

## COUNCIL

20 February 2020

### Present:-

Chair: J Mathews

Vice-Chair: M Squires

Councillors H Ackland, M Asvachin, Y Atkinson, S Aves, K Ball, S Barker, F Biederman, R Bloxham, J Brazil, J Hook, J Brook, C Channon, I Chubb, C Chugg, J Clatworthy, P Colthorpe, A Connett, P Crabb, R Croad, A Davis, A Dewhirst, A Eastman, R Edgell, R Gilbert, B Greenslade, G Gribble, I Hall, R Hannaford, J Hart, J Hawkins, L Hellyer, J Hodgson, G Hook, R Hosking, S Hughes, A Leadbetter, J McInnes, B Parsons, R Peart, P Prowse, R Radford, S Randall-Johnson, S Russell, P Sanders, A Saywell, R Scott, D Sellis, M Shaw, G Sheldon, C Slade, J Trail, P Twiss, N Way, C Whitton, C Wright and J Yabsley

### Apologies:-

Councillors J Berry

## 260 Minutes

The Chair of the Council **MOVED** and it was duly **SECONDED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2019 be signed as a correct record.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

## 261 Announcements

The Chair of the Council reported the sad passing away of former County Councillor Roger William Boote who had served the Council between 2005 and 2009 representing the former Honiton St Paul's Division.

The Chair, along with other Members of the Council, had attended the funeral service on 28th January 2020.

The Council had also been shortlisted for Large Employer of the Year at the Apprentice and Employer Awards 2020. The ceremony was taking place on Thursday 26th March at Sandy Park.

Alderman Sir Simon Day was also in attendance at the meeting in the capacity of a co-opted member of the Council's Standards Committee to monitor compliance with the Council's ethical frameworks.

## 262 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

## 263 Public Participation: Petitions, Questions and Representations

The Leader was presented, by Councillor Ray Steer-Kemp, who chaired the Bishops Clyst Traffic Group, with a report organised by the Parish Council containing a number of recommendations about a series of highway concerns around Clyst St Mary and the surrounding area.

A further petition was presented to the Leader from Mr Legon relating to parking in Stoke Valley Road and the surrounding streets and requesting extended residents parking, containing approximately 89 signatures.

The Chair indicated that the relevant Cabinet Member or Head of Service would be asked to respond direct to both petitioners on the issues raised, within 15 days.

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the Council received and acknowledged an oral representation made by Mr Moore on mental health and well-being, raising awareness on issues for young people and older generations on mental health and on ways to move forward.

Also, the relevant Cabinet Member responded to one question from a member of the public on increased car use through Halberton, speeding traffic and options for residents.

The Cabinet Member also responded orally to the supplementary question arising from the above.

The Chair thanked all Members of the public for attending the meeting, advising that Members will have heard their questions and representations.

*[NB: A copy of the questions and answers are appended to these minutes and are also available on the Council's Website at <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=132&Year=0> and any supplementary questions and answers may be observed through the webcast of this meeting – see Notes below]*

#### **264 Petitions from Members of the Council**

There was no Petition received from a Member of the Council.

#### **265 Questions from Members of the Council**

In accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules, the relevant Cabinet Members provided written responses to 20 questions and a verbal reply to one question submitted by Members of the Council on the following issues;

- supporting the 2020 Summer Sunday service to Okehampton;
- the reopening of Appledore Shipyard (including dates, the Ferguson Marine shipyard, public investment and parity of funding);
- the recent decision to reduce numbers of Police Community Support Officers in Devon and Cornwall;
- the learning records database (breach of data, any disclosure and relevant checks);
- the numbers of children and young people in care since January 2018;
- the numbers placed in care settings outside of the Council area and the furthest distance of the placing;
- meeting obligations in relation to visits to young people outside of the Council area from social workers;
- approved budgets for highways drainage and actual spends;
- the Road Warden scheme and completion of Chapter 8 Training;
- the number of potholes filled each year by community road wardens;
- the number of potholes reported/known to the County Council and how many were repaired;
- the process through which Parish and Town Councils could install flashing speed awareness signs in communities;
- care fees and residential properties interests with the Land Registry;
- monies owed to the Council for care fees and the number of people the fees related to;
- financial support and officer time the Council had provided outside of its contract to Libraries Unlimited;

- extensive flooding of the road between Colyton and Offwell at Holmebush / Suttons Cross and urgent resolution of the problem;
- creation of a clearway at Haldon;
- the decision to remove Colyton Primary School from the Axe Beacon Federation;
- the Council's working from home policy and relevant promotion of policy in light of the climate emergency and carbon neutrality; and
- budget provision and real term value when compared to 2019/20 and 2009/2010.

The Cabinet Members also responded orally, as appropriate, to any supplementary questions arising therefrom.

*[NB: See also responses to Questions referred to at Minute 263 above. A copy of the questions and answers are appended to the signed minutes and any supplementary questions and answers may be observed through the webcast of this meeting – see Notes below]*

## **266 Revenue Budget 2020/2021, Medium Term Financial Strategy & Capital Programme 2020/2021 to 2024/2025**

(Councillor Connett declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being a Member of Teignbridge District Council referring to said Council in the debate).

(Councillor Parsons declared an interest by virtue of his partner being in receipt of funding for foster caring, although this issue was covered by the general dispensation).

*All Members of the Council had been granted a dispensation to allow them to speak and vote in any debate on the setting of the Council Tax or Precept or any fees and charges arising therefrom as a consequence of simply being a resident of or a land, business or property owner in the administrative County of Devon or by being a County Council representative on a local authority company or joint venture or by being a parent or guardian of a child in a school on any matter relating to school meals and school transport, or in relation to being an approved foster parent, providing placements for the Council's Children in Care or in relation to the setting of members' allowances or as a parent or a guardian of a child in care or in receipt of statutory sick pay or a pension.*

The Council considered the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting (Minute 462 (1-21) of 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020), together with the Report of the County Treasurer on the Revenue Budget for 2020/21, Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24 and Capital Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25, including an assessment of the adequacy of reserves, a range of prudential indicators concerning the financial implications of the capital programme and an assessment that identified risks associated with the budget strategy, together with how the risks would be managed. The budget book contained details of the County Council's revenue and capital budgets together with associated financial and operational information. There was a requirement to prepare a Capital Strategy in line with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities 2017 and this was also included.

The book contained;

- Revenue Budget Overview;
- Statement on the Robustness of the Budget Estimates, the Adequacy of Reserves and Affordability of the Capital Strategy;
- Capital Strategy and Programme Overview 2020/21 - 2024/25;
- Service Budgets;
- Fees & Charges;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 - 2023/24;
- County Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves 2020/21;
- Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 - 2022/23 and Prudential Indicators 2020/21 - 2024/25;
- Risk Analysis of Volatile Budgets; and
- Abbreviations.

The Chairs of the Children's Scrutiny Committee, Health and Adult Care Scrutiny and Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny having **MOVED** and it having been duly **SECONDED** that the Minutes of the budget Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020 relating to the annual estimates be approved, the motion was subsequently put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

The Council noted that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee had, at its meeting on held 28th January 2020, considered and endorsed the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21, prior to determination of the budget for that year.

The Council further noted that the Council's financial plans had been drawn up with reference to the County Council's major policies and objectives, the County Council's performance framework, demographic changes occurring within the County; and consultation with local residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

The final Local Government financial settlement for 2020/21 represented an increase on 2019/20 of 1.6%. The Final Settlement had been confirmed at £103.2 millions which was an increase of £1.7 millions on 2019/20. 2020/21 was expected to be the start of a new multi-year funding settlement that incorporated the outcome of a new Comprehensive Spending Review, Fairer Funding Review and Business Rate Changes - this had not happened and the settlement for 2020/21 was for one year only and there was no information on what the authority's funding would be for 2021/22 and beyond.

The authority was experiencing significant demand and cost pressures within Social Care services, but the most significant concern was within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Special Educational Needs (SEND). The Council was not able to fund the deficit from elsewhere, therefore had to carry forward a negative figure.

The Council heard about the uncertainty faced by Local Government in the absence of a four year settlement and the lack of clarity for financial planning which in turn meant more risk for Local Government finances. In that respect, reserves of £100 millions (minimum) should be kept, a balance that was in line with other like Councils.

The targets set for each service area had been subject to different pressures and influences. Cabinet had noted in January that the target for Adult Care & Health had increased by £7.7 millions, for Children's Services an increase of £2.5 millions. The increased targets also included £60,000 for additional legal support within Corporate Services and £1 million within Highways, Infrastructure and Waste to help with drainage issues on the Highway network.

The Service budgets totalled £541.2 millions, including funding for budget pressures of £50.6 millions that mainly related to additional expenditure to allow for service growth to cater for demographic changes such as increased children and adult service users and unavoidable cost pressures. Savings and income initiatives of £7.5 millions were required to set a balanced budget.

The budget for Adult Care & Health was £260,258 millions, a net change of £23,714 millions or 10.0%. For Children's Services, this was £146,845 millions, the net change being £11,538 millions (8.5%). Community, Public Health, Environment & Prosperity was £39,713 millions, with the net change of £925,000 or 2.4%. For Corporate Services £37,160 millions, a net increase of £2,479 millions (7.1%) and in relation to Highways, Infrastructure Development & Waste £57,508 millions, an increase of £2,790 millions (5.1%).

The settlement had set the Council Tax increase that would trigger the need for a referendum at 2% for 2020/21, with social care authorities allowed a 2% social care precept. A Band D Council Tax would, if the proposed budget was approved, increase by 3.99% to £1,439.46. The Council Tax requirement for the Council was £423,095,396.52.

The Council acknowledged that a Budget 2020/21 Impact Assessment had been prepared previously and taken into account by Scrutiny Committees as part of their earlier deliberations together with those specific impact assessments undertaken as part of the budget's preparation or in relation to service reviews arising therefrom: to ensure all Members had all relevant information in having regard to the responsibilities placed upon the Council to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 when considering the proposed budget, its impact and any mitigating action required, prior to making a decision. The preparation of Impact Assessments was necessarily a dynamic process and that individual assessments for specific proposals may necessarily have to be developed and updated with time. The Impact Assessment had been made available to all Members of the Council for the purpose of the Scrutiny meetings, the Cabinet meeting on 14th February 2020 and this County Council meeting. A revised version had been circulated to all Members on 5 February.

The Chair of the Council **MOVED** and it was duly **SECONDED** that in accordance with Standing Order 30, Standing Order 14(4) be suspended to permit more than one motion or amendment to be debated at the same time.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

The Chair then indicated that he would exercise his discretion to enable the Leaders and budget spokespersons of the political groups to speak for longer than 7 minutes, if desired.

Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor Barker **SECONDED** that Cabinet Minute 462(1-21) setting out the proposed revenue and capital budgets as detailed in Report (CT/20/20) be approved.

In commending the proposed budget to the Council, the Leader commented this was a good budget for the people of Devon.

Both the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources Management paid tribute to and expressed gratitude to the County Treasurer, her staff and all those Officers involved in the preparation, management and monitoring of budgets over previous years and recognised also the exceptionally difficult circumstances of preparing a budget for 2020/21. They also thanked other Members of the Council for their input into the Scrutiny process. Additional thanks were given to those who had participated in the three budget consultation meetings as well as the parish councils attending the Leader's budget roadshows.

Members then formally moved, each duly seconded, amendments as shown below which were subsequently the subject of one debate as agreed above.

Councillor Hannaford **MOVED** and Councillor Whitton **SECONDED** that Cabinet Minute 162 (1-21) (Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2020/21 – 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2020/21 – 2024/25) be amended by the addition of the following and all necessary changes be made to the detailed budgets.

**Highways Department**

**£500,000 – Management and transformation process** - *To provide additional team capacity to better manage reactive and scheduled work, and generally promote reform and business transformation.*

**Public Health**

**£1,000,000 - Substance abuse prevention** – *To move from a treatment service, towards early intervention and prevention work.*

**£150,000 - Domestic and Sexual Violence** - To help deal with the 24% increase in cases locally, especially focused on supporting children, early intervention work, and promoting behaviour change.

#### **Economic Resilience**

**£100,000 – Trading Standards** – To provide additional support to local businesses, farmers, the fishing industry, food producers, and others, in terms of import and export activity through the BREXIT transition period.

#### **Climate Emergency – Green Industrial Revolution**

**£500,000 - Energy Smart Grants** – A trial project to work with small to medium-sized businesses, to receive an energy efficiency audit, and operate a small grants scheme. The aim would be to help businesses introduce energy-saving measures in areas including lighting, equipment, heating, insulation and the installation of renewable energy, such as solar panels. Furthermore driving down costs, improving productivity, and securing carbon reductions for Devon.

#### **Schools and Learning**

**£1,000,000 – Schools maintenance backlog** – To speed up the scheduled maintenance programme, especially boiler replacements to avoid potential closures in small rural schools.

**£250,000 – Educational inclusion work** – To expand current initiatives to prevent and reduce school exclusions specifically in primary schools.

#### **Community Resilience**

**£350,000 – Community Health Initiatives** – To provide help and support for third sector groups, charities, and Community Interest Companies, working in the community on health and social care related issues, including social prescribing.

**£200,000 - Promoting Play** – To trial a Play Ranger initiative with a local CIC, based in local communities, to encourage children to be more active, through delivering a range of outdoor based activities, including during the holidays or term times, and linking outdoor sessions to the school curriculum.

**£200,000 – Older people with memory loss** - To provide help and support for third sector groups, charities, and Community Interest Companies, working in the community with older people that are experiencing memory loss, including memory cafes, social events, and singing groups.

**£500,000 – Youth Work Best Practice** – To roll out best practice models across Devon, based on community and voluntary solutions, with training and development support, to include inclusive non targeted work in a place based setting.

#### **Children's Services**

**£300,000 – Family Workers** – To commission a trial project for evaluation with Action For Children, to promote better support and early help for vulnerable families.

**£250,000 – Autism and Medical Absences** – To provide additional capacity to manage these expanding areas of work, including automatic diagnosis and self-assessment.

**£700,000 – Care Leavers** – *To improve the support given to our care leavers, including the ongoing issues around contact rates , to achieve a higher levels , with better outcomes.*

**£1,000,000 – Children’s Social Worker Offer** – *To improve the terms, conditions, training, and development opportunities for our children’s social workers. Specifically to ensure that our core offer is more robust and competitive, in terms of recruitment and retention, in the context of our neighbouring authorities, on an invest to save basis, that works to reduce agency staff.*

**That the total cost for 2020/21 of £7.0 millions be funded from the Budget Management Reserve.**

Councillor Connett **MOVED** and Councillor Brazil **SECONDED** that Cabinet Minute 462 (1-21) (Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2020/21 – 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2020/21 – 2024/25) be amended by the addition of the following and all necessary changes be made to the detailed budgets.

Cabinet Minute (462) (1-21) (Revenue Budget 2020 – 2021, Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023 / 2024, and Capital Strategy 2020 / 2021 to 2024 / 2025) be amended by the addition of the following and all necessary changes be made to the detailed budgets.

*Devon County Council must no longer turn its head to avoid the dreadful impacts on residents of flooding and damage caused by the cuts to Highway drainage services and regular maintenance.*

*Scrapping the Highway Lengthsmen service and the routine and regular maintenance it provided has proved a folly and a dreadful false economy.*

*This Liberal Democrat budget amendment proposes:*

**1. Investing an immediate and additional £4.5 million during 2020-21 in our highways to clear drains, improve highway drainage and repaint absent and faded road and junction markings. We will invest £4 million in highways drainage improvements and £500,000 to renew and replace white lines and junction markings, helping to make our roads safer.**

**2. Creating 20mph zones and speed limits around Devon’s schools and other high priority areas with an investment of £400,000 in 2020/21.**

**3. Launching a ‘Green Devon’ scheme to support environmental projects such as bee corridors, wild flower meadows and verges, tree planting and helping local communities deliver their own environmental improvements. We will fund this with a minimum £50,000 by ending the wasteful ‘essential user allowances’ for staff driving less than 1,000 miles year (19 miles a week) on council business**

**1. We will fund the £4.5 million road drainage and safety priorities by:**

*Drawing on the Council’s £18.1 million Emergency Reserve, set aside to deal with the impact of flooding and other events. This ‘stitch in time’ approach to clear drains and renew road markings is an ‘invest to save’ measure – saving not only on damaging flood costs but also the misery caused to Devon residents and householders.*

**2. We will make 20mph zones for schools a priority with an investment of £400,000 in the 2020/21 council year, funded by:**

*Cutting the budget for consultants and stand-in managers by £200,000 and cutting £200,000 from the media, public relations and advertising budget.*

**3. We will fund 'Green Devon' projects by:**

*Ending wasteful payments requiring staff to bring cars to work which are then rarely used on council business.*

*We note that 108 staff this year have been paid, in total, up to £50,000 and none have driven more than 1 mile a week for business use.*

*The Liberal Democrats believe it is time for a thorough review of all 'essential' car use to deliver savings and identify cleaner, greener, cheaper ways to help staff travel, when necessary.*

**Other financial steps:**

*Devon County Council to lobby government to end the switch from Council Tax to Business Rates loophole used by some second home owners and to allow local councils the power to charge up to 200% Council Tax on second/holiday homes. Such measures would, it is believed, raise in the region of £10 million for Devon County Council from South Hams alone. Across the county, it is suggested the income could be in excess of £20 million.*

**We note the people of Devon continue to be short changed by Government:**

- *Loss of £180 million in core funding since 2010*
- *Each Devon school child still underfunded by approx. £294 a year*
- *£45 million deficit by end of March 2021 for Special Educational Needs*

The amendment in the name of Councillor Connett was then put to the vote and declared **LOST**.

*(NOTE: In accordance with Standing Order 32(5) and any vote relating to the setting of the Council Tax or level of precept, Councillors voted as for, against or in abstention to the aforementioned Motion/Amendment as follows):*

*For the amendment; Councillors Ackland, Asvachin, Atkinson, Aves, Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Dewhirst, Greenslade, Hannaford, Hodgson, G Hook, J Hook, Shaw, Sheldon, Way, Whitton and Wright: (Total: 18)*

*Against the amendment; Councillors Ball, Barker, Bloxham, Brook, Channon, Chubb, Chugg, Clatworthy, Colthorpe, Crabb, Croad, Davis, Eastman, Edgell, Gilbert, Gribble, Hall, Hart, Hawkins, Hellyer, Hosking, Hughes, Leadbetter, McInnes, Parsons, Peart, Prowse, Radford, Randall Johnson, Russell, Sanders, Saywell, Scott, Sellis, Slade, Squires, Trail, Twiss and Yabsley: (Total: 39)*

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hannaford was then put to the vote and declared **LOST**.

*(NOTE: In accordance with Standing Order 32(5) and any vote relating to the setting of the Council Tax or level of precept, Councillors voted as for, against or in abstention to the aforementioned Motion/Amendment as follows):*

*For the amendment; Councillors Ackland, Asvachin, Atkinson, Aves, Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Dewhirst, Greenslade, Hannaford, Hodgson, G Hook, J Hook, Shaw, Sheldon, Way, Whitton and Wright: (Total: 18)*

*Against the amendment; Councillors Ball, Barker, Bloxham, Brook, Channon, Chubb, Chugg, Clatworthy, Colthorpe, Crabb, Croad, Davis, Eastman, Edgell, Gilbert, Gribble, Hall, Hart, Hawkins, Hellyer, Hosking, Hughes, Leadbetter, McInnes, Parsons, Peart, Radford, Randall Johnson, Russell, Sanders, Saywell, Scott, Sellis, Slade, Squires, Trail, Twiss and Yabsley: (Total: 38)*

*Abstained from Voting; Councillor Prowse (1)*



The motion in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

*(NOTE: In accordance with Standing Order 32(5) and any vote relating to the setting of the Council Tax or level of precept, Councillors voted as for, against or in abstention to the aforementioned Motion/Amendment as follows):*

*For the Motion; Councillors Ackland, Asvachin, Atkinson, Aves, Ball, Barker, Bloxham, Brook, Channon, Chubb, Chugg, Clatworthy, Colthorpe, Crabb, Croad, Davis, Eastman, Edgell, Gilbert, Gribble, Hall, Hannaford, Hart, Hawkins, Hellyer, Hodgson, Hosking, Hughes, Leadbetter, McInnes, Parsons, Peart, Prowse, Radford, Randall Johnson, Russell, Sanders, Saywell, Scott, Sellis, Sheldon, Slade, Squires, Trail, Twiss, Whitton and Yabsley: (Total: 47)*

*Against the Motion; Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Dewhirst, G Hook, J Hook, Shaw, Way and Wright (Total: 9)*

*Abstained from Voting; Councillor Greenslade (1)*

## **267 Pay Policy Statement 2020/2021**

The Council considered the recommendations of the Appointments, Remuneration and Chief Officer Conduct Committee held on 4 February 2020 relating to the adoption by the County Council of the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21.

The Leader of the Council **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the recommendations of the Appointments, Remuneration and Chief Officer Conduct Committee be approved and that the Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 (and consequential changes to the Council's Constitution) as set out at Minute 55 of that Committee be endorsed and the Constitution amended accordingly.

The motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

## **268 Cabinet Member Reports**

The Council received reports from the relevant Cabinet Members on matters of interest or service developments relating to their remits which had occurred since the previous meeting or were likely to have an impact in the future or on specific issues upon which they had been asked to comment, as set out below:

### **(a) Policy, Corporate and Asset Management**

Councillor Hart commented, as requested by Councillor G Hook on the settlement of claims for compensation for residents living adjacent to the South Devon Highway. The Leader commented on the numbers of agents and claims submitted and the difficulties sometimes experienced with agents that were not always local. Duplicate claims were being filtered out and people notified if claims were invalid. 14 claims were eligible under different noise legislation and these claimants would be notified shortly.

He was also asked to report, by Councillor Greenslade, on the "Great South West" initiative and the projects this organisation was promoting which benefitted economic regeneration in north Devon. The Leader circulated a report that said the initiative was a partnership covering Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset geographies to deliver a £45 billion boost to the regional economy. There was a prospectus entitled "Securing our Future" which highlighted the need for and benefits of funding for the area, including transformational change opportunity for the Green and Blue economies. He reported that at this early stage there was not a list of projects, as the prospectus was highlighting themes from the Government's Industrial Strategy, although support was being sought for an enhanced export and investment hub, rural productivity deal and a South West tourism action zone and the region's MP's had been lobbying Government at the highest level.

The Great South West initiative did not identify individual projects in specific areas, although the key aim was to bring prosperity to the left-behind areas of the region therefore areas such as North Devon, should be at the forefront of efforts.

The Leader also responded, as an urgent matter, to questions from Councillor Connett on the Government's new immigration controls, the current issues regarding recruitment and retention of care staff and the impact this new policy could have on filling care and care-related roles in Devon. The Leader said that the adult social care workforce was 90% British, 6% EU and 4% Non-EU origin. Whilst it was too early to say what impact a new policy may have, anything that could reduce the available pool of 'labour' was not likely to help the sector. The Leader endeavoured to keep the Council updated.

He also responded to questions from the floor on the Plough Arts Centre in Torrington and a potential shortage of junior doctors in light of Brexit.

**(b) Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environment**

Councillor Croad circulated a Report, as requested by Councillor Wright, on progress with the 10-point green action plan. The Cabinet Member highlighted that opportunities for enhanced green action had been considered by the Environmental Performance Board and relevant aspects by the Farms Estate Committee. A refreshed suite of environmental action plans was planned and progress highlight reports would be presented to each meeting of the Environmental Performance Board and also published online at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-policy>. The Report also included a table which summarised progress against some of the areas for enhanced environmental action endorsed by the Environmental Performance Board.

He also responded to Councillors Shaw and G Hook on the preparations that the Council and the NHS were making for the possible development of the Wuhan coronavirus into a global pandemic affecting Devon and the UK, including health and economic impacts. His Report said that on the announcement of the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China, Public Health England put in place arrangements to contain the spread of the virus. The World Health Organisation described the outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern and the NHS and the Council immediately implemented enhanced planning arrangements for Covid-19 and continue to do so on a daily basis; for example daily teleconferences including emergency planning, social care and human resources as well as the conversation by NHS providers in Devon. Communications were being cascaded and the Local Resilience Forum (through emergency planning staff) had reviewed the updated Devon and Cornwall Pandemic Influenza Plan and supporting plans which would be implemented immediately should a Covid-19 Pandemic be declared.

He circulated a Report, as requested by Councillor Hannaford, on women's health screening in Devon, including issues such as local trends and figures, areas of good performance and areas for improvement, breast cancer screenings, the review of cancer screening published in October, cervical cancer rates and the take up of screening appointments, vaccination rates for the human papilloma virus (HPV), technological innovations and work with employers and businesses to ensure time off and child care for health screening needs. Much of the Report had been compiled using information from the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Health Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19 as the data was publicly available. He also commented that NHS England/NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) was accountable for national screening and immunisation programmes which were commissioned via Section 7A arrangements. Local authorities, through Directors of Public Health, were responsible for seeking assurance that services were operating safely whilst maximising coverage and uptake.

The Cabinet Member also responded to questions from the floor on the Holbeam Dam, reporting that the Dam did overtop at the weekend (the second known occasion). There was a constant monitoring of the Dam and the flows along the River Lemon during Storm Dennis and the Dam remained safe, stable and operational.

The Environment Agency had also given the Council a statement which the Cabinet Member shared with the Council, highlighting that the reservoir was highly effective in reducing flood risk to Newton Abbot and also on the latest inspection of the dam under the Reservoirs Act 1975 and the works identified to improve the resilience of the dam for the long-term future.

**(c) Children's Services and Schools**

Councillor McInnes circulated a Report, as requested by Councillor Hannaford, on the Schools Company Academy Trust, including issues such as performance, outcomes, attainment and other general matters. The Cabinet Member provided a summary relating to the Council's historic concerns around The Schools Company Trust, the actions taken at that time and the new provision which was now in place. This included that initially the Trust's performance was considered acceptable, the Ofsted inspections during Autumn 2017 (which confirmed the Council's concerns), the financial notice to improve that was issued, the interim leadership provided through the DfE during much of 2018, the appointment of Wave Multi Academy Trust as the new sponsor for the Devon schools in November 2018 (considered one of the highest performing alternative provision providers nationally), the strong commissioning agreement between DCC and Wave, the review of the first year of provision which demonstrated significant progress in leadership and safeguarding and the attendance of WAVE at the Council's Children's Scrutiny Committee masterclass in November 2018 to provide further information on the provision and to answer questions.

**(d) Infrastructure Development and Waste**

Councillor Davis circulated a Report, as requested by Councillor Hannaford, on various railway related issues including the £500m Beeching Reversal Fund and investment in Devon, the medium to long term vision for the local railway network, the Dartmoor Railway Community Interest Company, disability access at St Thomas Railway Station and the potential nationalisation of South West Railways.

The Cabinet Member reported there would be a lot of competition for the £500m Beeching Reversal Fund pot (recently renamed the 'restoring your railway fund'), however, the Council would make the case for the most advanced schemes in Devon, including the desire to run regular weekday services between Okehampton and Exeter and funding to progress work with the Tavistock to Bere Alston rail line reopening.

The vision was also expressed with schemes in the short term such as the delivery of Marsh Barton and timetable changes to improve coordination between local Devon Metro services. The medium to long term, in addition to the Dawlish mainline resilience works and phased delivery of the 'northern route', was working with Network Rail on their Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) process, on which there were two CMSP corridor studies (the West of England corridor study, which was nearing completion and then work commencing on an Exeter to Bristol corridor study).

In relation to the Dartmoor Railway Community Interest Company, the Cabinet Member updated on the current lease arrangements and the ambition of regular weekday rail services being reintroduced between Okehampton and Exeter. The question posed on disability access at St Thomas Railway Station would be sent to partners at GWR. In relation to the potential nationalisation of South West Railways, this was a matter for the Train Operator, Department for Transport and Central Government.

She finally gave an update on progress for Marsh Barton Rail station, as requested by Councillor Connett, highlighting that ecological surveys and the environmental impact assessment had been completed, which would inform the planning submission for the new station, which was expected in late Spring this year. There had been positive meetings with disability and access groups as part of pre-consultation discussions and land agreements had been agreed in principle with Network Rail. Design was progressing well and, subject to

planning, the Council was hopeful of being on site at the start of 2021 with opening towards the end of 2021.

The Cabinet Member also responded to questions on other rail links including Barnstaple to London, Heathfield, Tavistock, Bere Alston, passing loops east of Exeter, the old primrose line, rail access in Torridge and the use of the trains for more freight.

**(e) Economy and Skills**

Councillor Gilbert circulated a Report, as requested by Councillor Hannaford, on the ongoing situation at Axminster Carpets including the role of the Council, LEP and other regional and economic forums, in terms of trying to keep the business open and viable. The Report highlighted the sad news that the company had entered into administration resulting in a significant number of redundancies. Buyers had been found for the underlay business Axfelt, plus the carpet outlet shop, enabling the retention of a small core of staff. The Council would be working closely with a range of local partner organisations to help facilitate a range of support options to staff facing redundancy, including access to 'Learn Devon's' services, for example adult learning, qualifications and skills training.

He further reported on the reopening of Appledore Shipyard, joined up thinking with Government and the economy of north Devon, as requested by Councillor Greenslade, adding that the commitment and political will from the Council was not in question when it came to re-opening Appledore Shipyard, given its importance to the local community. The Council had worked hard with partners and local MP to get to this point and find potential new owners for the shipyard. Regular engagement with Government over public investment remained ongoing, but the desire was a sustainable and viable future, securing long term employment and economic benefits for the local area.

**(f) Highways Management**

Councillor Hughes commented, as requested by Councillor Connett, on Parish and Town councils being permitted to install flashing speed awareness signs, the SCARF process and how many have been rejected, speedwatch schemes, where they were working successfully, the number of schemes waiting to be supported, the priority placed on Speedwatch by the Council and the Police and the current 20mph speed limit trials and timeline for other communities being able to adopt 20mph zones/limits and the provision of a Clearway or other parking restrictions to protect the highway at Haldon, in line with the council's requirements in response to a planning application at Haldon, for the forest park.

He commented that in the last three years 36 Parish & Town Councils had requested Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) via the SCARF process, of which 22 had been supported. In 12 cases, the requests could not be supported and there were often a number of different reasons for this.

In relation to Speedwatch, there were currently 135 live sites supported by 30 successfully operating community groups. 18 new groups had been identified, with a further 16 being re-activated. The Police had been piloting CSW Online, with plans to roll out across the whole force area during March and April 2020.

On 20mph, the working group had its first meeting on 24th January. Work had progressed including how a town-wide 20 mph trial scheme may be delivered for Newton Abbot, provisional data analysis and concept designs. As the project developed there would be extensive consultation with partner organisations.

The Cabinet Member offered to arrange a meeting with officers with regarding the clearway / parking restrictions at Haldon.

**269** **Minutes**

The Chair of the Council **MOVED** and it was duly **SECONDED** that the Minutes of the under-mentioned meetings of Committees be approved.

Appeals Committee - 6 January 2020  
Procedures Committee - 4 February 2020  
*(including approval of Minutes 82 and 83 relating to amendments to the terms of reference for the Appointments, Remuneration and Chief Officer Conduct Committee and also the Members Allowances Scheme)*  
Appointments & Remuneration Committee - 4 February 2020  
*(including approval of Minute 56 relating to the Appointment process for the Director of Public Health)*

Children's Scrutiny (Ordinary Meeting) - 20 January 2020  
Health & Adult Care Scrutiny (Ordinary Meeting) - 23 January 2020  
Corporate Infrastructure & Regulatory - 28 January 2020  
Services Scrutiny (Ordinary Meeting)

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

**270** **LGBT+ Inclusive Relationship and Sex Education (Minute 255 - 5 December 2019)**

Pursuant to County Council Minute 255 of 5 December 2019 relating to the Notice of Motion set out below as previously submitted and formally moved and seconded by Councillor Hannaford that:

*This Council notes that LGBT+ inclusive relationships and sex education is crucial to the development of young LGBT+ people, and in creating a more tolerant, caring and open society.*

*Council notes with concern that the current climate for LGBT+ people in the UK means that that nearly half - including 64 per cent of trans pupils - are bullied for being LGBT+ in Britain's schools.*

*Council notes that the repeal of Section 28 was a pivotal moment for LGBT+ rights, and that the UK must never move backwards on LGBT+ rights by stopping LGBT+ inclusive education in schools.*

*Council notes that people of all faiths and none are LGBT+ and it is vital that all children receive comprehensive and inclusive age appropriate relationships and sex education.*

*Council welcomes the introduction of statutory Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which all primary and secondary schools in England respectively will be required to teach from September 2020.*

*Council affirms unequivocally its support for compulsory LGBT+ inclusive Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education in all state funded primary and secondary schools.*

*Council commits to ensuring that schools are delivering RSE in line with new Government guidance.*

and having had regard to the advice of the Cabinet set out in Minute 449(a) 15 January 2020:

Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Cabinet's advice be accepted and that the principles of the Notice of Motion be supported and that the Council

commits to advocate, promote and challenge schools to deliver RSE in line with new Government guidance.

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED** and subsequently thereafter also **CARRIED** as the substantive motion.

**271**      **Care Leavers Council Tax Exemption (Minute 256 - 5 December 2019)**

(Councillor Connett declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being a Member of Teignbridge District Council)

Pursuant to County Council Minute 456 of 5 December 2019 relating to the Notice of Motion set out below as previously submitted and formally moved and seconded by Councillor Hannaford that:

*This Council **notes** that:*

- 1. Last year 780 young people (aged 16 or over) left the care of Devon County Council and began the difficult transition out of care and into adulthood.*
- 2. A 2016 report by The Children's Society found that when care leavers move into independent accommodation they begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time. The report showed that care leavers can find this extremely challenging and with no family to support them and insufficient financial education, are falling into debt and financial difficulty.*
- 3. Research from The Centre for Social Justice found that over half (57%) of young people leaving care have difficulty managing their money and avoiding debt when leaving care.*
- 4. The local authority has statutory corporate parenting responsibilities towards young people who have left care up until the age of 25.*
- 5. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 places corporate parenting responsibilities on district councils for the first time, requiring them to have regard to children in care and care leavers when carrying out their functions.*

*This Council **believes** that:*

- 1. To ensure that the transition from care to adult life is as smooth as possible, and to mitigate the chances of care leavers falling into debt as they begin to manage their own finances, they should be exempt from paying council tax until they are 25.*
- 2. Care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group for council tax debt.*

*This Council, therefore, **resolves**:*

- 1. To use the county council's convening powers and expertise in corporate parenting to work with all council tax collecting authorities to exempt all care leavers in the county from council tax up to the age of 25, sharing any arising costs proportionately.*

and having had regard to the advice of the Cabinet set out in Minute 449(b) of 15 January 2020:

Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Cabinet's advice be accepted and that whilst the Notice of Motion is welcomed, it be amended as follows;

- (a) Council note that in April 2020 there will be an evaluation of the first-year operation of the scheme established by the Devon Local Government Steering Group (targeted support including exceptional hardship funding and/or discretionary Council Tax write offs); and
- (b) that this review establish how the Council continue to support care leavers by establishing how many care leavers have been assisted, how they have benefited, the costs to the Collection Fund and to inform a further consideration of alternative options available for the future of support for care leavers.

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED** and subsequently thereafter also **CARRIED** as the substantive motion.

## **272 Artificial Light Pollution (Minute 257 - 5 December 2019)**

Pursuant to County Council Minute 257 of 5 December 2019 relating to the Notice of Motion set out below as previously submitted and formally moved and seconded by Councillor Shaw that:

*This County Council is concerned by scientific findings showing that artificial light pollution is a major factor in the decline of insect populations, and resolves to review the appropriateness of all external lighting for which the Council is responsible in the light of this concern, in conjunction with its Climate Emergency planning.*

and having had regard to the advice of the Cabinet set out in Minute 449(c) of 15 January 2020, Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Cabinet's advice be accepted and that spirit of the Notice of Motion be supported; and Council

- (a) Notes with concern recent research highlighting the effect of artificial lighting in contributing to the decline of insect populations;
- (b) Continues its current efforts to reduce the detrimental effects of artificial lighting; and
- (c) Investigates what further steps might be taken as part of its commitment to enhanced environmental action through the DCC Environmental Performance Board.

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED** and subsequently thereafter also **CARRIED** as the substantive motion.

## **273 Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service - Consultation and Options for Change (Minute 258 - 5 December 2019)**

Pursuant to County Council Minute 258 of 5 December 2019 relating to the Notice of Motion set out below as previously submitted and formally moved and seconded by Councillor Shaw:

*This County Council notes that the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service have carried out a public consultation on 7 options for change, all of which include the closure of fire stations at Appledore, Ashburton, Budleigh Salterton, Colyton, Kingston, Porlock, Topsham and Woolacombe, as well as the removal of engines from other stations, and that, while a potential overall improvement in safety has been claimed as a result of these options, all are likely to result in increased risk for the substantial proportion of Devon's population who live near the affected stations.*

*This County Council notes that divisional members representing affected stations who are not members of the Fire and Rescue Authority, while having had the opportunity to submit written representations to the consultation, would not normally be able under the Authority's Standing Orders to address the Authority's decision-making meeting, This Council therefore requests the Authority to provide an*

*opportunity, Standing Orders notwithstanding, for any affected members who wish so to speak.*

*This County Council also regrets the failure of the Fire and Rescue Service to consult directly with the Council as a partner Category 1 responder organisation in the provision of emergency services under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and notes that detailed discussion of the impact on civil contingencies such as flooding was not provided in the consultation. The Council therefore resolves to communicate its concern to the Service about this aspect of the consultation.*

and having had regard to the advice of the Cabinet set out in Minute 449(d) of 15 January 2020:

Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Cabinet's advice be accepted and that no further action be taken on the Notice of Motion and Council notes the decisions made on 10 January 2020 by the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority about changes to operation of the fire and rescue service, the details of which are summarised in the statement here;

<http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/News/Newsdesk/PressReleaseArticle.cfm?ReleaseID=2277&siteCategoryId=3&T1ID=26&T2ID=36>

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED** and subsequently thereafter also **CARRIED** as the substantive motion.

**274**      **Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health and the 'Every Mind Matters' Campaign (Minute 259 - 5 December 2019)**

Pursuant to County Council Minute 259 of 5 December 2019 relating to the Notice of Motion set out below as previously submitted and formally moved and seconded by Councillor Scott:

*DCC to sign the Prevention Concordat for better mental health.*

*Recognises and commits to support The Every Mind Matters campaign.*

*Supports the mental health of all DCC employees and contractors, this is key to providing first class services and leadership in Devon.*

*Understands the need to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health through the lived experience of people who have suffered mental health problems.*

*(further information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevention-concordat-for-better-mental-health-consensus-statement/prevention-concordat-for-better-mental-health>)*

and having had regard to the advice of the Cabinet set out in Minute 449(e) of 15 January 2020:

Councillor Hart **MOVED** and Councillor McInnes **SECONDED** that the Cabinet's advice be accepted and that Notice of Motion be supported and that the Council requests the support of all Members for signing the Prevention Concordat; in promoting the Public Health England 'Every Mind Matters' campaign; in supporting the mental health of the Council's employees and, through its commissioned services, the mental health of providers; and to support the work the Council currently does – and will continue to do – in using the lived experience of people to better understand and to help and prevent mental ill-health.

The amendment in the name of Councillor Hart was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED** and subsequently thereafter also **CARRIED** as the substantive motion.



**275** **Totnes and Littlehempston Cycle / Footpath Scheme and the Council's Cycling and Multiuse Trail**

Councillor Hodgson **MOVED** and Councillor Biederman **SECONDED**

*That the proposed Cycle and footpath link scheme between Totnes and Littlehempston be added to the County Council's current Cycling and Multiuse Trail strategy as this will:*

- 1. provide an important non-vehicular link between Totnes and its adjacent parish and village centre in Littlehempston;*
- 2. support the SHDC A385 Air Quality Management Action Plan (it is listed as an action) to address traffic congestion and air quality in Totnes and environs;*
- 3. complete an important missing link of the national NC2 cycle route (which when complete will link Dover in Kent with St Austell in Cornwall) supporting commuters as well as tourism; and,*
- 4. thereby support DCC's declaration of a climate emergency.*

In accordance with Standing Order 6(6) the Notice of Motion was referred, without discussion, to the Cabinet for consideration.

**276** **The Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Bill 2019-20**

Councillor Hannaford **MOVED** and Councillor Hart **SECONDED** that in accordance with Standing Order 6(6), the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Hannaford be considered at this meeting.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

Councillor Hannaford then **MOVED** (with the amendment shown below and with the consent of the Council) and Councillor Hart **SECONDED**;

**Council notes**

*In July 2019, the Work and Pensions Committee and Education Committee held a joint evidence session on school holiday poverty.*

*Following the session, the chair of the Work and Pensions Committee, Frank Field, sent a letter to the Secretary of State for Education stating that the testimony at the session from parents and parental support organisations was "profoundly distressing" and raised the issue of school uniform costs, in particular schools using particular providers for generic items.*

*The letter asked the Secretary of State to consider what the Government can do in supporting parents dealing with high uniform costs. It further stated that the committees would return to the wider issue later in the year, with further evidence sessions and a report.*

**Council notes with concern.**

*The Children's Commission on Poverty, supported by the Children's Society, published The Wrong Blazer: Time for action on school uniform costs in 2015, a report that highlighted concerns about uniform costs, recommended making the DfE guidance statutory, as well as that the Government should explore a school uniform cost cap.*

*In August 2018, the Children's Society published an update to the report, based on a survey of 1,000 parents, which highlighted uniform costs and the potential impact on children:*

*The report, **The Wrong Blazer 2018: Time for action on school uniform costs**, revealed families are paying out more on school uniforms, with an average of **£340 per year for each child at secondary school** – an increase of 7% or £24 since 2015. Parents of **primary school children spent on average £255 per year**, an increase of 2% since 2015.*

*The high cost of uniforms can be put down in part to school policies that make parents buy clothing from specialist shops rather than giving them the choice of buying items at cheaper stores such as supermarkets or high-street chains. Where parents have to buy two or more items of school uniform from a specific supplier, spending was found to be an average of £71 per year higher for secondary school children and £77 higher for primary school children.*

*For children themselves, the cost of school uniform can have a serious impact. Around one in 10 parents said it had led to their child wearing uniform that didn't fit properly, and more than one in 20 said that their child had been sent home for wearing the wrong clothes or shoes as a result of them struggling to afford the cost.*

*The full report again recommended that the Government make the DfE guidance statutory, and also that the Government should end the freeze on key benefits and tax credits for families with children.*

### **Council welcomes**

***The Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Bill 2019-20*** that was introduced by Labour Mike Amesbury MP following the Private Members' Bills Ballot on 9 January 2020.

*First reading took place on 5 February 2020 and the Bill's second reading is due on 13 March 2020.*

*The bill is designed to cut the cost of school uniforms in England. The draft legislation would aim to strengthen existing guidance encouraging schools to keep down costs.*

*It could also force schools to keep compulsory branded items, like blazers, to a minimum. Especially as an inquiry last year heard items like blazers embroidered with school logos can cost up to three times more.*

*The bill, whose details have yet to be finalised, now stands a much better chance of approval with government support.*

*The draft law has already received the backing of some Tory MPs such as Huw Merriman and Kevin Hollinrake, as well as Lib Dem education spokesperson Layla Moran.*

*It understood that the bill would aim to make government uniform guidance statutory, meaning schools would be legally required to follow it.*

*The move would bring the English school system into line with Wales, where new statutory guidance came into force in September last year.*

**Council therefore resolves**

*That Council be asked to formally write to all Members of Parliament in the Devon County Council area, ~~clearly raising all these issues and concerns, with some local context,~~ to urge them to actively support and vote for this Private Members Bill, through all its parliamentary stages to ensure that it is enacted into law at the earliest opportunity.*

The Motion (as amended above) in the name of Councillor Hannaford was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

**277**

**Support to Town and Parish Councils and Speed Awareness Signs**

Councillor Connett **MOVED** and Councillor Way **SECONDED**

*'Parish and Town Councils across Devon should be supported in providing the popular 'flashing or vehicle activated speed awareness' signs in their communities and the current fog of bureaucracy imposed by Devon County Council is ended. We call for a simpler system to help and support our local communities tackle concerns about speeding vehicles by giving our local Highways Officers the authority to agree the number and location of the 'vehicle activated speed awareness' signs with Parish and Town Councils'.*

In accordance with Standing Order 6(6) the Notice of Motion was referred, without discussion, to the Cabinet for consideration.

[NOTES:

*Prayers were offered prior to the commencement of the meeting, to those who wished to attend, by Revd David Fletcher, Vicar of the Parish Church of St Peter & St Mary Magdalene, Barnstaple).*

*The Minutes of this meeting and of any Committee referred to above (together with minutes of the Council's Cabinet, Health & Wellbeing Board and Pension Board which while not part of the formal Agenda of this meeting are available on the County Council's Website.*

*Minutes should be read in association with any Reports or documents referred to therein, for a complete record. 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>]*

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 6.59 pm





## QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Thursday 20 February 2020

**1. QUESTION FROM MR BENNETT-GREEN (IN ATTENDANCE)  
Re: Traffic through Halberton**

Cars over the past few years have increased significantly through Halberton, in Mid Devon and at certain times of the day attempting to walk through the village can be a most unpleasant and daunting experience. There have been attempts to slow the traffic down by the use of 20 mph 'flashing signs', for example, which seemingly have now ceased to function, and apparently Devon CC now say they are too expensive to replace.

Therefore, I have contacted the prospective Labour Party Police Crime Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson, who, in the first instance, suggests Speedwatch is the 'way to go'.

Consequently, to start the ball rolling, Halberton Primary School have been approached to come up with a 'Traffic Plan', which children and parents will formulate, in order to give feedback on their experiences going and returning from school. This will be an initial project to gain an understanding 'on the ground', of experiences from our younger residents.

Can you as Devon CC respond to our concerns, and advise please?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

DCC have recently had a meeting with Halberton Parish Council who highlighted many concerns. As you say Halberton Primary School have been asked to provide a school travel plan which is a living document, updated every year, that sets out how a school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel to and from school. The main emphasis is on reducing the number of children being driven to and from school, therefore reducing traffic congestion outside the school.

It was also identified that Halberton has a Community Speedwatch which has not been active due to lack of volunteers, you may wish to approach the Parish Council with a view to reinvigorating this community initiative.





## QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS

Thursday 20 February 2020

**1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD**  
**Re: Okehampton Sunday Rail Service**

Will the County Council continue to support the 2020 Summer Sunday service to Okehampton?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR DAVIS**

The announcement that Dartmoor Railway has gone into administration makes it difficult to offer anything definitive at this stage; however, the County Council has made provision for supporting the 2020 Summer Sunday service between Exeter and Okehampton.

**2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD**  
**Re: Appledore Shipyard**

Can the Cabinet Member please update Council on plans to reopen Appledore Shipyard, to include:

- do we now have a date for reopening?
- is the Cabinet Member aware that the Ferguson Marine shipyard in Scotland was nationalised at the end of 2019, to stay open, and is due to receive £49 million pounds of public investment according to budget documents?
- does the Cabinet Member agree that if no viable private sector solution can be found to keep Appledore Shipyard open, that it should be renationalised and given government related work to underpin any other work streams?
- Furthermore, does he also agree, that Appledore Shipyard, once renationalised, should also receive parity of funding in line with the shipyard in Scotland to make sure that it becomes a hub for innovation and best practice?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR GILBERT**

The commitment and political will from Devon County Council is not in question when it comes to re-opening Appledore Shipyard. We know how important it is to the local community, and we're as keen as everyone to get a deal over the line as soon as possible and get the shipyard up and running. We have worked extremely hard with partners and local MP Geoffrey Cox to get to this point and find potential new owners for the shipyard. Regular engagement with Government over how public investment can be secured to support the re-opening of the yard remains ongoing. Critically, we wish to achieve a sustainable and viable future for the yard and secure long term employment and economic benefits for the local area.

**3. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD**  
**Re: Police Community Support Officers**

Can the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel Member please brief Council on the recent decision to cut the number of Police Community Support Officers in Devon and Cornwall? Are

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there measures in place to allow PCSO to become Police Officers and do we have any indication how many we will lose in the Devon County Council area and in which communities?

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

The Cabinet Member will provide a verbal response.

## 4. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT Re: Betting Companies access to Children's personal details

Betting companies have been given access to a database containing the personal details of millions of children and young people, the Times newspaper reports. It is said the Learning Records Service database, intended to provide schools and other education providers with information about children's educational achievements, had been shared beyond the agreement made with the Department for Education resulting in gambling firms being able to use it.

Is Devon County Council aware of this breach? Has it led to the data of any children and young people in Devon being disclosed to gambling firms or any one else without proper authority? What checks will Devon County Council make to ensure data it provides about children and young people in the County to the Government or any other organisation are kept safe?

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

The Council understands that this nationally reported alleged data protection breach is currently being investigated by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). To-date, Devon County Council has not been notified as part of these investigations.

This alleged data protection breach concerns an information system that is operated by the Education Skills Funding Agency and is commissioned by the DfE. Investigations into this alleged data protection breach are continuing. Until the conclusion of these investigations, the council is unable to confirm whether any data regarding Devon school pupils, might have been accessed.

In this instance, the Learner Records Service holds information from a variety of sources. The Council undertakes a Data Protection Impact Assessment before commencing any new initiative that involves the sharing of large quantities of personal data. This ensures that the privacy risks associated with any new initiative are documented, and mitigating controls are put in place to manage these risks during the life of the initiative. The Council also has a security assessment process to ensure that those who we contract with to hold personal data, are able to provide the highest levels of assurance over the security arrangements they have in place to safeguard this data.

## 5. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT Re: Children and young people in care

Please confirm how many children and young people were in the care of Devon County Council for each month from January 2018 to the end of January 2020.

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES



Month	Number of Children Looked After	Placement outside DCC
31-Jan-18	708	177
28-Feb-18	706	182
31-Mar-18	695	175
30-Apr-18	710	177
31-May-18	708	171
30-Jun-18	705	168
31-Jul-18	727	179
31-Aug-18	715	177
30-Sep-18	725	173
31-Oct-18	723	172
30-Nov-18	733	179
31-Dec-18	746	185
31-Jan-19	757	182
28-Feb-19	750	178
31-Mar-19	750	180
30-Apr-19	768	190
31-May-19	764	190
30-Jun-19	776	183
31-Jul-19	790	193
31-Aug-19	789	196
30-Sep-19	787	186
31-Oct-19	786	192
30-Nov-19	762	184
31-Dec-19	762	179
31-Jan-20	768	182

**6. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Children in Care outside Devon**

How many children and young people in each of those months were placed in care setting outside of the Devon County Council area?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES**

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The number of children and young people placed outside of the Devon county council area is included in the table provided in response to question 5.

Currently, 23% of children in the care of Devon county council are placed outside Devon. This compares very favourably to an England average rate of 41% and a Statistical Neighbour rate of 26%.

There are many good reasons why children may be placed outside Devon, and most often that will be because of the appropriateness of the provision to meet their particular assessed need.

**7. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Distances from Devon**

In each of those months, what was the furthest distance a child or young person was placed from the Devon County Council area?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES**

We do not currently capture data in a way that makes producing an answer to this question on a month-by-month basis possible within the timescales before full council.

**8. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Social Worker Visits**

In each case, has Devon County Council ensured it met its obligations for a social worker to visit the child or young person wherever they were in care?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES**

Visits by social workers is a statutory requirement and the service assures itself that it meets its obligations through a range of different measures, including:

- A weekly report on visits is generated and circulated to managers in the service.
- Monitoring by Independent Reviewing Officers (with an escalation policy in place if required).
- Quality Assurance of providers
- Performance and management information reports.
- Supervision of staff.

During the recent Ofsted inspection, inspectors fed back during one of the daily update meetings that children placed outside Devon received regular visits from their social workers and similarly were well supported by the Virtual School too.

**9. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Budgets for highways drainage**

For each of the financial years from 2009/10 to date please report on the approved budget for highways drainage and the actual spend at year end.

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

	Budget £	Spend £
2009/10	6,015,153.00	4,705,652.98
2010/11	5,701,805.00	4,577,578.89

2011/12	5,094,219.00	4,767,783.65
2012/13	6,726,514.00	5,562,340.29
2013/14	6,610,982.00	4,523,489.49
2014/15	6,555,735.00	5,552,195.68
2015/16	5,222,735.00	5,231,220.00
2016/17	5,337,527.00	4,459,497.87
2017/18	5,136,631.00	4,044,566.61
2018/19	6,897,893.00	7,342,878.01

**10. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**

**Re: Road Warden Scheme**

For each of the years since the start of the Road Warden scheme, please report on the number of Road Wardens who have completed the Chapter 8 Training, and renewed their authorisation when it expired?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

The chapter 8 qualification is valid for 5 years. The number of Parish and Town council representatives who have received the training are as follows:

Year	Representatives
2014	6
2015	62
2016	52
2017	68
2018	20
2019	22
2020	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>237</b>

We are starting to receive enquiries from and have contacted those whose qualification has expired. Training will be arranged when numbers enable it to be cost effective to do so.

**11. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**

**Re: Potholes**

Is the County Council aware of how many potholes have been filled each year by community road wardens? If so, please give the number for each year.

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

Whilst we do not have a robust record of the number of potholes filled by community road wardens, we do have a record of the amount of pothole repair material supplied to each parish in 25kg tubs, totalling 971 tubs:

Organisation	Date of order	Tubs ordered
Bishops Clyst Parish Council		35
Lustleigh Parish Council	13-Jan-20	52

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Shaldon Parish Council	13-Nov-19	30
Kenn Parish Council	08-Jan-18	26
Thornbury Hamlets Council	22-Mar-18	52
Plymtree Parish Council	16-Apr-18	8
Thornbury Hamlets Council	22-May-18	52
All Saints Parish Council	24-May-18	10
Ashton Parish Council	24-May-18	2
Chardstock Parish Council	24-May-18	10
Newton Poppleford & Harpford Parish Council	24-May-18	10
Poltimore Parish Council	24-May-18	10
Shute Parish Council	24-May-18	20
North Bovey Conservation Group	09-Jul-19	52
Great Torrington Town Council	11-Jun-18	20
Winkleigh Parish Council	11-Jun-18	6
Bere Ferrers Parish Council	28-Jun-18	5
Modbury Parish Council	02-Oct-19	52
Modbury Parish Council	06-Sep-18	52
Horrabridge Parish council	06-Nov-18	34
Bradford & Cookbury Parish Council	19-Dec-19	52
Winkleigh Parish Council	25-Apr-19	12
Whimple Parish Council	05-Feb-20	52
Rattery Parish Council	05-Feb-20	52
Axminster Town Council	13-Dec-18	10
Plymtree Parish Council	18-Dec-18	10
Ilfracombe Town Council	18-Dec-18	34
Nymet Rowland Parish Council	04-Feb-19	4
Sheepwash Parish Council	04-Feb-19	10
Thornbury Hamlets Council	04-Feb-19	25
Winkleigh Parish Council	04-Feb-19	6
Bradford & Cookbury Parish Council	12-Mar-19	52
Lustleigh Parish Council	13-Mar-19	52
North Bovey Conservation Group	13-Mar-19	52
Thorverton & Brampford Speke	11-Apr-19	10

971

However, as a Road Warden myself I have filled in excess of 125 potholes in my area.

**12. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Number of potholes reported/repared**

For the year 2013/14 and each subsequent year to date, please confirm how many potholes were reported/known to the County Council and how many were repaired.

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

Potholes reported:

2013/2014 – 80210  
2014/2015 – 43886  
2015/2016 – 55853  
2016/2017 – 48281  
2017/2018 – 72906  
2018/2019 – 50930

Potholes repaired

2013/2014 – 72541  
2014/2015 – 43701  
2015/2016 – 55806  
2016/2017 – 48177  
2017/2018 – 72338  
2018/2019 – 50309

**13. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Speed Awareness Signs**

Please set out the process through which Parish and Town Councils can install flashing speed awareness signs in their communities

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

DCC welcomes approaches from Communities interested in funding and operating their own VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) and has worked with several Parish Councils who have funded the purchase of their own, including Kennford, Chudleigh, Sticklepath and Wembury.

VAS have been shown to be effective in reducing vehicles speeds when sited appropriately and can also be an important element of a co-ordinated approach to speed management in Communities.

VAS are ideally sited where there is evidence of a speeding problem as deploying them where they are rarely activated is not good value for money. Therefore VAS (including those funded by Parish or Town Councils) would be considered following a SCARF (Speed Compliance Action Review Forum) assessment indicating that VAS are appropriate.

Where Parish or Town Councils wish to fund a VAS, the Authority would then engage to agree;

- Design (to ensure that the signs communicate the appropriate message to drivers)
- Location (to ensure that they are seen by approaching drivers at an appropriate distance, and can accurately detect the speed of those vehicles)
- Funding (including costs relating to purchase and installation)
- Insurance (the PC will be responsible for insuring the unit against claims for Injury, Accident or Damage)
- Public Liability Cover (the PC will be responsible for providing cover, at least £5m is recommended)

The Authority would facilitate purchase and installation if required, and where reliant on mains power cover those ongoing costs.

**14. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**  
**Re: Care Fees and Land Registry**

In order to secure the payment of care fees, how many residential properties has Devon County Council registered its interests in with the Land Registry?

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## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR LEADBETTER

As of 12th February 2020, the Council has registered an interest with the Land Registry Office on 101 properties.

### 15. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT Re: Care Fees owed to DCC

For each of the years 2016/17 onwards, to date, how much is owed to Devon County Council for care fees and the number of people the fees relate to.

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR LEADBETTER

As of 1st April 2016:

### Residential Care:

£36,852,207: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months  
£13,361,210: Total fees owed of which:

£8,027,845: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Secured  
£2,286,158: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,805: Number of chargeable clients at the time

### Community Based Care:

£6,317,378: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months  
**£927,068: Total fees owed of which:**

£213,244: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

2,575: Number of chargeable clients at the time

As of 1st April 2017:

### Residential Care:

£39,285,942: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months  
**£14,290,414: Total fees owed of which:**

£8,500,823: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Secured  
£2,741,764: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,767: Number of chargeable clients at the time

### Community Based Care:

£7,858,044: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months  
**£1,210,405: Total fees owed of which:**

£311,942: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

2,954: Number of chargeable clients at the time

As of 1st April 2018:

### Residential Care:

£38,105,952: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months  
**£14,407,739: Total fees owed of which:**

£9,000,212: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Secured  
£2,534,023: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,533: Number of chargeable clients at the time

**Community Based Care:**

£9,280,255: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months

**£1,520,238: Total fees owed of which:**

£443,717: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,164: Number of chargeable clients at the time

As of 1st April 2019:

**Residential Care:**

£38,383,450: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months

**£15,512,199: Total fees owed of which:**

£9,597,473: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Secured

£2,701,875: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,584: Number of chargeable clients at the time

**Community Based Care:**

£10,608,453: Charges raised in the preceding 12 months

**£1,931,961: Total fees owed of which:**

£552,692: Fees over 12 weeks old owed to DCC and Unsecured

3,422: Number of chargeable clients at the time

NB: It is difficult to secure fees (as the law prevents this) for Community Based Care client's because any property owned usually continues to be lived in by the person.

**16. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT**

**Re: Libraries Unlimited**

How much financial support and officer time (expressed financially) has Devon County Council provided outside of its contract to Libraries Unlimited in each of the years since Libraries Unlimited was established?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD**

Since Libraries Unlimited was established in April 2016, the Council has provided financial support outside of their annual contract value as a one-off payment in 2016/17 of £450,000 and a one-off payment in 2018/19 of £55,000. The Council does not record data on officer time provided.

**17. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW**

**Re: Flooding in Colyton**

A substantial flat section of the road between Colyton and Offwell at Holmebush/Suttons Cross has been flooded extensively throughout the last two winters (and at other times when there has been significant rainfall). Vehicles have got into difficulties on several occasions, and locals make long detours to avoid the flood (the road is the main route from Seaton and Colyton to Sutton Tip). The matter has been raised repeatedly by four different parish councils, and at four consecutive meetings of the Seaton and Colyton Traffic Group between July 2019 and January 2020. I have most recently been informed that the landowner of an adjacent field, who the Neighbourhood Highways Officer has written to, is responsible for preventing the resolution of the problem. Will the Council now take urgent action, including whatever is necessary to make other parties fulfil their responsibilities, to make this road safe and passable?

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## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

The site is drained from a single gully with an outlet pipe across private land. It appears the section on private land, which was piped approximately 40 years ago, is currently blocked and has limited access.

The land owner has been written to and spoken with in regard to their responsibilities by the local Highways Officer. The landowner has since undertaken some remedial measures to remove water from the road. The local highways Officer is continuing to liaise with them to support their works to clear the drainage system in order for DCC to undertake patching works to repair the surface.

## 18. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT

### Re: Clearway at Haldon

Why is Devon County Council retreating from creating the promised Clearway at Haldon which the County Council said was necessary as a result of the development and attractions provided at Haldon Forest park by the Forestry Commission?

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

When the Clearway Order for Haldon was published, a number of objections were received to the proposal. As the effect of a Clearway prohibits loading and unloading the Order cannot be made without holding a Public Inquiry. As this would be costly, the proposal is being re-considered with alternatives being investigated. I would be content to arrange a meeting with officers to update you as to progress.

## 19. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW

### Re: Axe Beacon Federation

Will the Cabinet member explain the Council's role in the decision to remove Colyton Primary School from the Axe Beacon Federation, which has resulted in the Federation governors' proposal to dissolve the Federation and to transfer the three other primary schools, Seaton, Shute and Kilmington, to academy trusts based outside East Devon?

## REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

In October 2019 Colyton Primary School was judged inadequate at an Ofsted inspection. This judgement means that their pathway is mapped out through government legislation, which requires that any school judged to be inadequate is converted into an academy as part of a multi-academy trust. The governing body has ensured that an interim partnership arrangement with a strong Devon MAT is in place for Colyton.

The impact of this judgement on the three other Federation schools, however, was that in order for them to focus on their own improvement journey as maintained schools, they have had to dissolve the federation.

Supported by the Local Authority, the new governing board has worked tirelessly to stabilise leadership across all the schools and secured strong partnerships between the remaining schools and other high performing schools within the maintained sector. The opportunity to collaborate with other schools who have a robust record of school improvement is a very positive step and will drive better outcomes for the children whilst staying within the maintained family of schools.

## 20. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PROWSE

### Re: Working from Home Scheme

The Working from Home scheme:



- When was it introduced?
- How many staff take the opportunity to access the scheme?
- Does the Leader agree that if the scheme was further promoted this is another example of this Council's commitment to engage staff and others to contribute in a positive way towards our target of being carbon neutral thus having positive outcomes on our climate change activities?

## **REPLY BY COUNCILLOR PARSONS**

Devon County Council has a number of working policies and practices that enable and encourage staff to work flexibly and agilely which can result in staff reducing the amount of travel they undertake for work purposes, because not all roles are suitable for homeworking. These include:

Devon County Council's Corporate Flexible Working Policy which was introduced in April 2009 and applies to all DCC Staff, including Centrally Employed Teachers but excluding All Staff in Schools. The Council recognises, and supports, the benefits of offering flexible working in its retention of staff, together with the importance of helping its employees balance their work and home life by offering flexible working arrangements that enable them to balance their working life with other priorities, which could include parental and other caring responsibilities; their wellbeing; life-long learning; voluntary work; leisure activities and other interests. In turn it recognises that staffing levels must at all times remain in line with the demands of the business.

Devon County Council's Health and Safety Arrangements for Teleworking. Teleworking is a way of employees using information and communication technology (ICT) to work away from their regular base. Using ICT allows employees to occasionally be based at home, in other locations or mobile such as from vehicles.

Devon County Council's Formal Homeworking policy. Formal homeworking can apply to full and part-time employees and is where work is carried out at home for the entire employee's contractual hours with the home designated in the contract of employment as the employee's work base for tax purposes. Decisions on the appropriateness of homeworking will always be made on an individual basis as not all roles, individuals or homes will be suitable for homeworking.

Phil Norrey, Chief Executive, supports the view that 'Our need to work in new and different ways has opened up a variety of opportunities for individuals and teams within DCC. Now is the time to embrace these opportunities to help us work more flexibly for the benefit of all'.

The Council has invested in technology which gives all staff the opportunity to work effectively from any location where connectivity is available including home. All DCC offices are equipped with Wi-Fi and technology enabling staff to attend meetings virtually which significantly reduces the need to travel for business meetings. Inside Devon (the weekly Council newsletter) is used to highlight good practice, good examples of home or remote working and encourage staff to explore the options open to them.

Arrangements for these flexible working options are made at a local level between staff and their line managers meaning the numbers of staff taking up these arrangements are not monitored centrally.

## **21. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE Re: Budget Provisions**

Would the Cabinet Member for Resources Management please set out by headline service area the change in real terms in the value of the budget provision for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 and for 2020/21 compared to the budget for 2009/10.

## **REPLY BY COUNCILLOR BARKER**

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The change in real terms in the value of the budget for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20:

	<b>Net Change from 2019/20 to 2020/21 in cash terms</b>	<b>real terms net change from 2019/20 to 2020/21, adjusting for RPI at 2.2% (Dec 2019)</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Adult Care and Health	+ 10.0%	+ 7.7%
Children's	+ 8.5%	+ 6.2%
Community, Public Health, Environment & Prosperity	+ 2.4%	+ 0.2%
Corporate	+ 7.1%	+ 4.8%
Cross Council Savings Strategies	- 87.1%	- 87.4%
Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste	+ 5.1%	+ 2.8%
<b>Total Service Budgets</b>	<b>+ 8.7%</b>	<b>+ 6.3%</b>

The change in real terms in the value of the budget for 2020/21 compared to 2009/10:

Due to restructures and funding changes it is not possible to show this by service area and even using the overall position is not possible to compare like with like. However, RPI over this time has increased by 37% and service budgets have increased by 19.3%.

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

### **Introduction**

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 20 February 2020:

By Councillor Greenslade on:

*The Leader is Party to the “Great South West” initiative which is attempting to push the case for economic regeneration. A very laudable objective.*

*In respect of the meeting late last year with the Prime Minister who apparently gave his backing to this initiative can the Leader please say what projects the “Great South West” Organisation is specifically promoting which will directly benefit economic regeneration in Northern Devon?*

### **Great South West**

The Great South West (GSW) is a partnership covering Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset geographies. This is an alliance of the 3 LEAs, businesses, local authorities, colleges and Universities set up to demonstrate the productivity benefits of allocating funding to the SW area in the same way as the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine areas.

With the aim that we will deliver a £45 billion boost to the regional economy and create 190,000 jobs by 2035. Initial governance arrangements are in place with Steve Hindley, formerly Chairman of the HotSW LEP as the GSW chairman.

By working together at a larger geography, we can make a better case to Government for significant “levelling up” investment, responding to the Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine etc.

The GSW has produced a prospectus entitled “Securing our Future” which highlights the need for and benefits of funding for the area. The proposal describes the transformational change opportunity for the Green and Blue economies, which relate to land and marine based economies in our area, with a focus on clean growth giving GSW the potential to lead on clean energy economic restructuring.

With our natural and research assets the GSW has the potential to become the Clean Energy powerhouse for the country.

At this early stage, there is not a list of projects as such. The prospectus is highlighting themes from the Government’s Industrial Strategy, which Government is looking for local areas to deliver through the Local Industrial Strategies, such as: Clean Growth, Digital Connectivity, Social Mobility, Healthy Aging, Transport infrastructure and Advanced Manufacturing – such as Agri-tech, Marine, Nuclear and Aerospace. There is a focus on how digital technology and infrastructure investment can be used to raise the productivity of the area.

The prospectus seeks £2m enabling funding from Government for the first 3 years in addition to support for an enhanced export and investment hub, rural productivity deal and a South West tourism action zone.

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The prospectus has been presented to the Prime Minister, Treasury, MHCLG and BEIS. This is on a geographical scale the Government, MPs, business leaders and key media figures seem interested in supporting.

The region's MPs have been lobbying Government at the highest level for the GSW to be formally recognised and for the £2m of pump priming funding to be allocated in the budget to launch the project. GSW partners held a meeting with Western Gateway colleagues to explore the appetite for future collaboration and mutual support on shared priorities. There was a positive response from all parties and agreement to continue working on this.

There is a joint meeting (APPG) being held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, with the region's MPs to discuss ongoing strategy aimed at securing government support for the project. There will be attendees from the 3 LEPs and local authorities.

There is a launch of the prospectus at the South West Business Council event at Exeter Racecourse on 6<sup>th</sup> March and this will be attended by the 3 LEPs as well as local Councillors and business people.

At this stage the concept of a Great South West doesn't identify individual projects in specific areas. However the key aim is to bring prosperity to the left-behind of our region and for that reason areas, such as Northern Devon, should be very much at the forefront of our efforts and we would wish to see such areas benefitting significantly from the establishment of a Great South West powerhouse.

## **John Hart**

Cabinet Member

Policy, Corporate and Asset Management

**Report of the Cabinet Member for  
Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental  
Services**

**Introduction**

I have been asked to report to Council by Members as follows:

- 1. by Councillor Wright on progress on the 10 point green action plan**
  
- 2. by Councillor Shaw on the preparations that the Council and the NHS are making for the possible development of the Wuhan coronavirus into a global pandemic affecting Devon and the UK;**
  
- 3. by Councillor Hannaford on Women's health screening in Devon, as follows:**
  - *Overall local trends and figures across the main health concerns for women.*
  - *In which areas are we doing well and others that we need to improve.*
  - *Number of breast cancer screenings missed locally, as one in four nationally are missed.*
  - *Time and accessibility of breast screening appointments.*
  - *The major review of cancer screening published in October suggesting women should be offered lunchtime mammograms near their workplace to rescue screening rates.*
  - *Cervical cancer rates in Britain halved between the late 1980s and mid-2000s, but progress has since been 'stalling and stagnating', according to Cancer Research UK figures recently published.*
  - *The latest figures show less than three-quarters of women invited for cervical screening take it up, and this falls even further in younger age groups and more deprived regions. How are we doing locally?  
The current vaccination rates for the human papilloma virus (HPV) in Devon.*
  - *New technological innovations that make it possible to potentially home test for cervical cancer in a less invasive way.*
  - *Can we work with local employers and businesses to ensure women have time off and child care for their health screening needs?*

## **Reports**

Taking the requests for reports in order:

### **1. 10 point green action plan**

I last reported on this issue at the County Council meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

Despite not adopting the 10 Point Green Action Plan originally proposed through the Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. Wright, this Council did endorse the principle of pursuing further action to address environmental issues. As a result, opportunities for enhanced green action were considered by the Environmental Performance Board last August and relevant aspects were noted by the Farms Estate Committee in September 2009. A refreshed suite of environmental action plans is planned, although their production has been delayed due to the current priority being given to the Devon Climate Emergency.

Through my previous commentary, I indicated that future progress would be reported through the Environmental Performance Board and the publication of the annual Environmental Performance Statement. However, to ensure that this information is readily available to all Members and also to the public, the progress highlight reports presented to each meeting of the Environmental Performance Board will be published online via the DCC Environmental Policy web pages (at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-policy>). This approach will be adopted following the next scheduled Board meeting in May.

In the meantime, the table below summarises progress against a few of the areas for enhanced environmental action endorsed by the Environmental Performance Board.

<b>Proposed Action</b>	<b>Progress Since Autumn 2019</b>
Work with Woodland Trust in launching a new Devon free tree scheme linked to ash dieback.	Pilot scheme successfully established in November, with free tree packs recently offered to 45 landowners.
Launch a new 'Landmark Trees' planting scheme with Town and Parish Councils, again linked to ash dieback.	Separate pilot scheme successfully established, with landmark trees recently offered to 31 Parish Councils.  Funding secured for major new project (Saving Devon's Treescapes) through Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum to provide a future approach to these tree planting schemes.
Approach all County Farms Estate tenants to review opportunities for new tree planting and provide tree stock.	First planting scheme undertaken in December (through DCC staff volunteering event) at DCC tenanted farm near Silverton (200 trees).  Ongoing programme of planting at a series of other County Farm Estate holdings in

	preparation, for implementation through Saving Devon's Treescape project.
Promote and support a partnership initiative to review the Devon Ancient Woodland Inventory through DBRC.	Funding contributions secured through local and national partners (including DCC). DBRC project commencement in December 2019.

## 2. Wuhan coronavirus

At the point of announcement of the Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China, Public Health England, as the lead government agency for health protection matters, put in place arrangements to contain the spread of the virus which are currently being implemented with all immediate changes required according to the status of the outbreak.

When the World Health Organisation described the outbreak as public health emergency of international concern, the NHS and Devon County Council immediately implemented enhanced planning arrangements for Covid-19 and continue to do so on a daily basis. As an example of the planning activities going on, Devon County Council's Director of Public Health chairs a daily teleconference which includes emergency planning, social care and human resources. NHS providers in Devon also currently have regular teleconferences, chaired by the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group, which includes the three Directors of Public Health. We also participate in a call with PHE and the universities in the South West.

Communications are being led by the Department of Health and Social Care/Public Health England and are cascaded by our own communications team.

In addition, the Local Resilience Forum, through its networks of emergency planning staff, have been reviewing the updated Devon and Cornwall Pandemic Influenza Plan and its supporting plans. Should a Covid-19 Pandemic be declared, this plan will be implemented immediately.

## 3. Women's health screening

### **Cervical screening, breast screening and HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) immunisation uptake in Devon**

This report has been compiled using information from the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Health Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19 as the data are publicly available. The annual report will be presented to the next Devon Health and Wellbeing Board as part of the local authority's assurance process.

#### Accountability and assurance arrangements

NHS England/NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) is accountable for national screening and immunisation programmes. These are commissioned via Section 7A arrangements.

PHE Screening and Immunisation Teams work alongside NHSE/I to commission the programmes.

Local authorities, through the Director of Public Health, are responsible for seeking assurance that services are operating safely whilst maximising coverage and uptake. Serious incidents that occur in the delivery of programmes are reported to the Director of Public Health and to the Health Protection Committee. There are oversight groups (Programme Boards) for all screening programmes and these form part of the local assurance mechanisms to identify risks and oversee continuous quality improvement.

### Cervical screening

The national programme is moving to a ‘Primary HPV’ model, where women’s samples are first tested for HPV infection and only those that are positive for high-risk HPV infection go on to be tested for cytology. This is a very positive change as it will more effectively identify women at greatest risk of developing cancer, and at the same time return a higher proportion of women who are HPV negative (and at lower risk of cancer) back to routine screening intervals.

Local issues:

- During 2018/19, **sample turnaround times** for the Devon programme were falling short of the national standard, with 69.2% of sample results sent to women within 14 days (April 18). The service is now back on track with a significant improvement in turnaround times (April 19: 96.8%).
- **Workforce issues** are a challenge for all screening programmes. In the cervical programme, sample-taker training and assurance is critical in maintaining quality and safety. Therefore, initiatives were implemented in 2018/19 to support sample-takers.
- **Coverage** of local cervical cancer screening programmes remains a concern. Rates remain above the national average yet continue to fall, mirroring the slow but consistent reduction in national rates over many years (Table 1). All areas are below the national target of 80%.

**Table 1: Cervical cancer screening coverage, 2016-2018**

Indicator <sup>1</sup>	Lower threshold	Standard	Geography	2016	2017	2018
Cervical cancer screening coverage	75	80	Devon	77.1	76.6	76.3
			Plymouth	74.5	73.6	73.1
			Torbay	74.8	73.9	73.0
			Cornwall	75.7	74.9	74.5
			Isles of Scilly	81.9	78.2	79.2
			England	72.7	72.0	71.4

<sup>1</sup> Data Source: LA Dashboard (data taken from Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) <http://www.phoutcomes.info/>)



## Breast screening

In 2018/19 all breast screening services were affected by the national incident (May 2018) whereby some eligible women may not have been invited for their final screening appointment. Services were required to provide thousands of extra appointments in addition to maintaining the routine programme. All Devon providers worked extremely hard to complete the catch-up in the nationally required timescales, with minimal impact on the routine programme. Learning from the incident has been implemented across the national programme with additional quality improvement and assurance processes introduced with no concerns raised about local services.

For 2018/19, all providers generally maintained performance however there were in year fluctuations due to equipment and staffing issues, and pressures from symptomatic services. These issues are representative of pressures across the national programme and have been proactively managed to minimise any impact on women. Workforce remains an area of concern with national and local shortages of key staff across the providers.

Coverage remains stable though below the national target of 80%, mirroring the national trends. Coverage for Devon has remained above the national average (Table 2).

**Table 2: Breast cancer screening coverage, 2016-2018**

Indicator <sup>2</sup>	Lower threshold <sup>3</sup>	Standard <sup>4</sup>	Geography	2016	2017	2018
Breast Cancer screening coverage	70	80	Devon	78.8	78.3	78.3
			Plymouth	79.3	79.0	78.2
			Torbay	74.7	74.1	74.4
			Cornwall	80.0	79.3	78.4
			Isles of Scilly	80.1	79.5	79.8
			England	75.5	75.4	74.9

### Improving uptake (breast and cervical screening)

Following the national breast screening incident and a cervical incident soon after, the Secretary of State announced a review of UK cancer screening programmes. This was published in October 2019 and made a series of recommendations regarding IT systems, better high-risk identification/screening, organisational and governance changes, and recommendations to improve uptake, including use of text reminders and extending access to clinic appointments - as referenced in the request for information from Councillor Rob Hannaford. We are currently waiting for the national response to these recommendations to be agreed which will then inform

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: LA Dashboard (data taken from Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) <http://www.phoutcomes.info/>)

<sup>3</sup> Threshold based on 2017-18 Public Health Functions Agreement

<sup>4</sup> National Screening and Immunisation Programme Standard

local action. The recommendations also refer to potential new technology that has not yet been considered by the National Screening Committee.

All members of the local Health Protection Committee are committed to work more closely with partners to drive improvements in screening uptake and quality and to reduce inequalities within and across communities. This includes supporting NHSE/I's delivery of the ambitions outlined within the NHS Devon Long Term Plan:

- supporting effective local delivery of primary HPV testing within the cervical programme; and delivery of HPV vaccination for boys (commenced September 2019)
- working with partners to ensure that all screening programmes (cancer and non-cancer) are continuing to meet or exceed national performance standards
- continuing to develop specific plans with the Cancer Alliance to understand variability in uptake, improve quality and reduce inequality
- responding to learning from Sir Mike Richards' Independent Review
- exploring new models of working
- capitalising on wider digital developments and greater use of artificial intelligence

### HPV Vaccination

HPV vaccination is a two-dose programme with both doses given in Year 8 or first dose given in Year 8 and second dose in Year 9. In Devon, all adolescent boosters are given in Year 9 with an offer of mop-up community clinics. The school-aged programme also includes flu vaccination.

2018/19 saw the successful mobilisation of a new provider for school-aged immunisations in Devon. There were several challenges due to the extension of the flu programme to include year 5 and implementation of a new e-consent system. Additional clinics were delivered to minimise the impact on uptake. Table 3 shows HPV uptake and Table 4 shows adolescent booster uptake by Local Authority. The adolescent booster data is part of a new national pilot data collection and is very provisional – therefore the quality of the data is not guaranteed.

**Table 3: Local Authority uptake of HPV Dose 1 in Year 8 females (%) up to 31 August 2019**

Indicator	Standard <sup>1</sup>	Geography	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2018/19
HPV (%)	86.1	Devon	86.2	82.5	84.3	84.3
		Plymouth	85.1	86.6	83.6	83.6
		Torbay	85.0	86.2	86.2	86.2
		Cornwall & IoS	78.6	81.9	78.4	78.4
		England	87.2	86.9	87.9	87.9

**Table 4: Local Authority adolescent booster uptake in Year 10s (%)**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>2016/17 vaccinated up to 31/08/17</b>	<b>2017/18 vaccinated up to 31/08/18</b>	<b>2018/19 vaccinated up to 31/08/19</b>
<b>Devon</b>	<b>82.4</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>89.7</b>
Plymouth	77.6	76.4	78.7
Torbay	75.9	77.9	76.7
Cornwall	80.3	76.9	76.8
England	82.0	82.9	86.0

NHSE/I is working closely with Devon's school-aged immunisation provider to ensure improvements are made for the 2019/20 academic year. Self-consent for HPV vaccination is to be developed as an additional tool to increase uptake.

**Councillor Roger Croad**  
**Cabinet Member for Communities, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services**



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

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 20 February 2020:

1. By Councillor Hannaford on:

*An update on the Schools Company Academy Trust from a Devon County Council perspective, including performance, outcomes, attainment and other general matters in addition to the matters below.*

**1. Schools Academy Trust**

The Schools Company Trust have not provided Alternative Provision in Devon (or anywhere else) since Devon's provision was re-brokered, by the DfE, to a new sponsor in 2018. We have therefore provided below a summary of information relating to our historic concerns around The Schools Company Trust, the actions taken at the time and the new provision which is now in place.

The Schools Company Trust (SCT) was a Multi-Academy Trust, responsible for running Devon's Alternative Provision between March 2015 and Nov 2018. The Schools Company Trust were a DfE approved sponsor with experience in this type of provision. Initially the Trust's performance was considered acceptable however this was not sustained and, in March 2017, Devon raised our growing concerns directly with the Regional School Commissioner. Ofsted inspections during the Autumn 2017 confirmed the concerns we had raised with inadequate inspection outcomes at 2 of the 3 provisions. Whilst the local authority have no involvement with the finances of Academies we are aware that the DfE had also issued the Trust with a financial notice to improve. It should be noted that none of the reported overspends have been borne by Devon County Council.

As a result of these concerns for the majority 2018, the provision was managed by interim leadership provided through the DfE. This included a new CEO and Board of Trustees appointed by the DfE. Leadership support was also secured from another Multi-Academy Trust.

Following due process, in November 2018 the DfE appointed Wave Multi Academy Trust as the new sponsor for the Devon schools. Wave, a Cornwall based Multi-Academy Trust, are considered one of the highest performing alternative provision providers nationally with all seven of their schools in Cornwall either good or outstanding. There is a strong commissioning agreement between DCC and Wave which includes safeguarding audits across the four schools, termly roll reviews with lead commissioners and the strategic lead for inclusion, annual reporting and quality assurance visits.

A review of the first year of provision has demonstrated significant progress in leadership and safeguarding as well as changes in structure which will better support individual needs, in particular a new school focused on students who cannot attend school due to medical reasons. Funding for a replacement purpose-built provision in South Devon has been secured, underpinned by a capital contribution from DCC and a new centre in Exeter has opened, again supported by DCC. Feedback about the provision from mainstream schools has been positive and there is evidence of strong collaborative working across the County.

Wave attended a DCC Children's scrutiny masterclass in November 2018 to provide further information on the provision and to answer questions. They have recently been appointed as sponsor to the new special school in Newton Abbot, Glendinning house.



## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure Development and Waste**

### **1. Introduction**

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 20 February 2020:

By Councillor Hannaford on:

- *Railway issues in Devon including:*
  - *How the £500m Beeching Reversal Fund can be invested in Devon.*
  - *The medium to long term vision for our local railway network.*
  - *The Dartmoor Railway Community Interest Company has going into administration.*
  - *Disability access at St Thomas Railway Station.*
  - *The potential nationalisation of South West Railways.*

By Councillor Connett on:

- *the progress of Marsh Barton Rail Station*

### **1. Railway issues in Devon**

#### **Beeching Reversal Fund**

There will be a lot of competition for the £500m pot, which is likely to be spread nationally, therefore we will be making the case for the most advanced schemes in Devon. We will reiterate the desire to run regular weekday services between Okehampton and Exeter currently being investigated by GWR and will be applying for funding to progress work with the Tavistock to Bere Alston rail line reopening.

#### **The medium to long term vision for our local railway network**

We see rail as having increased value of importance in encouraging mode shift to help meet Devon's carbon reduction targets. In the short term we are keen to get Marsh Barton delivered and adjustments made to the recent timetable changes to improve coordination between local Devon Metro services. In the medium to long term, in addition to the Dawlish mainline resilience works and phased delivery of the 'northern route' (mentioned above), we will be working with Network Rail on their Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) process. This is the new approach for securing funding and improvements to the rail network and there are two CMSP corridor studies currently underway affecting Devon: firstly, the West of England corridor study, which is nearing completion and includes plans for a new passing loop west of Whimple which will improve resilience and frequency of services between Exeter and East Devon towns. Secondly, we are about to begin work on an Exeter to Bristol corridor study which is likely to focus on how rail can best support

sustainable economic growth between Bristol and Exeter. There will be subsequent studies looking at the network between Exeter and Plymouth, including Torbay. We will also continue to work with the train operators to secure improved access to stations to maximise the potential of rail in the County.

#### Dartmoor Railway Community Interest Company

The County Council has a 60 year lease to Dartmoor Railway CIC for the station building, which has limited permitted use including a café, visitors centre, retail unit and a flat. The County Council remains hopeful of seeing regular weekday rail services reintroduced between Okehampton and Exeter and there is nothing from a Devon County Council-owned asset perspective that would prevent this from happening. The lease of the rail line from Aggregate Industries to Dartmoor Railway is a separate matter, which we have no influence over. As the administrators have now been called in a moratorium will be in place which means that no action can be taken against the tenant for the time being and we need to allow the administrator time to decide what steps they need to take to achieve the best outcome for its tenant.

#### Disability access at St Thomas Railway Station

I will refer this question to partners at GWR. I would however add that designs for the nearby Marsh Barton Station will be inclusive – we have been meeting with disability groups to ensure access for all from the station to jobs in Marsh Barton industrial estate and leisure opportunities at the Riverside Valley Park and Exeter Canal.

#### The potential nationalisation of South West Railways

There is little for the County Council to say on this as it is a matter for the Train Operator, the Department for Transport and Central Government – South Western Railway have a franchise commitment and we have to allow those organisations to discuss how best they will fulfil the outcomes for its customers. I would suggest it is best addressed by the Rail Minister, Chris Heaton-Harris who I would be happy to share his details with you.

## **2. Progress of Marsh Barton Rail Station**

The ecological surveys and environmental impact assessment has been completed, which will inform the planning submission for the new station, which is expected in late Spring this year. We have had positive meetings with disability and access groups as part of pre-consultation discussions and land agreements have been agreed in principle with Network Rail. Design is progressing well and, subject to planning, we are hopeful of being on site at the start of 2021 with opening towards the end of 2021.

**Councillor Andrea Davis**

Cabinet Member for Infrastructure Development and Waste



## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills**

### **Introduction**

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 20 February 2020:

By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

*Can I please request a Cabinet member report to update council on the ongoing situation at Axminster Carpets. Including the role of Devon County through the LEP, and other regional and economic forums, in terms of trying to keep the business open and viable. And the significance of the 90 jobs are thought to be at risk if the company enters administration.*

By Councillor Greenslade as follows:

*Press reports regarding the reopening of Appledore Shipyard which say "a lack of joined up thinking and prevarication between the Government and Devon County Council is thought to be the only thing that is holding up the deal" that would lead to reopening of the yard.*

*Can the Leader/Cabinet Member please clarify what the position of Devon County Council is in this vital matter for the economy of northern Devon and what actions he is going to take to unlock this apparent blockage?*

### **1. Axminster Carpets**

Axminster Carpets has been synonymous with the town since 1755 and the company has an unrivalled reputation for quality craftsmanship. We sadly heard yesterday that the company had entered into administration resulting in a significant number of redundancies. We understand that buyers have been found for the underlay business Axfelt, plus the carpet outlet shop, enabling the retention of a small core of staff. Buyers are still being sought for the remaining brand and assets. Devon County Council will be working closely with a range of local partner organisations, including East Devon District Council and the Department of Work and Pensions, to help facilitate a range of support options to members of staff facing redundancy and to ensure the right advice is on offer for those people facing redundancy. Support will be offered, including the opportunity to access Learn Devon's services such as adult learning, qualifications and skills training. We are keen to ensure that anybody made redundant is able to use their skills to their fullest advantage, which will have knock-on benefits for other local employers who are looking to recruit.

### **2. Appledore Shipyard**

The commitment and political will from Devon County Council is not in question when it comes to re-opening Appledore Shipyard. We know how important it is to the local community, and we're as keen as everyone to get a deal over the line as soon as possible and get the shipyard up and running. We have worked extremely hard with partners and local MP Geoffrey Cox to get to this point and find potential new owners for the shipyard. Regular engagement with Government over how public investment can be secured to support the re-opening of the yard remains ongoing. Critically, we wish to achieve a sustainable and viable future for the yard and secure long term employment and economic benefits for the local area.

**Councillor Rufus Gilbert**

Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

