

## CABINET

10 July 2019

Present:-

Councillors J Hart (Chair), S Barker, R Croad, A Davis, R Gilbert, S Hughes, A Leadbetter, J McInnes and B Parsons

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

Councillors F Biederman, A Connett, A Dewhirst, J Hook, B Greenslade and C Whitton

\* 367

**Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019 be signed as a correct record.

\* 368

**Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

\* 369

**Announcements**

There was no announcement by the Chair at this meeting.

\* 370

**Petitions**

There was no petition received from a Member of the Public or the Council.

\* 371

**Question(s) from Members of the Council**

There was no question from a Member of the Council.

\* 372

**Investing in Vulnerable Children (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Children's Social Care**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Dewhirst, Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services (CS/19/20) asking for approval to secure accelerated improvements as identified in the December 2018 Area SEND Inspection by Ofsted and CQC and May 2019 Focused Visit by Ofsted. The Report was circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Cabinet noted that in 2014, the Government introduced much needed reforms to arrangements to meet the needs of children with SEND. However, funding for those reforms did not fully match the increased demand and expectation and, as a consequence, the system, both nationally and locally, experienced sustained pressure. In 2016, Ofsted commenced a programme of SEND inspections, with Devon's SEND services being inspected in December 2019 and a WSoA issued (like many other Local Authorities) (<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50054047>). Devon would be re-inspected in about 18 months' time with an expectation that the four key areas identified for accelerated improvement would be fully resolved. The new framework for inspection (since 2018) raised the expectations bar in relation to the quality of supervision and the reliability of practice audit

as a tool of quality assurance and these were areas requiring further development in the recent Ofsted Focused Visit.

The Report outlined the identified four areas where accelerated progress needed to be made. This related to Strategic plans and the local area's SEND arrangements not embedded or widely understood by stakeholders, concerns about communication with key stakeholders, (particularly parents and families), the time taken to issue Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) and the variable quality of the plans and weaknesses in the identification, assessment, diagnosis and support of those children and young people with autism spectrum disorder.

The Children's Scrutiny Task Group Report '[Behind the Education, Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#)' recommended investment in the 0-25 team to match that found in other Local Authorities to ensure staff caseloads were reasonable.

The investment proposals set out in the Report it was felt would address the identified weaknesses in the WSoA and identified by the Task Group.

These were;

- Strengthened Engagement Function (WSoA 1 & 2) – to bring together capacity across Children's Services. Investment was sought for 3.2 FTE and then procure a portal which enabled parents and professionals to access, monitor and contribute to the child's EHCP, in real time, on line.
- EHCP Timeliness and Quality (WSoA 2 & 3) – Investment was being sought for six staff, 1.5 FTE in each area whose roles straddled 0-25 and Inclusion to ensure timely and effective intervention for children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions. Also, a designated social care officer to match the designated clinical officer to ensure social care contributions to EHCP were timely and of the right quality.
- Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) – currently timely, planned and proactive PfA and transition to adult care and health services was hindered by capacity. A team of four social workers or equivalent supported by a Team Manager would ensure effective and timely intervention.
- Transformational change, achieving integration – there was a desire to undertake a project to redesign, with parents, children, young people and disabled adults, the SEND system to achieve a fully integrated (Health, Education, and Social Care) 0 to 25 system. A secondment would be offered to develop and implement robust system redesign.
- Strengthening Children's Social Care - a short-term booster investment was required to accelerate the full embedding of Eclipse (the case management system in Children's Social Care), therefore proposal for four Quality Assurance Manager posts (up to nine months) to support the enhanced activity already being implemented by the service.

The Cabinet noted that this long-term investment meant that, over time, would lead to reduced activity and costs at the higher tariff. The financial considerations of the proposals were outlined at section 3 of the Report which highlighted additional staffing of 14.2 full time equivalent employees (ongoing cost of just over £640,000) and additional staffing of 8.5 full time equivalent employees on a short-term basis costing £378,000 in 2019/20 and £58,000 in 2020/21 which would fall to the Council's General Fund. It was felt that the additional investment sought, coupled with that by the CCG and that for Children's Social Care, would ensure the Council was better able to meet the needs of children and families and that the re-inspection would not result in Government intervention in Devon.

The investment would have a positive equalities impact as many of the children and young people with SEND and/or involved with Children's Social Care would meet at least one of the protected characteristics in the Equalities Act.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability (including carbon impact), risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Chief Officer's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

it was **MOVED** by Councillor McInnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

**RESOLVED** that in order to secure the accelerated improvements identified in the December 2018 Area SEND Inspection by Ofsted and CQC and May 2019 Focused Visit by Ofsted:

(a) the investment for 14.2 full time equivalent (FTE) employees at an ongoing cost of just over £640,000 per annum be approved; and

(b) the one-off investment for 8.5 full time equivalent employees for a short-term period at a cost of £378,000 in 2019/20 and £58,000 in 2020/21 also be agreed.

\* 373

### **Children and Young People Plan**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Dewhirst, Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

(Councillor Parsons declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of having a child in care at home).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services (CS/19/21) seeking approval for the Devon Children and Families Partnership Children and Young People's Plan, circulated prior to the meeting in accordance with regulation 7(4) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Devon Children and Families Partnership (DCFP) was established in 2018 in response to the Wood Review reforms and subsequently set out in statutory guidance 'Working Together 2018'. The DCFP strategic plan set out the vision and priorities for children and families in Devon for the next three years. It was led by three local safeguarding partners, being the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Devon and Cornwall Police, although membership spanned education, schools, social care, public health, health providers, District Councils, voluntary sector, police and children and families. The partnership had a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Devon.

The full Plan was attached at Appendix A of the Report. The development of the Plan had been coordinated through a range of multi-agency events and refreshed the commitments made and direction that had been set in 2017. The voice of children and families had been a critical foundation to the priorities.

The vision and priorities identified in the Children and Young People's Plan included all children / young people having the right to:

1. Life Chances – including a good education for all, better support for children in care and care leavers and improving the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) offer.
2. Be Healthy and Happy – including emotional wellbeing, mental health and self-harm, early support for autism and improving speech and language services.
3. Feel Safe – including better identification and prevention of neglect, support for vulnerable young people at risk and helping more people stay out of care.
4. Be Protected from Harm – including protecting and supporting children where there was domestic or sexual violence and abuse, helping children in crisis and reducing the impact of self-harm and preventing exploitation.

The Partnership would continue to engage with children and to refine interventions and demonstrate impact. It had also reviewed population data taken from the Joint Strategic

Needs Analysis and Devon Children and Young People's Sustainability and Transformation Plan Data Pack which informed the priorities.

The Plan broke with tradition and moved towards total digital communication, putting the purpose and priorities in the hands of staff and children, accessible through mobile devices and accessible in language and design. The Report further highlighted how the plan had been shared and the positive feedback received.

The Plan would be supported by more detailed documents such as an Outcomes Framework a Workforce Development Strategy and a Joint Commissioning Plan and there were multiple sub-strategies and plans. The priorities were focused on areas of increased demand or high spend and the preventative and early intervention support required to prevent increased demand in the future, which was challenging in current financial conditions.

The Head of Services Report incorporated an Impact assessment for the attention of Members at this meeting which had been undertaken to inform the plan. A successful implementation of actions and priorities had the potential to support development of children and young people in Devon, protect them from harm and harmful behaviours and allow them more opportunities to thrive, with good health, developing and acquiring more skills, qualifications, training. All of this would positively impact on wellbeing and improve social value in the years ahead.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability, carbon impact, risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Chief Officer's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor McInnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

**RESOLVED** that the Devon Children and Families Partnership Children and Young People's Plan be approved.

*[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and is available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>].*

\* **374** **Treasury Management Annual / Outturn Report (following consideration by the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee)**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Dewhurst, Greenslade and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the County Treasurer (CT/19/59) outlining the Treasury Management action taken during the last financial year (in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice previously adopted by the Council) which had also been considered and endorsed by the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (Minute \*136 refers).

The Annual Report set out the outturn position, reviewing performance and informing Members of any key matters arising from the Council's Treasury and Debt Management activities during the 2018/19 Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Scrutiny Committee had also received a revised version of the Treasury Management Strategy, attached at Appendix I to the Report.

The Scrutiny Committee had resolved that the Treasury Management Stewardship Annual Report for 2018/19 be commended to Cabinet and furthermore the corrected Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 also be endorsed.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial and legal considerations) set out in the County Treasurer's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Barker, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

**RESOLVED** that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee be thanked for their review of the Annual Treasury Management Stewardship Report for 2018/2019 and the revised Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 and that both documents be further endorsed.

\* **375**      **Children's Scrutiny Committee - Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) Task Group Report**

(Councillors Biederman, Dewhirst and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that the Children's Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 considered the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) Task Group Report (Minute \*121 refers) which covered the process of applying for and producing an EHCP in Devon. The Task Group had been established to respond to concerns over not meeting the statutory timescales in completing and issuing EHCPs.

Cabinet further noted that some of the task groups recommendations had already been included in the Written Statement of Action and were therefore being progressed.

The Children's Scrutiny Committee subsequently resolved that the Task Group report and recommendations be endorsed and commended to the Cabinet.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes and

**RESOLVED**

a) that the Children's Scrutiny Committee be thanked for its Task Group Report and the recommendations be noted;

b) that Cabinet also note the current work being undertaken in the Written Statement of Action which already includes most of the task group's recommendations; and

(b) that the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officer for Children's Services take forward the Report and progress subject to available resources, engaging other partners, stakeholders and contractors as necessary.

\* **376**      **Children's Scrutiny Committee - Special Guardianship Task Group Report**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that the Children's Scrutiny Committee had, at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019, considered the Special Guardianship Task Group Report (Minute \*127 refers) which focussed on the experience of Special Guardians and subsequently reflected on the issues faced by them.

The Scrutiny Committee had resolved that the Report and recommendations be endorsed and commended to the Cabinet.

The Leader also agreed to highlight the issue to District Councils, particularly in relation to recommendation 8, when they next met.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor McInnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart and

**RESOLVED**

a) that the Children's Scrutiny Committee be thanked for its Task Group Report and the recommendations be noted and

(b) that the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officer for Children's Services take forward the Report and progress subject to available resources, engaging other partners and stakeholders as necessary.

\* **377**      **Children's Scrutiny Committee - Schools Funding in Devon 2019/20**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Dewhirst, Greenslade and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the Children's Scrutiny Committee, in considering a Report from the Head of Education and Learning (CS/19/17) on Schools Funding in Devon 2019/20 noted that in 2019/20 the funding per pupil in Devon was £4,395 compared to the national average of £4,689, a difference of £294. This meant that across the authority this equated to £27 million less funding, based on the October 2018 school census.

The Committee therefore resolved that the Cabinet be asked to lobby the Department of Education over the need to increase funding for schools in Devon, highlighting in particular;

- (a) the real term reduction in schools funding of 10% since 2009/10;
- (b) that Devon gets £294 per pupil less than the national average;
- (b) high needs pressures and including increased EHCP numbers;
- (c) the inadequacy of Government capital maintenance funding to meet the current school building maintenance backlog; and
- (d) the deferment of announcement of round 3 of the priority schools building programme.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor McInnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart and

**RESOLVED**

(a) that the Children's Scrutiny Committee be thanked for their support and full recognition of the Schools Funding issues in Devon;

(b) that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Schools be asked to make representations to the Secretary of State for Education over the pressing need to increase funding for schools in Devon, highlighting in particular the issues raised by the Scrutiny Committee relating to the real term reduction in schools funding, the amounts received in Devon compared to the national average, the pressures of high needs and increasing EHCP numbers, the inadequate capital maintenance funding to deal with school building maintenance backlogs and the deferment of announcement of round 3 of the priority schools building programme.

\* 378 **Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee - Traffic Speed Task Group**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Dewhirst, Greenslade, J Hook and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 25 June 2019, considered the Report of the Traffic Speed Task Group (Minute \*132 refers) and the recommendations contained therein.

The Scrutiny Committee had thanked those involved in the production of the Report and commented on the positive effect of 20mph on climate change, the importance of culture change and educating communities in relation to 20mph and the role of the planning process in designing housing and communities that supported 20mph zones. It was further considered that some budget lines were already committed, therefore it was recognised that some works might need to be deferred and / or re-organised to accommodate the recommendations.

The Scrutiny Committee subsequently RESOLVED that the Task Group Report and recommendations be commended to the Cabinet with a report on progress in nine months' time.

The Cabinet Member for Highway Management recognised and acknowledged the hard work carried out by the Task Group. He outlined that he supported the recommendations but highlighted to the Cabinet that some of the recommendations required a significant investment by the Authority.

He proposed that efforts were initially focused on a review of road safety strategy, speed policy, and the SCARF process which would provide a solid base on which to develop some of the other recommendations.

The Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste also commented that the recommendations would be looked at in their entirety and they would focus on working in partnership, particularly with public health to look at the wider societal benefits.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hughes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart and

**RESOLVED**

(a) that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee be thanked for its Task Group Report and the recommendations be, in principle, endorsed; and

(b) that the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste be asked to take forward and progress / co-ordinate the recommendations contained therein, subject to available resources.

379 **Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee - Maintenance of Vegetation and Drainage Adjacent to the Highway**

(Councillors Dewhirst, Greenslade and Whitton attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

At its meeting on 25 June 2019, the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/19/52) on the Maintenance of Vegetation and Drainage Adjacent to the Highway (Minute \*135 refers).

The Scrutiny Committee subsequently RESOLVED to;

(a) ask the relevant Cabinet Member to

(i) where appropriate, write to Landowners to prompt them and their tenants to undertake their duties regarding maintenance and drainage adjacent to the highway;

(ii) write to the NFU and CLA and request a meeting to discuss responsibilities with a view to improving the current situation; and

(iii) consider inviting the NFU to the planned local conferences.

(b) request that Cabinet asks the Communications team to publicise the policy and responsibilities of landowners and tenants regarding ash die back, hedge cutting and drainage.

The Cabinet Member for Highways Management thanked the Scrutiny Committee for its review and highlighted that the Council served just under 100 enforcement notices in the last 12 months and had written to over 300 landowners. He further added they were committed to working with the NFU, CLA and landowners to ensure they understood their duties.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hughes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart and

**RESOLVED** that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee be thanked for its review of landowner responsibilities and Cabinet endorse the recommendations made by the Committee.

\* **380** **Question(s) from Members of the Public**

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the relevant Cabinet Member responded to three questions from Members of the public on fuel poverty levels across Devon and target dates and levels for reducing fuel poverty, assistance to City, District and Town Councils that had now made commitments to be carbon neutral by 2030 and studies commissioned on the potential for expansion of the renewable energy sector in Devon and capacity for community energy projects and local renewable energy production.

A copy of the questions and answers would be sent to those not present at the meeting.

*[NB: A copy of the questions and answers are appended to these minutes and are also available on the Council's Website at <http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcc/committee/minutes.html>]*

\* **381** **Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the following and any recommendations to Cabinet therein be approved:

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – 14 June 2019  
Devon Education Forum – 19 June 2019  
Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee – 19 June 2019

\* 382 **Delegated Action/Urgent Matters**

The Registers of Decisions taken by Members under the urgency provisions or delegated powers were available for inspection at the meeting in line with the Council's Constitution and Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; a summary of decisions taken since the last meeting had been published with the Agenda for this meeting. Decisions taken by Officers under any express authorisation of the Cabinet or other Committee or under any general authorisation within the Council's Scheme of Delegation set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution may be viewed at <https://new.devon.gov.uk/democracy/officer-decisions/>.

\* 383 **Forward Plan**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet reviewed the Forward Plan and determined those items of business to be defined as key and framework decisions and included in the Plan from the date of this meeting onwards reflecting the requirements of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (at <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=133&RD=0>).

**NOTES:**

1. These Minutes should be read in association with any Reports or documents referred to therein, for a complete record.
2. Notice of the decisions taken by the Cabinet will be sent by email to all Members of the Council within 2 working days of their being made and will, in the case of key decisions, come into force 5 working days after that date unless 'called-in' or referred back in line with the provisions of the Council's Constitution.
3. The Minutes of the Cabinet are published on the County Council's website.
4. A recording of the webcast of this meeting will also be available to view for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting, at <http://www.devoncc.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

**\*DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.28 pm





**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC  
Wednesday 10 July 2019**

**1. QUESTION FROM MR VINT (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)  
Re: Climate Change and Fuel Poverty**

The County Council is a signatory to the ‘Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Declaration on Climate Change and Fuel Poverty’ (2007). What was the fuel poverty level across Devon in 2007 and what is it now, what target dates and levels were in place for reducing fuel poverty across Devon and are the signatory councils on track for achieving these targets?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD**

Devon County Council was a signatory to the joint Council declaration in 2007 and has regularly reported activity. The target set in 2007 to alleviate fuel poverty was to take as many households out of fuel poverty as possible. Fuel poverty levels are monitored and, working in partnership, the Council has a programme to reduce fuel poverty, as detailed below.

Fuel poverty rates are calculated by modelling household income and fuel costs. The government’s methodology of calculating fuel poverty changed in 2011 making comparisons back to 2007 problematic. Data from 2011 through to 2017, the latest data available, is provided in the table below. The number and percentage of homes in fuel poverty has fluctuated due to changes to fuel prices and economic activity over the same period. These fluctuations make it difficult to see the effect of fuel-poverty alleviation schemes in the data.

Year	Devon CC	
	Count	%
2011	31,170	9.7%
2012	34,133	10.3%
2013	42,559	12.5%
2014	43,918	13.0%
2015	41,145	12.2%
2016	36,970	10.9%
2017	40,472	11.6%

The current national fuel poverty target, set in the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England, is to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practical meet a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C by 2030. The bands run from A to G, with G being the most inefficient. An analysis undertaken for Public Health Devon shows that 74% of homes in fuel poverty in Devon are rated Band D – G.

Between 2008 and 2017, Cosy Devon, a partnership of local authorities and community energy companies working to improve domestic energy-efficiency, partnered with Eon Energy to deliver measures in Devon through government’s Carbon Emissions Reduction Target scheme and later the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) phase 1 and 2 schemes. These schemes

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installed measures in 13, 500 homes at a cost of £5.5m and lifted 1,000 households out of fuel poverty.

Cosy Devon provides a free home energy advice visit to eligible residents via the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP). The visit provides general energy saving advice and the installation of simple energy saving measures, such as draught proofing, light bulbs, chimney balloons and radiator panels. Advice is provided about grant assistance which is available to either cover the full or partial costs of installing heating and insulation measures. Grants are provided through the government's ECO phase 3 scheme combined with top-up funding from the Better Care Fund and dedicated budgets from district authorities. The LEAP also identifies people who may benefit from an income maximisation check; a referral can be made to an independent company who offers a free telephone service providing advice to people on how to increase their income and general money matters. Additionally, the home energy visit provides advice on fuel switching whereby householders are informed as to whether there is a cheaper energy deal available for them. If so they are given the option to switch at that time with the help of the energy advisor. Households can apply via [www.cosydevon.com](http://www.cosydevon.com)

In the past year, the LEAP has visited 1,153 households in administrative Devon and installed 9,791 energy-efficiency measures.

## 2. QUESTION FROM MR SCOTT (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)

### Re: Assistance to City, District and Town Councils on Carbon Neutrality

What assistance will the County Council consider offering to those City, District and Town Councils in Devon that have now made commitments to be carbon neutral by 2030 - including matters relating to public transport, provision for cyclists and planning permission for renewable energy schemes in these locations?

### REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

City, District, Borough, Town and Parish councils have separate responsibilities to the County Council and will need to allocate their own resources to determine how they can use those responsibilities to contribute to the decarbonisation of Devon. These Councils are involved in the Devon Carbon Plan process and will be able to use outputs of the research and discussions that will take place at county level with their involvement, currently funded by the County Council and the University of Exeter, to inform plans for their local areas. Preparation of the Devon Carbon Plan will involve the matters you specifically identify. The County Council has arranged and funded training on carbon footprinting, to which the councils have been invited. The flow of assistance, cooperation and ideas will need to operate in both directions between local authorities – this is not an agenda that is solely the responsibility of the County Council – which is why the multi-agency Devon Climate Emergency Response Group has been established.

## 3. QUESTION FROM MS PONTON (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)

### Re: Studies Commissioned on Expansion of Renewable Energy Sector

What studies have the County Council commissioned or been involved in producing over the last decade on the potential for expansion of the renewable energy sector in Devon, parts of Devon or the wider region - and for the capacity for community energy projects and local renewable energy production to provide for local energy needs, increase local employment, contribute to the local economy or provide an income for this council?

### REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

Devon County Council has been involved in many studies and projects in the last decade on the potential for renewable energy in Devon. Here we can provide an overview and some highlights.

Through Devon County Council's membership of Regen, a not-for-profit centre of energy expertise in Exeter, the authority contributed to the cost of the annual South West Renewable Energy Progress Report: Whilst this is no longer produced, the authority still commissions an annual Devon Renewable Energy Progress Report and funds 100% of the cost. Regen and Devon County Council jointly produced the Devon Community Impact Report in 2018 on behalf of the 23 community energy groups across the county; it shows how Devon is taking a leading role in the UK's community energy revolution and demonstrates the environmental, economic and social benefits that community energy projects are providing throughout the county.

Through projects such as the joint EU-funded Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space and the Community Energy Accelerator, the council has been directly supporting community energy since 2011.

The authority is also a member of the South West Energy and Environment Group, hosted by the Centre for Sustainable Energy at the University of Exeter. Through this Group, a number of public sector organisations collaborate on energy-related research and share the outcomes. In 2011 the Group undertook A Review of Renewable Energy Resource Assessment and Targets for Devon. Subsequent studies focussing on south west Devon and the North Devon Biosphere Reserve were completed in 2013. An evaluation of the potential for field-scale solar PV and wind turbines was included within the 2018 Low Carbon and Climate Change Evidence Base for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan, covering Teignbridge, Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter City council areas.

All of these studies are available online via

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/renewable-energy>

In addition, the authority has been involved in various studies to explore specifically the opportunity for district heating schemes in and around Exeter, Newton Abbot, Tiverton and Barnstaple. These studies led to the successful deployment of district heating at Cranbrook, Sky Park and Monkerton and the ongoing development of a city centre scheme for Exeter through Dextco <https://www.dextco.org.uk/>.

Furthermore a number of studies have looked at the renewable energy potential on the council's land holdings and buildings, the latest of which have been in 2016 and an update in 2018. These led to the community-owned solar PV arrays being installed on Great Moor House and Exeter Central Library. The cost of upgrades required to the local electricity distribution network has meant that deploying field-scale opportunities is problematic and funding opportunities are being pursued to try to address this.

Finally, a study is currently being drafted to identify the clean growth opportunities in Devon across a variety of sectors, including onshore and offshore renewable energy generation, which will be able to inform the emerging Local Industrial Strategy being developed by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.

