Croad

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality

Report of the Cabinet Member
Children's Services and Schools

I have been asked to Report as follows for Full Council on 7 October 2021:

1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

It has been estimated that more than two-thirds of the extra costs facing schools in England as a result of the coronavirus pandemic will not be covered by the government's support funding. Most schools have had to spend more cash throughout the pandemic in order to operate a "Covid-safe" environment. The government has provided some financial relief through its exceptional costs fund, but research from the Education Policy Institute (EPI) suggests that the majority of schools' additional costs won't be met by the fund.

The analysis, based on a survey of more than 700 schools, suggests that nearly three in five (57%) are using their reserves to cover these extra costs and around half of schools do not expect to have a balanced budget by the end of the year. The EPI estimates that of the combined total of all schools' Covid-related costs in England, less than a third (31%) will be reimbursed by the government's exceptional costs fund.

The analysis found that nearly all schools reported extra spending on PPE and cleaning supplies, while the vast majority faced increased costs in signage, digital equipment and hand-washing facilities.

It also found that since the first national lockdown in March 2020, primary schools have had to meet additional non-staff costs that averaged just under £13,000, special schools just under £18,000 and secondary schools nearly £43,000. The pressure of this additional expenditure, the report suggests, will be "felt most in schools with high levels of disadvantage" and schools may be facing a shortfall in terms of funding for catch-up.

School budgets in Devon which were already "very tight because of years of government underfunding", are now in an even worse position. It will inevitably mean schools will need to make more cuts and this will impact on the academic and pastoral support they are able to provide to pupils in the wake of the pandemic.

Can the Cabinet Member please update council on the additional costs of the pandemic on Devon's schools and the overall levels of budget deficits that they are carrying.

2. By Councillor Hannaford and Biederman as follows:

It is understood that many coach firm operators across Devon are going into retirement or diversifying. In addition to this Stagecoach and other bus companies are experiencing a serious driver shortage that will take some time to fully resolve.

Can the Cabinet Member please report on the current situation with Bus services in Devon, particularly with regard Driver Shortages, which is resulting in many cancellations of service, causing many residents to be stranded, missing appointments, Late for work -
What are we doing to assist operators?

Can the Cabinet Member also update council on how these factors are impacting on our school bus services, in terms of capacity, coverage and costs. Furthermore what we are doing in partnership with others to ensure that our local children can properly access their schools and colleges.

3. By Councillor Letch as follows:

A report on fostering of children in families and institutions, to include the extent that they are fostered as close as possible to their community so that they do not lose links with friends and their school.

4. By Councillor Aves as follows:

Please can the Cabinet member for Children's Services provide me with a report on Pupil Premium and my points raised below:

Reference: Guardian 5th Sept 2021 article on: Schools in poorest areas of England to be worst hit by pupil premium change –

Normally, the government gives the funding to each school in England based on the number of children eligible for free school meals in January of the previous year.

However, the government changed the census date for when pupil premium funding is calculated this last year, so that schools in England had to count the number of children eligible for free school meals from October (2020) and not January 2021.

Schools and children in the poorest parts of Devon will presumably be hit harder by this. These schools will lose out on the FSM provision for the pupils that would usually qualify and as FSM funding is increasing, they lose out on this too. This will hit the most disadvantaged pupils.

DCC Children services have recently provided me with the following summary when I asked about how this will impact on Devon schools:

Impact of the October Census being used to calculate the Deprivation Pupil Premium, rather than the January Census, is a reduction in funding of £1,185,315, applying the free school meal ever 6 principle.

Free School Meal ever 6 count as per the October Census is 18,226 eligible pupils and the January Census is 19,147 eligible pupils, additional 921 eligible pupils which equates to £1,185,315 reduction in funding across all settings (Hosp Ed; Wave; Primary; Secondary; All Through; Special Schools).

Primary aged pupils – 784 pupils at £1,345 = £1,054,480

Secondary aged pupils – 137 pupils at £955 = £130,835

I do appreciate that schools will make sure families are not affected because schools have a duty to provide the FSM meals regardless of how the government decide to allocate the funds.

1. Therefore, how does this impact on school budget spending when they will have to cover this without the funding from government that they would have had previously?
2. How are Devon supporting our schools with finance decisions they have to make as a result of this?
3. Has this been changed for this school year 21/22 now that the government realises the impact of such a decision?
4. I realise representations were made to the DfE about the impact of the changes. What has been their reply?

5. Knowing your budget earlier re Pupil Premium helps you plan and budget, **but** if knowing means less money it creates more financial problems for schools and increased anxiety for our school staff and governors, plus it impacts on what is provided for our children by our schools. Again, the next generation is taking a hit in their education for a poorly thought through decision by government. Do you agree?

Response

1. School Covid Costs and Budget Deficits

Covid Costs

Schools have identified additional expenditure due to Covid, however the majority of this for the 20/21 academic year has been offset by Covid grants (for cleaning etc) or grants for Furlough (where eligible). Additional teaching has been supported by Catch up Premium and the national tutoring programme. This means only the remaining elements feature in schools deficit budgets.

The Local Authority only has access to maintained schools information. Academy finances are monitored by the ESFA.

Of the 135 maintained schools, five have reported a deficit budget and their combined deficit at the end of 2020/21 was £432,000. Looking forward, based on their latest reports, 12 schools are projecting a deficit for 2021/22 and these have a combined total deficit of £825,000.

The remaining 130 schools had surplus balances for 2020/21 just short of £20m in total. Based on the current forecasts for 2021/22 this has reduced to 123 schools with surplus balances totalling £16.2m. It should be noted that some budgets are carried forward to cover known upcoming costs or to cover budget shortages in years where there are reduced pupil numbers prior to them rising again. School surpluses and deficits are monitored closely by the finance team.

2. Driver shortages and the impact on School bus services

We are aware of driver shortages which are affecting the transport and logistics industry. This is due to several factors including the pandemic, more attractive employment opportunities elsewhere, many existing drivers reaching retirement age, and a delay in authorities processing PCV licences.

The rise in covid cases in Devon has caused a few short term issues in some areas, but these are generally being managed and contracts are being covered.

We have a legal obligation to get children to school and are fulfilling this at present. One exception in the last week of September was a school coach route to Ivybridge Community College. We worked with local operators in the area to make alternative arrangements to get students to school, and we believe this is now resolved.

Driver issues continue to be a challenge for our local bus provider, Stagecoach. We are in regular contact with the company who are, at the time of writing experiencing around 10% shortage in drivers across the region; this has recently been mitigated by some reductions in service levels. The high turnover and sickness rate is reducing, and they have many new starters in the system. They also have been recent pay offers made which will improve their ability to attract new staff.

The company fully expect the situation to ease in the coming weeks and months. Their current service performance of operating over 90% of services is nowhere near their usual performance of operating 99.5%, they are still serving the public and hope this percentage will continue to increase.

One separate issue in Exeter (public route 985 which serves St James School) has been caused due to capacity issues on vehicles, this is being addressed separately with Stagecoach and the school and we have reached a solution.

We are working closely with transport operators in Devon to make sure any issues are highlighted ahead of time, so we can work towards a solution without impacting services. Costs for school transport have increased – as yet we are unable to finalise figures, but they are currently being worked on. The change is largely due to an increase in the number of SEND children we are transporting.

Lack of supply has also pushed up some costs for taxi journeys – relating to school and patient transport routes.

3. Fostering of children in families and institutions

1. Introduction

2. Children's Social Care promotes children and young people in care (C&YPIC) living, wherever it is safe to do so, close to and in the communities, they were raised. C&YPIC tell us that relationships with their birth family and friends and living in their local community and attending the same education provision, is important to them. Indeed, their experience also tells us that, on leaving our care, these relationships are harder to build – and thrive – when they have not been nurtured during their childhood and adolescence.

3. This report describes how successful Devon is, in promoting the relationships C&YPIC have with their birth family and friends. The report also details our strategic priorities, to further enhance children and young people's experiences in our care.

4. What figures tell us about homes for children and young people in care

5. *More children and young people living within their family and networks*

6. The number of C&YPIC in Devon has steadily fallen from a peak of 841 in December 2020, which now sits at 803 (October 2021). Accordingly, there is an increasing number of children and young people (C&YP) whose needs are met within their family and networks who do not come into our care and who maintain their friendships and attendance at their local nursery, school or college.

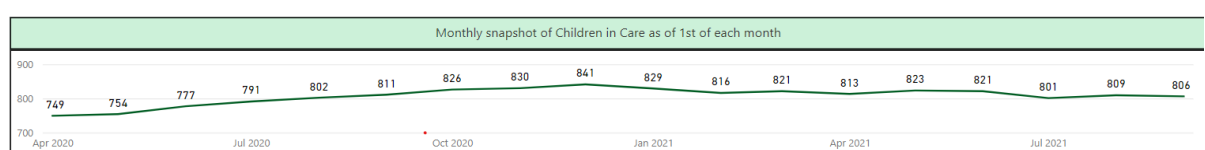


Figure One: Children in care population April 2020 to September 2021

7. ***C&YPIC who ceased to be looked after who then live within their birth family or wider network***

8. In the last six months, 142 C&YP have ceased to be looked after by Devon Children's Services. Of those, 79.6% (113 C&YP), when leaving our care, returned to their parent/carer, family member or connected person. Of note, 16% who leave our care live with a special guardian, three percentage points above the England average.

Number of CLA ceased by reason in the period

Adopted	15
Died	0
Care taken by another LA	0
Returned home to live with...	56
Live with parents/relatives (not PR)	30
Residence order granted	4
Special Guardianship Orders	23
Moved into independent living	3
Transferred to residential care...	0
Sentenced to custody	0
Accommodation on remand ended	0
Age assessment determined child...	0
Child moved abroad	0
Any other reason	11
Not recorded / Error	0

Figure two: Family and network destinations of C&YP who leave our care

9. Figure three shows that, year on year, Devon County Council provides special guardianship order allowances to more special guardians, which tells us that more C&YP, who cannot live with their parent, live with a connected person known to them. For example, in March 2018, there were 298 special guardians receiving an allowance and today, this has increased by 32% to 433 (October 2021). This is a significant achievement for Devon, enabling more and more children and young people to live within their wider family.

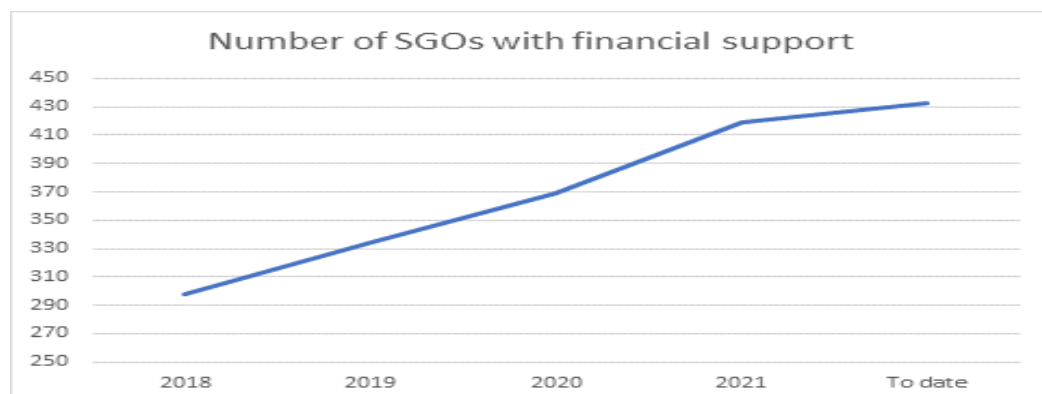


Figure three: Special Guardians receiving a special guardianship order allowance

10. ***Proximity of our C&YPIC to Devon and the home they lived in before coming into our care***

11. Children's Social Care is committed to finding homes for C&YPIC close to their birth family, friends and schools. A new figure for us which we choose to care about, 71% of C&YPIC live within 30 miles of the address they lived at immediately before coming into our care. We choose to care about a proximity of 30 mile because, typically, a distance of not more than this does enable C&YPIC to continue to attend their local schools and maintain contact with their birth family without significant travelling time. This will be a key impact measure for us as we take our strategic work programme forward.

12. Of the C&YP who are cared for by Devon Children's Social Care, 73% of them live within the Devon boundary County Council. Though we are pleased and proud of this achievement, Devon is a large rural authority and so C&YPIC can experience significant disruption and challenges in maintaining friendships, even when they are 'in county'. Of our C&YPIC, figure four shows the number, by age group, who live in county, within a neighbouring authority and beyond (distant). This tells us that, of our 803 C&YPIC, 93% live in Devon or a neighbouring authority.

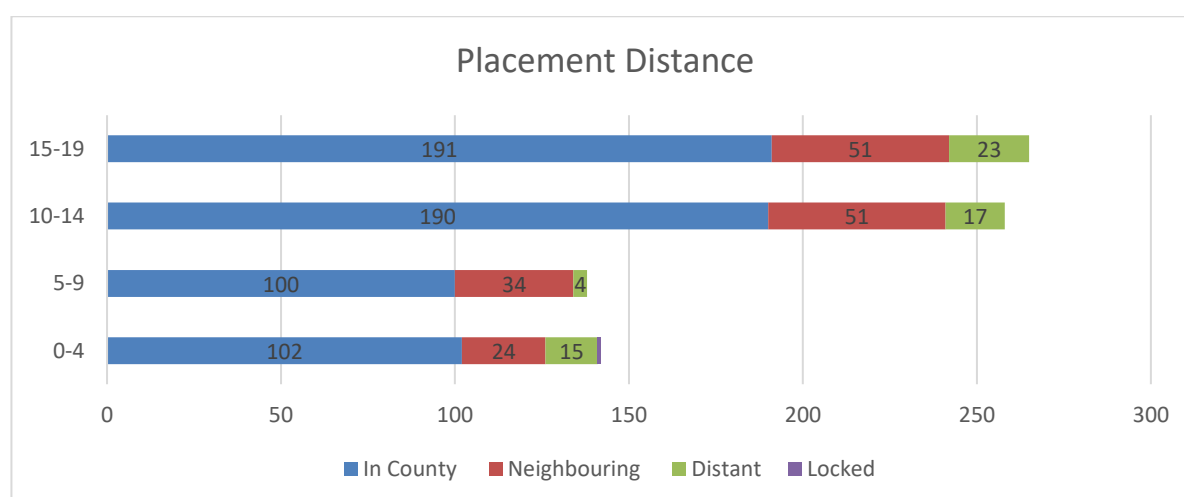


Figure five: Placement distance from the Devon boundary.

13. **How does Children's Services promote family time?**

14. ***What is the Contact Service?***

15. Children's Services encourages, wherever it is safe to do so, foster carers or residential children's homes, to support and supervise family time. Family time, commonly known as contact, enables C&YPIC to maintain and build relationships with important people in their lives, often parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents and siblings. Children's Services also has a Contact Service who will support and supervise contact between children in care and their families. Their focus is to:

- build strong, meaningful, trusting and respectful relationships;
- repair relationships when difficulties or harm arises;
- enable children and young people to feel listened to; and,
- for parents to feel comfortable and respected.

16. What do children and young people tell us?

17. Children's Services Participation Team currently works with, on average, 40 children and young people in care aged 11-15 and a similar number of children in care over 16 years, and care leavers. The Participation Team tells us that very few of them have raised that the distance they live from family and friends causes them issue. Two of our care leavers who have experienced multiple changes in homes when in our care have shared their stories with fostering managers to contribute to the 'strengthening stability' discussions and guidance. Detailed below are experiences shared by our C&YPIC and care leavers; they describe the importance of matching C&YPIC to their homes, recognising the challenges of living away from their local communities, but the safety, for some, that this can also help create.

4. Pupil premium change

Pupil premium funding has historically been calculated using the January census information for the same year. This means that for 2020/21 the January 2020 census was used. However, for 2021/22 the DfE made the decision to change the date when the pupils eligible for Pupil Premium data was collected to the October census date. This means that for the 2021/22 year the October 2020 census date was used. As the number of eligible pupils rose by 921 between the Oct 2020 census and the Jan 2021 this meant schools received of £1,185,315 less funding than they would have under the previous system.

The Councillor is correct in saying that this does not affect families as all eligible pupils receive a free school meal from the time they qualify.

Representations around the impact of this change on school budgets have been made to the DfE but we have received no further information re the data collection date for 2022/23 to date.

Devon has a system to support maintained schools who are facing budget challenges and school who are struggling due to the pupil premium change can apply to the Financial intervention Panel for financial support. Academies have other access to support either through their trust or sometimes with the ESFA.

Andrew Leadbetter

Cabinet Member

Children's Services and Schools

Report of the Cabinet Member for Highway Management

Requests for reports

I have been asked to report to full Council on the following:

1. by Councillor Dewhirst on unrecorded rights of way, as follows:

“Like many Councillors, I have been contacted by residents concerned by reports that unrecorded rights of way will not be recorded in time for the cut-off date of 2026. Can the Cabinet Member for Highways Management please give an update on the situation here in Devon?”

2. by Councillor Wrigley on road painting, yellow lines and disabled bay markings, as follows:

“In common with many Councillors I have been chasing up yellow lines and disabled bay markings that are long overdue. One Disabled bay in Dawlish has been outstanding since its approval in 2019, and although the road markings have been re-done since then. After chasing this up, the bay has been painted last week, even though the regulation sign was in place for the best part of a year.

I understand that the pandemic prevented line-painting work for a time. The highways dashboard from the recent scrutiny meeting indicated that new painters were to be engaged, and this should be a help since Teignbridge managed to get parking spaces on a new on-street development ordered and done in two weeks.

However I have also been told that last year’s TRO requests hadn’t been fully completed – let alone put out for painting - and there was little point in submitting new requests for parking restrictions.

I would like to ask the cabinet member for a report on how much longer there will be delays in line painting, how soon we can expect the log-jam of existing request to be in place, and how we can be assured of swift implementation for this autumn’s list of parking restrictions?”

3. by Councillor Dewhirst to Council on LED lighting, as follows:

“In his response to my question at the September Cabinet the Member with responsibility for Highway Management replied that the new LED lamps being rolled out across Devon were rated at 3000K, similar to the old sodium lamps. Can he brief the Council on progress to mitigate the harmful effects of LED lights on humans and the recent reports concerning the devastating effects on insects?

Many studies have shown that the blue light spectrum in LEDs interferes with melatonin production in humans leading to photoreceptor damage, sleeping difficulties, mood changes and may increase incidence of cancer. Recent studies have found that street lighting strongly reduces moth caterpillar abundance compared with unlit sites (47% reduction in hedgerows and 33% reduction in grass margins) and affects caterpillar development. Our own Exeter University has conducted studies to show the negative effects of artificial night lighting on birds and bats. It would be helpful to know how many of our LED streetlights are set to dim during their lighting cycle. How many communities have management software to operate their LED lights? How many streetlights have management software? What is the total number of LED streetlights installed? How many streetlights have had shields fixed to them to direct the light only onto the highway? How many Parish and Town Councils have discussed timings of lighting with the County Council to ensure that we are not using this precious resource in a wasteful manner?"

Reports

1. Unrecorded Rights of Way

The definitive map and statement are the legal record of public rights of way i.e. footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, and byways open to all traffic. Arrangements for this were first set out within the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (ref. [National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1949/29))

1st January 2026 has been set as the cut-off date for applications to register historic paths for inclusion on the definitive map and statement. This is set out in Section 56 of the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000 (ref. [Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/25)).

Devon County Council (as surveying authority) has a duty in law to keep the definitive map under continuous review and to make modification orders as necessary to keep the map and statement up-to-date as an accurate record of the public's rights. This is set out within Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 ([Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/61)).

The Council has taken a proactive approach, and since 1989 has undertaken a parish-by-parish definitive map review to ensure that existing public rights of way in each parish are correctly recorded in terms of status and location (ref. [Definitive map review - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/definitive-map-review-public-rights-of-way)).

This parish-by-parish review provides opportunity to identify paths that may have been mistakenly omitted from the definitive map and statement, and where appropriate make orders for these to be added. This is a key area of work for the Public Rights of Way Committee. Good progress is being made, with approximately 90% of Parishes either complete, or close to completion.

Whilst the parish review process significantly reduces the likelihood of there being unrecorded rights of way, stakeholders are concerned about the upcoming deadline and the risk that historic paths may be lost. At a national and local level, organisations such as the Ramblers and British Horse Society have active campaigns and projects to encourage people to research, identify and register unrecorded paths. Officers at DCC are liaising closely with stakeholders both individually and through the Devon Countryside Access Forum to provide advice (e.g. on evidence requirements) so that focus is placed on locations and paths most likely to be of relevance. Where appropriate, this may include sharing research information from the parish reviews.

There are additional, related workload implications - for example, in managing applications and making Definitive Map Modification Orders. DCC has also seen an increase in applications for land to be included on the Register of landowner statements, highways statements and declarations (ref. [Protecting your land - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/protecting-your-land-public-rights-of-way))

The legislation does allow for the Secretary of State to extend the date by up to 5 years. However, by acting in a proactive and cooperative way, Devon County Council is well placed to work to the cut-off date of 1 January 2026.

2. Road painting, yellow lines and disabled bay markings

Due to the pandemic and operational demand issues, we have seen a delay in disabled bays and HATOC waiting restrictions being completed during the last 18 months. To alleviate this situation, DCC has identified and engaged additional contractual resource to increase resilience and clear the backlog of lining schemes.

I am pleased to report that due to this intervention, we have made excellent progress with the outstanding Disabled Parking Bays and a backlog of over 200 bays has now been completed. More recent applications have also been programmed, with 45 more bays to be marked before the end of the November. From December onwards, advisory disabled bay applications will be delivered within our target timescales of 12 weeks and mandatory bays we will be delivered within our target timescales of 9 to 12 months allowing for the processing of traffic regulation orders.

In addition, I am further pleased to report, the 2020/21 HATOC waiting restrictions programme of works will be substantially complete and, on the ground, utilising this additional resource this month, with completion soon after.

The 2021/22 programme is progressing as planned and a recent communication to Members has set out timescales and notified that all locations requiring consideration should be submitted to the appropriate Neighbourhood Officer by 29 October.

3. LED lighting

The reports regarding the risk of LED lighting to human health and wellbeing in the media are often inaccurate and unhelpful. However, if the local member would like to share any specific report then officers are always happy to review. All lanterns

currently being installed in residential areas are specified as 3000k, this is similar to the sodium lamps they replace. These new installations are for the most part also subject to part night lighting, whereby all lights are completely turned off for 5 hours from 12:30pm. DCC are also looking to expand the roll out of the remote management system, which will allow DCC to make further changes to the light output by applying dimming at various times as so required.

The LED's on the main roads have been installed at 4000K, however these are already programmed to dim down to 50% through the night. These lanterns will also be part of the remote management system expansion again giving greater control to DCC to dim/control the light output further without needing to attend site.

There are approximately 45,000 lanterns with LED, and approximately 34,000 yet to be converted. There are circa 14000 that have a pre-set dimming regime on main roads, and 45000 operate part night light, with a further 10000 under remote Management control (a mixture of old and new). The new remote management system will cover Exeter and be expanded across the most populated area's of Devon, with an initial deployment of 13,000 lighting installations on remote management rising to nearer 38000 once the LED rollout is completed. It is not known exactly how many lanterns have shields fitted, but they are installed as and when residents so request. During the design stage for new developments shields are always taken into account where it has been highlighted that ecology may be a concern.

Various Town and Parish Councils request an array of different timings, this is currently not possible but with the deployment of the remote management system this scenario could be considered, although consistency amongst community's will need to be considered.

It should also be noted that lanterns are installed at zero degrees to avoid light above the horizontal axis, and LED lanterns naturally come with a more distinct cut off, this reduces the spill of light to the rear/sides and front. DCC specify design standards that are, where possible, as low as the British Standard will allow, and always look sympathetically in this regard. The street lighting team and DCC ecologist are in direct contact with one another to improve knowledge of both ecological and lighting concerns.

Councillor Stuart Hughes
Cabinet Member for Highways

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills

I will be reporting as follows for Full Council on 7 October 2021:

1. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

Over two million pensioners in the UK are now living in poverty, including one in five female pensioners, with older BAME people disproportionately at risk of struggling financially. The triple pension lock was the guarantee that vulnerable elderly people were relying on. Yet this winter the government will instead turn its back on the poorest pensioners by suspending it, just as the added pressures from spiraling energy costs kick in, leaving many older people now at a high risk of no longer being able to heat their homes properly.

Research from the House of Commons Library has identified the top thirty constituencies effected by this controversial change.

Four of these are in Devon , they are Totnes, Torridge & West Devon, East Devon and Tiverton & Honiton.

Can the Cabinet Member please confirm if we have undertaken a full impact assessment on these changes?

Furthermore, what work we will be doing with others to make sure our local pensioners claim all the help and assistance that they are entitled to ensuring that they stay safe, warm and well through the winter months.

Here is the list of worst-hit constituencies in full.

KEY: Name of constituency (number of pensioners hit, proportion of constituents who are pensioners)

1. Christchurch (28932, 33%)
2. North Norfolk (27472, 31.4%)
3. Clacton (28043, 30.9%)

4. New Forest West (26571, 30.8%)
5. West Dorset (29573, 29.7%)
6. Louth and Horncastle (29605, 29.4%)
7. Ludlow (24681, 28.4%)
- 8. Totnes (24572, 28.2%)**
9. Bexhill and Battle (30043, 28.1%)
10. Suffolk Coastal (28973, 27.9%)
11. Brecon and Radnorshire (18792, 27.2%)
- 12. Torridge and West Devon (27578, 27%)**
13. Isle of Wight (38158, 26.9%)
14. East Yorkshire (27728, 26.9%)
15. Worthing West (26916, 26.9%)
16. West Worcestershire (26052, 26.8%)
- 17. East Devon (28903, 26.7%)**
18. Berwick-upon-Tweed (20388, 26.7%)
- 19. Tiverton and Honiton (27533, 26.4%)**
20. South East Cornwall (23860, 26.4%)
21. Sefton Central (22078, 26.4%)
22. Arundel and South Downs (26913, 26.3%)
23. North Herefordshire (23902, 26.2%)
24. Westmorland and Lonsdale (22307, 26.1%)
25. Thirsk and Malton (26513, 25.9%)

26. Beverley and Holderness (26020, 25.9%)

27. Derbyshire Dales (21018, 25.9%)

28. St Ives (22435, 25.8%)

29. Hexham (19923, 25.6%)

30. Chichester (28451, 25.5%)

2. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

Thousands of workers in the Westcountry now face uncertainty as the government's £66billion furlough job support scheme has been wound up. Just over 30,000 workers were still on furlough in the South West as it ended, including 2,700 in Torbay, 4,000 in Plymouth, and 14,000 in the rest of Devon.

Some government ministers have admitted that the end of the scheme was expected to lead to a third wave of job losses. Economists have also warned that although many may find work in recovering sectors such as hospitality and travel, there is also likely to be a rise in general unemployment due to new redundancies.

Can the Cabinet Member please update council on the work being done with others to help those coming off the scheme to find new work, retrain, transition to self-employment, and start up small businesses.

3. By Councillor Atkinson as follows:

The Team Devon Plan 19 Economy and Business Recovery Prospectus July 2020 said you would

- Lobby for a National Industrial Accelerator Fund, providing revenue and capital support to companies that are seeking to expand but are finding issues around bank funding availability due to wider market liquidity issues.
- Also seek £20m investment to enable smart energy management and renewable energy generation through upgrading the national grid network
- Seek up to £90m of resources from the Further Education Capital Programme, including resources to enhance digital capacity within our College and Provider Network to provide virtual learning and further modernise and grow the local FE estate.
- Seek to secure £10m towards a Green Skills Development Package for Devon, incorporating capital and revenue programme to be spent over the next three years to fast-track relevant sector and employment opportunities..
- Secure up to £20m of additional innovation and skills development opportunities working with the County's Universities and Colleges, with a focus on high growth and clean growth innovation and high value employment in opportunity areas such as health, green economy and advanced manufacturing and engineering.

We will:

- Develop a Venture Capital Network – establish a 'Bounce Forward' loan programme to accelerate capital investments across a range of sectors, particularly manufacturing sector, environmental technologies and clean growth and Agri-tech.
- High Growth Start Up Programme – raise £40m to support innovative new start-ups in high growth areas, notably around digital and FinTech. Ideally the scheme would include a strong focus on young people and graduates.

Please will you report on progress in securing this.

What new money has the government pledged for any of these programmes or to support the Team Devon Plan 19 Economy and Business Recovery Prospectus July 2020.

4. By Cllr Atkinson as follows:

How will the cut to Universal Credit and the rise in National Insurance impact on low-income working families and their children here in Devon

5. By Councillor Atkinson as follows:

Please update us on how Devon CC is working with the government businesses investors education and training providers and public bodies in the SW Region including the LEPs to develop public private sector partnerships to invest in the development of new wind power 'green hydrogen' and new carbon neutral and capture technologies here in the Southwest?

Response

1. End of The Pension Triple Lock

The triple lock is a Government commitment to increase the State Pension each year in line with earnings, prices, or 2.5%, whichever is highest.

During summer 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a fall in average wages. State Pensions for the year starting April 2021 increased by 2.5%, being the higher of that and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of around 0.5%.

The Government has stated that COVID-19 has likewise "skewed and distorted" this year's earnings measure. The labour market has shown strong signs of recovery and earnings have risen at an unprecedented rate, with the annual increase in the Average Weekly Earnings index for the three months to July 2021 being 8.3%. The [Social Security \(Up-rating of Benefits\) Bill 2021-22](#)¹ published on 8 September

¹ [Social Security \(Up-rating of Benefits\) Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

2021 suspends the earnings element of the triple lock for the tax year 2022/23. State Pensions are expected instead to rise by around 3.9%, in line with inflation.

Announcing this change on 7th September Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions assured Parliament that the triple lock would be [“restored for the remainder of this Parliament”](#).²

Were the triple lock to be removed altogether, this could indeed have a major effect on the income of current and future pensioners. However, this change is temporary and continues to link pensions to rising prices. Therefore, DCC has not carried out an assessment of its impact.

Since introduction of the triple lock, the basic state pension has increased significantly. By next April it will have increased by 41% over the last eleven years, compared to 25% if it had been indexed in line with inflation (as measured by the CPI) or by 22% if it had been indexed in line with earnings.

Pensioners who are experiencing financial hardship can access DCC-funded help, including money advice from Citizens Advice and the hardship funds administered through the District Councils.

2. End of Furlough Scheme

The Government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ended on the 30 September, having supported over 11.6m jobs across the Country since its inception in March 2020. This included over 132,000 jobs across Devon since the beginning of the pandemic.

As of the 31 July 2021, 14,000 individuals, or approximately 5% of the workforce, were still accessing the support scheme across the County. This figure had however fallen by approximately 20% per month since January 2021, with an estimated 7,000 to 9,000 roles still receiving some level of support at the end of the September.

At present it is unclear how many individuals will be made unemployed as a result of the end of the scheme across Devon. Work carried out on those leaving furlough to date suggests that these numbers may be relatively small, with a recent study in Plymouth suggesting that just 0.3% of those leaving furlough did not immediately return to work. This also reflects the relatively high level of demand across the balance of the labour market, with Devon generating in the region of 25,000 unique job adverts per day as of 30 September. The October final Claimant Count figures (due for publication in late November) will provide a definitive view. It is also worth adding, that in terms of pay roll employees, the levels across Devon were almost back to pre-pandemic levels in March 2021 and are expected to now be at, or above these levels.

In the meantime, the Authority continues to work closely with both District Partners, Job Centre Plus / Department for Work and Pensions, our Colleges and other

² [Pensions Update - Tuesday 7 September 2021 - Hansard - UK Parliament](#)

education providers, and wider community partners to support individuals to find new work, retrain and transition to new opportunities, including supporting business start up. This work has also been supplemented by the Council's £6m recovery support package announced early this year. Current activity is set out below:

- **Employability Programme** - supplementary support through Learn Devon for basic, digital and employability skill across the County,
- **Youth Hubs** - targeted support for youth employment through the Youth Hubs in Exeter, Torbay and Northern Devon,
- **Support for people with a disability** - investment in additional employability support for those with a disability in Teignbridge and North Devon,
- **Open up to Skills Programme** - wider support for skills and training within the tourism and hospitality sector to improve the sustainability of linked jobs and opportunities
- **Pre Start-up support.** The project will support individuals (aged 25 and over) in Devon to start a new business or social enterprise. It is focused on pre-start-up support and it will help participants build their entrepreneurial confidence and to engage in collaboration and partnership development. The project will launch shortly
- **Business Adaptation Support – Get Set Adapt.** A commissioned service to help businesses in Devon recover from the impacts of the pandemic by adapting their business plan/strategy supporting business resilience and safeguarding jobs. This will launch this month
- **Digital Support – Digital Advance Devon.** A specific support programme to help participants use digital solutions for advancing their business.
- **E-Commerce Pilot** - Working with the Devon and Plymouth Chamber a pilot programme to support businesses in all aspects of E-Commerce is being developed which will help businesses to take their product or service fully online, improve performance and support job retention.
- The Council hosts the **Health and Social Care Skills Accelerator Programme** ('HSSAP') covering Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, a £3.5m European funded programme supporting the recruitment and training of over 1,000 individuals over the next 3 years into the health and social care sector.
- Similarly the Council hosts the **Heart of the South West Growth Hub service** which offers further support for start-up businesses. This service offers information and guidance to those seeking to start-up a business and provides links to employment and skills programmes, including the resources available through the Heart of the South West Skills Launchpad.
- **The Thrive programme** has been developed in partnership with the Growth Hub and will be available to all businesses in Devon and has been supplemented with additional County Council recovery funding to extend the number of businesses who can benefit, and again support and safeguard local jobs.

3. Team Devon Plan 19 Economy and Business Recovery

Since the publication of the Team Devon Recovery Prospectus in mid-2020, the Authority has been working closely with local, regional and national partners, our MPs and Government to secure additional investment and support for the local area

and its communities. This has included supplementary investment across an array of activity and topics. Key announcements to date include:

- An initial commitment from Government of £5m through the Further Education (FE) capital programme in August 2020 towards renewal and enhancement for our FE Estate across the County's 5 Colleges. This was supplemented by a further £1.5m towards FE Digital Infrastructure in summer 2020 from the Local Enterprise Partnership, and an additional £2m from the Government's Getting Building Fund towards FE assets, including £1m for Exeter College to further invest in green and high tech / high value training assets at the Future Skills Centre (owned by the County Council).
- £8m from the Government's Getting Building Fund in late 2020 towards capital investment in Higher Education assets and grow on space, including £5m for additional space at Exeter Science Park, £2m of investment into the University of Exeter's Clean Mobility Centre, and £1m towards the University of Plymouth's Health Tech Innovation Hub are further examples of investment drawn into the County, along with Devon Work Hubs programme which support enterprise space to micro businesses.
- Working in partnership with Somerset County Council, Devon and Somerset have secured over £4.5m of Fast Track training / bootcamp provision across high growth sectors including an array of new advanced engineering, digital and green opportunities. In total, this programme will deliver over 2,500 new opportunities through to 2023.
- The Kickstart Programme is a national Programme for Young People 16-24 who are on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment – Devon County Council as an employer are employing 65 Young people across the authority in order to support those who have lost their job through the pandemic or who have not been able to start their career. Four Young people have already been taken on and the rest of the positions are being recruited to.
- We are developing and commissioning a high growth start up scheme, with a strong focus on young people and graduates (age 16-24), with the aim of launching this before the end of the year, as part of the Recovery Package of activity funded by the County Council. Green technologies and clean growth themes are likely to be key themes within this programme.
- The County Council has undertaken a study to identify specific issues affecting some of our Coastal and Market towns and the type of support that can help these communities bounce back. Five initial case studies have been identified and DCC is currently awaiting the recommendations and next steps to guide future investment on a range of projects and proposals to further support our communities. Developing such proposals will mean our towns should be well-placed to benefit from new funding announcements by Government, including Levelling Up and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

- Officers have continued to liaise with Western Power Distribution, joining a number of seminars, the South West Energy Hub and the HotSW LEP as part of developing cases for energy infrastructure investment, and lobbying for the South West.

4. Cuts to Universal Credit and the rise in National Insurance

It is currently unclear how the proposed reduction in Universal Credit and the rise in National Insurance will specifically impact on low-income working families and their children across Devon.

Early work undertaken by the authority however suggests that the proposed cut will affect around 30,000 households receiving some element of Universal Credit across Devon, reducing total income by around £25m (or around £800 per household per year). Of the two interventions, figures suggest that the Universal Credit reduction will be the most significant, with the increase in national insurance having a less pronounced impact due to its scaling and tax treatment.

We are unable to comment on other economic factors which are currently working their way through the system such as inflation and potential benefits from the upward pressure on wages, which are likely to also have an impact on individual financial circumstances.

5. Green Investment

With regards skills, Devon County Council is current working closely with Exeter College and other partners around the development of their green skills offer and complementary disciplines. This includes our investment in the Future Skills Centre within East Devon, with a focus on electrical, material and construction disciplines that will support new green jobs, work with the University of Exeter through its Clean Mobility Centre, and joint activity around Skills linked to the clean aviation pilot at Exeter Airport. More widely, the Council is also working closely with national providers around support for retrofit skills within the construction sector, including a joint bid to the Community Renewal Fund due to be announced alongside the Comprehensive Spending Review.

As part of the Recovery Package agreed by Cabinet the County Council has set aside £1.4 million to support Natural Capital, Community Energy, and Green Innovation programmes, all of which have the potential to be key economic drivers for the County and create new jobs, skills and businesses. A range of natural capital and community energy schemes have been identified and work is starting and the Green Innovation programme will follow shortly.

The Council has been in discussion with private sector green hydrogen developers and public sector partners to ascertain the potential opportunities for Devon and the Council to support the implementation of this technology. A new facility at Langage is

being discussed and could form part of the Plymouth and South Devon Freezone proposal.

The Council is also working with partners in Exeter and East Devon, regarding the Monkerton and Cranbrook district heating schemes and enabling these to become net zero carbon, including seeking government Heat Network Infrastructure Programme funding towards the scheme.

Councillor Rufus Gilbert

Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Skills

