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To: The Chair and Members  
of the Cabinet

County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX2 4QD

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Date: 6 August 2024

Contact: Karen Strahan, 01392 382264

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## **CABINET**

Wednesday, 14th August, 2024

A meeting of the Cabinet is to be held on the above date at 2.00 pm in the Committee Suite (DAW) - County Hall to consider the following matters.

Donna Manson  
Chief Executive

## **A G E N D A**

### **PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE**

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest

Members of the Council will declare any interests they may have in any item to be considered at this meeting, prior to any discussion taking place on that item.

The other registrable interests of Councillors of Devon County Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.

For details of District and or Town and Parish Twin Hatters – please see here - [County councillors who are also district, borough, city, parish or town councillors](#)

- 3 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2024 (previously circulated).

4 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which in the opinion of the Chair should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

5 Announcements

6 Petitions

7 Question(s) from Members of the Council

**FRAMEWORK DECISION**

8 Annual Youth Justice Service Plan (Pages 1 - 44)

Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures (CS/24/20) presenting the Devon Youth Justice Service Annual Youth Justice Plan Submission, attached.

The plan is attached as an appendix to the report.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

**KEY DECISIONS**

9 Independent Education Provision Commissioning and Procurement Strategy  
(Pages 45 - 52)

Report of the Director of Children & Young People's Futures (CS/24/23) outlining a Commissioning and Procurement Strategy, attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

10 Family Hubs - Part 1 (Pages 53 - 100)

Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures (CS/24/21) on future of family hubs delivery, attached.

Two Impact Assessments have been prepared, are attached, and also available on the website at

[Family Hub Development – Impact Assessment](#)  
[Children's Centre Buildings Consultation - Impact Assessment](#)

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

## **PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

### 11 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Recommendation: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act namely, the financial or business affairs of the Council and a third party, information relating to consultation and negotiation in connection with labour matters and likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

### 12 Family Hubs - Part 2 (Pages 101 - 108)

*An item to be considered by the Cabinet in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, no representations having been received to such consideration taking place under Regulation 5(5) thereof*

Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures (CS/24/22) giving additional context to the Part 1 paper, attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

## **PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE**

### **MATTERS REFERRED**

### 13 Health and Wellbeing Board (Minute\*155, Carers in Communities and in Employment) (Pages 109 - 124)

At its meeting on 18 July 2024, the Health and Wellbeing Board received a Report, attached, and associated presentation on Carers in Communities and in Employment, Minute \*155 refers. The Board **resolved** that:

- (a) The report be passed to Cabinet for review and consideration of how recommendations 1-6 and 8 of the report can be put into action.

#### Recommendation

A high level action plan will be developed by Integrated Adult Social Care in partnership with the ICB setting out how the recommendations in the report will be delivered and monitored. A regular progress and impact update will be provided to

the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee whose members have had long standing interest and activity on carers including a Spotlight Review.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

## **STANDING ITEMS**

14 Question(s) from Members of the Public

15 Minutes

Minutes of the bodies shown below are circulated herewith for information or endorsement as indicated therein (i.e. any unstarred minutes):

*[NB: Minutes of [County Council Committees](#) are published on the Council's Website:*

a Devon Assurance Partnership - 11 July 2024 (Pages 125 - 126)

16 Delegated Action/Urgent Matters

The Register of Decisions taken by Members under the urgency provisions or delegated powers is available on the website in line with the Council's Constitution and Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. The decisions taken and associated information can be found [here](#).

17 Forward Plan (Pages 127 - 140)

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet is requested to review the list of forthcoming business (previously circulated) and to determine which items are to be defined as key and/or framework decisions and included in the Plan from the date of this meeting.

The [Forward Plan is available on the Council's website](#).

*Members are reminded that Part II Reports contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). They need to be disposed of carefully and should be returned to the Democratic Services Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.*

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Members of the public may also use social media to report on proceedings.

### **Declarations of Interest for Members of the Council**

It is to be noted that Members of the Council must declare any interest they may have in any item to be considered at this meeting, prior to any discussion taking place on that item.

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**Induction Loop available**



CS/24/20  
Cabinet  
14 August 2024

Devon Youth Justice Service Annual YJ Plan Submission

## **Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures**

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

### **1. Recommendation**

1.1 That the Cabinet be asked to:

(a) To endorse the content of the report submitted to the Youth Justice Board in accordance with the 30th of June 2024 deadline, including the positive transformation within the service which is being achieved.

### **2. Background / Introduction**

2.1 Devon County Council has a statutory duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prepare and submit an annual Youth Justice Plan (YJP) to the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The Plan has now been agreed by Becky Hopkins Deputy Director CSC Chair of the Devon Youth Justice Partnership Board, and the partnership, as well as the YJB, as the statutory Plan for the DCC partnership and endorsed by the Local Authority Senior Leadership Team.

### **3. Main Body / Proposal**

3.1 The full plan, as submitted to the YJB, can be found in Appendix 1.

### **4. Options / Alternatives**

4.1 The annual YJ Plan is a statutory requirement under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and as such no alternatives are available. It is both a forward plan and a review of the past year's performance.

### **5. Consultations / Representations / Technical Data**

5.1 The annual YJP is completed by YJ Service management, on behalf of the Devon Youth Justice Partnership Board (DYJPB), and as such is signed off formally by the Chair of that Board. DYJPB is a full multi agency Board, with statutory and additional members, and act as a consultation forum and contributors for this plan.

# Agenda Item 8

5.2 All data contained within the annual YJ Plan is provided through the national Youth Justice Application Framework data framework and through the Management information provision within Children's Social Care.

## **6. Strategic Plan**

6.1 DYJPB is responsible for the strategic oversight, direction and oversight of delivery of youth justice services in Devon. DYJPB currently meets quarterly, increasing to bi-monthly from Sep 24 and is made up of statutory core members including the Local Authority, Probation, Police, Health and Education. Additional members include partners from the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Youth Magistrates Bench, Elected Councillors, voluntary sector (including Devon's commissioned youth services), the DYJS Service Manager and Head of Service and representatives from the Local Authority's finance department.

6.2 DYJS also contributes to other partnerships and strategic plans including:

- Devon Safeguarding Childrens Partnership
- Devon Youth Panel meeting (Youth Court)
- Devon Alternative Provision Panel
- Devon and Cornwall Local Criminal Justice Board and Annual Plan 2023 – 2024
- LCJB Swifter Justice working group
- LCJB Victims and Out of Court Scrutiny Panel
- Devon and Torbay Prevent Partnership
- Safer Devon Partnership
- Safer Devon Child Exploitation subgroup
- Devon Preventing Serious Violence Strategy 2024 – 2029
- Corporate Parenting Board

6.3 Devon YJS are well engaged with Safer Devon, with strategic links provided through the DYJSPB chair also sitting on the Safer Devon Executive Board. DYJS has been particularly involved with the development of the Preventing Serious Violence Strategy as part of the Serious Violence duty, providing a core member of the group which is now overseeing resulting plans and actions from the published strategy.

6.4 Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) oversees partnership arrangements for services responsible for safeguarding children in Devon. DYJS has good links through the DYJSPB Chair, as well as the service being positioned with Early Help and Partnerships and part of Children's Services enabling a robust response to pre-court interventions to reduce first time entrance into the youth justice system.

## **7. Financial Considerations**

7.1 There are no specific financial considerations to be considered by Cabinet.

## **8. Legal Considerations**

8.1 There are no specific legal considerations to be considered by Cabinet.

## **9. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)**



9.1 All decision made within the DYJPB consider environmental impact consideration – this year this will be largely a move out of a large and unsuitable building into more appropriate office accommodation, with the need to secure delivery space in the community. Travel and climate impact must be reduced wherever possible, through strict allocation process and a move to a locality model, mirroring that of wider Childrens Social Care.

## **10. Equality Considerations**

10.1 Devon YJPB is required to consider the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty in its decision making to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

10.2 In relation to the [protected characteristics](#) (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (for employment), pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This Council also treats care experience as if it were a protected characteristic.

10.3 DYJPB members now receive a monthly 'snapshot' report which includes protected characteristics of the YJ cohort, to ensure appropriate service development and delivery. Additionally, the Board receives regular reports highlighting any over representation issues within the YJ Service, to allow the Board to 'course correct' as necessary.

## **11. Risk Management Considerations**

11.1 DYJPB has developed a risk log, and this is available within the MS Teams site for the partnership board members, to maintain confidentiality in a multi-agency arrangement. This annual plan has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken / included to safeguard the Council's position.

## **12. Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations**

12.1 Adoption of the annual YJ Plan (section 40 Crime and Disorder Act 1998) ensures compliance with statutory obligations.

**Stuart Collins**  
**Director of Children and Young People's Futures**

**Electoral Divisions:** All

Councillor Andrew Leadbetter, Cabinet Member for Childrens Services and Schools

# Agenda Item 8

## **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Youth Justice Annual Plan  
June 2024

### **Contact for enquiries:**

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Telephone: 01392 380165

Address: Room 228 County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter



YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

**Devon Youth Justice Service (DYJS)**  
**Strategic Plan 2024 – 2025**

Service	Devon
Service Manager	Lisa Colombi
Head of Service	Lise Bird
Chair of DYJS Partnership Board	Becky Hopkins



1. Introduction, vision and strategy
  2. Local context
  3. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements
  4. Progress on priorities in the previous plan
  5. Performance and national key performance indicators
  6. Risks and issues
  7. Plan for the forthcoming year
  8. Resources and services
  9. Priorities for the forthcoming year
  10. Service Development
  11. Sign off, submissions and approval
- Appendix 1: Devon YJS structure chart
  - Appendix 2: Ethnicity, sex and known disability of staff
  - Appendix 3: Table of Acronyms

## Introduction, Vision and Strategy

I am pleased to share with you Devon Youth Justice Service's strategic plan for 2024-25. The service is committed to achieving the best outcomes possible for children, young people, and communities in Devon. The plan reflects on key accomplishments made over the past year, whilst also acknowledging areas for improvement which have been identified as priorities for the year ahead.

Focusing on prevention and diversion for children at risk of entering the formal system remains a priority and central aim of this year's plan, as we acknowledge the challenges of a rising cohort of children becoming First Time Entrants in Devon. This is a trend we are committed to understanding and providing a coherent, joined up response across the partnership and wider system, so we can work together to tackle the drivers for this increase and see fewer children coming into the system over the next year. Similarly, understanding and responding to exploitation risks and increasing serious violence rates amongst children and young people in Devon remains a priority, which we are committed to addressing through a closer alignment to Early Help services, the development of a Risk Outside the Home service and active participation in Devon's reducing serious violence strategy.

The service is in a period of transition and transformation, with a new leadership team, positive additions to the Partnership Board and a commitment to developing and embedding a Child First practice framework which is shared and understood by all. The service is committed to developing a culture and system that is reflective and nurturing of each other, whilst also holding each other to account whilst we work towards our shared aim of increasing children and young people's opportunities for positive identity development, which in turn will lead to fewer victims and safer communities for all.

To support this the plan places emphasis on understanding the needs of our children and families, through developing more robust datasets with routine monitoring and scrutiny which will inform dynamic planning around the delivery of services. Strengthening oversight through a revised Quality Assurance framework will also support an understanding of effective practice and needs of the service and will include a more formal structure for gaining children, young people and family feedback to support service development.

This Youth Justice Plan has been produced following consultation with stakeholders, partners, volunteers, staff and most importantly the children and their parents and/or carers who are accessing or have lived experience of being in the system. These perspectives are all considered alongside relevant data, recommendations from the 2022 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation inspection and the findings of our National Standards self-assessment, with oversight and governance of the Youth Justice Partnership.

Whilst the past year has not been without challenge, this is an exciting time for DYJS as we review, develop and modernise aspects of the service in the context of a changing landscape for the youth justice sector. Throughout this change the service remains committed and dedicated to quality work with children and young people, which is evidenced by the strengths of relationships formed and the feedback received from children supported by the service.

### Becky Hopkins

Deputy Director – Head of Children's Social Care

## Local context

DYJS serves one of the largest geographic areas in the country, covering 2,600 square miles and a youth-justice aged population (10-18) of 94,957 children (2021 figure, source Office for National Statistics). The total population of the Devon County Council area is 811,600 (ibid, 2021). Children and young people represent around 11.7% of the county's total population, a slightly lower proportion than the Southwest as a whole.

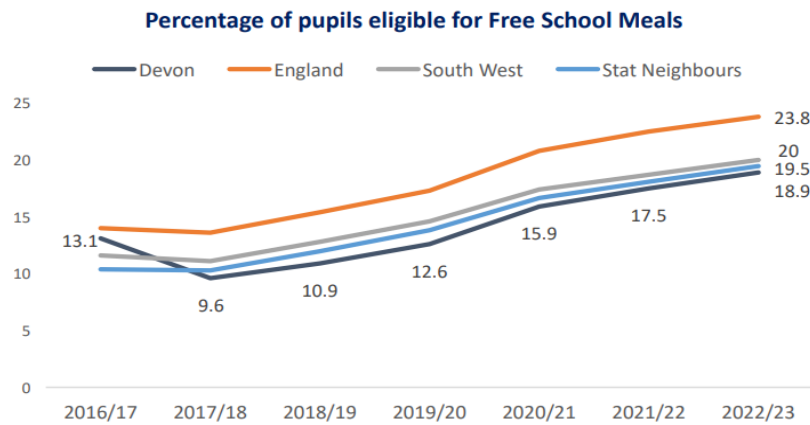
Devon remains a predominantly white population at 96.4%. People identifying as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh make up 1.5% of the population. Those identifying as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African make up 0.3% of the population. Those identifying as Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups total 1.4% and 0.5% identify as another ethnic group (not defined by the ONS). Youth Justice caseloads generally reflect that of the general population in terms of ethnicity, though recent data suggests some disproportionality for Black and Mixed children. For Global Majority children, living in a predominantly white area will bring its own challenges and it is important for the service to understand and recognise these, whilst being culturally competent.

## The context of poverty and deprivation in Devon

As summarised in last year's plan, Devon (within the County Council boundaries) is a large and predominantly rural county with one city, Exeter, and several coastal and inland towns. As a result, there are significant differences in the experiences and outcomes for children and young people growing up in different neighbourhoods across the county. County-wide statistics hide the wide disparities between urban and rural neighbourhoods, as well as between coastal and inland towns. Some neighbourhoods in Ilfracombe and Barnstaple in North Devon are among the 10% most deprived in the country, with others in Teignmouth and Exeter are in the 20% most deprived and in Exmouth, Dartmouth and Tiverton in the 30% most deprived (ibid, 2021). Household deprivation is largely characterised by insecure and low-quality housing, rising debt burdens, fuel poverty, digital poverty and food poverty. While entrenched poverty and inequality manifests itself in declining access to local public services and community spaces, limited public transport and low-wage and seasonal employment opportunities.

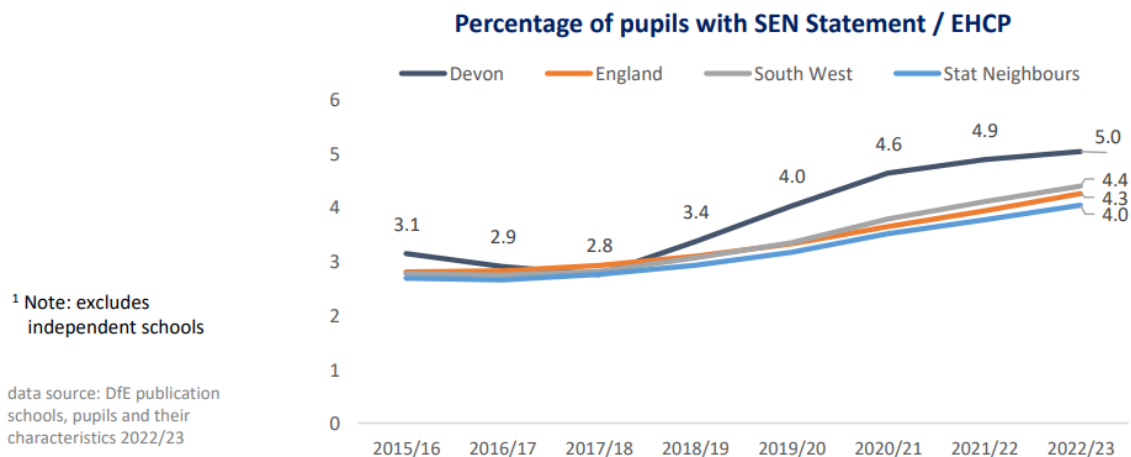
Devon's economy and labour market are disproportionately structured around seasonal industries, predominantly tourism and hospitality. This seasonality has helped lead to disparities, especially the divides between coastal and inland communities. On top of this, in recent years, the impact of limited suitable and affordable housing in the region, digital poverty, and unreliable transport links have exacerbated inequalities between rural and urban areas and limiting the improvement of livelihoods and opportunities of young people and families.

The number of children eligible for Free School Meals continues to rise. On Spring 2023 census day 19,153 pupils in Devon LA maintained schools and academies were eligible for Free School Meals. This is an increase of 8.6% (1,510 pupils) on the previous year.



### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Devon

There are 108, 546 children attending 413 schools in Devon in 22/23 including state funded and independent schools). This is an increase of 0.4% on the previous year. Additionally, 418 children received alternative packages in 22/23. 5% of pupils attending Devon state funded schools have an Education, Health and Care Plan, representing 5,099 pupils. This is significantly higher than nationally and regionally. This differs from the number of pupils with an EHCP maintained by Devon LA, which is 8,400 pupils as at Jan 2023.



Of the 8,400 children with an EHCP maintained by Devon LA, 44% are in mainstream education, slightly more than that seen nationally (41%). Devon, like other areas nationally are seeing a rise in children Electively Home Educated (EHE), and in 22/23 2951 children were registered as EHE, a rise of nearly 18% and the highest on record for Devon County Council.

### Children Missing Education

Census day information gives a snapshot of children missing from education. The majority of children missing education are in the secondary school phase, with 106 children accounting for 73% of children missing education. Census day data also showed that in Devon, more boys are missing education than girls. On average, nearly 60% of those missing education in Devon are boys, higher than nationally (51%). Children missing education with an EHCP fell from 29% in autumn 22 to 23% in summer 23. This is significantly higher than nationally (5% in Autumn 22).

## Children's Social Care

Referrals have decreased from 483 to 464 per 10,000. This is lower than the England average, and in line with Devon's statistical neighbours. The number of repeat referrals has decreased from 28% average to 27% average and stayed consistent at 22%-24% across April to June. Children subject to a Child Protection Plan decreased to 40 per 10,000 and Children Looked After increased to 57 per 10,000. This information is included from Children's Social Care Performance report (September 2023) and reflects the ongoing improvement journey for Devon to move to Requires Improvement. The most recent Ofsted monitoring visit (March 24) suggested positive steps in this ambition.

When considering the above local context for children within the DYJS cohort, the characteristics of children suggest higher levels of need than the general population in areas such as SEND, vulnerability to exploitation and involvement with Children's Services, speech, language and communication difficulties, and neurodiversity. DYJS has benefitted from resourcing from partners to support children's needs and is now developing a closer alignment with Early Help and Partnerships and a developing strategic relationship with Children's social care, which was identified in the HMIP report in Autumn 2022.

## Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Devon Youth Justice Service Partnership Board (DYJPB) is responsible for the strategic oversight, direction and how this is operationalised into delivery of youth justice services in Devon. Previously known as Devon Youth Justice Service Management Board, it was re-named in 2023 as part of Board development to support shared partnership accountability and responsibility. DYJPB meets a minimum of quarterly (though will be increasing to bi-monthly from Sep 24) and is made up of statutory core members including the Local Authority, Probation, Police, Health and Education. Additional members include partners from the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Youth Bench, Elected Councillors, voluntary sector (including Devon's commissioned youth services), the DYJS Service Manager and Head of Service and representatives from the Local Authority's finance department.

DYJS also contributes to other partnerships and strategic plans including:

- Devon Safeguarding Childrens Partnership
- Devon Youth Panel meeting (Youth Court)
- Devon Alternative Provision Youth Panel
- Devon and Cornwall Local Criminal Justice Board and Annual Plan 2023 – 2024
- Local Criminal Justice Board Swifter Justice working group
- Local Criminal Justice Board Victims and Out of Court Scrutiny Panel
- Devon and Torbay Prevent Partnership
- Safer Devon Partnership
- Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Exploitation subgroup
- Devon Preventing Serious Violence Strategy 2024 – 2029
- Corporate Parenting Board

DYJS are well engaged with Safer Devon, with strategic links provided through the DYJSPB chair also sitting on the Safer Devon Executive Board. DYJS has been particularly involved with the development of the Preventing Serious Violence Strategy as part of the Serious Violence duty, with the Service Manager a core member of the group which is now overseeing resulting plans and actions from the published strategy.

Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) oversees partnership arrangements for services responsible for safeguarding children in Devon. DYJS has good links through the DYJSPB Chair also being Deputy Director of Children's Services, as well as the service being



positioned with Early Help and Partnerships and part of Children's Services. The Head of Service has responsibility for Early Help and Partnerships, which includes 10 distinct services including edge of care and family intervention. At the time of writing these services are currently undergoing a reshape, with proposals to enhance the prevention and early help offer to families in Devon.

The Service Manager role was restructured in early 2023, to take on responsibility for additional aligned Early Help and Partnership services alongside DYJS. Further changes include a new Head of Service, Deputy Director and Director of Children's Services, meaning the service is now structurally positioned under a stable and permanent Children's Service's Senior Leadership Team. The DYJS Service Manager also holds responsibility for the Reducing Exploitation and Absence from Care or Home (REACH) team, which currently provides Return Home Conversations and follow up support for children who go missing. As part of current re-shape proposals, this team will merge with the Youth Intervention Team to provide a dedicated 'risk outside the home' (ROTH) service for children, young people and some young adults who go missing, are at risk of exploitation, or are at risk of increasing anti-social behaviour which could expose them to violence. The DYJS Service Manager will oversee the DYJS and ROTH team in one portfolio as part of the wider Early Help and Partnerships and Children's Services. This will provide much greater integration of services for children and young people at risk of offending and exploitation, as well wider integration into services for children and families in need of help.

The DYJS Head of Service sits on the newly re-established Child Exploitation sub-group of the Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership, and the DYJS Service Manager chairs the operational working group under this, providing strategic and operational alignment to the exploitation agenda for children and young people. The Service Manager is also a core member of Devon's Channel Panel, whilst the Head of Service has strategic lead for Prevent within Children's Services.

The arrangement for partnership provision is outlined in the DYJS Partnership Agreement between the statutory partners. This agreement outlines all the financial arrangements of the partnership, including the level of both financial and staff contributions made by each of the statutory partners. DYJS has both financial and staffing contributions from partner agencies which are detailed further in appendix 2 of this document.

The service includes seconded staff - 2.6FTE Police Officers, 1.4 Probation Officers, 2.4 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) practitioners, 1FTE Attendance Improvement Officers and 1FTE Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), with an additional 0.4FTE Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) resourced by the service. Within its structure the service also has 3.5FTE qualified Social Work case managers and 3FTE Probation qualified case managers. Please see appendix 1 for the full structure chart.

In addition to the statutory partnership arrangements the service also benefits from a growing professional alignment with the voluntary sector. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) from both Devon's commissioned youth service organisation, SPACE, and young people's well-being charity, Young Devon, have both recently joined the DYJS partnership board as co-opted members. The service is currently exploring opportunities for shared working through use of youth centre facilities to support more work with children and young people in their own communities, and as an opportunity for them to access and be supported by community provision post DYJS intervention. Additionally, the service continues to benefit from an established and embedded relationship with Devon's Young People's substance misuse service Y-SMART, who are currently co-located with DYJS in office spaces across the county.

## **Progress on priorities in previous plan**

It should be noted that the previous plan was written during a period of transition and change for the service which included a proposed restructure. Since this time the restructure for DYJS has been halted, a new Chair of the Partnership Board has been appointed, and a new Head of Service and Service Manager have started in post. The progress on the priorities below therefore reflects the challenges the service has faced in the last 12 months, but positively evidences some real improvements in key areas.

### **Reducing FTE**

#### **Key achievements**

- Robust monitoring of First Time Entrants (FTE) data through developing local performance reporting tool
- Out of Court Resolution Panel review of outcomes completed which has highlighted themes and trends to explore.
- FTE multi-agency deep dive review completed to track children in the FTE cohort journey – to provide learning and challenge for services.

**Areas for development** - Work with local solicitors around no comment interviews and availability of out of court disposals - Finalisation and sign off of Devon and Cornwall (D&C) police child centred policing review which will promote the use of Outcome 22 and Deferred prosecution, which should impact positively on FTE rates.

### **Strengthen crossover and governance of serious youth violence**

#### **Key achievements**

- DYJS contribution to published Preventing Serious Youth Violence Strategy 2024-2029.
- Strategic Alignment of services through YJ Service Manager role now also managing missing children's service and chairing child exploitation operational working group under Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership CE Subgroup, which has recently been re-established. Proposal in current consultation will see expansion of support and contextual safeguarding resourcing for children at risk of harm and violence outside the home (if agreed).

#### **Areas for development**

- Ability to offer support to children released under investigation/ bailed for serious violence offences and progress 'reachable, teachable moments' has not progressed due to information sharing barriers. This has been escalated to Partnership Board level and is being addressed.

### **Workforce development plan**

#### **Key achievements**

- Skills survey completed with findings used to inform workforce development plan for 24/25 - 7 staff members have completed the YJB accredited Child First training and are implementing learning into their practice.
- Child First input into service development work commissioned and scheduled to take place in July 24.

### **Areas for development**

- Strategy and plan to achieve cross agency understanding of child first practice in Youth justice to be formulated, led by the Partnership Board following service development input.

### **Participation offer expansion**

#### **Key achievements**

- DYJS is now incorporated into the Children's Services single feedback form.

### **Areas for development**

- Review and mapping of current feedback processes to be completed to inform participation plan.
- Child and family voice at the Board.

### **Quality Assurance**

#### **Key achievements**

- Review of quality assurance processes as part of Quality Assurance (QA) framework proposals which align with Children's Services processes, with a focus on closing the learning loop.
- Family and children feedback process has started in May 24.

### **Areas for development**

- QA framework to be confirmed, implemented and understood by the workforce.

### **Swifter Justice**

#### **Key achievements**

- DYJS input contributed to swifter youth justice being named as a priority in the 23/24 Devon and Cornwall Criminal Justice Board strategic plan.
- Child First Direct Diversion Pathway has been proposed (yet to be agreed) to avoid unnecessary investigations into lower-level gravity offences.

### **Areas for development**

- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) cases continue to have significant delays in investigation and decision making by Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

### **Reduce the use of youth detention**

#### **Key achievements**

- Overnight detentions review process is looking to be re-established pending confirmation of data issues being resolved.

### **Areas for development**

- Tracking of remand data - No remand strategy

## KPIs and live data tracker

### **Key achievements**

- Development of At a Glance report which provides caseload detail and characteristics of the DYJS cohort.

### **Areas for development**

- Regular analysis of live tracker data and KPI data to inform service responses.

## Board development

### **Key achievements**

- Board is now quorate, with additional, co-opted members including commissioned youth services.
- Board strategy now in place
- Risk register now in place
- Timely minutes
- Board attendance monitored
- SharePoint site set up to ensure confidential documents can be accessed by Board members

### **Areas for development**

- Bite size training sessions to be further developed.
- Board members to actively represent the YJ cohort and wider YJ system in own agency strategic and operational plans
- Improved board understanding of the YJS cohort in Devon
- Develop a mechanism for voice of the child to be fed into the board that leads to service improvements

## Disproportionality and overrepresentation

### **Key achievements**

- Disproportionality plan drafted.
- Planning with Probation, Looked After and Care Experienced teams for young adults (18 – 25) who have repeat offences/ short custodial sentences, to look at what support DYJS can offer to this cohort earlier to prevent cycle. The DYJS are also contributing to an audit on young Care Experienced adults in custody.

### **Areas for development**

- Regular provision of partnership data.
- Regular monitoring and responses to disproportionality embedded across the partnership.
- Agreement with police on response and outcomes for children in care.

## Review policies in line with new case management guidance and Child First

### **Key achievements**

- Risk policy and panel process reviewed in line with Child First and revised case management guidance. 'Safety Panel' launched June 24.

- Out of Court resolution processes locally are being reviewed through an operational working group alongside the wider Devon and Cornwall police review.
- Court policies are being reviewed as part of Standards for Children self-assessment development plan.

### Areas for development

- All policies and practice guidance to be reviewed, embedded and understood by staff following Child First service development work scheduled for July 2024.

### Increase Education, Training and Employment (ETE) opportunities

#### Key achievements

- ETE Personal Assistant (PA) input has supported more children in the DYJS cohort to access post 16 opportunities.

### Areas for development

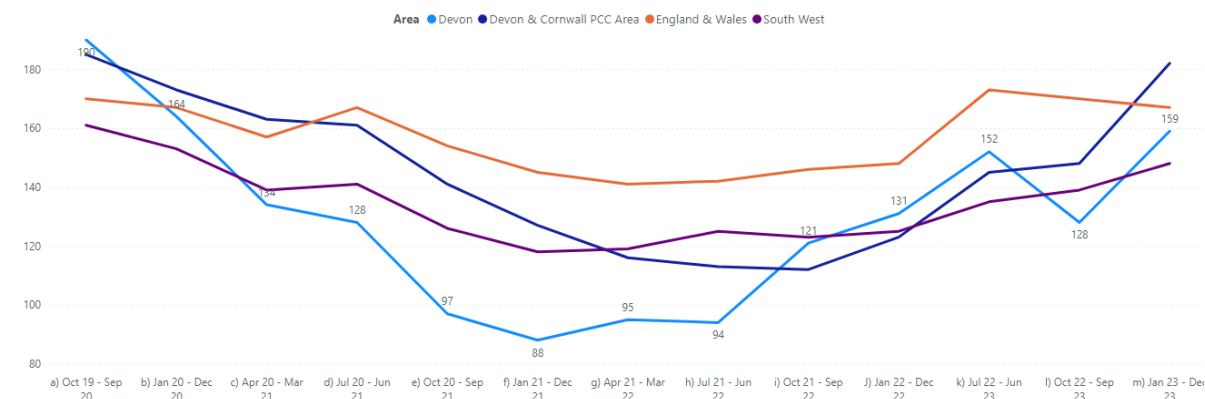
- More robust monitoring of ETE data and regular analysis embedded into performance reporting.

### Performance and national Key Performance Indicators

DYJS reports on three top line KPIs alongside the 10 new KPIs introduced in April 2023.

#### First time entrants

Rate of FTEs per 100,000 10-17 year olds



Sum of Rate of FTEs per 100,000

BY AREA, PERIOD (GROUPS)

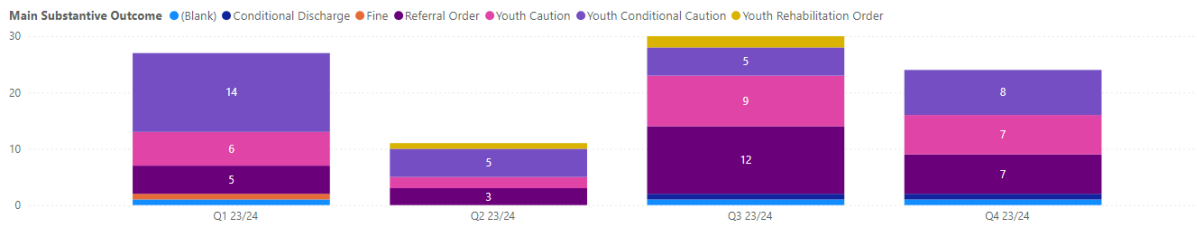
Area	a) Oct 19 - Sep 20	b) Jan 20 - Dec 20	c) Apr 20 - Mar 21	d) Jul 20 - Jun 21	e) Oct 20 - Sep 21	f) Jan 21 - Dec 21	g) Apr 21 - Mar 22	h) Jul 21 - Jun 22	i) Oct 21 - Sep 22	j) Jan 22 - Dec 22	k) Jul 22 - Jun 23	l) Oct 22 - Sep 23	m) Jan 23 - Dec 23
Devon	190	164	134	128	97	88	95	94	121	131	152	128	159
Devon & Cornwall PCC Area	185	173	163	161	141	127	116	113	112	123	145	148	182
England & Wales	170	167	157	167	154	145	141	142	146	148	173	170	167
South West	161	153	139	141	126	118	119	125	123	125	135	139	148

YJB published statistics illustrates a trend of rising FTE rates in Devon, with a 31% rise between 21/22 and the most available data for 2023 (Jan-Dec 23). This follows a similar rise noted in last year's plan on the previous year, a change in trajectory from the previous 5 years

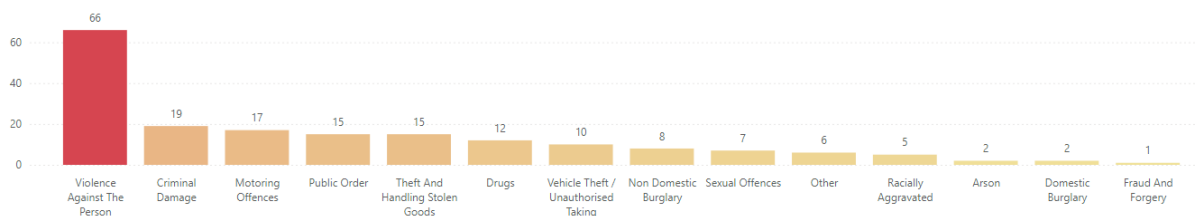
which had seen a 46% decrease in FTE rates. Whilst an increase has been seen in other areas and nationally (YJB annual statistics noted a 1% rise overall in 22/23) the rate of increase in Devon is concerning and requires exploration, monitoring and response to understand and address the reasons behind this rise. It is acknowledged this trend is shared across the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) area and this has been flagged as an issue with the Local Criminal Justice Board.

A breakdown of the data available for the local case management system provides further detail including FTEs by outcome, which indicates children are still entering the system predominantly pre-Court (51) compared to post Court (30), however we have seen a rise in referral orders with 27 made for FTEs in 23/24, and a significant spike observed in Q3. This led to a review of out of court decisions which found a rise in violent offences, as evidenced by the offence type data below. Further work is required to understand this rise, which includes a significant increase in the female population of the DYJS cohort with violence against the person offences. This trend has been mirrored in Youth Justice services across the peninsula, indicating a need for services to collaboratively explore the drivers for this increase. Additionally, a multi-agency audit into serious youth violence is currently being planned, with partners agreeing to fund a commissioned piece of work to facilitate this.

Number of FTEs in the Year by Outcome



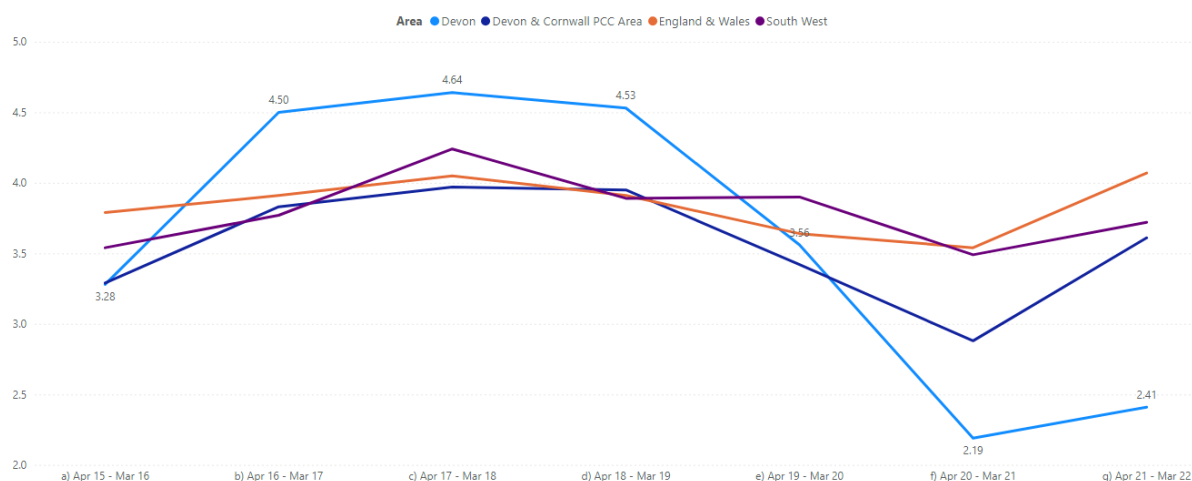
Offences of FTEs in the Year



A partnership led, multi-agency deep dive review into FTEs has been completed and preliminary findings are summarised on page 25. To develop our understanding and response the service now plans to track our FTE cohort through regular monitoring and RAG rating, to be reported bi-monthly to the Partnership Board from August 24. The development of a Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP) joint decision protocol, including the formal adoption of a Deferred Prosecution scheme for children alongside increased use of Outcome 22 is approaching sign off and implementation, and it is envisaged this will have a significant impact on FTE rates once embedded. Additionally, DCP are proposing a Child First Direct Diversion pathway for lower gravity offences, which is currently being explored as a further practice development which could positively impact on FTE rates if agreed.

## Reoffending

Annual Weighted Average



### Sum of Reoffending Rate

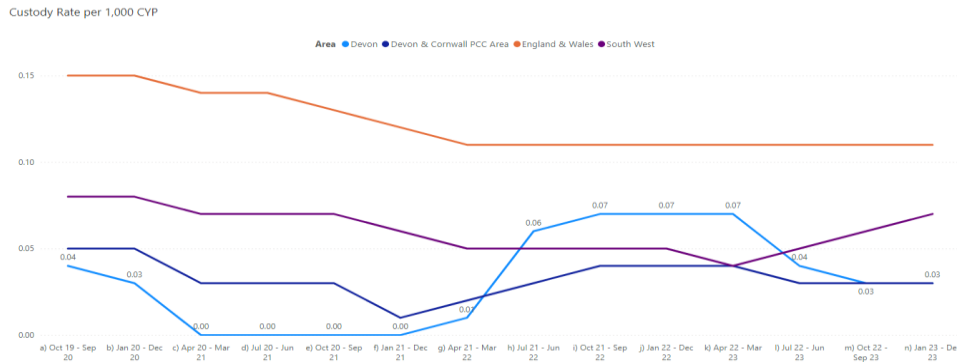
BY AREA, PERIOD

Area	Apr 15 - Mar 16	Apr 16 - Mar 17	Apr 17 - Mar 18	Apr 18 - Mar 19	Apr 19 - Mar 20	Apr 20 - Mar 21	Apr 21 - Mar 22
Devon	3.28	4.50	4.64	4.53	3.56	2.19	2.41
Devon & Cornwall PCC Area	3.29	3.83	3.97	3.95	3.42	2.88	3.61
England & Wales	3.79	3.91	4.05	3.91	3.64	3.54	4.07
South West	3.54	3.77	4.24	3.89	3.90	3.49	3.72

Devon's reoffending performance continues to be relatively strong in comparison to the Devon and Cornwall PCC area, the southwest region and nationally. To assist in understanding our reoffending rates currently, the development of a live reoffending tracker demonstrates a decrease in the number of children offending and the number of offences (50 children and 160 offences Sep 22 – Dec 23). As a key performance measure the service is looking at engaging with a cohort of children who have offended within 3 months of closure, to gain their views on what could have made a difference for them so appropriate exit planning and step across support is considered for all children and young people closing to the service.

Reoffending	Rolling 15 months (Dec 22 - March 24)
Number of YP in cohort	219
Number of YP Reoffending	23
Number of further offences committed	51
Reoffences/Reoffender	2.22
Reoffences/Offender	0.23
% Reoffending	10.5%
% Reoffenders reoffending in 1st month	43.5%
% Reoffenders reoffending in 3 months	69.6%

# Custody

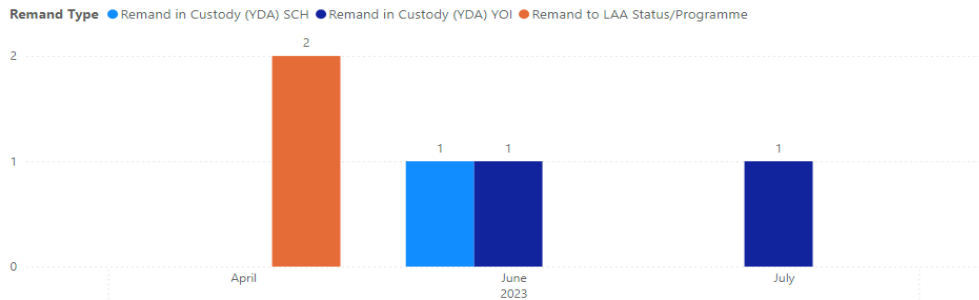


Sum of Custody Rate  
BY AREA, PERIOD (GROUPS)

Area	a) Oct 19 - Sep 20	b) Jan 20 - Dec 20	c) Apr 20 - Mar 21	d) Jul 20 - Jun 21	e) Oct 20 - Sep 21	f) Jan 21 - Dec 21	g) Apr 21 - Mar 22	h) Jul 21 - Jun 22	i) Oct 21 - Sep 22	j) Jan 22 - Dec 22	k) Apr 22 - Mar 23	l) Jul 22 - Jun 23	m) Oct 22 - Sep 23	n) Jan 23 - Dec 23
Devon	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.03
Devon & Cornwall PCC Area	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03
England & Wales	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.12	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
South West	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07

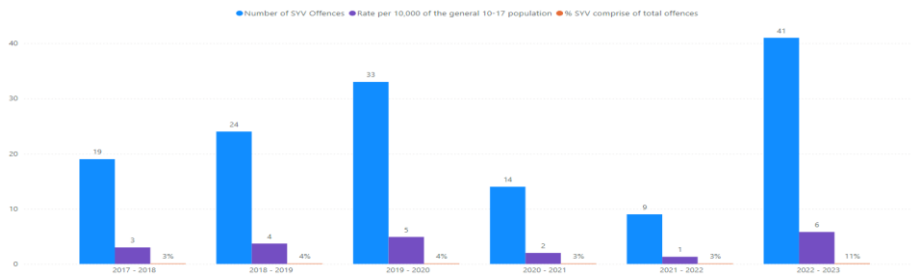
Custody rates in Devon remain very low, with only one custodial sentence made in 23/24. There have however been three remands to youth detention accommodations made in the period, which indicates a need to monitor use of remand if those children did not then receive custodial outcomes following their period in custody. The service does not currently have a remand strategy, and this will be developed as part of the Court Development Plan.

Remands in the Year



# Serious Violence

Number & Rate of Serious Youth Violence Offences - Devon



% SYV comprise of total offences, Number of SYV Offences, Rate per 10,000 of the ge...

Year	Number of SYV Offences	% SYV comprise of total offences	Rate per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population
2022 - 2023	41	11%	5.80
2021 - 2022	9	3%	1.30
2020 - 2021	14	3%	2.00
2019 - 2020	33	4%	4.90
2018 - 2019	24	4%	3.70
2017 - 2018	19	3%	3.00



Serious violence rates have continued to rise in the youth justice cohort in Devon. This remains a priority for the service and links to the priorities set in Devon’s Serious Violence strategy (see page 30).

### Caseload characteristics

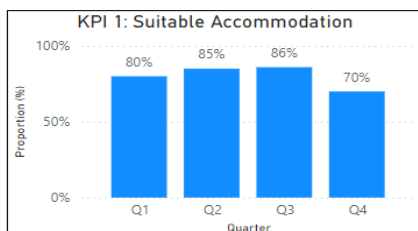
The development of a monthly At a Glance report, which is shared with all Board members is intended to provide live contextual information on children on the DYJS caseload, to understand the needs of the cohort and how best to direct resources.

Characteristic at Intervention Start Date	No. of Young People with a Characteristic at any of their Intervention Start dates in the Year	% of Young People with a Characteristic at any of their Intervention Start dates in the Year
SEN prior to Intervention	84	60%
CiN, CiC or CP	44	31%
EHCP prior to Intervention	33	24%
Diagnoses of ADHD	16	11%
Vul Criminal Exploitation	11	19%
Diagnoses of Autism	8	6%
Vul Sexual Exploitation	6	9%
County Lines	5	8%
Diagnoses of Autism & ADHD	5	4%

The table above breaks down the characteristics of the current DYJS caseload (May 2024) and illustrates the prevalence of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and known to Children’s Social Care as significant areas of need. This data supports the deep dive exercise into FTEs completed in the same month, which of the selected cohort found 70% of children had SEN and 40% had a social worker. Case file review suggested late diagnosis and support for those needs were a common feature of children entering the justice system.

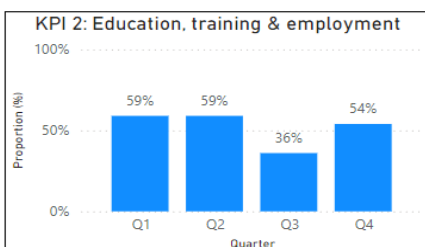
### KPIs

The following summarises Devon’s performance against the additional KPIs introduced in April 23 (excluding Victims as this data is not available):



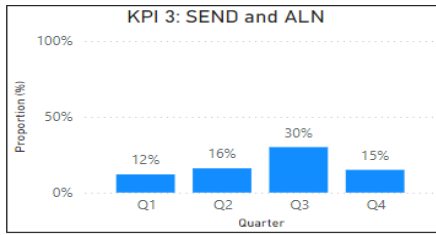
#### Suitable Accommodation

70% of children were in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention in Quarter 4. This is a significant reduction from the previous two quarters, though the year on average is 80%. Work is underway to understand this reduction and whether it is due to a recording issue, or indicative of increasing concerns around the suitability of children’s accommodation.



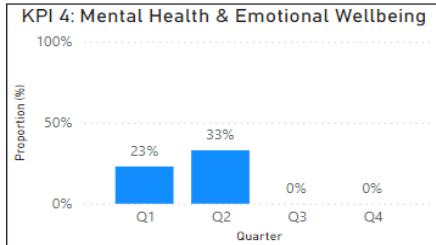
#### Education Training and Employment

54% of children were in suitable ETE at the end of their order in Q4, which is consistent with Q1 and Q2, but which also demonstrates that over half the DYJS cohort are not engaged with education, training or employment when finishing their work with the service, which is a significant issue. Further work is underway to break down those children of school age and post 16, to understand the barriers and issues for children. There was also a large dip in Q3 which needs unpicking. The service is aware of some potential issues within the recording of data which populates this KPI that may be negatively impacting figures, which is being explored.



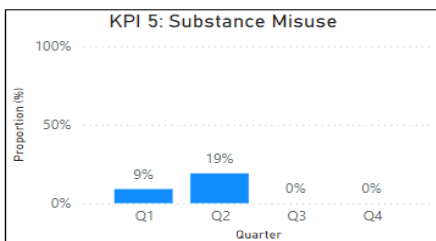
### SEND and Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

15% of children with identified SEN/ ALN had a formal plan in place by the end of Q4, which is consistent with the first two quarters of the year but half that of Q3.



### Emotional and Mental Health

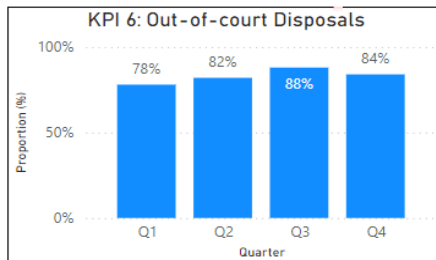
Due to ongoing issues within the case management system, which have been flagged and are being addressed, we are not able to report accurately on Q3 and 4 for this KPI. Q1 and 2 suggested a quarter of children have a screened and identified need for emotional well-being or mental health support at the end of their DYJS intervention.



### Substance misuse (SMU)

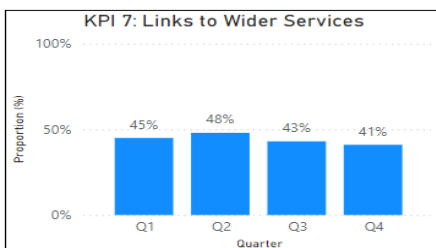
As above we cannot accurately report on Q3 and 4 for Substance Misuse. However, performance over Q1 and Q2 suggests an increase in children screened for a SMU need requiring support at the end of their intervention. Though we cannot currently track if this trend is continuing through KPI reporting we will complete a manual audit to identify any significant issues to be

addressed.



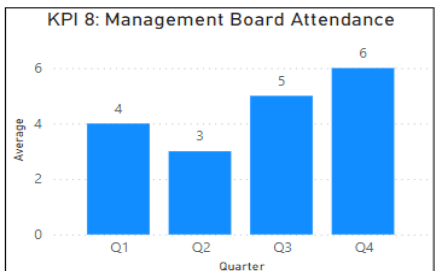
### Out of Court Resolutions

84% of children successfully completed their intervention in Q4, a slight reduction from Q3 but consistent with the previous two quarters following a dip in Q1.



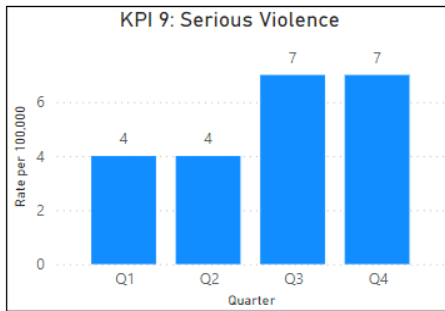
### Links to wider services

41% of children with interventions ending in the period were connected to or supported by wider services, a figure which has been consistent over the year.



### Management Board Attendance

Following a decrease in Q2, attendance by senior partners at the DYJS Partnership board has seen a steady increase, which reflects the commitment from partners to strengthen practice and the role of the Board in this.



### **Serious Violence**

Q3 and Q4 have seen an increase in the number of serious violence offences (as a rate of 100,000 of the 10-17 population, 2021), an increase which will be explored as part of the planned multi agency audit into serious youth violence discussed in page 31.

## **Risks and issues**

The service has now formulated a 'risk register' that forms part of the standing agenda for the Partnership Board.

### **Premises**

The service currently works from two main office bases in Exeter and Barnstaple, and a satellite office in Newton Abbot. The Exeter base is in a state of disrepair and is being sold by the Local Authority, meaning the team will be moving to County Hall as an office base and will be required to work from community facilities as delivery spaces for direct work with children and young people. Whilst this way of working aligns with the wider Early Help and Family Hub model, and supports practice that reintegrates children into their communities, there is a risk that services may be impacted if appropriate venues are not consistently available. Ongoing work is underway to identify community spaces and resources to minimise impact and support suitable spaces for direct work.

### **Analytical capacity for performance information**

The current management information resource is not sufficient for the needs of the service, and while there have been some positive developments around the At a Glance reporting tool, there is a need for an analyst role who can interrogate data and provide robust information that assists with the strategic and operational responses to children in the cohort. To address this, funding has been agreed and an increase in FTE and grade to reflect analytical capacity has been requested from the management information team, which will be provided post reshape of that service later in 2024.

### **Physical health**

Whilst the service has a strong offer around mental health and speech and language, there is no physical health input which leaves a gap in this important area of children's well-being. A proposal to address this need will be submitted for Board consideration in Q2.

### **Lack of overnight detention review process**

There is no current review panel to review and monitor children held overnight in the cells under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). This has been raised as an issue at Board level and operationally within D&C police, who are looking at restarting a previous peninsula wide model.

### **Information sharing for arrested children**

DYJS do not routinely get information shared around children open to the service when they get arrested. A report is being trialled which aimed to address this gap, which would include intelligence around open children, however this does not appear to be effective, and investigations are underway to understand the reasons behind this. However, there is a wider barrier around information sharing for children not known to the service, meaning the opportunity to provide support for children on bail for serious offences is limited. This has been raised at Board level.

## Potential risks

### Compliance with the Victim Code of Practice

Due to upcoming maternity leave the service will soon have a gap in provision for meeting the needs of victims, and whilst temporary recruitment has been attempted there was no successful appointment made. The vacancy is being re-advertised as a full-time fixed term role in order to make it more attractive. Should this recruitment exercise be unsuccessful, a contingency plan around resource currently in the team is being prepared.

## Plan for the forthcoming year

### Child First

DYJS shares the YJB's commitment to understanding and promoting what research tells us works for children in the justice system, and as such is prioritising a focus on Child First as an approach to all aspects of service delivery. Whilst there have been some positive advancements in this aim over the past year, through self-assessment it is acknowledged there is more we can be doing both strategically and operationally to achieve this across the system. The service has started to formulate a plan to assist in our ambition to implement the four tenants of Child First principles into practical service delivery:

### Understanding Child First principles

To ensure a consistent and shared understanding across the partnership, specialist Child First input has been commissioned with delivery scheduled for July 2024 to include:

- Introductions and development of a Child First Partnership for the DYJS Partnership Board
- Child First Practice-Tenants of Child First and Best Practice
- Implementing Child First in Practice-Assessment, Planning, Interventions
- Operational managers development of child first as a practice model-Case formulation, identity development and tenants of child first practice

The above input will aim to provide a practice framework for DYJS that is understood across the partnership, strategically driven by the partnership board into operationalised practice and delivery. Training has already commenced, with 7 staff completing the YJB Child First Effective Practice modules in 22/23 operational managers accessing external training in 2023, and volunteers receiving training in 2024.

*Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.*

The service already places a strong emphasis on the four tenants through practice approaches. The team were early adopters of trauma informed practice through Enhanced Case Management (ECM) and are skilled in understanding the impact of trauma for children within assessments and planning. With a strong Speech and Language offer and CAMHS support, children's needs, capacities, rights and potential are at the forefront of practice. The service advocates for children's rights and challenges others not meeting their responsibilities towards children. However, it has been noted anecdotally by staff that sometimes other services can look to the DYJS for a more punitive response to children's behaviour, and do not always understand Child First in a youth justice context. This suggests more could be done across the partnership to support wider understanding of Child First principles and will be addressed through a targeted offer of Child First training and briefings in 24/25.

*Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their prosocial identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.*

A key strength of the service is the focus on positive activities within delivery of intervention plans, which provides opportunities to build on children's strengths, develop their pro-social identity and support children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.

*Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.*

An emphasis on positive identity shift is supported by opportunities for children to participate and benefit from social inclusion, through meaningful community-based activities and service development. Planning is done with children and carers, who are encouraged to actively participate and take ownership of their plans. Children are also supported to engage in participation opportunities within the service, such as being part of interview panels, and visiting potential co-working spaces such as youth centres as part of reviewing the facilities available for service delivery.

*Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.*

Devon Local Authority has a broad-based prevention offer which includes the Turnaround project and the Youth Intervention Team (YIT), the latter service sitting within Early Help and not managed within the DYJS structure. Whilst there is some benefit in having a crime prevention service situated in Early Help in terms of minimising stigma, this structure doesn't align with the principles of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which places a statutory responsibility on Youth Justice partnerships to prevent offending by children. The current reshape consultation proposes the amalgamation of YIT and the missing children's service REACH, to form a 'risk outside the home' service which included anti-social behaviour and crime prevention, to sit structurally under the DYJS Service Manager. This will support an offer for children that is aligned strategically and operationally with youth justice services but also promotes pre-emptive prevention and minimal intervention and contact with the formal system.

Child First practice example – Child A came to the service with a number of vehicle offences, which had led to a breakdown in relationship with his parent and disengagement from education. A focus on positive identity shift supported Child A to engage in confidence building activities, which then led to employment with the activity he had particularly enjoyed. He is working towards gaining his Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card and his relationship with his parent has improved significantly. He is currently being supported by the service to complete a charity event to raise money in memory of his relative. He also participated in a recent recruitment day for DYJS staff, sitting as part of the interview panel and contributing to the final decisions on appointments, where he commented '*everything in my life has got better since I started working with the YJ, I make better decisions and got my job now, it's just really different*'.

### **Voice of the Child/ Family**

DYJS employs different approaches to capturing child and family feedback at different points throughout their time with the service. Self-assessment questionnaires are used to inform

assessments and planning, and children are asked for their views at reviews, closure and post closure. However, it is noted that a current gap is meaningful analysis of children and family feedback, which will be addressed through stronger focus at Partnership Board level, as well as through the development of the QA framework and Child First review of practice. This will include working with Devon County Council's Participation team to capture feedback in more creative ways, such as videos or audio of children sharing their experiences, which will be used to inform service delivery as well as to support recruitment of volunteers to the service.

## Resources and services

The planned spend of the youth justice core grant for 24/25 will be directed at staff salary costs, activity budgets and accommodation costs which support service delivery. The grant is used alongside partnership contributions, which includes cash and staffing contributions from our statutory partners. Contributions are agreed and formalised through our Partnership Financial Agreement and reviewed annually alongside related performance information. A full breakdown of partnership contributions included in Table B5: Budget Costs and Contributions can be found in appendix 2.

DYJS deliver a variety of services that meet the needs of children and those who have been harmed, to support the core aims of preventing offending, reoffending and keeping children and others safe. We use our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver these services and we believe they produce the following benefits and outcomes. Our performance will be improved next year by:

- **Prevention** – preventing children from offending by working closely with Devon's wider prevention services, including the planned Risk outside the Home service which will target children involved in increasing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and at risk of exposure to violence. The services being more closely aligned will provide opportunities for targeted group work and contextual approaches to children at risk of offending.
- **Out of Court Resolution Panel** – assessments which contribute to decision making on the appropriate disposal for a child, including diversion from a formal outcome or charge. Intervention and activities delivered through a variety of disposals which promote desistance from offending and escalation through the system.
- **Reparation** which supports restorative work for harmed persons. Cross Park is the service's dedicated allotment space which provides excellent opportunities for children to learn new skills and provides fresh AIR – Activities, Interactions and Roles which support a positive identity shift in line with Child First.
- **Speech and Language** – the service utilises its SALT resource within the Court setting to ensure children who are charged can access speech and language screening at Court, so any immediate issues can be flagged prior to the child appearing alongside any follow up support post hearing.
- **Court work and statutory orders** – attendance at Court, provision of reports and assessment, planning, intervention and review of statutory Court orders
- **CAMHS and emotional well-being** – embedded CAMHS practitioners who can both see children, advise case managers and provide a pathway to further CAMHS support where needed.
- **Education, Training and Employment** – to ensure children have access to and can engage with appropriate education or post 16 provision.
- **Safe and Healthy Sexual Behaviour Forum** – a multi-agency, collaborative pathway for children displaying reactive and harmful sexual behaviour is due to launch in June 2024. The DYJS partnership has invested in a programme of training across Early

Help and Partnerships and Children's Social Care, which provides a dedicated resource for advice, assessment and interventions where needed.

Alongside the key activities outlined above, DYJS is located within Early Help and Partnerships, which supports access to a range of services for children including the young people's drugs and alcohol service, family intervention services, family group conferencing and edge of care. The proposed changes to the missing childrens team REACH, and the Youth Intervention Team will bring about additional resource and support for children at risk of offending and exploitation.

Additionally, the service is currently undertaking a review of responsibilities across the practitioner and management group to ensure resources are being employed effectively in the context of national youth justice sector developments and local need. This will include review and planning around current non-case holding staff who lead on reparation and positive activities, persons who are harmed contact and RJ and parenting.

The service development and allocation of resources and roles described above are monitored quarterly through reports to the Partnership Board and provides assurance that the core YJB grant, and partner contributions are used to deliver core aims and objectives of the service.

### **Board development**

In April 2024 DYJSPB agreed the following strategic priorities for the year ahead:

#### **Priority 1:**

Develop multi agency interventions to prevent children and young people involved in offending behaviour escalating in their behaviour severity or frequency.

#### **Priority 2:**

Develop multi agency interventions to ensure we build on the talents and interests of all children and young people working with the YJS to raise aspirations and accentuate career pathways.

#### **Priority 3:**

Improve the identification of children and young people at risk of exploitation including county lines type activity and provide an effective early multi agency response.

#### **Priority 4:**

Ensure appropriate screening of the health vulnerabilities of our YJS cohort and that the necessary pathways are available and have sufficient capacity to meet their needs to reduce the risks of further offending behaviour.

#### **Priority 5:**

Explore the impact of parental imprisonment on children in the criminal justice system including identification of an effective intervention.

At the June 2024 Partnership Board, a focus on prevention, diversion and reducing the number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) was agreed and will be formally included as a sixth strategic priority.

Partners have recently committed to the development of the service by making pledges which reflect their roles and responsibilities, and how they will contribute to fulfilling these strategic priorities. These include:

*Devon and Torbay Probation pledge to support the Devon Youth Justice Board strategy by ensuring that we continue to provide good quality seconded staff to the partnership, that we involve ourselves actively with the work of the board through appropriate liaison and quality assurance and that we support with the priorities around exploitation and the impact of parental offending through active involvement with those subgroups and strategies. We will also act as a critical friend during the board meetings.*

*As a magistrate representative on the Devon YJS Partnership Panel, I undertake to support, scrutinise and, where appropriate, challenge the executive leadership in the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan. I will offer support in any areas associated with my role, including assisting with audits of performance relating to court work. I will seek to learn and understand as much as I can about the role and functioning of the service, its challenges, and the characteristics of the children it works with. I will relay relevant information to fellow magistrates on the South and West Devon Youth Panel and, where it would be helpful, communicate with and learn from YJS operational staff.*

*Space Youth Service pledges to be a proactive partner of the Youth Justice Board. We are committed, within our means, to support the reduction of youth offending and to contribute to early intervention strategies that seek to prevent young people from entering the system.*

- As a Voluntary Sector Charity, we have the scope to seek non statutory funding streams, we pledge to work collaboratively to identify need and codesign new ways of working that help deliver on the partnerships priorities. To seek funding, for new innovative interventions that focus on the direct delivery of support - putting resources on the ground and reaching young people who are falling through the gaps.*
- Our greatest strength in supporting the partnership is our ability to consult with young people on societal issues. We hope that we can support the partnership by bringing the voice of young people to the table and hearing their lived experiences. This insight helps inform our joint understanding of the pressures and causes that lead to offending activity.*
- We will share the experience of youth workers, what we see and hear from the communities of young people we work alongside.*
- We will share data and findings from our 'Not My Sentence' pilot delivery school programme, to help inform and shape the imprisoned parents/sibling's priority of the board.*

## **Workforce development**

DYJS understands the importance and value of regular training and continuing professional development opportunities for the workforce. The service has delivered or had access to a number of training events over the past 12 months, including Assessment, Intervention and Moving on (AIM) 3 assessment, intervention and Supervisors training, under 12s and Technologically Assisted HSB, shame competency and motivational interviewing. A practitioner has also completed the NATP/ Anna Freud National Autism Trainer Programme, which will allow the service to provide training that has been developed and co-produced collaboratively with individuals with lived experience. The practitioner has also been



supported to access ADHD coaching training, a skill which is being utilised with children directly as well as upskilling the practitioner group.

A skills audit has been undertaken and the findings have informed training and development priorities for the year, to include:

- Risk outside the home, including use of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) as a Section 45 defence for criminally exploited children, gang involved children, and understanding the drugs trade
- Working with neuro-diverse children
- Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Out of Court processes and assessments
- Child First and developing a practice framework

### **Staff well-being**

- All staff receive regular one to one supervision with their line manager on a monthly basis.
- A peer supervision/ practice group has been set up to follow team meetings to provide additional peer support.
- The service has introduced regular 'staff surveys' as a means to gaining views and feedback across the staff group. This has recently included a supervision audit, which found that 100% of staff felt supported by their manager and were getting what they needed from their supervision.
- Staff are able to access Devon County Council's well-being resources, including access to free counselling without the need for an Occupational Health referral if needed.
- Clinical supervision is being explored through the Edge of Care team's Psychologist provision.

## **Evidence based practice and innovation**

### **ADHD coaching**

In response to a growing number of children on the DYJS caseload with this type of neurodiversity, the service is about to pilot ADHD coaching, led by a practitioner who is neurodiverse herself. The practitioner will use her acquired specialist coaching skills with children whilst undertaking an activity, bespoke to their needs that will focus on:

- Understand how their neurodivergence might impact their lives.
- Identify ways to manage emotional dysregulation, including communicating their needs.
- Thinking about impulse control, how this has impacted life so far and how to challenge this. Working on organisation and planning techniques.

The practitioner will also lead an upskilling across the workforce of working with neurodiversity, including ADHD and autism after completing the National Autism Training Programme (NAPT)/Anna Freud Centre Autism training programme, which has been expanded from its original health context to include justice settings, in recognition of the challenges neuro-diverse people face within a system not designed to meet their needs.

## Crosspark nursery

DYJS benefits from a dedicated allotment site in the south of the county, which is used for reparation and positive activity work with children. The produce grown at the site benefits the local community via food bank donations while providing a safe, quiet space, making the most of a natural environment for the young people who attend which is in line with trauma informed practice and the needs of young people with neurodiversity. We currently have other community users benefitting from the site; a local ETE Alternative Provision are using the site for community outreach volunteering work and a group who work with adults with learning disabilities also co-work aspects of the site. Having this natural space to work in is valued by children who consistently commented in their feedback that it was the best thing they did while with DYJS.



## Evaluation

The Young Person's Behaviour Change project within DYJS is a bespoke 1:1 early intervention for young people who have displayed or are displaying harmful behaviour towards family members/carers or an intimate partner. The aim is to prevent young people from displaying abusive and violent behaviour later in life and to reduce the likelihood of involvement in wider offending behaviour. The project underwent a Phase 2 evaluation in 2023 by Plymouth University, who interviewed 20 children and young people who had gone through the programme which provided a qualitative analysis of the effectiveness of the programme. Findings concluded the outcomes for children were improved after participating in the programme, including:

- Improvements in relationships
- Reduction in aggressive behaviour
- Positive changes in young people's feelings and behaviour
- Improved school attendance, confidence and ambition
- Reduction in the involvement of partner agencies, including the police

Feedback from children, parents and professionals included:

*'I don't get so angry anymore, I'm just happy. I don't actually know how he done it. It was like talking to him or whatever, it made me happier, and now like I just realised I don't need to be angry.'* - child, male, phase 1 participant

*'It's been lifesaving...*

*I don't know what would've happened if he hadn't had offered the intervention, but I can make a pretty good assumption that my life would probably be very different, either through a serious injury or something worse than that ..."*

- Parent

*'I think the successful aspects we see are the reduction in demand on police ... "*

- Professional

The project has been funded externally and due to the successes reported, a further year is now being funded through the Serious Violence duty funding which will support the learning and skills developed through the project being shared through a training programme, which will upskill more front-line practitioners and support sustainability.

## Priorities for the coming year:

### Standards for children

**Work in Courts** - DYJS submitted the required Standards for Children – work in Courts self-assessment in October 2023. Following a validation visit in February 2023, an overall rating of 'Requires Improvement' was agreed to reflect areas of strategic oversight and operational practice which are in need of review or requiring further development. It was noted by the YJB that the new Service Manager and Head of Service are aware of development needs and are putting plans in place to address, but that developments are not yet embedded. A Court practice working group has now been formed within the service, comprising managers and Court officers who are taking on areas of development. An overall plan has been developed which incorporates improvements needed in the strategic oversight of Court work in Devon.

**Priority:** Court development plan to be progressed.

**FTE deep dive audit** – A multi-agency review was undertaken in May 2024 with colleagues from Probation, Children's Social Care, Health, DYJS and Education, with the aim of identifying critical factors leading to the child entering the formal youth justice service, and any learning for agencies. Preliminary highlights include:

- Of the cohort reviewed, 70% had identified SEN at the point of entering the justice system
- 40% were open to a social worker
- Themes included a delay in specialist assessments and interventions for identified health needs earlier in the child's journey – needs were correctly identified but resource and support were not timely due to resource pressures
- Children coming in and out of social care intervention, raising a question around thresholds and planning
- Out of Court panel reliance on gravity matrix and whether more discretion could have been utilised, however it was noted in these cases the victim's views impacted the final decision.

FTE rates remain a focus for the service, and it is noted that rising rates across the Devon and Cornwall police area are impacting on the FTE rates for the Southwest. This has been raised as an issue at both the DYJS partnership board and with the Local Criminal Justice Board within the OPCC. Tracking of the FTE cohort is being prepared for Partnership Board scrutiny and response from August 24.

**Priority:** Increase in FTEs to be further interrogated through tracking and monitoring of children in the FTE cohort.

### Quality Assurance

Whilst the service has a QA process for assessments and reports, there is currently no embedded QA framework, regular audit cycle or process to capture children and family's feedback into actions for service development. An Early Help QA framework is currently under development which will include the DYJS, with distinct service specific additions where

required. As a starting point 'family feedback' has commenced, which involved Team Managers contacting young people and parents post closure to gain their views on what has helped them during their YJ intervention, and what could have been done differently. This feedback will be analysed by the Service Manager and fed back into the service development plan with oversight of the Partnership Board to close the learning loop.

**Priority:** QA framework to be in place and operational across the service, to include regular audit cycle, child, family and victim feedback, plans in place to address audit findings.

### **Education, Training and Employment**

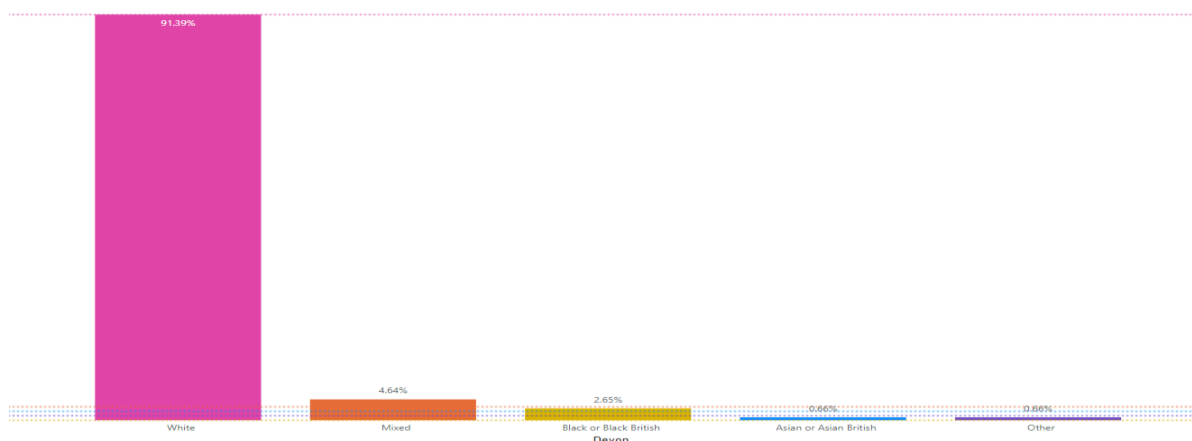
The service benefits from 2 x 0.5FTE Attendance Improvement Officers (AIOs), seconded from the Attendance Service (formally Education Welfare Service). The AIOs identify and track children's education offer and attendance for those of school age (10-16). The AIOs work with DYJS case managers and other staff as well as children and their families to assist them to access their educational entitlement. This includes advocating for them with education providers and challenging decisions where provision is inadequate or unsuitable. The service also utilises its Speech and Language Therapists to provide reports to ensure children's needs are being met within an education setting. Of the current caseload, 25% of children have been permanently excluded from their education setting and 25% are not receiving their 25 hours entitlement. Analysis suggests that of the cohort either permanently excluded or receiving less than 25 hours, there are no current issues around disproportionality for children looked after by the LA or from a global majority ethnic group. Whilst outcomes and engagement are tracked and responded to by the AIOs, a priority for the coming year is to establish a robust monthly tracking process which uses data to identify any disproportionality of themes which the service will need to address. This will include linking in with DCC's Education and Learning department around their work to identify children early at risk of becoming Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET).

For children in the post 16 cohort, the service had utilised ETE PAs who supported children directly to access education, training and employment opportunities. The PAs were a shared resource with our Children Looked After team, and although some examples of excellent outcomes for children have been identified, it has become clear the resource available is not sufficient for the needs of the YJ cohort and a plan to address this is currently being worked up with the Partnership Board's support.

**Priority:** Strengthening data set for justice involved children's educational provisions and outcomes. Regular monitoring and analysis of data used to drive allocation of resources. Post 16 provision appropriate for the needs of the service.

### **Over-represented children**

Understanding and addressing children from certain backgrounds who are disproportionately represented with the YJ cohort in Devon remains an ongoing priority for the service. The development of our characteristics reporting tool alongside national tools provides the opportunity to interrogate the data we have access to across the partnership, which will give the service greater insight into local issues.



Currently, data suggests that Devon has a small over-representation of Black or Black British children within the justice system – 2.65% compared with 0% in the general Devon population (0% is due to the numbers in the Devon population being so low). There is a larger disproportionality issue for children from a mixed background (4.64% compared to 3% in the general population). Whilst these numbers are small they are significant for the children in the system and therefore are a priority for the service to address alongside known issues for children with SEND, neurodiversity and those children known to children’s social care or looked after by the LA. Whilst girls in the cohort are historically fewer both locally and nationally, Devon and our counterparts across the peninsula have seen a steady rise in girls entering the system, particularly for violence offences. This rise needs to be understood alongside our response and provision for girls who will often have different needs. To pull the data together and formalise our response, DYJS has drafted a disproportionality and diversity action plan which will be monitored by the Board on a quarterly basis, to ensure the partnership understands and takes ownership of a response to reduce those children who are over-represented in the system.

**Priority:** Use of data to provide regular reporting and oversight of over-represented groups. Disproportionality plan completed and in place with reporting to the Board, to include actions to reduce over-represented children included Children in Care and children with additional needs.

## Policing

### Strengths of the partnership

Devon YJS has a strong partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP) at both local and county level. The DYJS has 2.6 FTE Police officers seconded to the DYJS to cover the three Police localities (LPA) of North and West, Exeter, East and Mid, South. These officers are line managed by the DYJS but linked to a Police line manager, the local community safety sergeant (CSS) who also manages Police Youth Intervention officers. This ensures that they are kept up to date with Police and DYJS work and can access resources and support as needed. The CSS all sit on the Devon Out of Court Resolution (OOCR) panel as Police gatekeepers. This allows them to make decisions on behalf of DCP and deploy resources for intervention and diversion work as needed. Two of the three areas run a Diversion Clinic which takes direct DCP referrals and referrals from the OOCR panel. These clinics are seen as best practice by DCP who are looking to roll them out to all local police areas. DYJS sits on the OOCR Improvement Working Group and Speedy Justice working group.

The OOCR working group has been active for 18 months and is seeking to roll out a consistent model of OOCR of decision making and delivery across the DCP area, based largely on the Devon model, with a particular focus on the incorporation of Outcome 22 and a Deferred Prosecution Scheme. The DCP Policy is nearing completion and will shortly be going to the chief officer's group and CPS for sign off.

The swifter justice group is focused on reducing the time of offence to outcome which has become an issue since the removal of Police targets by the Ministry of Justice, and the impact of changes to PACE. The reasons for the delays are complex with both Police processes and CPS decision making taking longer to conclude investigations due to a plethora of factors. It is unlikely that the working group will be able to make significant progress due to this complexity however the working group has agreed 'targets' for the different outcomes, these targets have yet to be agreed by senior officers. On a positive note, two Police areas are trialling specialist youth investigators to target prolific offending by children and gather their investigations to get offences dealt with at the same time. This is having a significant impact with over 150 crimes dealt with in the first two months of operation. The impact on the OOCR panel has been noted but we have already seen a reduction in offence to outcome times for these children with complex situations.

DYJS also sits on two Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) led scrutiny panels for Decision Making and Victims. This is a key forum for reflection and learning on practice, with a well-represented partner agency group present.

#### Challenges and risks

The current OOCR working group is part of a wider portfolio of development work under an allocated Inspector, who is driving forward proposals for a child centred approach to policing youth crime. Whilst this is very positive, there remains a challenge around the ownership and escalation routes for children who offend within police structures, and the level of seniority providing governance to this area which could negatively impact on outcomes for children and victims. This challenge is acknowledged by the LCJB who are now facilitating collaborative youth justice meetings with the police, YJ services across the force area and the YJB.

On an operational level, challenges remain around information sharing for children who are arrested. For children already open to the service, a daily report has been devised to provide the DYJS with any information on children arrested, however this is not working as effectively as envisaged and is currently under review. The service does not routinely get informed about children being arrested and released on bail or released under investigation who are not currently open, due to information sharing barriers. This prevents the opportunity for the service to proactively offer voluntary support for children arrested for serious offences or provide 'reachable/ teachable moments' intervention and support whilst children are in custody.

Access to police data which could inform responses to children has also been an issue due to DCP moving to new IT system, Niche, and whilst this has now been resolved, there is a backlog of issues to address which are prioritised and requests such as data for overnight holds of children in police custody continue to be delayed. It is promising however that the issues and challenges identified are well acknowledged within the partnership and there is a strong will to address and resolve these barriers, which are included on the DYJS development plan below and the Partnership Board risk register.

**Priority:** Pending the progress of proposals submitted to senior Force leaders around Child First policing, review operational practice around Out of Court work in line with YJB case management guidance.

## **Prevention**

Within the DYJS, the Turnaround project is the current offer for preventing children from offending. As noted in previous sections, whilst Turnaround funding is due to end in March 2025, the proposals for a combined 'risk outside the home' team, strategically aligned with the DYJS will provide Devon's prevention offer for children, alongside other early help services. Devon's Turnaround programme has been very successful, with the MoJ using case examples for briefings and the Turnaround lead delivering a well-received workshop at the Turnaround end of year conference in February 2024.

The Out of Court Resolution panel and the Police Youth Intervention Teams have been the consistent source of referrals for the service, alongside attending the police led Intervention Clinic and ASB panels as they have become re-established in Devon. In 23/24 the Turnaround programme:

- Received 113 referrals.
- Closed 51 interventions with a current rolling open caseload of 32.
- Saw the majority of referrals (61) coming in as a result of OOCR panel decision Outcome 22/No further action (NFA), followed by Community Resolutions (46)
- Identified 64 children with SEND and 35 as Child in Need
- 2 children identified as Black Caribbean and 3 children were from a mixed background, with the rest White British or declining to say.
- Since completion of their Turnaround intervention, only 2 children became FTE following a 6-month period.

Demographically, the Turnaround cohort mirrors the YJ cohort so does not identify any differing needs for children at risk of offending, suggesting we need to be targeting our resources around what we know are the needs for children much earlier, in order to successfully prevent them entering the system.

**Priority:** Exit planning for Turnaround and consideration of YJ prevention offer aligned with proposed Risk Outside the Home service.

## **Diversion**

Diversion work is delivered through the Out of Court Resolution (OOCR) Panel process. DCP refer all cases after first informal disposal to the panel for consideration. This provides more opportunity for consultation than the legally required consultation with DYJS on formal OOCR disposals. As a result, the DYJS can invite a wide variety of partners to participate which includes the diversion projects from Turnaround and the Youth Inclusion Team (YIT, as well as Y-Smart (young people's substance use service) and the Police who offer preventative interventions. The panel operates a first tier of decision making where suitable prevention cases are identified and OOCR decisions made including referrals to these diversion services. Only those cases where the best outcome is unclear or there is significant previous offending are referred to the DYJS for assessment. This prevents potential net widening but does provide a challenge with capacity when considering how the child's voice is included in decision making, which is now an area of focus for a working group for the panel. Performance of the OOCR panel is monitored through a combination of means. The key re-offending data which is the best measure of efficacy is measured via YJS and Police recording systems, with the DYJS reporting on this to the YJB. Turnaround has its own Ministry of Justice performance measures which run in addition to DYJS statistics.

**Priority:** Review of panel process to include child and family voice.

## **Restorative Justice (RJ) and victims**

DYJS offers services to all victims regardless of offence or status. They must have been identified as victims of children who have plead guilty or been found guilty, and for whom an intervention is either being considered (OOCR) or has already been agreed (Post court sentencing). All victims are contacted by letter as a first contact. Corporate victims are sent an 'opt in' letter whereas personal victims are sent an 'opt out'. The offer is then phone contact and then face to face contact. This is to gain victim impact and views on decisions and reparative actions. Victims are also offered the chance to be updated on a child's progress through the criminal justice system. The service employs 1.2 FTE RJ workers who cover the county. The victim is guaranteed the support that they need to get through the process. This is at minimum a letter, phone call and offer of home visit. The end of our support is informed by the victim's choice or at latest the end of the child's intervention. The RJ workers feed in their information to the OOCR decision making panel or to the report writer for Referral Orders and Pre-Sentence Reports. The information is then used to inform the outcome of the decision and the design of any intervention plan. The RJ workers co-ordinate the delivery of RJ alongside lead Team Managers and other YJ practitioners who deliver RJ activities and community reparation. All case managers are also trained in RJ practice and can support and participate in direct and indirect RJ work as needed. Ongoing support can be accessed via the Victim Hub, ran by Devon and Cornwall police through the OPCC. This has an extensive network of support providers. Where appropriate the service will direct victims to the Hub as a gateway to this support. Following intervention victims are asked to complete a survey with findings being collated and used to inform planning for future service delivery.

The service does have a challenge whereby one of the RJ workers has gone on maternity leave and as of May 2024 we have not been able to recruit to her temporary cover. The role has been made full time to enhance interest and a contingency plan is in place if recruitment is again not successful, to ensure the service can continue to comply with the Victim's Code and support those harmed by the offending of children in Devon.

**Priority:** Ensuring capacity to deliver high quality victim services. Consistency of practice across the county.

## **Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding**

Following the implementation of the statutory serious violence duty in January 2023, the service has worked closely with partners to support the completion of a needs analysis, which identified a number of needs and drivers behind serious violence in Devon which have been incorporated into Devon's Preventing Serious Violence Strategy [Serious-Violence-Strategy-v.Final-2024.01.31-for-publishing.pdf \(saferdevon.co.uk\)](#) The needs assessment found that while serious violence offence rates were low compared to national rates, there has been an increase of around 12% and children under 18 were responsible for less than 20%. Qualitative data indicated that violence was becoming normalised amongst children and was a concern for children alongside feeling unsafe in certain spaces.

The strategy has identified key priorities which address the impact of serious violence for children, as both victims and perpetrators. The strategy has adopted the public health model towards serious violence and takes a place-based approach which aligns with contextual safeguarding responses for children and young people.



#### Core priorities

Priority 1: Shape a series of preventative responses for young people and adults who, based on their individual needs and experiences, are at greatest risk of involvement in violence, taking account of intersecting needs and the individual ways needs may present.

Priority 2: Strengthen our understanding and response to contextual harms to reduce exploitation and peer group related risks.

Priority 3: Strengthen our early years and early help targeted offer for families where risk and vulnerability factors in relation to violence are present.

Priority 4: Challenge the normalisation of violence, particularly in relation to young people - supporting them to develop healthy and respectful relationships, both intimate partner and peer to peer.

Priority 5: Work towards creating inclusive and supportive education environments where all young people can thrive, with a focus on strengthening their wellbeing, resilience and opportunities.

#### Cross-cutting priorities

Priority 6: Work towards trauma, shame and neurodivergence-informed systems (see appendix 1 for our definitions of these terms).

Priority 7: Strengthen our learning about serious violence, needs and drivers, and what works well as prevention.

DYJS are well engaged with the developing plan to address these key priorities and reduce serious youth violence in Devon. There is now closer alignment of youth justice services and the exploitation and serious youth violence agenda through the Service Manager holding responsibility for both DYJS and the Local Authority's missing and exploitation offer, which is proposed to become a Risk Outside the Home service. This will allow greater crossover of information sharing, resource and responses to children who are at risk of exploitation and violence which may lead them to offending and youth justice. The DYJS Service Manager is currently leading a review of Devon's Adolescent Safety framework under the Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership governance which brings together key partners to review processes which seek to identify and disrupt exploitation and associated violence and working to increase safety for children and young people.

The Innovate Project, a research programme based within the University of Sussex ([The Innovate Project | Researching youth, risk and complexity](#)) which supports innovation work in children's services, are currently supporting Devon through the testing of system change tools which were developed with Devon (and others) as a test site in the initial research period. The DYJS Service Manager has recently worked as a practitioner co-researcher on a project led by the Contextual Safeguarding research team based in Durham University ([Sustaining Social Work Project Report \(contextualsafeguarding.org.uk\)](#)) and the Head of Service has brought transformation experience around the exploitation and serious violence agenda, which is supporting a significant shift in focus, responses and resources, including the YJ Partnership board commissioning a high level exploitation needs assessment for Devon.

**Priority:** Progress multi agency audit on serious violence to inform service planning

#### Detention in Police Custody

Inappropriate use of overnight holds does not appear to be a significant issue for Devon, however issues with accessing police data has meant there is no formal process for review and monitoring. Devon and Cornwall police previously had in place a monitoring forum with all 4 Youth Justice services in the PCC area, however this has not been operating for some time. This issue has been raised at Board level and with the Local Criminal Justice Board. The DYJS Service Manager does meet regularly with the Emergency Duty Service manager to review any issues and there are good relationships between the services which promote

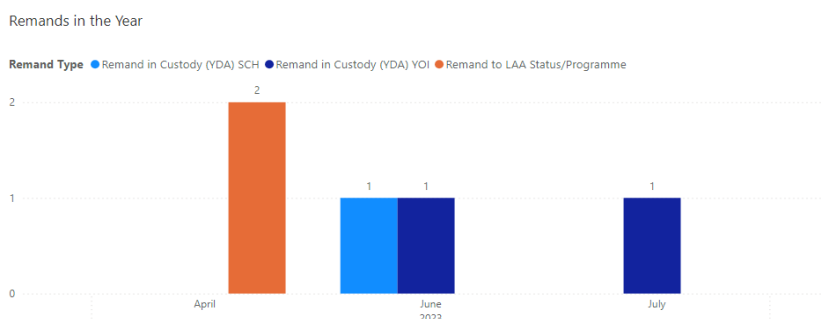
the sharing of information and joint problem solving. The service also resources a PACE bed for children in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and the fostering service, which until recently was shared with Plymouth YJS who contributed to the weekly retainer cost. Due to lack of use Plymouth no longer contribute and one of the two pairs of foster carers used within the scheme has now retired. The bed was used once in 23/24 but is offered more frequently. A review of this provision is therefore required and has been arranged for this quarter.

Appropriate Adults services are commissioned and provided by The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS), an arrangement which is currently being reviewed due to tendering and procurement requirements.

**Priority:** Progress re-instating of overnight holds review process

## Remands

The service has seen two children Remand to Local Authority Accommodation (RLAA) and three children remanded into youth detention in 23/24. The two RLAA and one of the Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) children were remanded for the same incident, all three children ultimately received community orders on sentence. One child remanded to YDA is not a Devon child and remains on remand whilst Court processes are ongoing, and the other received a Deferred Sentence for a period before receiving a custodial sentence for offences committed as an adult. Though use of remand is relatively low for Devon children, the service is looking at developing refresher training for Court Officers as part of ongoing Court development work, alongside the development of a remand strategy. DYJS does offer bail support for children charged to Court, and where children are at risk of remand the service offers robust bail packages that supports safety for the child and public protection wherever possible and safe to do so, keeping the welfare of the child and the safety of others at the forefront of planning.



Cost of Remands

Year	YOI	SCH	STC	All Settings	MoJ Budget	Additional DCC Budget	Over/Under Budget
2023/2024	£123,480	£0	£0	£123,480	£7,789	£34,000	£81,691
2022/2023	£20,262	£0	£0	£20,262	£19,883	£31,000	£30,621
2021/2022	£18,270	£0	£0	£18,270	£28,804	£31,000	£41,534
2020/2021	£0	£0	£17,526	£17,526	£41,827	£31,000	£55,301
2019/2020	£3,600	£0	£85,278	£88,878	£29,171	£0	£59,707

Number of nights in Remand

Year	YOI	SCH	STC	All Settings
2019/2020	15	122	0	137
2020/2021	0	23	0	23
2021/2022	58	0	0	58
2022/2023	66	0	0	66
2023/2024	115	0	0	115

Remands to Youth Detention Accommodation

Year	YOI	SCH	STC	All Settings
2019/2020	1	5	0	6
2020/2021	0	1	0	1
2021/2022	1	0	0	1
2022/2023	1	0	0	1
2023/2024	2	0	0	2

**Priority: Devise strategy which outlines how the service will reduce the use of remands.**

### **Use of Custody and Constructive Resettlement**

DYJS has relatively low numbers of children receiving custodial sentences and has only seen one child receiving a Detention and Training Order in 23/24. The service works collaboratively with children, families and the professional network to provide robust alternative to custody and promote engagement and compliance.

DYJS have adopted the guidance regarding the 7 pathways to resettlement for children - Pathways to Resettlement ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)). HMIP rated the DYJS response to resettlement as “good” stating that the service recognises the need to build on a child’s strengths and their protective factors; the children we have had in custody receive frequent visits, both in person and through video conferencing and that DYJS staff often provide transport for families, and/or the DYJS contributes towards travel costs for families to maintain contact.

DYJS practitioners regularly write to children in custody and children often write back, showing evidence of a positive working relationship. When appropriate we have supported release on temporary licence and this is used well to support reintegration into the community, undertaking activities such as going to interviews and spending time with families.

DYJS Victim workers are creative in their work with children while in custody and very much are involved in the formulation of any licence conditions required to keep victims safe.

**Priority:** Resettlement policy reviewed and in place.

### **Working with families**

DYJS recognises the importance of a whole family approach when working with justice involved children, therefore all practitioners have the skills and abilities to offer support to families as part of intervention planning. The service does have a family support lead worker, who can offer specific family and parenting support, guidance and signposting to families, and who acts as a family work champion within the service. Families are supported with a wide range of issues, including but not limited to housing, education, benefits, access funding grants, therapeutic parenting and harmful sexual behaviour support. Training around the use of a reducing parental conflict toolkit has been accessed by some staff and there are growing links to family support services across Devon. Within Early Help and Partnerships the service can access Devon’s Family Intervention Team, Bridges Team (edge of care support), Autism and Us Parent Programme provided by the Devon Communication and Interaction Team, Parenting Plus Adolescent Programme provided by Devon County Council, Let’s Talk online parenting training provided by South Hams Community Safety Partnership, DICE parenting programme provided by Barnardo’s, Intercom Trust Services for LGBT families, Exeter Community Initiatives for one to one parenting support, CEDA Bis Net for support for parents of neurodiverse children, and the Solihull Approach – an online parenting training offer. Closer integration of services as part of the Early Help reshape will further strengthen working relationships and provision of services for families working with the DYJS.

**Priority:** Ensure whole family approach is embedded in practice framework.

### **Service development**

Following the service’s HMIP inspection in 2022 with a rating of ‘Good’, an improvement plan was formulated to address the recommendations. Due to the subsequent restructure and

change in management, some of those actions remain and are included below alongside identified strategic priorities for the service identified from the last 12 months:

Priority	Progress	Action needed	Owner	RAG
Ensure robust contingency plans are in place for all children, who address their safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others	Plans for all children now included on the case management system. QA and supervision provide monitoring of this.	Review of Risk Policy and Risk Panel has been completed. Revised Policy will launch in July 2024 including process for ensuring robust contingency plans are in place. QA framework development and audit cycle will focus on contingency planning as a theme.	Service Manager	Yellow
Review and produce quality assurance arrangements that drive improvement across all aspects of case management in court and out-of-court service delivery	An Early Help QA framework is being developed which aligns with Children's Social Care and includes case file review, thematic audits, professional and family/child feedback.	DYJS specific elements to be completed and in place by September 2024. Audit schedule to be devised.	Service Manager	Red
Review management roles and responsibilities to ensure more parity in work distribution.	Internal review started in January 2024 and due to conclude June 2024.	Revised responsibilities and arrangements to be agreed and confirmed.	Service Manager Team Managers	Yellow
Expand the breadth and depth of management information, forensically. analyse segmented data, and use findings to improve outcomes for children	Development of At a Glance reporting tool, which provides a breakdown of characteristics for analysis including age, gender, ethnicity, looked after status, social car involvement, Education	Analytical capacity required to support information provided to the Board.  Further development of available data, including partners providing datasets for analysis.  Data to drive disproportionality plan with a focus on reducing over-represented groups including Children Looked	Service Manager  Partnership Board	Yellow

	status, SEND, vulnerability to exploitation.	After, SEND and Neuro-diverse children.		
Ensure that strategic relationships with children's social care translate into positive outcomes for DYJS children	<p>Chair of the Partnership Board is now the Deputy Director for Children's Services</p> <p>YJ Service Manager attends performance and practice meetings with SMs across EH&amp;P and CS</p>	Cross service understanding of Child First through training and relationship building, strengthened by potential of co-locating.	<p>Head of Service</p> <p>Service Manager</p>	
Strengthen connectivity with DYJS staff to build closer collaboration that improves outcomes for children	<p>Board updates now standard agenda item as quarterly team meetings following PB</p> <p>New board members induction includes visiting the team</p> <p>Meet the team session planned in June</p>	Board to launch strategic priorities in face-to-face session with the team.	Partnership Board	
Child First informed practice framework embedded and understood across the partnership	<p>YJB training sessions undertaken by 7 staff members.</p> <p>Practice discussions being held at team meetings.</p> <p>Policies have started to be reviewed with Child First</p>	Training and service development through a Child First approach – external commissioned input scheduled in July 2024	Service Manager	

	lens and language			
Standards for Children self-assessment findings	Court and OOCR operational working groups established to progress plan	Remand strategy  Disproportionality plan to be agreed, to include plan to reduce the number of SEND and CLA children in the DYJS cohort.  Resettlement policy and strategy	Service Manager  Partnership Board	
Child First policing	Review underway within D&C police.  Proposals due to be shared with senior police leads in June 2024	Clear governance structure for youth related policing, including oversight of YJ Police Officer role.  Sharing of information for children arrested and released under investigation/ bailed.  Overnight detention review process		
How we respond to Serious Youth Violence and use of contextual safeguarding responses	SYV audit/ self-assessment will be commissioned via PB to identify themes and trends	Proposal of Risk outside the Home team alongside DYJS will strengthen alignment and crossover of knowledge and response through mapping and sharing of resources	HoS Service Manager	

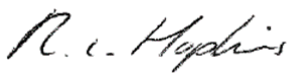
### Closing summary

The past year has been particularly challenging for the service, given that historically there is limited staff turnover the change in senior management and some operational staff moving on has been significant. Alongside the changing models of practice within youth justice, including the positive adoption of Child First and updated case management guidance, there has been a lot of change and it is fair to say the service is experiencing the biggest transition it has gone through in years. However, with this comes real opportunity for the service to develop and respond to the changing landscape of youth justice – something the partnership, staff and management group are committed to achieving to ensure the very best outcomes for children, young people and communities across Devon. There is real momentum building across the system, with a Partnership Board which has already made huge progress in the last 6 months alone, a dedicated operational management group and practitioners who, throughout periods of instability and challenge, have continued to put the best interest of children and victims at the heart of their work. This stands Devon in good stead for becoming

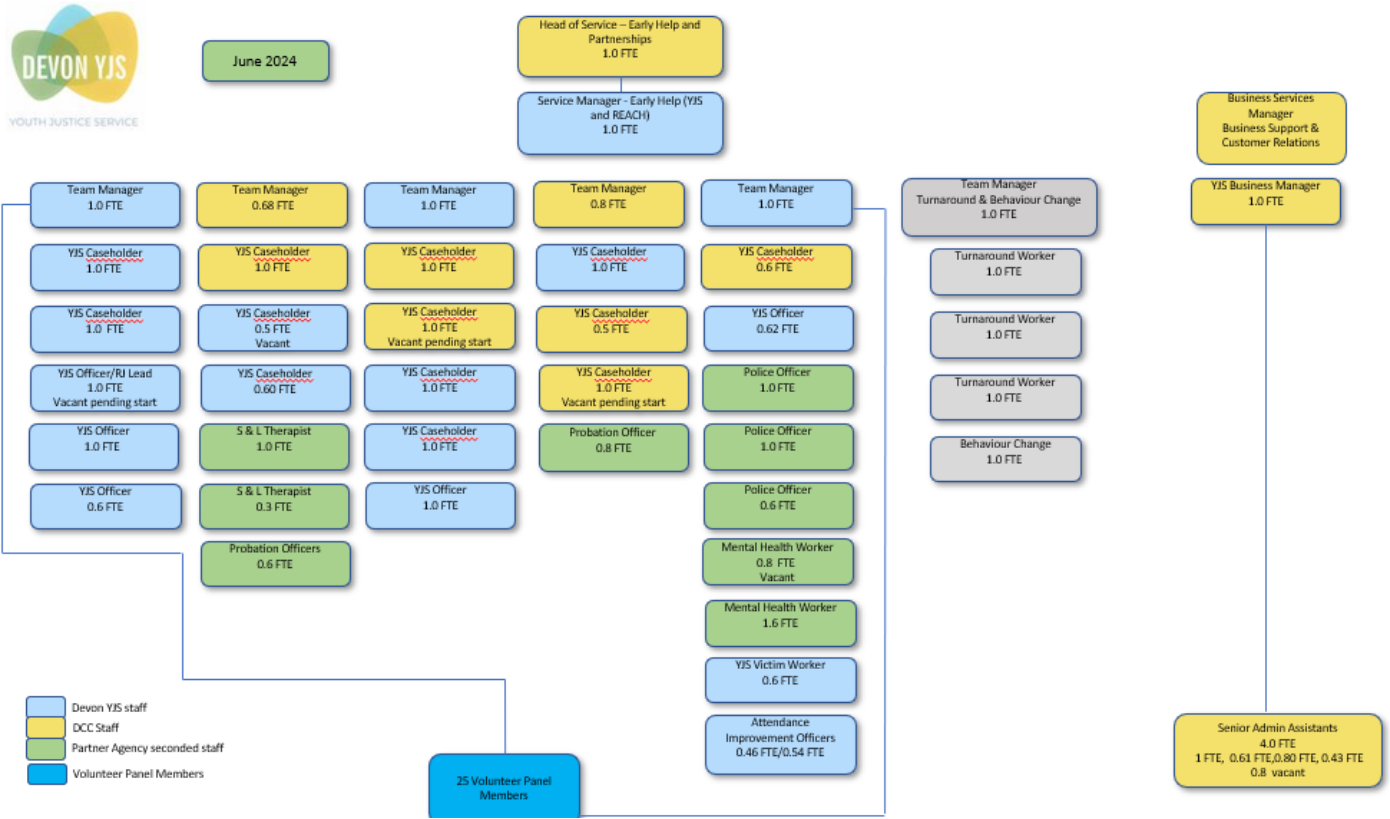
a high achieving service and we look forward to seeing what the next 12 months brings on this journey.

### Sign off, submission and approval

Cabinet sign off scheduled for July 2024.

Chair of the Youth Justice Partnership Board	Becky Hopkins
Signature	
Date	28.06.24

# Appendix 1: Staffing Structure



B8: Staffing of the YOT by gender and ethnicity; No. of individual people

Ethnicity	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other Volunteer		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Asian																		0	0
Black																		0	0
Mixed					1													1	0
White		1	2	3	7	19		5		22	1		6	19			16	69	
Any other ethnic group																		0	0
Not known																		0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>69</b>	
* Welsh Speakers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* Welsh YOTs only



## Appendix 2: Budget Costs and Contributions

### B5: YOT budget Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	0	0	699,877	699,877
Local Authority	384,000	0	299,200	683,200
Police	151,320	0	0	151,320
Police and Crime Commissioner	0	0	190,266	190,266
Probation	59,670	0	5,000	64,670
Health	188,115	0	66,431	254,546
* Welsh Government				0
Other	0	0	14,980	14,980
<b>Total</b>	<b>783,105</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,275,754</b>	<b>2,058,859</b>

\* Welsh YOTs only

## Appendix 3: Acronyms

Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB
Adolescent Safety Framework	ASF
Activities, Interactions and Roles	AIR
Additional Learning Needs	ALN
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB
Assessment, Intervention and Moving on	AIM
Attention Deficit hyperactivity Disorder	ADHD
Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	CAMHS
Child Exploitation	CE
Child First	CF
Child Protection	CP
Child Sexual Exploitation	CSE
Community Safety Sergeant	CSS
Construction Skills Certification Scheme	CSCS
Crown Prosecution Service	CPS
Devon & Cornwall	D&C
Devon & Cornwall Police	DCP
Devon County Council	DCC
Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership	DSCP
Devon Youth Justice Partnership Board	DYJSPB
Devon Youth Justice Service	DYJS
Early Help & Partnerships	EHP
Education, Health and Care Plan	EHCP
Education, Training and Employment	ETE
Electively Home Educated	EHE

Enhanced Case Management	ECM
First-time entrants	FTEs
Harmful Sexual Behaviour	HSB
Head of Service	HOS
His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation	HMIP
Key Performance Indicators	KPIs
Local Authority	LA
Local Criminal Justice Board	LCJB
National Autism Training Programme	NAPT
National Referral Mechanism	NRM
National Standards	NS
No further Action	NFA
Not in Education, Training or Employment	NEET
Occupational Health	OH
Office for National Statistics	ONS
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner	OPCC
Out of Court Resolution	OOCR
Personal Assistant	PA
Police & Crime Commissioner	PCC
Police and Criminal Evidence Act	PACE
Police Localities	LPA
Quality Assurance	QA
Realised under Investigation	RUI
Red, Amber, Green	RAG
Reducing Exploitation and Absence from Care or Home	REACH
Referral Order	RO
Remand to Local Authority Accommodation	RLAA
Restorative Disposal	RD
Restorative Justice	RJ
Risk Outside the Home	ROTH
Safety Panel	SP
Serious Youth Violence	SYV
Service Managers	SM
Special Educational Needs	SEN
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	SEND
Speech & Language Therapist	SALT
Substance Misuse	SMU
The Appropriate Adult Service	TAAS
Youth Detention Accommodation	YDA
Youth Intervention Team	YIT
Youth Justice	YJ
Youth Justice Board	YJB
Youth Substance Misuse Advice Recovery Treatment	YSMART

CS/24/23  
Cabinet  
14 August 2024

## **INDEPENDENT EDUCATION PROVISION COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT STRATEGY**

Report of the Director of Children & Young People's Futures

*Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.*

### **Recommendation:**

That the Cabinet be asked to:

- (a) Agree the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy set out in this Paper.
- (b) Agree to the principle of an open, competitive process to procure a multi supplier framework, or equivalent, for individual packages of education support.
- (c) Following completion of a full procurement options appraisal give delegated authority to the Director of Children & Young People's Futures and Director of Finance and Public Value, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's SEND Improvement Services, to approve the final route to market.

### **1. Background**

As part of the work programme for the SEND Transformation Programme and the Department for Education (DfE) Safety Valve, a significant workstream is around the future commissioning and procurement strategy for Independent Special Schools and Alternative Education Providers.

Other workstreams within the Programme are focussed on increasing capacity in the maintained state sector, to help educate children in their own community, but there will remain a need to commission from the independent sector.

The County Council is currently purchasing places from the independent sector for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) via a spot purchase mechanism. Operational teams have adapted a national contract which details the arrangements for each individual child or young person. Except for the annual review of the EHCP, there has been no ongoing contract management with providers.

DCC has also been purchasing packages of Alternative Education Provision (AEP), the majority of which is delivered by external providers

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who are unregistered. At this point in time there are no national quality standards or registration processes for AEP providers. This is being reviewed by the DfE. For AEP different teams have been operating in different ways which needs to be standardised.

## 2. Proposal

The principle of the commissioning and procurement strategy is to achieve safe and effective commissioning that:

- Is legally compliant with procurement rules,
- Is cost effective,
- Has clear contracting,
- Has defined outcomes,
- Has performance metrics to support contract monitoring and Quality Assurance.

### **Independent Special School Placements (ISS):**

The strategy for ISS is to improve the commissioning of ISS placements, including alignment of the commissioning processes for independent school placements with:

- Wider education commissioning.
- Wider Council commissioning and procurement practice.
- Post 16 settings, linked with Transition and Preparing for Adulthood

### **Alternative Education Provision (AEP):**

The strategy for AEP is to put in place an appropriate commissioning, approach, and mechanism where the County Council is using AEP to support the education of children and young people for a period of time. This can include:

- Those children with an EHCP, predominately identified as Education Other than at School (EOTAS),
- Those children who fall under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. This duty states that “local authorities shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable... education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.
- Children in care,
- Children missing from education (CME) for a period of time.

## 3. Work undertaken so far:

From April 2024 additional resources within the Children’s Commissioning team have been focussed on achieving priorities for both the short and long-term commissioning need.

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This includes phase one of the ISS transformation to meet the Safety Valve savings targets for the 2024/25 financial year. Work undertaken includes:

- Reviewing the contractual arrangements with independent providers.
- Meeting with 17 providers to discuss short term block contracting arrangements to reduce the overall price paid.
- Designing a block contract to agree with providers including service specification, terms and conditions and individual placement agreements.

Phase 1 of the AEP transformation has been launched with the implementation and piloting of a new commissioning process for an interim period (2024/25). The purpose of the interim commissioning process is to manage any risk from current practice. Work undertaken includes:

- Mapping and understanding current activity of teams and using this for the shaping and standardising of practice across teams as part of an interim commissioning process.
- Greater understanding who the providers are across teams and who we paid for services in 2023/24.
- Identifying the top providers to start short term negotiations to achieve savings for 2024/25 through the agreement of block contracts of between £0.2m and £0.6m per annum.
- Designing and implementation of an AEP information request survey with the aim of obtaining up to date information and assurances for DCC on safety and welfare practices of the providers we are using.
- A new joint Teams page as a central and shared space for a range of teams and colleagues to document, share, record and monitor all education packages for children and young people.
- A range of guidance notes, process map, and a series of templates have been developed to support teams to implement the new process going forward. This includes the introduction of an approval process for all AEP packages.
- Designing an individual placement and Terms and Conditions document to be used by all teams ahead of a longer-term Framework being in place.
- Developing a master provider list to support the process.
- Organising drop-in sessions for teams to work through guidance and navigation of the Teams page and process during July 2024.

The work so far for both the ISS and AEP sectors puts greater assurance in place whilst longer term formal frameworks and approaches are developed and implemented.

#### **4. Future work on the strategy:**

The aim is to have an overall commissioning and procurement mechanism in place for both ISS and AEP by January 2026, earlier if possible. This will be one of the first procurement processes to be implemented by the County Council under the Procurement Act 2023. This is a new mandatory

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legal structure for all public sector which will come into force on 28 October 2024.

The new Act will require additional notices and documentation for the process which will require additional time to be allowed for within the procurement timetable. As this is a significant, complex, and sensitive project, and the first procurement for DCC under the new Act, it will require increased scrutiny from procurement and legal teams. To ensure strict compliance with the new legal structure, additional review and quality assurance will be included within the process which will also require consideration within the procurement timetable.

By the time this paper is considered by Cabinet the following will have been worked on:

- A Needs Analysis for both workstreams
- A Prior Information Notice (PIN) and soft market questionnaire
- An agreed Engagement and Communication Plan
- Benchmarking with other Local Education Authorities

If Cabinet decide to proceed:

- The PIN and a Market testing questionnaire will be launched.
- A procurement options appraisal will be completed to identify the best route to market.
- Provider engagement will commence from September 2024.
- Service specifications will be developed.
- An Impact Assessment will be completed linked to the development of the Service Specification and engagement set out in Appendix A.
- Wider Stakeholder engagement will also commence.

This work will all be completed by February 2025 when work will start on a tender pack with a final review and agreement on an Invitation to Tender (ITT).

The graphs in Appendix A set out the current timeline.

## 5. **Options**

The current way of working needs to change to reflect updated County Council Governance arrangements, to achieve the best outcomes for young people and to ensure best value.

The procurement options appraisal will set out the possible routes to market. Examples include a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), successfully used for passenger transport, through to a preferred partner model or an alliance strategic partnership. The final option chosen will reflect the diverse nature of the providers and allow for flexibility in the market taking into account the wide range of needs to be met.

## 6. Consultations and Representations

The proposals in this paper were included in the High Needs Block Management plan as submitted and agreed with the Department for Education. There has been an ongoing dialogue with Devon Education Forum and Devon Schools' Leadership Services.

Progress on the proposals have been reported through to the SEND Transformation Programme Board

Within the timeline set out in Appendix A the following line of engagement and consultation will commence from September 2024 including:

- Engagement with the market with an initial event provisionally planned for 30 September.
- Consultation with families and young people who are placed within the Independent Sector and with Alternative Education Providers.
- Linked with the SEND Transformation Programme explore opportunities for Co-production.
- Further engagement and training for staff with the aim of improving systems and processes to free more officer time up to work directly with parents/carers and providers.

## 7. Strategic Plan

The work of this project, together with the wider SEND Transformation Programme, is a key priority for being ambitious for children and young people. Listening to the voice of all within the system including improving our working relationship with providers will help achieve better outcomes building on the partnership approach set out in the Strategic Plan.

## 8. Financial Considerations

Through better financial management and placement value savings can be achieved without reducing a level of service. In fact, the strategy should contribute towards improving quality through proper contract management and defined quality standards.

In the 2023/24 financial year the County Council spent £54million on ISS settings and £8.6million with independent AEP providers.

The financial management, placement value and AEP commissioning workstream within the DfE Safety Valve is key to achieving savings with a target of £2.4million for the 2024/25 financial year.

## 9. Legal Considerations

As set out above, the Procurement Act 2023 will be taken into account with this work. The County Council's legal team are contributing to work on

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short-term block contracting agreements and the longer-term framework options.

All provision, through this strategy, will conform with our statutory duties as Local Education Authority.

## **10. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)**

This work will not have a direct Environmental Impact. However, with this work linking with the aim of children and young people being educated in their local community, there should be a positive impact on distances travelled. This will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from home to school transport.

## **11. Equality Considerations**

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs.
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- take account of protected characteristics in coming to a decision.

The development of service specifications will include input from engagement with providers, Parents and Carers and Young People. This will help inform the Impact Assessment and the ultimate decision for the procurement option.

## **12. Risk Management Considerations**

This project forms part of the SEND Transformation Programme which has a risk register which is regularly updated. This commissioning and procurement strategy will help mitigate the following risks highlighted in the Programme:

- The risk that the High Needs Block spend does not return a balanced budget.
- The continued growth, in recent years, of EHCP with no facility to reduce external demand.
- The high cost of educating pupils with complex educational and physical needs. This includes the students remaining in post-16 education.



## 13. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The proposals in this paper will ensure the County Council is able to fulfil its statutory responsibilities in respect of commissioning appropriate provision for Children and Young People, in particular those identified with special or additional educational/medical needs. Proposals are directly linked to the High Needs Block Management Plan, as submitted, and approved by the DfE as well as the wider SEND Transformation plan.

Proposals will establish a better way of working/commissioning that ensures compliance, value for money, performance monitoring and improved outcomes for Children and Young people.

Linked with the wider SEND Transformation Programme this strategy gives the opportunity to lead on establishing a better way of working.

Stuart Collins  
Director of Children & Young People's Futures

[**Electoral Divisions:** All]

Cabinet Member for Children's SEND Improvement Services: Councillor Lois Samuel

Director, Stuart Collins, Director of Children & Young People's Futures

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Contact for Enquiries: [Damien Jones, Deputy Director for Transport Operations, Environment & Waste](#)

Tel No: 01392 383244 Room: G121

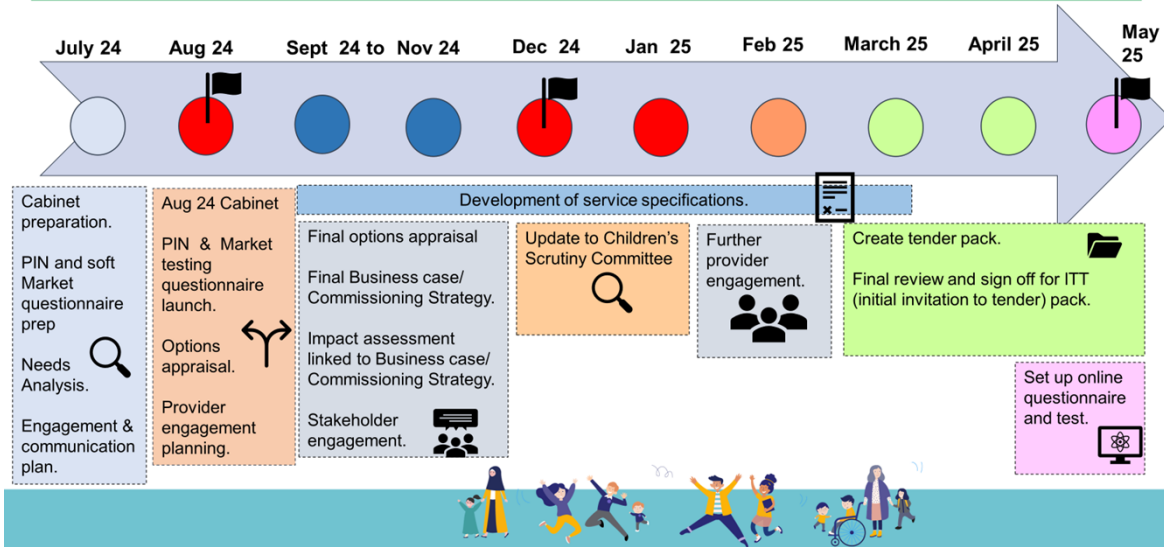
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## Appendix A – Timeline

Graph 1 – Commissioning and Procurement timeline from July 2024 to May 2025

### Part 1 Longer term AEP and ISS

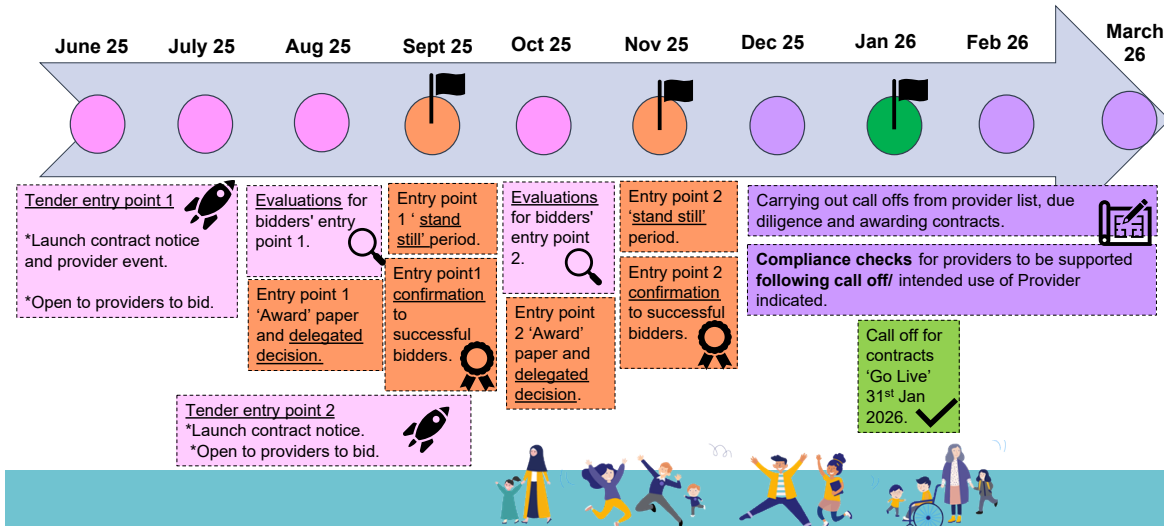
### Commissioning & Procurement activity timeline.



Graph 2: Commissioning and Procurement timeline from June 2025 to March 2026

### Part 2 Longer term AEP and ISS

### Commissioning & Procurement activity timeline.



CS/24/21  
Cabinet  
14 August 2024

## **The Future of Family Hubs Delivery and Children's Centre Buildings Consultation Concluding Recommendations**

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### Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

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#### **1) Recommendation**

That the Cabinet be asked to:

- (a) Agree that the delivery of Family Hubs should be undertaken directly by Devon County Council from the 1 April 2025, including the transfer of related staff into the authority (through a TUPE arrangement)
- (b) Agree to the recommendations of a phased approach pertaining to the former children's centre buildings which is set out in paragraph 3.15 and table of Actions and Mitigations at 3.16.
- (c) Agree to delegate to the Director of Children and Young People's futures and the Director of Transformation & Business Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the relevant local Member, the decisions relating to individual buildings.

#### **2) Background / Introduction**

- 2.1 The development of a Family Hubs model for Devon was agreed by Cabinet on 11 October 2023, following the development in 2022 of the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme and policy which was set up and taken forward by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care. The Family Hubs programme sits within the Children's Services Improvement Programme, aligned to the Early Help redesign and is an agreed priority of the council to help improve the entire Early Help pathway for children, young people and their families. Family Hubs have been implemented successfully elsewhere across the country, including in Torbay, Plymouth and Cornwall.
- 2.2 The proposal builds on the previous £800,000 investment in Early Help which was agreed at the Devon Education Forum in January 2024 and has successfully supported the expansion of our Early Help offer. The proposal to move to an in-house delivery mechanism sits within the context of the developing open access delivery model across Devon for families with children aged 0-19 (up to 25 with SEND and Care Leavers). Providing opportunities to develop a clear and cohesive pathway of support and line of sight for families, which ensures they can get the right help at the

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earliest opportunity but also works closely with our Early Help, Statutory and Specialist services to provide clear routes and partnership working around step up and step down support for children and their families (See Appendix 1). This includes further changes in how and where services are delivered alongside, an improved outreach offer. The proposals for which buildings should serve as hubs or outreach venues have been reviewed following a full statutory consultation from 6th April 2024 to 3rd July 2024 and a discussion at Children's Scrutiny Standing Overview Group (CSOG) on 29 July 2024.

2.3 The Council has previously commissioned Children Centre Services in Devon, the history of this contracting can be summarised as follows: -

- In November 2017, Cabinet approved the award of a £5.9885 million contract to Action for Children to deliver targeted Early Help support.
- In December 2022, Cabinet agreed to an extension of 12 months for the contract offering targeted Early Help with a reduced budget of £5.517 million. This contract ended on the 31st of March 2024.
- In October 2023, Cabinet agreed to the direct award of a new 12-month contract from the 1st April 2024 with a budget of £4.8 million (including £1.5 million from Public Health) focusing on prevention and early intervention, to reduce inequalities and engage with communities to help build, shape and strengthen local services that reflect and respond to local need.

2.4 In response to the specification and as part of the transformation so far, the provider has introduced a staffed single phone line for families to speak directly with a Family Hub practitioner who can signpost or provide support and guidance immediately. A web site of resources, information and online support has been produced and continues to be to be developed. The provider is feeding back their findings, successes, risks and barriers to Devon County Council as part of their ongoing contract management and review. The learning and development from this transitional year will continue to feed into the future development of Family Hubs across Devon.

2.5 We want to reduce the number of children requiring a statutory social work intervention. As a result, we are reshaping and strengthening our Targeted Early Help offer which supports families with multiple or complex needs. Alongside this we are also enhancing the partnership level through Family Hubs to ensure that support is offered at the earliest opportunity with the aim of enabling families to find their own solutions and support networks at a community level. Our aspiration is that Family hubs will work at a community level to ensure that families get the right support at an early stage to prevent escalation over time but to also prioritise our statutory safeguarding duties by ensuring those most in need get a clear pathway to the correct support.

2.6 Work is ongoing to utilise the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership Locality Partnership meetings, which are attended by members from Education, Early Help, Health and the Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). From this, work is taking place to further enhance Family Hub focus groups which will work together to develop Family Hubs in each District Council area based on specific local

needs and themes. Community development is taking place with the VCSE to strengthen community resources. Family Hubs will continue to evolve and grow both from the physical buildings and outreach and partnership with communities and partners across Devon. This will include over time:

- Devon's schools and colleges
- Utilising space and relationships across Devon's 50 libraries
- Council's Youth Services and community led activities for YP and families
- Public health nursing offer
- Work supporting children and families around special educational needs and disability
- Supporting young people in care, or care leavers
- Work alongside Districts including accommodation advice and support
- Devon's voluntary, community and social enterprise Assembly/sector
- Support around training, employment and skills
- Specialist support around substance misuse and domestic violence
- Government agencies, including DWP
- Responding to Government policy changes e.g. Possible new Community Mental Health Hub Model

2.7 Previous extensive engagement has been carried out with families who have told us:

- They want to be able to access support in friendly, welcoming, non-judgemental, open, and safe spaces on a drop-in basis, without appointment, criteria or waiting lists, which can be suitable for the whole family.
- They would like multi-functional spaces which can support them to meet with their peers, as well as a range of practitioners who are all working together.
- Spaces where they can access more face-to-face advice, information and support if preferred and which also enable families to learn more about what support is available locally to them in their communities.
- Some families outlined a feeling that there was nothing within the area in which they live which could meet their needs.
- Other families highlighted that to meet their needs, more support is required for families with children with SEND, advice and support on parenting, mental health support, early years support and better access to people to talk to at the point when they need them.

2.8 The three main themes from professionals were:

- A need for the local system to recognise the range of skills and expertise currently available to families across a spectrum of services.
- A wish to develop closer partnership working and develop community resilience to build on the systems in place to support families.
- A requirement to better share learning, resources, and a better understanding of what is available for the families they support.

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2.9 A public consultation was conducted throughout May and June 2024 on the proposals regarding the change to the current Children's Centre service and buildings from which these are currently delivered. The full report outlining the results of the consultation is available in Annex 2. The results can be summarised as follows:

- There were 766 responses in total of which 60% were from parents/carers, 23% were professionals, 17% were a combination of community volunteers, councillors and grandparents, with less than 1% from young people.
- When broken down by area, most people in Torridge, Teignbridge, Mid, South and East Devon agreed with the proposals for the Children's Centre buildings in their area.
- There was however some robust feedback, from Exeter, West and North Devon.
- The majority of those who disagreed cited opposition to the loss of a physical building, highlighting a view that this would lead to loss of support services.
- For those who raised concerns that were directly linked to the loss of a building, these mainly related to children with complex needs attending Step by Step (SEND) groups who stressed that certain centres are particularly good for this.
- Current provider staff have also fully engaged with the consultation process. As should be expected, staff expressed that they were concerned about the impact of proposed changes on their employment as well as where support for families would be delivered from.
- Geographical access was also raised in areas where the proposal was to move the hub. This included the need for parking close to the hub building, the potential cost of travel including public transport for families, and difficulty in being able to travel for families without access to a car.
- Of those who agreed with the proposals key positives identified were the advantages to families of the service adopting a universal proportionalism approach, where any family can access, bringing buildings back into use (either as a Family Hub or for childcare), increased support for older children (up to 19) who were not included in the Children's Centre age range or offer and the new offer of outreach support that can come to their local area.
- There were several requests for more information about what a Family Hub would look like and what services would be available, including the outreach offer.
- Some of the services that people said they would like to see in family hubs included support to be available at different times e.g. at evenings/weekends.

## 3) Overview of Current Financial Position, Options and Proposed Approach

### 3a) Current Financial Position

3.1 The Developing Family Hubs budget in 2024/25 is £5 million; £4.8 million for the main contract and £200,000 for other building related expenditure. In 2025/26 the Medium Term Financial Plan includes the budget reducing to £3.5million, when £1.5 million of one-off Public Health grant will cease. This is in addition to the £800,000 awarded by the Devon Education Forum in January 2024 to enhance our Early Help offer.

### 3b) Options Appraisal

3.2 A brief synopsis of the options considered, and the challenges / issues involved with each is provided below for information:

- **Option 1** - Family Hubs to be delivered directly by the council (implement and bring in-house). This option will include a TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) consultation and TUPE transfer of existing provider staff members who will have protected employment rights if they have been wholly or mainly assigned by Action for Children to deliver the current Developing Family Hubs contract. Under this option any TUPE pre-transfer formalities for eligible staff would need to be completed by 31 March 2025 in order for the transfer to happen on 1st April 2025. Activity linked to family hub approaches and networks would continue to operate as part of the early help system for families.
- **Option 2** – Family hubs to be delivered through a newly commissioned contract and subject to commissioning and procurement arrangements including an extension of the current contract for up to 9 months. This option would include undertaking a full and compliant commissioning and procurement process, to identify a provider or consortium of providers to deliver identified activity, possibly to identify volumes and according to set quality standards. This could be through:
  - Procuring a Strategic Partner (lead provider arrangement) Providers would either have a single opportunity or multiple opportunities to bid to deliver activity grouped within the contracting arrangement to work in partnership with Devon County Council and partners, forming the “Strategic Partnership”. The provider and the Council would work in partnership to achieve agreed outcomes linked to the development and expansion of family hub approaches and networks locally.
  - Block contracting which involves a service contract with a provider to deliver activity for families to a particular volume. These approaches usually work best with a single provider.
  - Multi-provider agreements which are either closed or open (either with set points of entry or being open all the time.)

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- Employees of Action for Children' who are wholly or mainly assigned to deliver the newly commissioned contract would transfer to this new Strategic Partner under TUPE.
- **Option 3** – Allow the 12-month contract with Action for Children to end on the 31st of March 2025 and do not continue with the development or expansion of family hub approaches and networks locally.

3.3 An evaluation criterion was used to assess identified options based on need, outcomes, and costs. The table below summaries the results. The full options appraisal with weighted scores can be found in Annex 3.

Model Appraised	Total weighted score	Rank Order	Notes on scoring appraised of criteria
Option 1: In house	84.5	1	Provides the highest opportunity for achieving the best outcomes for families, by delivering improvements and the right service for families and the future sustainability of Devon's Family Hubs model.
Option 2: Contract Extension and commissioning of a new provider.	55.5	2	Would adequately meet all criteria but lacks the flexibility to use the resources across all early help services and make future savings. Would require a full procurement exercise with the requisite built in time delays.
Options 3: Stop the contract and family hub arrangements with no replacement.	23.5	3	Potentially prevents the continuation of the Family Hubs ambition within Devon.

3.4 Taking into account the benefits and risk of each option the preference, resulting from this analysis, would be to bring the service into the local authority and continue the development of Family Hubs alongside the development of the wider partnership and Early Help Family Intervention Service and other early help services to ensure a pathway of support is available to the families of Devon.



## 3c) Proposed Approach

- 3.5 The proposal to move to a family hubs model in Devon County has been formed within the context of our previous governance decisions, public engagement results and an options appraisal.
- 3.6 The Devon model largely aligns with the national approach which can be categorised under three key outcome criteria as follows:
- Access: There is a clear, simple way for families to access help and support through a hub building and approach
  - Connection: There are services working together for families with a universal 'front door', shared outcomes and effective governance. There are professionals working together, through co-location, data-sharing and a common approach to their work. Families only have to tell their story once, the service is more efficient, with safeguarding at its core, and families get more effective support. Statutory services, the community, charities, and faith sector partners are working together to get families the help they need.
  - Relationships: Family hubs prioritise strengthening the relationships that carry us all through life, and building on family strengths, recognising that this is the way to lasting change. This idea is at the heart of everything that is done.
- 3.7 The 12-month developing family hubs contract runs from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and represents a significant period of transition and opportunity to test for change. Action for Children support roles and responsibilities alongside the Council and its partners as part of the developing family hubs system wide initiative which is focused on the following key functions:
- Greater access to advice, information, and intervention in local communities for families.
  - Taking identified actions contributing towards national initiatives Best Start for Life and Supporting Families.
  - Community engagement and partnerships, building, growing, and linking to community initiatives locally to meet needs.
  - Piloting and testing new delivery methods for community short breaks.
- 3.8 Appendix 1 shows the families journey within the Devon model. Essentially the service will operate at tier two (within Devon's levels of need) seeking to connect families with their communities to increase resilience and networks locally to support them with issues they experience at a much earlier point. Where families need more targeted support Families Hubs will support them with the process of referral and help them to step back when the time is right.
- 3.9 Our intention is to have consistently good services across Devon drawn from a range of statutory and non-statutory partners. However, the network of support services may vary across the diverse areas within Devon according to need. Services may include some of the following, working as part of a hub to ensure families are navigated to the right organisation, or specific intervention to meet their needs. This

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list is not exclusive and may include many other organisations operating in our city, towns, and villages.

- DCC Targeted Early Help services.
- Wider early years services and early education support.
- Public Health services.
- Public Health Nursing.
- Midwifery services.
- Partners supporting as part of the Best Start in Life national initiative.
- Charity, voluntary and third sector partners including faith groups offering opportunities for families in their local communities.
- Partners supporting drug, alcohol and domestic abuse or violence support.
- Partners supporting wider community health and wellbeing support for children and young people.
- Partners supporting and delivering the Reducing Parental Conflict programmes and developments.
- The Council led Disabled Children's Services.
- Partners supporting delivery of youth services.
- Schools, colleges, and Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLs).
- Social care services delivered by the Council directly (Integrated Adult Social Care and Children).
- Childcare settings, for example, childminders; nurseries and pre-school settings.
- Partners from other Government Departments
- Partners providing careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families.
- Partners delivering libraries.
- Education support teams.
- District Councils.
- Partners supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families.
- Safeguarding teams e.g., Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children and young people (MASH).
- Social prescribing teams, wellbeing co-ordinators, community connectors and builders.

3.10 Our preferred option is for the service to be run and managed by Devon County Council as part of the overall suite of Early Help services. This enables a more flexible approach as work continues towards the creation of a coordinated pathway with a focus on developing resilience with families through community engagement.

### **3d) Staffing Implications**

3.11 The recommended option for the future of family hubs allows the Council the flexibility to model, design and shape staffing teams and structures accordingly.

3.12 The Council has recently worked with representatives from Action for Children regarding a TUPE transfer of 29 individuals into DCC who were delivering a Level 3 Targeted Family Support service for children. This TUPE transfer which happened

on the 1 April 2024 has been a success with individuals feeling fully supported throughout the TUPE consultation process. Post TUPE transfer the 29 individuals were put through a comprehensive induction programme and welcomed into the Council and have quickly become integrated with the previous established Early Help teams. These employees are now part of the wider Early Help reshape and apart from a few concerns regarding work locations the consultation process regarding the restructuring has generally been a positive experience.

### 3e) Consultation Outcomes

- 3.13 Appendix 2 shows the recommended hub network across Devon divided into the four locality areas currently used to organise social work teams but ensuring at least one hub and a number of outreach spaces in each district area.
- 3.14 There were 766 responses to the consultation with 458 of these identifying as parents or carers. Action for Children informed us that they were aware that a number of responses came from Action for Children staff. Listening to the strength of feeling demonstrated within the consultation, from our communities in Devon, it is recommended that in some areas a phased approach is adopted to enable plans for hub locations to be co-produced with local communities.
- 3.15 Within Torridge, Teignbridge, South Hams, Mid and East Devon, most people agreed with the proposed use of the buildings. We recommend moving forward with these plans within Phase one which will be completed by December 2024. Within those areas there are specific places such as Torrington, Heathfield, Dartmouth, Exmouth and Holsworthy where there is more work to do in partnership with Communities see actions in the table below. These areas will be completed within Phase two and by the end of March 2025. Through the consultation it was also highlighted that there is more specific work to do In Exeter, West Devon and North Devon which will also take place during Phase 2. Where there are buildings on schools' sites that we are proposing to hand over for childcare, the estate team are working to ensure that there will still be space in the schools on an as and when basis for Family Hub work to take place with children from those schools.
- 3.16 The table below outlines the key feedback themes from the consultation and the actions Devon County Council will take to mitigate or address the points raised.

Key feedback from consultation	Actions and / or mitigations
Positive feedback about the benefits of co-location of some services	Seek to share spaces with partners wherever possible to promote multi-agency working and support for families.
Mainly positive feedback about extending the age range. Some concern about how Hubs will manage safeguarding if different age groups are using the same building, and about the risk of diluting the offer to younger children.	Notwithstanding that families are made up of children across a wide range of age and needs we will work with partners and service users to understand and design delivery points which make provision for early years and adolescents to be separate where appropriate. Hub buildings will be run in line with DCC safeguarding policy and practice.

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	<p>All safeguarding policies are thoroughly checked as part of the tendering and quality assurance process.</p> <p>Hubs will be developed in partnership with local communities according to local need, working with the local support provision where this is already in place.</p>
<p>Positive feedback about extending the offer to include some universal support that parents can access without needing a targeted referral.</p>	<p>Further develop in partnership with communities and set out for families, details of this offer.</p> <p>Use social media and other forms of communication to ensure families are aware of what they can access and how.</p>
<p>Families want to be able to access support face to face when they need to and to know where and how to access it.</p>	<p>Families will still be able to access services face to face in all of our Hubs. we will further develop in partnership with communities and set out for families, the details of the outreach offer to be provided in areas where there is not a Main Hub</p> <p>Use social media and other forms of communication to ensure families are aware of what they can access and how.</p>
<p>More information is needed about what the offer will be from Hubs and via outreach</p>	<p>Family Hubs will deliver a partnership driven approach to universal and targeted provision. Working with the community to develop services which best meet their needs and communicating the support offer both via the Main Hubs and via outreach.</p> <p>Use social media and other forms of communication to ensure families are aware of what they can access and how.</p>
<p>Step by Step groups are highly valued by families of children with complex needs. Venues for Step-by-Step groups need to be accessible and some of the current children's centres are well set up for this.</p>	<p>Ensure that there is at least one building in each District that could offer Step by Step and/or SEND support groups.</p>
<p>It can be hard to access support and activities for older children and young people with SEND. For example, social groups, wraparound and holiday childcare.</p>	<p>Link with colleagues in the youth service and the childcare service to discuss this feedback and put together a joint response.</p> <p>Continue to develop a community-based offer in each district for families who have children with SEND.</p>
<p>Families of children and young people who can't attend school say that it can be hard to access support for their children and themselves.</p>	<p>Work with schools and the virtual head to identify and support these families.</p> <p>Work alongside early help teams to plan the approach and ensure families are identified effectively.</p>

<p>Exeter 69% disagreed with proposals. Concerns around the proposed closure of Whipton Children’s Centre (86% disagreement for this centre).</p>	<p>Proposal to explore how Whipton can be used as the main hub by working with partners around co-location of the building. Allow more time for this by completing in Phase two.</p>
<p>West Devon 80% disagreed with the proposals. Concerns about Tavyside Health Centre and Hatherleigh Children’s Centre being repurposed for childcare, and about what space would be available in Okehampton.</p>	<p>Work with communities to further explore potential spaces in Okehampton and Tavistock, and to link with the school and multi-agency partners about suitable spaces that could be used for outreach groups in Hatherleigh. Allow more time for this work to be completed within Phase two.</p>
<p>North Devon 68% disagreed with proposals. Concerns about repurposing the three Children’s Centre buildings in Barnstaple and whether the Town Council centre Hub would be a suitable place for families with young children.</p>	<p>More work needed to look for suitable venues in Barnstaple – possibly one of the existing buildings and/or working with community partners. Allow more time for this work to be completed within Phase 2.</p>
<p>Concerns about a reduced number of Hub buildings meaning that families will need to travel further for support or may not access it. Concerns that the families most likely to be negatively impacted by longer journeys are those who are already financially disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Work with the relevant schools to access space in buildings for groups, meetings or single sessions if needed. Further develop and set out for families, the details of the outreach offer to be provided in areas where there is not a Main Hub. Use social media and other forms of communication to ensure families are aware of what they can access and how.</p>

- 3.17 On 29 July 2024 this report was heard and discussed by the Children’s Standing Overview Group (CSOG). Members supported the model of partnership working and planned work with communities to co-produce Family Hubs moving forward. Discussions took place around ensuring work is carried out with faith groups and within specific communities including military families and asylum seeking families.

## 4) Strategic Plan

- 4.1 Through the strategic plan Devon County Council has committed to being the best place to grow up, live well and prosper. Family Hubs form part of the Council’s renewed Early Help strategy and meet a key strategic priority within the children’s improvement plan to create sustainable changes that lead to good outcomes for children. This initiative will also contribute towards the outcome’s framework for the national ‘Supporting Families’ programme.
- 4.2 Since 2022, the development of family hub approaches and networks have been led initially through a national programme for family hubs by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care with other local authorities. The aim of family hubs nationally is to assist with information, advice and support being offered at the earliest opportunity to local families in local

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communities. The new Government have pledged a £95m investment into Young Futures Hubs which have a focus on joined up working to support young people's Mental Health, crime prevention and employment.

- 4.3 Devon's vision for Family Hubs is for families to be able to access the right support in the right place at the right time. Family Hubs offer a network of support services working together, rather than a stand-alone service. These services should be easily accessible to families within their own communities, built in collaboration with families and led by local need. Support should be delivered through familiar and trusted faces and spaces with no need for referral or meeting a certain criterion. Families should be able to access support through the Family Hub. Receiving the right support at the earliest point to prevent an escalation of need but also with the guidance and navigation through to targeted Early Help, Specialist or Statutory service when the need arises. Family Hub networks will work in partnership with communities to strengthen resilience and sustainable networks by pooling resources and upskilling partners. The vision for Young Futures Hubs fits well into our vision of partnership working and early intervention and there is potential for us to build and expand this support as part of the whole family approach within Devon Family Hubs.
- 4.4 Family Hubs in Devon will ensure that a family seeking help or guidance can access this quickly and easily at a universal level. Supporting a reduction in the need for escalation to targeted, statutory and specialist services or by supporting the journey for families through to such services when the need arises.
- 4.5 Following robust data and deprivation and usage analysis we aim to meet guidance on best value for money and develop a sustainable delivery model that leads to longer term efficiencies and better use of resources. If agreed the recommendations will result in a model which enables delivery closer to home for most families.

## **5) Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 The Cabinet is being recommended to treat the information relating to the financial considerations of this item as confidential because it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and is information relating to contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Council and employees of, or office holders under, the Council, which would be likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice and exchange of views for the purpose of deliberation or the effective conduct of public affairs.

## **6) Legal Considerations**

- 6.1 The lawful implications of this proposal have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report. TUPE legislation provides that the new employer assumes all rights, powers, duties and liabilities under or in connection with the employment contracts of the employees who are transferring.

- 6.2 Transferring staff would retain their same pre-transfer terms and conditions save that affected employees would automatically be enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme. DCC can only change the terms and conditions of the employees who transfer under TUPE if it can demonstrate that the grounds for the changes is related to an economic, technical or organisational (ETO) reason entailing a change to the workforce.
- 6.3 Agreements will need to be reached with landlords and other occupants and any relevant consents where required where either DCC are tenants of a building or where there is co-location with other partners. DCC will need to ensure properties meet requirements under health and safety legislation.
- 6.4 Through the development of Family Hubs, Devon County Council will be meeting its duties under the Childcare Act 2006 by promoting and facilitating access to Early Childhood services and working in partnership with education, health, CVSE and communities to improve wellbeing and reduce inequalities for children and young people in the area.

## **7) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)**

- 7.1 It is not envisaged that this proposal to bring Family Hubs in house will have a significant Environment Impact. However, work being carried out to develop Family Hubs and the phased approach to the buildings will have a positive environmental impact due to services being more accessible within Family's local areas and communities resulting in less travelling. More services within one place will reduce the need for multiple buildings and travelling between designated buildings and more efficient energy use.

## **8) Equality Considerations**

- 8.1 Where relevant, in coming to a decision the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
  - advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
  - foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

In relation to the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (for employment), pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This Council also treats care experience as if it were a protected characteristic. A decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

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- 8.2 In progressing this particular scheme / proposal, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Members and also is available on the Council's website at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published>
- 8.3 Members will need to consider the Impact Assessment for the purposes of this item / meeting.
- 8.4 As highlighted throughout this report the proposed changes to the delivery of family hubs, both in terms of location and delivery model, will have an impact of families with children aged 0-19 (up to 25 with SEND and Care Leavers). It is essential that Officers work with local communities moving forward to ensure this impact is positive.

## 9) Risk Management Considerations

- 9.1 The Cabinet is being recommended to treat the information relating to the risk management considerations of this item as confidential because it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council which would be likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice and exchange of views for the purpose of deliberation or the effective conduct of public affairs.

## 10) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 Subject to Cabinet agreeing the recommendations set out through this paper, officers will seek to expedite discussions with Action for Children to focus the development plan on the steps required to bring the Family Hubs model in house and to work with communities to ensure hub and outreach spaces are appropriate to the needs of local families. As described, the intent would be to transfer all staff and agreed buildings by April 2025, with further phasing of the key areas identified by the end of April 2025.

**Name:** Stuart Collins Director of Children and Young People's Futures

**Electoral Divisions:** All

**Cabinet Member:** Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Andrew Leadbetter

### Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Annex 1: [Equalities Impact Assessment for the Children's Centre Buildings Consultation and Equalities Impact Assessment for the in house option of Family Hubs](#)

Annex 2: [Children's Centre Buildings Consultation Report](#)

Annex 3: [Family Hubs Delivery Options Appraisal](#)

### Contact for enquiries:

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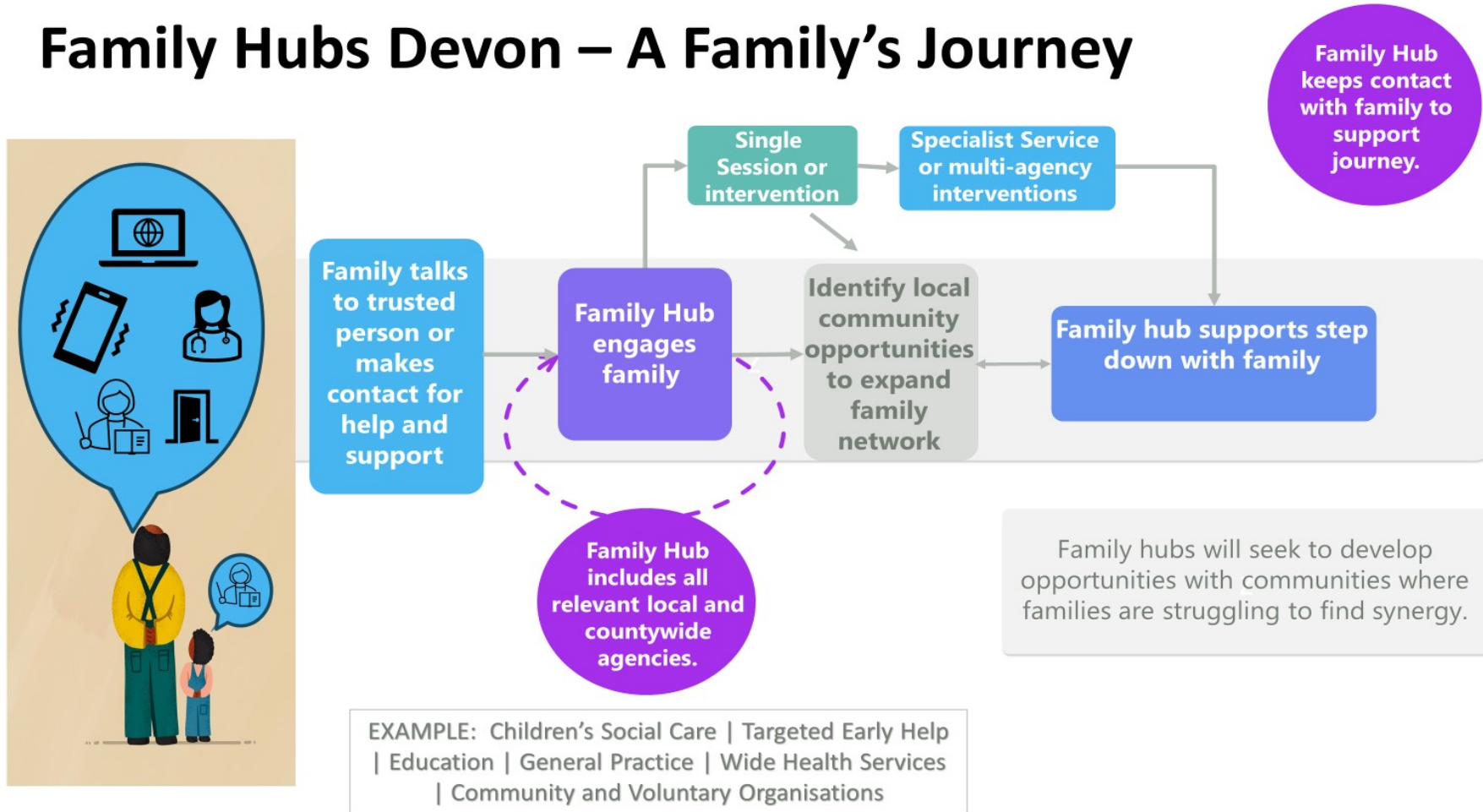
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# Family Hubs Devon – A Family’s Journey

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# Recommended Hub Network – Phased approach

## Main Hub(s) Whipton

*To be achieved within Phase 2*

Outreach spaces:

- Chestnut (Burnthouse Lane)
- Flying Start (Civic Centre) for short term whilst alternative is secured.
- Westexe - linked to Public Health Nursing delivery.

*All to be achieved within Phase 1*

- Alternatives outreach sites to be identified in Central, Beacon Heath, Pinhoe, Exminster, Exwick

*To be achieved within Phase 2*

## Main Hub(S) Tiverton and Cranbrook

*To be achieved within Phase 1*

Outreach spaces:

- Two moors
- Wilcombe
- Crediton
- Axminster

*All to be achieved within Phase 1*

- Alternatives outreach sites to be identified in Cullompton, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Sidmouth and Exmouth

*To be achieved within Phase 2*



## Main Hub(s) Bideford, and Ilfracombe

*To be achieved within Phase 1*

## Barnstaple

*To be achieved within Phase 2*

Outreach spaces:

- Barnstaple (Sticklepath and Central)
- Alternatives outreach sites to be identified in Torrington, Holsworthy, South Molton, Brunton, Lynton & Lynmouth

*All to be achieved within Phase 2*

## Main Hub (s) in Newton Abbot and Totnes

*To be achieved within Phase 1*

## Tavistock and Okehampton

*To be achieved within Phase 2*

Outreach spaces:

- Teignmouth Hospital
- Moors Edge
- South Brent
- Hatherleigh

*All to be achieved within Phase 1*

- Dartmouth

*To be achieved within Phase 2*

# Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Family Hub Development to be delivered directly by the Council (in-house delivery)

Service: Children's Commissioning, Children's Services.

Head of Service: Vikki Hearn, Head of Commissioning and Resources, Children's Services.

date of sign off by Head of Service: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Assessment carried out by : Senior Commissioning Manager, Children's Commissioning, Children's Services.

## 1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

This assessment explores the impact of a recommendation to agree to continue the journey of developing family hub approaches and networks in Devon, through arrangements delivered directly by the Council (in-house delivery).

In 2017, the Council agreed to award a contract for the delivery of a children centre model which would provide targeted intervention to identified families meeting the [level 3 threshold of needs \(Devon Levels of Need\)](#) with children aged 0-8 years as part of our Early Help offer. The Council awarded this contract to the provider Action for Children to deliver. This contract was taken to its full contract term and extended for a further year. This contract came to an end on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024.

In 2022 the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme and policy was set up and is being taken forward by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

In [October 2023](#), Cabinet agreed to the direct award to Action for Children of a new 12-month contract from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to support the Council with the transition from Children's Centres to a Family Hub model with a budget of £4.837m (including £1.5m from Public Health) to focusing on prevention and early intervention, on reducing inequalities and on engaging with communities and helping to build, shape and strengthen local services that reflect and respond to local need. This contract will come to an end on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

## 2. Proposal aims and objectives, and reason for change or review.

Going forward, the Council are looking at developing a family hubs model which is also intended to form a part of our Early Help offer. Family Hub models will look to work alongside and strengthen the communities in which people live their lives. It will aim to assist with information, advice and support being offered at the earliest opportunity to local families in local communities. The cornerstone of these models is focused on increasing access, building connections between practitioners and with families and putting our relationships with families at the heart of what we do. Development of the model relies on working with a range of different partners. This direction of travel is influenced by the [national initiative and programme for family hubs](#) being led with other local authorities by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

This Impact Assessment focuses on the proposed implementation of the Family Hub Model in Devon within the context of the developing open access delivery model across Devon for

families with children aged 0-19 (up to 25 with SEND and Care experience) and the proposal to move to an in-house delivery mechanism. This includes changes in how and where services are delivered, an improved outreach offer and access to digital support.

The current central government desire for Family Hubs across the UK is to empower parents, carers and all families to be able to give children the best start for life in their early years and throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. To enable this there must be high quality and easily accessible access to information and advice to empower parents and carers to develop their own knowledge on how best to support their children from 0-19 (25 SEND) years to reduce inequalities.

The 12-month developing family hubs contract aims which is live from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 will represent a significant period of transition and test for change. Action for Children will support roles and responsibilities alongside the Council and its partners as part of the developing family hubs system wide initiative which will be focused on the following key functions:

- Greater access to advice, information, and intervention in local communities for families.
- Taking identified actions contributing towards national initiatives Best Start for Life and Supporting Families.
- Community engagement and partnerships, building, growing, and linking to community initiatives locally to meet needs.
- Piloting and testing new delivery methods for community short breaks.

Our intention is to have consistently good services across Devon. However, the network of support services may differ across the diverse areas within Devon to be equitable. Services may include some of the following, working as part of a hub to ensure families are navigated to the right organisation, or specific intervention to meet their needs. This list is not exclusive and may include many other organisations operating in our city, towns, and villages.

- DCC Targeted Early Help services.
- Wider early years services and early education support.
- Public Health services.
- Public Health Nursing.
- Midwifery services.
- Partners supporting as part of the Best Start in Life national initiative.
- Charity, voluntary and third sector partners including faith groups offering opportunities for families in their local communities.
- Partners supporting drug, alcohol and domestic abuse or violence support.
- Partners supporting wider community health and wellbeing support for children and young people.
- Partners supporting and delivering the Reducing Parental Conflict programmes and developments.
- The Council led Disabled Children's Services.
- Partners supporting delivery of youth services.
- Schools, colleges, and Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLS).
- Social care services delivered by the Council directly (Integrated Adult Social Care and Children).
- Childcare settings, for example, childminders; nurseries and pre-school settings.
- Partners providing careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families.
- Partners delivering libraries.
- Education support teams.

- District Councils.
- Partners supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families.
- Safeguarding teams e.g., Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children and young people (MASH).
- Social prescribing teams, wellbeing co-ordinators, community connectors and builders.

Our proposal is for the service to be run and managed by Devon County Council as part of the overall suite of Early Help service.

### 3. Risk assessment, limitations and options explored (summary)

Main Risk	Counter Measures	Risk Rating (LxI)
This risk that key partners do not engage in family hub development and or that FH meets expectations/requirements. Families will not have access to the services they need in a streamlined fashion according to the ambitious of the family hub model	Widespread engagement and targeted membership of the Family Hub Steering Group to manage and develop the plan. The development of a DCC Localities team of Team Manager, Partnership leads and Navigators to work with and support the engagement of partners.	<b>6</b>
Negative connotations of Family Hubs linked to perceived removal of service or 'closure of Children's Centres'	Ongoing full engagement with all stakeholders through consultation to ensure that people are fully informed of the planned changes. Ensuring stakeholders are involved in the co-production of Family Hubs and communicated with effectively through various media such as the press, newsletters, websites, social media and face to face meetings or engagement sessions.	<b>12</b>

### 4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs.

The following groups of people are likely to be affected by the proposals: -

- Families with children and young people aged 0-8 years, this may include families with children and young people who may have Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities (SEND).

- Families with children and young people aged 0-19 years, 25 with SEND and/or care experience.

## Reach

The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) for Devon 2023 states: -

- Devon is the third largest county in England covering 2,534 square miles, with a total population of 814,440 people (395,689 male and 418,751 female).
- Devon has proportionally fewer younger people in Devon compared to the national average. There are 164,258 children and young people living in Devon aged between 0-19 years (84,308 male and 79,950 female).
- People living in poorer neighbourhoods tend on average to die 5 to 7 years earlier than people living in more affluent neighbourhoods. Life expectancy is starker in Devon in smaller areas of central Ilfracombe and Liverton in Exmouth. People in poorer areas also spend more of their shorter lives with a disability and/ or in poorer health.
- Outcomes for children and young people across Devon are variable and mixed.
- Focus on improving behavioural risk factors for children and young people around diet and physical activity is required to reduce dental decay in younger children and obesity in primary and secondary school aged children.
- Around a quarter of pupils in Devon are not achieving a good level of development by the end of reception and a gap in school readiness is considerably wider for disadvantaged children.
- Hospital admissions in children and young people are considerably higher in Devon for mental health conditions, self-harm and injuries. This gap is even wider for disadvantaged children.
- Devon has proportionality fewer working age people compared to the England average, particularly in persons aged 16-49 years.
- There is significant variation between areas within Devon in relation to economic landscape. Average earnings overall in Devon are well below the England average. Housing across Devon is expensive making it a challenge for some lower income households to get on the property ladder. Those living in rural communities are impacted even more by low wages, lack of access to affordable housing, public transport and digital connections.
- Behavioural risk factors such as smoking, alcohol, poor diet and lack of activity are the leading influences of ill health and premature mortality both nationally and locally.

At 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024, over the last 6 months there were 3,303 Children in Need. 2558 Children in Need with an open episode of need, 52% are males and 48% are females. 439 of these children (17%) have a disability. The 3 highest primary need areas included: - abuse or neglect; family in acute stress; family dysfunction.

At 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024, over the last 6 months there were 2,348 early help common/ targeted assessments being supported for children, young people and their families. 1201 of these assessments included a child or young person who was male aged 0-17 years (51%) and 1122 for a child or young person who was female (48%).

In 2023, there were 5.4% of all pupils in Devon with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) across all schools. There were 14.8% of all pupils in Devon with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support across all schools.

Current Ethnicity Data across Devon is as follows;

Asian / Asian British: 1.46

Black / Black British: 0.30

Mixed heritage: 1.35

White British: 92.63

Other White: 3.62

Other ethnicity including Arab, and Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller: 0.63

(Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnicity total: 3.75)

Current Data regarding Asylum Seekers in Devon;

There are currently two hotels in Devon supporting around 400 people from over 50 different nationalities. These individuals range from newborns up to older age and the majority are families.

There are 65 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in care being supported in Devon and 39 care experienced unaccompanied asylum seeking young people (over 18s).

The Unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people in Devon have come from Afghanistan, Albania, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam.

### Experience

Devon County Council Children's Services remain committed to supporting families to have their voices heard. This can include any feedback on their experiences of the different support available, aspects of their daily lived experience which they feel able to share with us and also their say on any plans being developed to provide support to children and young people. Examples of where parents, children and young people are encouraged to share their views with us includes:-

- Have your Say website. Used to host details of our formal consultations all aiming to help shape services across Devon.
- Parent Carer Forum. This group is supported independently. This group of parent carers work closely with Devon County Council to help us to grow and improve our offer of support for parents and carers of disabled children and children and young people with SEND.
- Bright Spots Survey and the Devon Mind of My Own App. These tools help us to hear the views of care experienced children and young people in Devon.
- Advisory groups and boards supported by parents and/or practitioners working with families.
- Virtual and face to face focus sessions and/or coffee mornings hosted locally.
- As part of any service assessments and support being provided to families.

## 5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

In addition to families and children and young people highlighted above, below are a list of key stakeholders who are likely to be interested in and impacted by the recommended proposal being explored in this assessment:-

Stakeholder Group	Interest and potential impacts.
<p>Action for Children, developing family hubs core staffing team.</p>	<p>Staff delivering the Family Hubs through a provider would be subject to TUPE if the delivery of Family Hubs was bought in house. There would need to be a period of transition moving staff across in to proposed roles which may result in some staff being at risk of redundancy. However, Staff will come across with existing terms and conditions and will be eligible for DCC pension and access to staff benefits.</p>
<p>Practitioners across our systems of services including for example:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Help services.</li> <li>• Wider early years services and early education support.</li> <li>• Public Health services.</li> <li>• Public Health Nursing.</li> <li>• Midwifery services.</li> <li>• Partners supporting as part of the Best Start in Life national initiative.</li> <li>• Charity, voluntary and third sector partners including Faith groups offering opportunities for families in their local communities.</li> <li>• Partners supporting drug, alcohol and domestic abuse or violence support.</li> <li>• Partners supporting wider community health and wellbeing support for children and young people.</li> <li>• The Council led Disabled Children's Services.</li> <li>• Partners supporting delivery of youth services.</li> <li>• Schools, colleges, and Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLS).</li> <li>• Social care services delivered by the Council directly (Integrated Adult Social Care and Children).</li> <li>• Childcare settings, for example, childminders; nurseries and pre-school settings.</li> <li>• Partners providing careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families.</li> </ul>	<p>All will need to have an awareness of any new arrangements and subsequent changes to contact details or processes. Existing relationships and processes will be maintained where possible.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners delivering libraries.</li> <li>• Education support teams.</li> <li>• Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership.</li> <li>• Citizens Advice and welfare support teams working with families in local communities.</li> <li>• District Councils.</li> <li>• Partners supporting children and young people with SEND and their families.</li> <li>• Safeguarding teams e.g., Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children and young people (MASH).</li> <li>• Social prescribing teams, wellbeing co-ordinators, community connectors and builders.</li> </ul>	
<p><a href="#">Elected Members.</a></p>	<p>Overall decision-making lies with this group. Elected Members will be making decisions that represent and respond to the needs and interests of Devon communities based on the information and evidence provided to them. Elected Members also need to be assured in their decision making that the Council are meeting their legal responsibilities and making the best use of public funds.</p>

## 6. Additional relevant research used to inform this assessment.

- [Devon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.](#)
- Children’s services Analysis Tool (ChAT) 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- [Local Authority Interactive Tool.](#)
- Children Centre services contract monitoring data.
- Engagement feedback and outcomes from professionals, partners and families.
- Consultation Report

## 7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

A formal consultation has been carried out from 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to midnight on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 hosted on the [‘Have your Say’ website.](#)

Alongside the consultation, 14 face to face engagement sessions were carried out to gather feedback directly from stakeholders. Please see summary of consultation feedback below;

The proposals in the consultation were formed through engagement events and meetings carried out with staff, partners and members to gather their thoughts regarding the development of Family Hubs and the most appropriate use of existing and potential venues to deliver from.

The proposals described and being assessed in this impact assessment were influenced by a previous Family Hubs Engagement questionnaire. 697 responses to this questionnaire have

been provided between 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 up to 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 closing date.

Initial findings highlight that families and professionals in Devon can often find it difficult to access services due to the rurality of Devon, the availability of transport and location of support for example. Families have told us that they want to be able to access support in friendly, welcoming, non-judgemental, open and safe spaces on a drop-in basis, without appointment, criteria or waiting lists and which can be suitable for the whole family. Families would like multi-functional spaces which can support them to meet with their peers, as well as a range of practitioners who are all working together. Spaces where they can access more face-to-face advice, information and support if preferred and which also enable families to learn more about what support is out there and is available locally to them in their communities.

Practitioners have told us they would also like to be able to use shared, local, multi-functional spaces with good access to IT and WIFI; which are well connected; affordable; sustainable; friendly, welcoming and safe spaces supporting relationships with families; and which provide a platform for shared learning and efficient use of resources for all.

It is also intended there will be an ongoing programme of engagement supported with partners and communities to continue to support, influence, shape, develop and improve any developing family hubs and networks in local communities. Details of any engagement events being supported will be made available on the main [Family Hubs website](#).

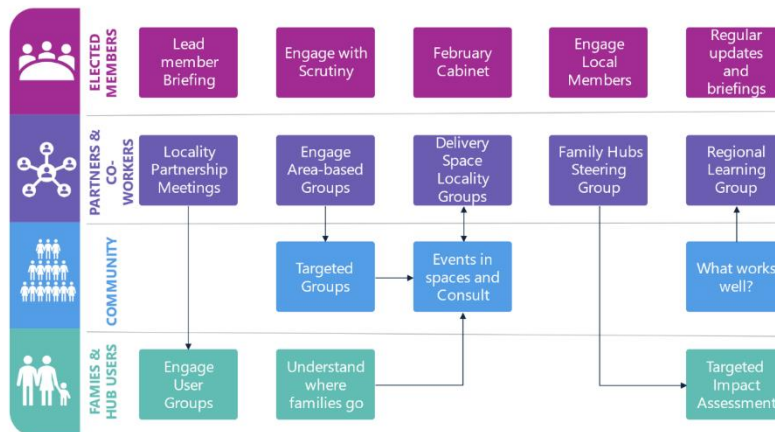
The recommendations from the consultation can be found in the [Children Centre Buildings Consultation Recommendations report](#). As a result of the consultation proposals have been adjusted and a phased approach implemented to ensure the views expressed have influenced the recommendations and actions moving forward to be agreed by Cabinet.

Consultation and Engagement has taken place in a variety of ways;

- With Elected member through individual briefings with lead members, attendance at Scrutiny, Cabinet, meetings with local members and regular updates and briefings.
- With Partners and Co-Workers through Locality Partnership meetings, area based groups, Family Hub Steering Group and regional learning group.
- With Communities through targeted groups and events in community spaces and ongoing partnership work with Communities to ensure co-production in response to what is working well.
- With Families and Hub users through user groups, understanding where families are going and what is working well through feedback, data and targeted impact assessment.

The diagram below outlines the various levels of consultation and engagement carried out as part of this process:-

## Engagement Plan



## Background information

### 8. Equality analysis

Under the Equality Act 2010, the local authority must consider how people will be affected by a service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (for work), sex, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are: informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations; proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision); fair, necessary, reasonable, and those affected have been adequately consulted.

#### All residents by geographic area.

The proposals to bring the delivery of Family Hubs in house has the potential for a positive impact for families in Devon. Bringing Family Hub staff in house alongside Early Help, Public Health and Children's Social Care has the potential to lead to more joined up service with less referral routes for support and consistency in response across the continuum of support with practitioners being able to access guidance and mentoring from differently skilled and qualified colleagues. This would also have the potential to positively impact access to information, advice and information for families. The work already carried out by the provider to start the development of Family Hubs will have been carried out in partnership with families and partners and in response to local need. Bringing these staff in house will have little impact on families in Devon as we would expect the work to continue in the same way. This has the potential to positively impact the physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of families, as they can better access the advice, support and help they need, in ways they feel are best for them.

There is a potential negative emotional impact for families in local communities where they may have negative connotations towards DCC and view Family Hubs as Children's Social Care. This

can be mitigated through effective engagement and communication with families and communities regularly. Moving staff across who have existing relationships with families and communities will also help with retaining trust and a positive view of the support and help Family Hubs can provide. Over the transitional 12 months the provider has been tasked with building and strengthening communities so it is hoped that families will have access to upskilled known and trusted faces within their communities who they have existing positive relationships with and can access extended Family Hub support through.

## **Age**

The proposal to deliver Family Hubs through DCC will have a positive impact for children and young people of all ages. We are looking to continue with the Family hub development so families with children from 0-19 years and for young people with SEND up to 25 years and their families will continue to be able to feed into the developing service. This will increase opportunities for families to seek advice, information and support in one place as their child or young person grows. Families will know where to go and be better supported to understand what support is available to them in their local communities. This has the potential to positively impact the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of parents and family members. As they have told us they often feel confused, unaware, and stressed as they are having to move from team to team and place to place. This also has the potential to positively benefit the development of children and young people as they are able to get the support, they need either from parents who have been supported and/ or as needed through more targeted and/ or statutory services such as social care.

**Disability (includes sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people.**

Family Hub delivery will take place in accessible venues within communities. Thought will be given to all aspects of disability to include consideration of all needs whether physical or sensory to ensure that children and families can access support provided. Core staff will work with families who have children with disabilities and SEND to ensure both parents and children build peer networks. Help navigation of specialist services and processes whilst also working with communities and families to increase equitable accessibility to activities for all children and families. This may include delivery of supported activities or building on existing groups for families who have children with SEND with the focus of building an understanding of the barriers faced when accessing community groups, supporting these families to access activities for their children in their own communities, building peer support and networks that they can take forward themselves and to also identify what type of short break provision Family Hubs could provide to meet current need.

**Race and culture: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour, religion and belief, asylum seeker and refugee status, language needs.**

Practitioners, partners, and any other organisations working as part of the Family hub network, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting, and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as race and culture for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

Consideration will need to be given to training needs for staff and partners to ensure that all families have equitable access to Family Hub support. Training and resources should include access to translation and interpretation services, knowledge and understanding of asylum seeking and refugee families plus Gypsy, Roma and traveller communities.

### **Sex and gender identity and reassignment (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed).**

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations working as part of the Family hub network, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as sex, gender identity and gender reassignment for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010). This will be ensured through shared working practices, training, policies across Hub networks and also quality assurance/improvement through our multi agency systems and monitoring through feedback from partners and families plus measurement of outcomes through data.

### **Sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership if work related.**

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations working as part of the Family hub network, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as sex, gender identity and reassignment for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

### **Other relevant socio-economic factors and intersectionality**

This includes, where relevant: income, housing, education and skills, language and literacy skills, family background (size/single people/lone parents), sub-cultures, rural isolation, access to services and transport, access to ICT/Broadband, children in care and care experienced people, social connectivity and refugee status/no recourse to public funds. Also consider intersectionality with other characteristics.

Having access to a wider range of advice and information and better join up between services in buildings used as family hub sites would be advantageous for our most vulnerable families in communities who may need support relating to employability, housing, benefits advice and welfare support.

## **9. Human rights considerations:**

We need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations working as part of the Family Hub networks, will be working in ways which promote the vision, values and principles of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children \(2010\)](#) and the [United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(2006\)](#) in their work with children, young people and families.

Family Hub approaches and networks developed locally will contribute to a key part of monitoring, auditing, evaluation, and improvement activity will be in considering how equality and diversity is being promoted and supported for children, young people and families. This will include evidence of adjustments which have been made and considering how aspects of the conventions are being supported appropriately as part of our aims, objectives, and vision.

## 10. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 11, otherwise complete the environmental analysis information below):

<b>Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process</b>	
<b>Planning Permission</b>	
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>	

### **Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost.**

The ongoing transformation of Family Hubs has potential for a positive impact. The options proposed are based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners and organisations and as locally as possible through the buildings available. Basing more teams in one place and locally is likely to mean a more effective and efficient use of energy, resources and costs associated with running any building. This will be more effective than all teams individually having their own spaces using energy and resources to run multiple buildings. There is also the potential to re-use and re-locate equipment and furniture from any buildings proposed for closure for example, into re-purposed spaces, ensuring equipment is being recycled and put to the best use.

Views could also lead to other actions being supported by the Council, for example materials could be made available to promote behaviours supporting the effective use of utilities such as water and electricity by anyone accessing or using any buildings to deliver from. Or to recycle materials appropriately or reduce the use of materials in shared locations.

### **Conserve and enhance wildlife.**

The development of Family Hubs aims to work in partnership with communities, there could be opportunities around involving families in any voluntary work that maintains or develops green spaces. Existing green spaces at Family Hub venues could be used to promote positive opportunities for insects and wildlife and biodiversity appropriately. This has the potential for a positive impact. Any grassed and lawn areas can be maintained in ways which encourage longer and protected growth of plants in areas which are attractive to insects and wildlife, for example. Natural spaces being available and maintained would also have potential positive benefits for the physical and mental wellbeing of parents, children and young people using repurposed spaces in the future. For children and young people there is the opportunity to potentially contribute to their learning of the benefits of outdoor spaces and the importance of retaining these spaces for all appropriately in buildings put forward for re-proposing.

### **Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape.**

None

### **Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage.**

None

### **Minimise greenhouse gas emissions.**

The continued development of Family Hubs is based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners and organisations and as locally as possible. Basing more teams in one place and locally could reduce the need for as much travel by car or public transport, thus having the potential to reduce emissions associated with travelling distances to access spaces. Moreover, community development and outreach aspect of Family Hub approaches, will aim to provide access to families closer to their homes, within their local communities and those served by appropriate public transport links. This approach should aim to reduce travel and keep as many families and practitioners as local to communities as possible.

### **Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)**

Anyone using DCC buildings will be encouraged to use resources economically and support energy saving measures as far as possible. For example, using energy efficient equipment and using equipment only when needed in any buildings, turning off lights when no longer needed. Materials could be made available to promote behaviours to support the effective use of utilities such as water and electricity by anyone accessing or using any buildings to deliver from. Facilities which encourage behaviours to recycle materials appropriately or reduce the use of materials e.g., paper, can be promoted through any sites used to provide support to families and practitioners going forward. It is hoped that this would serve to educate the wider Family Hub network and use of resources linked to this.

### **Contribute to reducing water consumption.**

Anyone using DCC buildings will be encouraged to use resources economically and support energy saving measures as far as possible. Materials could be made available to promote behaviours to support the effective use of utilities such as water. It is hoped that this would serve to educate the wider Family Hub network and use of resources linked to this.

### **Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level)**

Family Hub networks, over time and once embedded within communities, could support planning, protocols and responses for emergency evacuation and flooding for example.

### **Other (please state below)**

None

## **11. Economic analysis**

### **Impact on knowledge and skills**

Continuing with the development of Family Hubs through DCC has the potential for a positive impact on knowledge and skills. The options proposed are based on supporting co-location and partnership working amongst practitioners, partners and organisations. This increases the

potential for sharing of knowledge, learning and upskill between different practitioners and service areas being represented and making use of these spaces. This will be positive for families as they are more likely to receive consistent knowledge and information from groups of practitioners and partners.

### **Impact on employment levels and local business**

The proposal to continue the development of Family Hubs through direct delivery by Devon County Council has the potential for both negative and positive impact on employment levels. Some members of staff currently employed by the provider and DCC could potentially be put at risk of redundancy. However, by working in partnership as part of a wider network of support, families should be supported and signposted to partners who provide careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families. Partnership working with schools and other education providers will aim to address school readiness and attendance with the focus of improving outcomes and future employability of children in Devon.

The proposal looks to safeguard and reduce costs, and to promote efficient use of public money and resources available, supporting a Sustainable and Stronger Council approach whilst continuing to support families within their local communities.



# Impact Assessment



Assessment of: The Children's Centre Buildings Consultation.  
Service/s: Children's Commissioning, Children's Services and Corporate Estates.

Head of Service: Vikki Hearn, Head of Commissioning and Resources, Children's Services. Matthew Jones, Director of Transformation & Business Services

Date of sign off by Head of Service/s: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Assessment carried out by: Children's Commissioning and Corporate Estates officers.

## 1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

This assessment explores the impact of proposals being made as part of a public consultation to change the use of the current Children Centre buildings going forward.

In 2017, the Council agreed to award a contract for the delivery of a Children Centre model which would provide targeted intervention to identified families meeting the [level 3 threshold of needs \(Devon Levels of Need\)](#) with children aged 0-8 years as part of our early help offer. The Council awarded this contract to the provider Action for Children to deliver. This contract was taken to its full contract term and extended for a further year. This contract will be coming to an end on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024. Devon have decided to develop a family hub model in line with the national direction of travel.

Legislation relevant to the delivery of a Children Centre model are primarily contained within the Childcare Act (2006) and this has implications for any buildings which have been used to support Children Centre services.

Since 2022, the development of family hub approaches and networks have been led initially through a [national programme for family hubs](#) by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care with other local authorities. The aim of family hubs nationally is to assist with information, advice and support being offered at the earliest opportunity to local families in local communities. With a particular focus on increasing access for families; building connections between practitioners and with families and putting our relationships with families at the heart of what we do.

Whilst the Council is not currently a part of the nationally funded Family Hubs and Start for Life programme, we are committed to developing family hubs in Devon for our families. During the financial year 2024 to 2025 we will be working with Action for Children and our partners to start our journey towards developing family hub approaches and networks in local communities which will expand support to all families with children aged 0-19 (25 with SEND). This reflects decisions agreed by the Council Cabinet in October 2023. To achieve this, we have reviewed the current Children's Centre buildings. Some of these will be used as Family Hub bases moving forward but some are not suitable as Family Hubs, as a result, alternative arrangements

are being proposed.

This proposal also forms part of the Council's wider 'Climate Change, Innovation and Infrastructure' change programme priority, to support a Sustainable and Stronger Council approach which was endorsed by [Cabinet](#) in September 2023, and to which updates are being provided throughout 2024.

## 2. Proposal, aims and objectives, and reason for change or review.

The move to Family Hubs will be gradual, based on the needs of each community. The buildings we use need to be able to meet the needs of the whole family in a coordinated way, be somewhere we can co-locate services, be easily accessible to families and well used.

A Family Hub is a place where families can go (either in person, digitally or via telephone,) to access the support they need to manage the issues they may be experiencing. The hubs will contain a network of practitioners and organisations who will come together in local communities with families offering:

- Greater access to advice and information linked to a range of services, interventions, and local opportunities.
- Supporting an early response for families, co-ordinating an Early Help assessment, where needed, as part of the wider Early Help offer.
- Welcoming virtual and physical spaces which will grow and develop, forming part of the family hub network in your local area, which families can visit or contact to access the support they need. Enabling support to be offered at the point of need, as far as possible. This will include outreach hubs developed alongside those community hubs in existing in areas and created where they don't exist.
- Supporting families to connect with opportunities in their local communities supporting needs. Including enabling families to get involved with supporting other families in the communities.
- Supporting families to navigate pathways to higher level and specialist intervention which may be needed and keeping in contact with families while they gain access to these pathways.
- Forming partnerships in communities, increasing connections between organisations working within the same community.
- Enabling, growing, and linking opportunities and activities available in a local community to best support families.
- Promoting learning and upskilling local communities to support families. For example, understanding parental wellbeing; early brain development, attachment, and child development; promoting home learning environments and preparation for school.
- Offering intervention to families in need of specific support to manage their situation.
- Ensuring best value and quality services to families, in partnership with the current community-based offer and within the resources available.
- 

The following could form part of a local family hub network and offer in a local community:

- Early Help services.
- Wider early years services and early education support.
- Public Health services.
- Public Health Nursing.

- Midwifery services.
- Partners supporting as part of the Best Start in Life national initiative.
- Charity, voluntary and third sector partners including Faith groups offering opportunities for families in their local communities.
- Partners supporting drug, alcohol and domestic abuse or violence support.
- Partners supporting wider community health and wellbeing support for children and young people.
- The Council led Disabled Children’s Services.
- Partners supporting delivery of youth services.
- Schools, colleges, and Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLs).
- Social care services delivered by the Council directly (Integrated Adult Social Care and Children).
- Childcare settings, for example, childminders; nurseries and pre-school settings.
- Partners providing careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families.
- Partners delivering libraries.
- Education support teams.
- Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Citizens Advice and welfare support teams working with families in local communities.
- District Councils.
- Partners supporting children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Safeguarding teams e.g., Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children and young people (MASH).
- Social prescribing teams, wellbeing co-ordinators, community connectors and builders.

The Children’s Centre Buildings Consultation (hereafter referred to as the consultation) took place between 8th May 2024 and 3rd July 2024. The purpose of the consultation was to seek views from families and professionals on proposed changes to our current Children’s Centre buildings and the services we offer within them, as the journey towards the development of Family Hubs continues.

There are currently 27 Children Centre buildings which form part of the proposals being taken through a formal consultation with the public. 4 of these buildings are located in Exeter; 8 are located in East and Mid Devon localities (e.g., Exmouth, Honiton, Sidmouth, Seaton, Crediton and Tiverton); 8 are located in South and West Devon localities (e.g., Newton Abbot, Hatherleigh, Totnes, Dartmouth, Tavistock) and 7 are located across the North Devon localities (e.g., Barnstaple, Bideford, Torrington, Holsworthy, Ilfracombe).

Changes proposed for the buildings are summarised below:-

Change included within the proposal for consultation	Number of Children Centre buildings being proposed for this change.
a) <u>Building will be repurposed to become part of a family hubs approach and network(s) developing locally.</u> The sites will provide space as either a main hub building, or an outreach building <sup>1</sup> within that local	5

<sup>1</sup>it is proposed that there will be at least one hub in each district area (ten in total across Devon). These buildings will be places where staff can come together, and families can access support. There will be some meeting rooms and space for staff to come

family hub network.	
b) <u>Building will be repurposed to support other functions, services and/ or partners.</u> For example, many of the current buildings are located on school sites and schools have expressed an interest in using these spaces to develop their provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) or to develop more childcare provision in Devon for families. This has been considered as part of the proposals.	3
c) <u>A combination of changes described under a) and b) above.</u> For example, the centre is to be repurposed with other partners or use for other services, with the option that there could also be space to use for outreach on the site.	18
d) <u>Buildings will be closed.</u> All buildings included here within the proposal will have been discussed with partners to explore if there is any appetite to repurpose these buildings.	1

Please see the consultation pack on the [Devon family hubs - Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership \(devonscp.org.uk\)](https://devonscp.org.uk) for further information on the proposal for individual buildings included.

These changes and proposals are needed because:-

- Developing Family Hub approaches and networks in Devon represents a new direction of travel for families and the Council. As well as a change to and move away from the previous use of the buildings to deliver Children Centre services.
- They reflect and have been shaped by recent engagement activity where families and professionals have told us what would be important for the future in developing family hubs. Please see section 7 for a summary of relevant engagement outcomes and activity.
- Section 5 of the [Childcare Act \(2006\)](#), in particular 5D places a legal duty on local authorities to ensure there is consultation before any significant changes are made to Children's Centre provision in their area.
- The Council is committed to hearing the views of our public, our families and other key stakeholders. The outcomes of which will be important for us and will contribute towards shaping the future.
- The Council will be meeting statutory duties described, for example within the [Childcare Act \(2006\)](#) and these proposals will also be a part of contributing towards the delivery of strategic priorities outlined within the [Devon County Council Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#); [Devon's Early Help Strategy](#) and [Devon's SEND Strategy 2021-2024](#), for example.
- It forms part of the Council's corporate priorities and contributes towards one of the change programme priorities for 'Climate change, Innovation and Infrastructure' within

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together to learn and develop their skills, as well as some group delivery space. The outreach hub spaces will provide options for families to access various services and guidance in their own community. These will be linked to existing community services in different locations (such as schools, libraries, community hospitals and community centres) .

which the 'Property Change Programme' is being managed.

The Council's Property Change Programme.

The aim of this project is to reduce the Council's property portfolio without detriment to services or the local community. The vision is to 'Reduce, Dispose, Repurpose and Transform' the Council's property portfolio to provide a sustainable estate which promotes and facilitates agile and integrated service delivery.

The key elements of the estate strategy are: -

- Identifying properties that are no longer required or are not cost effective.
- Identifying the potential for co-location of services within DCC sites or public sector.
- Opportunities for better use of assets through repurposing to meet key strategic needs.
- Improving the energy efficiency of assets and reducing our carbon.

### 3. Risk assessment, limitations and options explored (summary)

Overall, the proposal being made has the potential to support positive social, environmental, and economic impacts. A summary of the potential positive impacts are below: -

Social impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repurposing buildings to be part of Family Hub approaches and networks locally could positively impact the physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of families, as they can better access the advice, support and help they need, in one place and in ways they feel are best for them, with a range of practitioners co-located and working better together. Physical space and buildings for the family hub network will only form one part of the approach, virtual offers and options will also be developed so families are enabled to have several options available to them to access the information, advice and support they need when they need it.</li> <li>• Access to advice, information, and support available would be improved through repurposing buildings to be part of family hub approaches for families with children and young people 0-19 years and up to 25 for young people with SEND. This expands use of the buildings which are currently restricted to parents with children aged 0-8 years only, for targeted offers of support.</li> <li>• Repurposing buildings to support development of more childcare provision for families would have positive benefits. For example, parents may be able to either return to work and/ or increase the working hours they can undertake; this may improve their financial situation at a time when cost of living is high and is creating pressure for families. More children would have access to childcare environments which could positively impact their development, learning and school readiness. This will also support the Council in meeting statutory duties for families in supporting childcare sufficiency locally.</li> <li>• Repurposing buildings to support the development of SEND provision for families would have positive benefits. It could mean schools and partners develop provision in these buildings which can better meet the needs of children and young people, supporting them to learn effectively, and achieve positive outcomes. In some cases, potentially remaining in mainstream education settings with their peers.</li> </ul>
Environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposals are based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners, and organisations, as locally as possible through the buildings available. Basing more teams in one place and</li> </ul>

	<p>locally is likely to mean a more effective and efficient use of energy, resources and costs associated with running any building. It could mean reduced travel time and emissions as a result. There is the opportunity for furniture and equipment to re-used and re-located where any building closure has been recommended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green spaces which are part of buildings are likely to be maintained. These have the potential to support conservation and biodiversity, whilst also offering benefits to parents and children and young people who may continue to have access to them when visiting a building.</li> </ul>
Economic impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-locating as many practitioners, partners, and organisations as locally as possible and in buildings put forward for repurposing, increases opportunities for knowledge, learning, skills and expertise to be shared across service areas and teams. It could improve partnership working, join up and integration across staff teams, which would also benefit families they are working with.</li> <li>• Job opportunities may become available within the local economy, where repurposed buildings are being proposed to potentially develop more childcare and/ or SEND provision. As this develops over time, schools and/ or organisations are likely to need additional staff to support services to be delivered in these spaces for children, young people, and their families.</li> <li>• If more childcare provision can be supported through repurposing of buildings, this could enable more parents to increase working hours and/ or return to work benefiting local businesses and the local economy.</li> <li>• Proposals promote efficient use of public money and resources in ways which support sustainability and continued support for families in local communities.</li> </ul>

#### 4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs.

The following groups of people are likely to be affected by the proposals: -

- Families with children and young people aged 0-8 years, this may include families with children and young people who may have Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities (SEND).
- Families with children and young people aged 0-19 years, 25 with SEND

##### Reach

Recommendations summarised have been informed by looking at:-

- Deprivation indices using both The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) and the [Indices of Multiple Deprivation \(IMD\)](#).
- Population size (see JSNA above) and child population 0-17 years as a percentage of total population.
- Travel links.
- Mapping of services available in each area (statutory and community based).
- Local knowledge of partners.
- Feedback from our families.

The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) for Devon 2023 states: -

- Devon is the third largest county in England covering 2,534 square miles, with a total

population of 814,440 people (395,689 male and 418,751 female).

- Devon has proportionally fewer younger people in Devon compared to the national average. There are 164,258 children and young people living in Devon aged between 0-19 years (84,308 male and 79,950 female).
- People living in poorer neighbourhoods tend on average to die 5 to 7 years earlier than people living in more affluent neighbourhoods. Life expectancy is starker in Devon in smaller areas of central Ilfracombe and Liverton in Exmouth. People in poorer areas also spend more of their shorter lives with a disability and/ or in poorer health.
- Outcomes for children and young people across Devon are variable and mixed.
- Focus on improving behavioural risk factors for children and young people around diet and physical activity is required to reduce dental decay in younger children and obesity in primary and secondary school aged children.
- Around a quarter of pupils in Devon are not achieving a good level of development by the end of reception and a gap in school readiness is considerably wider for disadvantaged children.
- Hospital admissions in children and young people are considerably higher in Devon for mental health conditions, self-harm and injuries. This gap is even wider for disadvantaged children.
- Devon has proportionality fewer working age people compared to the England average, particularly in persons aged 16-49 years.
- There is significant variation between areas within Devon in relation to economic landscape. Average earnings overall in Devon are well below the England average. Housing across Devon is expensive making it a challenge for some lower income households to get on the property ladder. Those living in rural communities are impacted even more by low wages, lack of access to affordable housing, public transport and digital connections.
- Behavioural risk factors such as smoking, alcohol, poor diet and lack of activity are the leading influences of ill health and premature mortality both nationally and locally.

At 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024, over the last 6 months there were 3,303 Children in Need. 2558 Children in Need with an open episode of need, 52% are males and 48% are females. 439 of these children (17%) have a disability. The 3 highest primary need areas included: - abuse or neglect; family in acute stress; family dysfunction.

At 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024, over the last 6 months there were 2,348 early help common/ targeted assessments being supported for children, young people and their families. 1201 of these assessments included a child or young person who was male aged 0-17 years (51%) and 1122 for a child or young person who was female (48%).

In 2023, there were 5.4% of all pupils in Devon with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) across all schools. There were 14.8% of all pupils in Devon with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support across all schools.

A summary has been provided below acknowledging the number of parents who have used the current children centre buildings over the last year (2023): -

District area in which Children centres are located.	Number of parents who have used the Children Centre buildings in this locality over the last year.
Exeter	449
Mid Devon	407
East Devon	684

Newton Abbot and Teignbridge	642
South Hams	370
West Devon	304
Barnstaple, North Devon	480
Ilfracombe, North Devon	242
Torridge	351
All centres total	3,929

### Experience

The Council is committed to supporting families to have their voices heard. This can include any feedback on their experiences of the different support available, aspects of their daily lived experience which they feel able to share with us and their say on any plans being developed to provide support to children and young people. Examples of where parents, children and young people are encouraged to share their views with us includes: -

- Have your Say website. Used to host details of our formal consultations all aiming to help shape services across Devon.
- Parent Carer Forum. This group is supported independently. This group of parent carers work closely with Devon County Council to help us to grow and improve our offer of support for parents and carers of disabled children and children and young people with SEND.
- Bright Spots Survey and the Devon Mind of My Own App. These tools help us to hear the views of care experienced children and young people in Devon.
- Advisory groups and boards supported by parents and/or practitioners working with families.
- Virtual and face to face focus sessions and/or coffee mornings hosted locally.
- As part of any service assessments and support being provided to families.
- Through our central Customer Service Centre and central service contact routes [Contact us - Devon County Council](#)

## 5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

In addition to families and children and young people highlighted above, below are a list of key stakeholders who are likely to be interested in and impacted by the recommended proposal being explored in this assessment: -

Stakeholder Group	Interest and potential impacts.
Practitioners across our systems of services including for example: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action for Children, developing family hubs core staffing team.</li> <li>• Early Help services.</li> <li>• Wider early years services and early education support.</li> <li>• Public Health services.</li> <li>• Public Health Nursing.</li> <li>• Midwifery services.</li> <li>• Partners supporting as part of the Best Start in Life national initiative.</li> </ul>	The outcomes of the proposal being taken through to public consultation will impact where staffing teams can be based and will provide some of the space and infrastructure from which to create and develop Family Hub networks and approaches in local communities and to support reach to and access for families. Several teams, practitioners, partners and organisations will form the family hub networks in local communities and these spaces will provide locations where they can link and work together with families. Moreover, all will need to have an awareness of the proposal for the buildings and be provided



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity, voluntary and third sector partners including Faith groups offering opportunities for families in their local communities.</li> <li>• Partners supporting drug, alcohol and domestic abuse or violence support.</li> <li>• Partners supporting wider community health and wellbeing support for children and young people.</li> <li>• The Council led Disabled Children’s Services.</li> <li>• Partners supporting delivery of youth services.</li> <li>• Schools, colleges, and Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLS).</li> <li>• Social care services delivered by the Council directly (Integrated Adult Social Care and Children).</li> <li>• Childcare settings, for example, childminders; nurseries and pre-school settings.</li> <li>• Partners providing careers and employability services in Devon to children, adults, and families.</li> <li>• Partners delivering libraries.</li> <li>• Education support teams.</li> <li>• Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership.</li> <li>• Citizens Advice and welfare support teams working with families in local communities.</li> <li>• District Councils.</li> <li>• Partners supporting children and young people with SEND and their families.</li> <li>• Safeguarding teams e.g., Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children and young people (MASH).</li> <li>• Social prescribing teams, wellbeing co-ordinators, community connectors and builders.</li> </ul>	<p>with the opportunity to share their views as part of the public consultation process.</p>
<p><a href="#">Elected Members.</a></p>	<p>Overall decision-making lies with this group. Elected Members will be making decisions that represent and respond to the needs and interests of Devon communities based on the information and evidence provided to them. Elected Members also need to be assured in their decision making that the Council are meeting their legal responsibilities and making the best use of public funds.</p>

## 6. Additional relevant research used to inform this assessment.

- [Devon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#).
- Children's services Analysis Tool (ChAT) 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
- [Local Authority Interactive Tool](#).
- Children Centre services contract monitoring data.
- Engagement feedback and outcomes from professionals, partners and families.
- Consultation Report

## 7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

The proposal described in section 2 above, reflects the proposal being made for current Children Centre buildings. The proposal was open for formal consultation from 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to midnight on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 and hosted through the [Devon family hubs - Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership \(devonscp.org.uk\)](#) Alongside the consultation, 14 face to face engagement sessions were carried out to gather feedback directly from stakeholders. Please see summary of consultation feedback below;

The proposals in the consultation were formed through engagement events and meetings carried out with staff, partners and members to gather their thoughts regarding the development of Family Hubs and the most appropriate use of existing and potential venues to deliver from.

The proposals described and being assessed in this impact assessment were influenced by a previous Family Hubs Engagement questionnaire. 697 responses to this questionnaire have been provided between 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 up to 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 closing date.

Initial findings highlight that families and professionals in Devon can often find it difficult to access services due to the rurality of Devon, the availability of transport and location of support for example. Families have told us that they want to be able to access support in friendly, welcoming, non-judgemental, open and safe spaces on a drop-in basis, without appointment, criteria or waiting lists and which can be suitable for the whole family. Families would like multi-functional spaces which can support them to meet with their peers, as well as a range of practitioners who are all working together. Spaces where they can access more face-to-face advice, information and support if preferred and which also enable families to learn more about what support is out there and is available locally to them in their communities.

Practitioners have told us they would also like to be able to use shared, local, multi-functional spaces with good access to IT and WIFI; which are well connected; affordable; sustainable; friendly, welcoming and safe spaces supporting relationships with families; and which provide a platform for shared learning and efficient use of resources for all.

It is also intended there will be an ongoing programme of engagement supported with partners and communities to continue to support, influence, shape, develop and improve any developing family hubs and networks in local communities. Details of any engagement events being supported will be made available on the main [Family Hubs website](#).

The recommendations from the consultation can be found in the [Children Centre Buildings Consultation Recommendations report](#). As a result of the consultation proposals have been adjusted and a phased approach implemented to ensure the views expressed have influenced the recommendations and actions moving forward to be agreed by Cabinet.

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## Background information

### 8. Equality analysis

Under the Equality Act 2010, the local authority must consider how people will be affected by a service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (for work), sex, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are: informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations; proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision); fair, necessary, reasonable, and those affected have been adequately consulted.

#### All residents by geographic area

The proposals regarding a change of use for the current Children Centre buildings to be put out to public consultation have the potential for a positive impact for families in Devon. It is being proposed 25 of the current buildings be repurposed to support local communities. Those being repurposed to form part of the infrastructure for the development of family hub approaches and networks have the potential to positively impact access to information, advice and information for families. They will provide some physical locations which are welcoming, trusted and safe where all types of families will be able to drop into, meaning they will be able to access information, advice and support potentially more quickly. The aim is also to make these repurposed spaces available to a wealth of practitioners and partners who will all form part of the family hub networks we are looking to develop in local communities, supporting them to work better together and to be more integrated and co-located in communities. This has the potential to positively impact families as physical spaces through the network can be accessed and used to meet with other parents and families face to face as well as a range of partners and professionals which all types of families may need support from. This also responds to what families have told us they want and would make better for them. This has the potential to positively impact the physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of families, as they can better access the advice, support and help they need, in ways they feel are best for them.

There is a potential negative emotional impact for families in local communities where they may perceive a long-standing Children Centre being repurposed for a different use or closing, and the perception that with this change, it means there will not be services or a Family Hub network in their area. This can be mitigated through effective engagement and communication with families and communities regularly. We will need to ensure there are communications providing clarity on sites that will be available in a local community and will be used to support the infrastructure for a local family hub network and approach for that community. Where buildings are not being repurposed for the family hub network or are closing, we need to be clear in our communications there are other spaces which have been mapped and which data and engagement have indicated to date would act as more appropriate locations and spaces to support family hub networks and approaches locally. Moreover, physical space and buildings for the family hub network will only form one part of the approach, virtual offers and options will also

be developed as part of family hub networks and approaches, families will have a number of options available to them to access information, advice and support they need when they need it.

Children Centre buildings being put forward for repurposing to support other functions, partners and services have an overall potential for a positive impact for families living in Devon. It is being proposed for consultation that 16 of the current Children's Centre buildings be returned to schools or other partners to repurpose as community spaces, childcare provision and/ or to provide space for SEND provision (7 of which would still provide space for outreach). If some of these spaces are used to develop and grow childcare provision, this will increase the number of places for childcare which are available to families and which may be able to provide more hours of free childcare for families as part of the national childcare initiatives being supported by the Government. This has the potential to positively impact parents, who may be able to either return to work and/ or increase the working hours they can undertake as they are able to access more hours and/ or spaces which may become available in local childcare settings. This could help to support them financially at a time when cost of living is high, positively impacting the health and wellbeing of families, reducing stress. Moreover, an increase in childcare provision will mean more children in Devon are able to access a setting where they can socialise with other children, make friends and have access to another environment which can help them to prepare for school and to develop socially, emotionally, cognitively etc. This will also support the Council in meeting their statutory duties for families in supporting childcare sufficiency locally.

### **Age**

The proposed re-purposing of 9 of the current Children Centre buildings to become part of family hub networks and approaches locally has the potential for a positive impact for children and young people of all ages. Currently Children Centre buildings are focused on delivery supporting families with children aged between 0-8 years. Through repurposing these buildings will become available to families with children and young people aged from 0-19 years and for young people with SEND up to 25 years and their families. This will increase opportunities for families to seek advice, information and support in one place as their child or young person grows. Families will know where to go and be better supported to understand what support is available to them in their local communities. This has the potential to positively impact the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of parents and family members. As they have told us they often feel confused, unaware, and stressed as they are having to move from team to team and place to place. This also has the potential to positively benefit the development of children and young people as they are able to get the support, they need either from parents who have been supported and/ or as needed through more targeted and/ or statutory services such as social care.

### **Disability (includes sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people.**

It is being proposed that 16 of the current children centre buildings are repurposed ( with 7 still making space available for outreach), this could include some of these buildings being returned to schools (as many Children Centre buildings are situated on school sites), who can then use this space to potentially develop provision and space in their schools which can be used to support more children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities. This has the potential to positively impact the lives of children, young people and families in these communities and it responds to what families have been sharing that they need e.g., more SEND provision locally. It also has the potential to mean more children with SEND can remain in mainstream settings depending on any additional provision schools may develop.

With different space and provision developed, it would mean schools can better support the needs of children and young people with SEND in their setting, promoting inclusion and supporting children and young people to learn as effectively as they can and to reach their potential.

The proposed re-purposing of 9 of the current Children's Centre buildings to become part of Family Hub networks and approached locally has the potential for a positive impact for children and young people with SEND and their families. Currently Children's Centre buildings are focused on supporting families with children aged between 0-8 years. If these buildings are repurposed to become part of infrastructure and space supporting family hub networks and approaches, they will be available to families with children and young people aged from 0-19 years and for young people with SEND up to 25 years. This will increase opportunities for families to seek advice, information, and support in one place as their child or young person grows. Families will know where to go and be better supported to understand what support is available to them in their local communities. This has the potential to positively impact the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of parents and family members who have told us they often feel confused, unaware, stressed as they are having to move from team to team and place to place. This also has the potential to positively benefit the development of children and young people as they can get the support, they need from parents who have been supported and/ or as needed through more targeted and/or statutory services such as social care.

#### **Race and culture: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour, religion and belief, asylum seeker and refugee status, language needs**

Practitioners, partners, and any other organisations making use of any repurposed Children Centres summarised above, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting, and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as race and culture for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

#### **Sex and gender identity and reassignment (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)**

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations making use of any repurposed Children Centres summarised above, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as sex, gender identity and reassignment for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

#### **Sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership if work related.**

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations making use of any repurposed Children Centres summarised above, will be working in ways which promote a safe, welcoming, trusting and open space for all types of families. This includes promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity practices within the buildings which make them accessible to all types of families and which respect and take account of protected characteristics such as sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership for a family and in line with the Equality Act (2010).

#### **Other relevant socio-economic factors and intersectionality**

When considering the options for repurposing Current Children centre buildings (as part of the proposal described in section 2), the recommended option for these buildings in communities has been considered against population data available. This is with the purpose and aim of

taking forward buildings which are best placed to meet the needs of families in their local communities, whilst also holding as much potential as possible to connect into and with families within our most deprived Devon communities, looking to reduce the impact of health inequalities for these families as far as possible, and supporting them to achieve the best outcomes they can.

As discussed above the option of repurposing current Children Centre buildings to potentially increase spaces and hours which may be available as childcare to families could positively impact the finances of families as they are enabled to take on more hours of work and/ or to return to work, where this may not have been a viable option for them previously. Potentially providing children and families with opportunities to engage in activities etc which they may not have been able to before. This will also support the Council in meeting their statutory duties for families regarding childcare sufficiency locally.

Having access to a wider range of advice and information and better join up between services in buildings used as family hub sites would be advantageous for our most vulnerable families in communities who may need support relating to employability, housing, benefits advice and welfare support.

## 9. Human rights considerations:

We need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).

Practitioners, partners and any other organisations making use of any repurposed Children Centres summarised above, will be working in ways which promote the vision, values and principles of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children \(2010\)](#) and the [United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(2006\)](#) in their work with children, young people and families.

For any of the Children Centre buildings being repurposed to become part of Family Hub approaches and networks developed locally a key part of monitoring, auditing, evaluation, and improvement activity will be in considering how equality and diversity is being promoted and supported for children, young people and families. This will include evidence of adjustments which have been made and considering how aspects of the conventions are being supported appropriately as part of our aims, objectives, and vision.

## 10. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 11, otherwise complete the environmental analysis information below):

<b>Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process</b>	
<b>Planning Permission</b>	
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b>	X
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>	

**Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost.**

Repurposing the Children Centre buildings in the ways which has been described (in Section 2 above) has the potential for a positive impact. The options proposed are based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners and organisations and as locally as possible through the buildings available. Basing more teams in one place and locally is likely to mean a more effective and efficient use of energy, resources and costs associated with running any building. This will be more effective than all teams individually having their own spaces using energy and resources to run multiple buildings. There is also the potential to re-use and re-locate equipment and furniture from any buildings proposed for closure for example, into re-purposed spaces, ensuring equipment is being recycled and put to the best use.

**Conserve and enhance wildlife.**

Children Centre buildings which are being put forward for repurposing will aim to be re-purposed and updated in ways which maintain any existing green spaces the buildings may have and to promote positive opportunities for insects and wildlife and biodiversity appropriately. This has the potential for a positive impact. Any grassed and lawn areas can be maintained in ways which encourage longer and protected growth of plants in areas which are attractive to insects and wildlife, for example. Natural spaces being available and maintained would also have potential positive benefits for the physical and mental wellbeing of parents, children and young people using repurposed spaces in the future. For children and young people there is the opportunity to potentially contribute to their learning of the benefits of outdoor spaces and the importance of retaining these spaces for all appropriately in buildings put forward for re-proposing.

**Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape.**

None.

**Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage.**

None.

**Minimise greenhouse gas emissions.**

Repurposing the Children Centre buildings in the ways which has been described (in Section 2 above) has the potential for a positive impact. The options proposed are based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners and organisations and as locally as possible. Basing more teams in one place and locally could reduce the need for as much travel by car or public transport, thus having the potential to reduce emissions associated with travelling distances to access spaces. Moreover, those buildings put forward for repurposing to become part of Family Hub approaches and networks locally, will aim to provide access to families closer to their homes, within their local communities and those served by appropriate

public transport links. This approach should aim to reduce travel and keep as many families and practitioners as local to communities as possible.

### **Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)**

Children Centre buildings which are being put forward for repurposing will aim to be re-purposed and updated in ways which will seek to reduce waste and make use or re-use of resources or equipment which may already be available. This has the potential for a positive impact. Anyone using the buildings will be encouraged to use resources economically and support energy saving measures as far as possible. For example, using energy efficient equipment and using equipment only when needed in any buildings, turning off lights when no longer needed. Materials could be made available to promote behaviours to support the effective use of utilities such as water and electricity by anyone accessing or using any buildings to deliver from. Facilities which encourage behaviours to recycle materials appropriately or reduce the use of materials e.g., paper, can be promoted through any sites used to provide support to families and practitioners going forward.

### **Contribute to reducing water consumption.**

Children Centre buildings which are being put forward for repurposing will aim to be re-purposed and updated in ways which will seek to reduce waste and make use or re-use of resources or equipment which may already be available. This has the potential for a positive impact. Anyone using the buildings will be encouraged to use resources economically and support energy saving measures as far as possible. Materials could be made available to promote behaviours to support the effective use of utilities such as water.

### **Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level)**

Maintaining any existing green spaces in buildings to be repurposed could be important, with any increased rainfall as a result of climate change, these spaces could soak up so much excess water, taking pressure away from waterfalls into the drains and sewers and any overflow. Buildings which may go on to become part of Family Hub networks, over time and once embedded within communities, could support planning, protocols and responses for emergency evacuation and flooding for example.

### **Other (please state below)**

The proposal supports the releasing of buildings which are not affordable, sustainable and/ or have limited use within communities.

## **11. Economic analysis**

### **Impact on knowledge and skills**

Repurposing the current Children Centre buildings in the ways which have been described (see section 2) has the potential for a positive impact on knowledge and skills. The options proposed are based on supporting as much co-location as possible amongst practitioners, partners and organisations and as locally as possible through the buildings available. This increases the potential for sharing of knowledge, learning and upskill between different practitioners and service areas being represented and making use of these spaces. This will be positive for families are more likely to receive consistent knowledge and information from groups of practitioners and partners. This will be particularly important for those buildings the Council is intending to repurpose to support the development of Family Hub approaches and networks



locally. At the same time creating more opportunities and spaces for practitioners to co-locate has the potential to positively increase partnership working and integrated working between teams and with families responding to what families are telling us i.e., they would like more evidence of partnership working and join up across all services, meaning we are better able to meet their needs.

### **Impact on employment levels and local business**

Repurposing the current Children Centre buildings in the ways which have been described (see section 2) has the potential for a neutral or positive impact on employment levels. The way the buildings are being repurposed should not result in any risk of job loss or redundancy to staff. There is the potential that job opportunities may become available within the local economy, where repurposed buildings are being proposed to potentially develop more childcare and/ or SEND provision. As this develops over time, schools and/ or organisations are likely to need additional staff to support services to be delivered in these spaces for children, young people and their families.

The proposal described in section 2 has the potential for a positive impact for the local Devon economy. Changes being proposed could enable more parents in the local economy to work more hours and/ or return to the workplace if some of the buildings are repurposed and can support more childcare provision going forward. The proposal looks to safeguard and reduce costs, and to promote efficient use of public money and resources available, supporting a Sustainable and Stronger Council approach whilst continuing to support families within their local communities.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted



Health & Wellbeing Board  
18 July 2024

## **Carers in Communities and in Employment**

Report of the Deputy Director, Adult Commissioning & Health

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation:**

**It is recommended that:-**

1. carers and their specific needs should be considered and explicitly addressed in the Director of Public Health's annual reports and in work arising from them.
2. that caring status be included in equality and inclusion frameworks and monitoring analogous to a primary Protected Characteristic in law.
3. member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board should lead the way as large employers of many carers in supporting carers to enter, remain in and re-enter employment. This will support employees in their caring role and is for the benefit for the organisation and, more widely, for the Devon economy as a whole – membership of the Devon Carer Friendly Employers Scheme will assist them in this.
4. the promotion of carer awareness should be a top priority in the community and among employers.
5. through Carer Friendly Devon (Communities and Employers) the additional barriers that carers face in everyday life and in employment are addressed.
6. the issues faced by carers identified in this report are taken in to account when developing services and strategies for the future.
7. the Health and Well-Being Board nominates a representative to join the Carers Partnership Steering Group to further develop the shared agenda.
8. member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board review "[The Commitment to Carers](#)" and how they can put this into practice.

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## 2) Background/Introduction

Ahead of the Meeting, members of the Board are invited to consider these questions to establish their level of carer awareness:

- Are carers important to our communities, public services or the economy of Devon?
- How well are we performing for carers in Devon?
- How many carers are likely to be working in your organisation?
- How many carers are there in Devon, and how many are there of working age?
- How many carers give up work on account of caring every day in Devon?
- How likely is a person to be a carer in their lifetime?
- Is the health and wellbeing of carers equal to that of the population who are not carers?
- What are the biggest issues for carers in Devon?
- Are carers always taken explicitly into account in our work?

This report and the presentation to be made to the Board will answer these and other questions as well as recommending specific actions, both to the Board corporately and to individual member organisations.

The scope of this report is Adult Carers of Adults, within the remit of the Care Act 2014. It does not cover Parent Carers of Children with disabilities (NB the NHS considers these two groups together) and Young Carers (aged under 18 years).

According to the 2021 Census there are at least 74,500 carers in Devon, 9% of the population<sup>1</sup>. Some studies though have estimated a higher percentage (e.g. 19.5% in the GP Patient Survey<sup>2</sup> and 20% in a Carers Week You Gov Survey<sup>3</sup>), which suggests the number of carers in Devon could be as high as 162,000. Nationally, around two in three people (65%) can expect to be carers at some point in their adult life<sup>4</sup>.

The purpose of this report is to inform the Devon Health and Wellbeing Board and recommend specific actions in respect of:

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<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics, Census 2021.

<sup>2</sup> GP Patient Survey (2023).

<sup>3</sup> Carers UK (2023). [I care. Carers Week report on unpaid carer identification.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Carers UK (2019). [Will I Care? The likelihood of being a carer in adult life.](#)

- The results of the biennial Survey of Adult Carers in England in 2023 - how are we performing for carers?
- Barriers for carers in their communities – what are these and are we specifically addressing them?
- Issues for carers in employment – why do they matter and what can we do about them?

Following the release of the Survey results, the regional group of Directors of Adult Social Services, at the instigation of the Devon Director Tandra Forster have determined that carers will be a priority for them regionally so that improvement across the region is given greater emphasis. Additionally, the Devon (Integrated Care System) proposals for the use of the Accelerated Reform Fund in respect of targeted breaks for carers and addressing how carers can be supported digitally and by Artificial Intelligence will support improvement and help to address a top priority for carers.

However, not all the levers are in Adult Social Care and improvement will require a more concerted approach across the Health and Well Being Board partnership.

### **3) The Survey of Adult Carers in England 2023**

Every two years (there was one exception when it was delayed to an interval of three years due to the Pandemic) a prescribed national survey of carers is undertaken by Local Authorities.

Detailed charts are in Appendix 1, showing comparative performance and trend lines, and further work drilling down into the results as well as seeking insights regionally and from high performing comparator Authorities is in hand, but the highlights are:

- Regionally, carer reported quality of life is marginally below the national average; Devon's score is at the lower end of this giving a national ranking of 110 /152), with static performance since the last survey. This is a composite measure which includes carer loneliness and isolation (see below).
- Carer satisfaction with Adult Social Care in the Southwest is marginally better than the national average, and Devon's score is towards the top end of this, giving a national ranking of 48/152 and a slightly improving trend. If satisfaction with Adult Social Care is relatively high it must mean that carer experience of the rest of the system and in their wider communities and lives is a concern.
- While more carers in the Southwest are included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for, Devon's result is towards

# Agenda Item 13

the bottom of this, level with the national average, giving a ranking of 76/152 but on a continuing downward trend. While this appears at first sight to be about practice in Adult Social Care, carers may also be thinking of General Practice and NHS practice; members with responsibilities in these areas are asked to give this a determined focus, as is already being done within Integrated Adult Social Care.

- In relation to the proportion of carers who find it easy to find information about services, the Southwest regionally performs better than the national average. Devon’s performance is around the midpoint of the regional spread, with a national ranking of 65/152 but on a downward trend. We know that they highly regard the information and advice of our commissioned service, Devon Carers, so the problem is much more widespread. Analysis of the survey free text on this point shows that carers are thinking of “whole system” information, and particularly about services needed by the person they care for/support (health, social care, housing, benefits, employment, leisure, arts and culture and so much more), so this is a matter for the Board specifically to consider how partners may be brought round the table on this.
- Carers’ social isolation continues to be a major cause for concern nationally and regionally, with Devon’s result second to bottom of the regional spread, giving a national ranking of 131/152, though with a slightly improving trend (which may be related to specific interventions such as “Carer Friendly Devon”, mentioned later). Carers’ social isolation is a distinct focus of this report as Adult Social Care alone holds insufficient levers to address carers experiences in their communities.

ASCOF 112 - Proportion of carers who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like

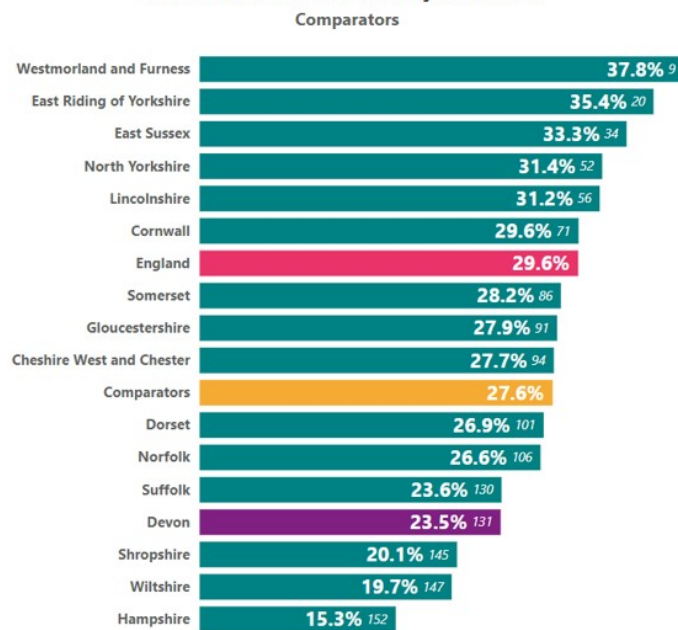


Figure 1: Social Contact: Comparator Authorities 2023/24 ASCOF Results



Viewed alongside our comparator Authorities, Devon's performance on this measure is poor, as shown in the table above.

## 4) Main Body/Proposal

As a result of the ASCOF survey findings from 2021-22, and the highlighting of additional issues faced by Working Age Carers, the Carers Partnership Steering Group (CPSG) identified Carer Isolation and Loneliness and Working Age Carers as key priorities. Two Working Groups were set up, with one focussing on carer social isolation and loneliness and the other focussing on the issues faced by Working Age Carers. The reports and recommendations from these two groups were approved by CPSG in 2023.

The proposal is an improved join up of strategic approaches to be explicitly inclusive of carers as outlined in the recommendations.

### 4A Carer Isolation and Loneliness

Social isolation and consequent loneliness are important, as studies have shown that it can have detrimental effect on physical and mental health. The World Health organisation describes the effects as follows:

“ Social isolation and loneliness affect mortality similarly to well-established risk factors such as obesity, lack of physical activity, smoking, other forms of substance abuse and poor access to health care ”

[WHO 2021 - Social isolation and loneliness among older people: advocacy brief](#)

In December 2020 a report by the Director of Public Health<sup>5</sup> proposed to support the Devon Charter to End Loneliness and incorporate it in the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy “Happy and Healthy Communities” 2020-2025<sup>6</sup>. The particular social isolation of carers was explicitly recognised in the report. The resultant Strategy included loneliness as a priority of mental health, with an ambition to “reduce loneliness in all age groups”. Carers were not explicitly in focus in the thinking and actions taken in relation to this priority. The actions taken, while no doubt helping some, would therefore likely be ineffective for many carers without additional inputs or adjustments as the additional specific barriers that carers face (see below) were not explicitly addressed.

The isolation which carers experience is caused by several factors related explicitly to their caring role. A Carers UK survey found the following to be the most widely reported causes.

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<sup>5</sup> Director of Public Health. (2020). An overview of loneliness in Devon.

<sup>6</sup> Devon Health and Wellbeing Board. (2019). Healthy and Happy Communities. Devon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2020 to 2025

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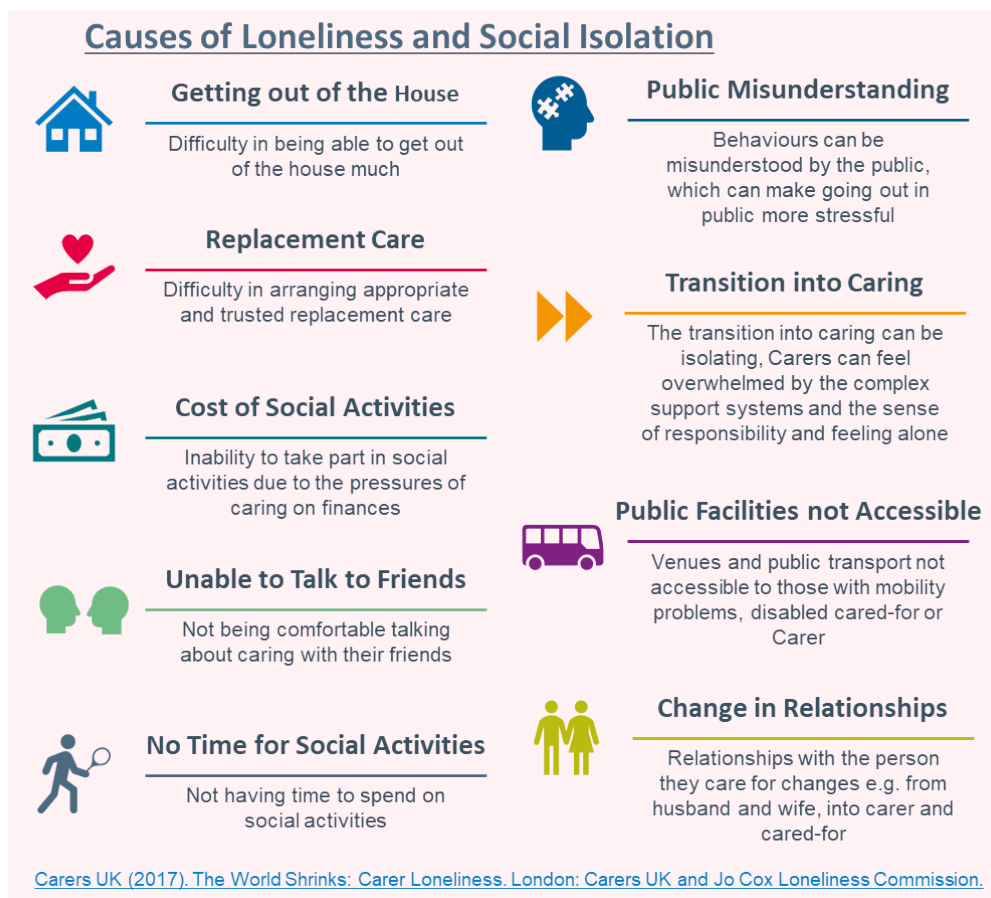


Figure 2: Causes of Loneliness and Social Isolation

Isolation and loneliness can negatively impact carers' physical and mental health<sup>7,8</sup>. Carers also face additional vulnerabilities arising from their caring role, which may interact and exacerbate each other. Solutions to address isolation and loneliness will vary with the circumstances that give rise to it and the personal characteristics of the carer. The most common measures to reduce carer isolation identified in a survey by Carers UK (2017)<sup>9</sup> are:

<sup>7</sup> Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Barreto, M., Vines, J., Atkinson, M., Lawson, S., & Wilson, M. (2017). Experiences of Loneliness Associated with Being an Informal Caregiver: A Qualitative Investigation. *Frontiers in Psychology*.

<sup>8</sup> Brimblecombe, N. and Cartagena Farias, J. (2022). Inequalities in unpaid carer's health, employment status and social isolation. *Health and Social Care in the Community*.

<sup>9</sup> Carers UK. (2017). [The world shrinks: Carer loneliness](#).

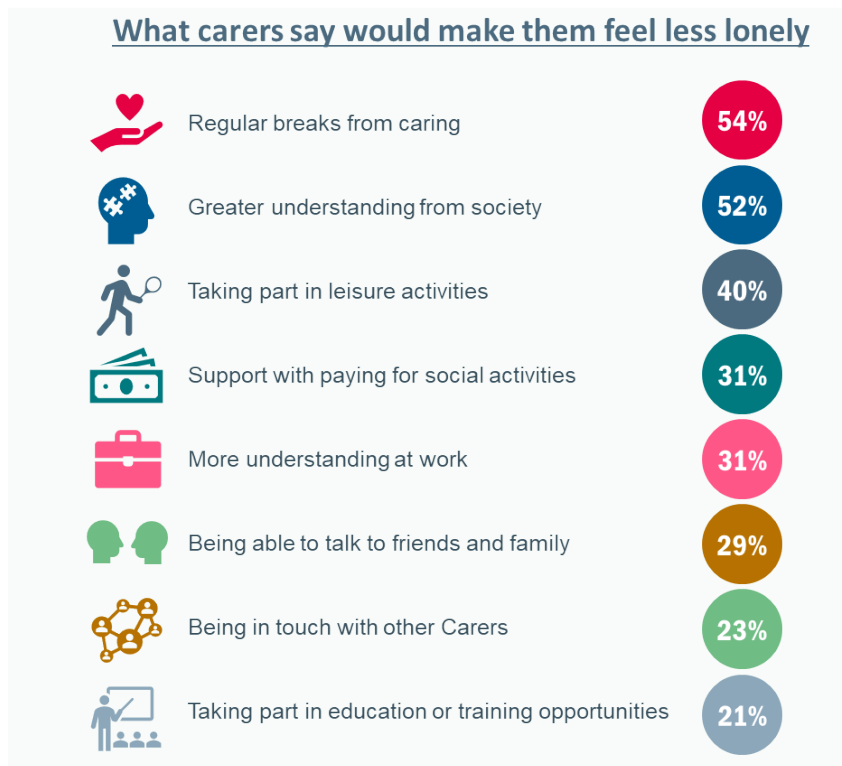


Figure 3: Measures to reduce Carer loneliness, as identified in a 2017 Carers UK survey.

There is also evidence to suggest that IT and technological solutions can improve social connectedness and reduce isolation for some carers (hence the focus in the Accelerating Reform Fund programme).

While isolation and loneliness have the same definition for carers and the general population, we conclude there are distinct conditions for carers under which it arises and that additional barriers exist and need to be overcome if it is to be successfully addressed.

Furthermore, we cannot succeed by carer support services alone, or by DCC or the NHS in their assigned roles. While commissioned carer support services can (within financial constraints) work to provide breaks from caring, wider support is needed to access leisure, sport, arts and culture, education and training, access to IT, opportunities to talk with other carers, and encouragement and support.

**Tackling carer isolation requires a concerted system wide and system level effort.** It will be necessary to incorporate these insights into all strategic programmes influencing public perceptions, visibility of and responsiveness to disabilities, community attitudes and the approach of employers to carers who work for them or who wish to work for them (employment is specifically addressed below).

And we need to ensure that strategic, Public Health and Communities initiatives are strengthened in their approaches to inclusion in respect of

# Agenda Item 13

disability and carers. Strategies, approaches, employers and services (including for example Highways and Transport) need to be carer-aware and linked to carers through the Carers Partnership Steering Group and on the ground through Devon Carers.

This will be difficult. How can it be routinely assured? The Carers Partnership Steering Group suggested that caring status be included in equality and inclusion frameworks and monitoring analogous to a primary Protected Characteristic in law. Carers are in fact protected in law as it can be unlawful to discriminate against them, on account of their association with a person with disabilities.

Universal carer awareness training and leveraging support in local communities are recommended, in many cases mediated by the Devon Carers "Carer Friendly Devon" scheme. All members of the Board and all levels of elected and non-elected officials are asked to promote this initiative, Members of this scheme (as "communities") currently include entities ranging from Seaton Town Council and Seaton Tramway to the National Trust. In connection with the Scheme, carer awareness training has recently been undertaken with staff of North Devon District Council. These are early days to see evidence on the ground, but there is evidence in the most recent survey of the positive impact of work with Seaton Town Council in improving carers lives and reducing their isolation.

In the Integrated Care System (ICS) the "make every contact count" approach is recommended for carers, including the use of the Carer Recognition Tool questions (see Appendix 2) in routine health checks and Hospital protocols. Ensuring loops to Primary Care coding and referral to Carer Support Services is important. Many service contacts have the potential to identify carers, including Police contacts. In fact SWAST were early signatories to the ICS level "Commitment to Carers", alongside organisations who may be thought to be more traditionally in this space, for example DPT. Members are asked to take note and request any help and advice they feel they need to take appropriate action.

It is also recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board consider isolation and loneliness related to caring in the last years of life, bereavement and loss of the caring role, recognising that post bereavement the carer is likely to have lost the person most important to them as well as their caring role and sense of purpose. This is a multi-agency concern and Members who have responsibilities for commissioning work in this space are asked to take note.

Before going on to consider carers of working age as a distinct topic, it is worth recognising that carers of working age in Devon are even more likely than older carers to be socially isolated. Those aged 18 to 64 are approximately 10% more likely to be socially isolated than older carers (data from 2021/22 Survey). It is considered likely that this is strongly related to loss of employed status (though we do not have data on that) which underlines the importance of the considerations in the next section.

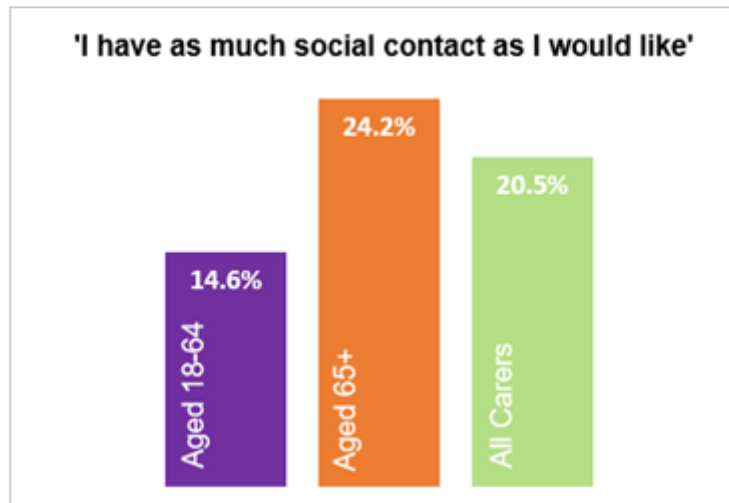


Figure 4: Proportion of Carers who reported they has as much social contact as they would like by Age Group in Devon.

## 4B Working Age Carers

Devon had a lower than national average of carers of working age in our 2023 Survey responses, 39% in Devon compared to a national average of 47%. Working Age Carers are also underrepresented in the “population” of carers registered with Devon Carers which is a likely factor contributing to this. Equality of support for Working Age Carers is a matter for improvement.

The following facts support our proposition that Working Age Carers, and Working Carers, must be a distinct focus in our wellbeing work, for their sake and for the economy of Devon, and that focussing on Employers as the first line in their recognition and support is the correct strategy:-

- Caring has a detrimental impact on someone’s ability to be in work and this impact is largely proportional to the intensity of care that they provide (Census).
- Working Carers have a distinct pattern of seeking information about care, as shown by a cross-Government study: they are more likely to approach their employers, the person they care for, family and friends, GP Practices and Pharmacies than more “traditional” information sources (see Appendix 3).
- Of a working age population in Devon of 475k, around 8 people in Devon per day or 2,921 people in Devon a year have to give up work to care. This is based on the statistic from Carers UK<sup>10</sup> that on average 600 people per day or 219,000 people a year in England give up work to Care (0.615% of working age population). This is clearly both to their detriment and that of their employer.

<sup>10</sup> Carers UK (2019). [Juggling work and unpaid care.](#)

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- Employers for Carers<sup>11</sup> say that “By raising awareness of caring in the workplace, reviewing and updating working policies and identifying and supporting carers in the workplace, organisations (can) retain their staff who are unpaid carers. Without the right support, 1 in 6 carers give up work or reduce working hours to care. Many will be the most skilled and experienced staff, the 45-64 year olds at the peak of their careers being the most affected age group.”
- The UK economy and the productivity of business and employers, including the public and voluntary sectors, depends on retaining their skilled and knowledgeable staff. Crucially, that increasingly includes employees juggling work with caring<sup>12</sup>.
- Due to an aging population, the number of people providing unpaid care looks set to increase. This can only mean that more people providing unpaid care will struggle to balance caring with employment and could lead to more people given up or reducing work.
- 48% of current and former carers said that caring had a negative impact on their job and ability to work<sup>13</sup>. That could equate to around 45k people in Devon.
- Over two-thirds (69%) of carers in Devon are of Working Age (aged 16-64). Working Age Carers are less likely to be in good health (77%) compared with the general population (86%) and are more likely to be economically inactive (28% compared with 15% of non carers)<sup>14</sup>.
- According to a recent NHS staff survey<sup>15</sup> 1 in 3 (32%) of NHS staff were also providing unpaid care.
- A report by the CIPD and The University of Sheffield suggested that carers working in the public sector are more likely to find it difficult to combine work and caring (53%) compared with those in the third sector (42%) and private sector (34%)<sup>16</sup>. This evidence suggests that a failure to meet the needs of unpaid carers would have a detrimental effect on the workforce of both the NHS in Devon and Devon County Council.<sup>17</sup>

A research review by the Department of Work and Pensions identified several issues encountered both by carers in work and those carers looking to enter employment<sup>18</sup>:

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<sup>11</sup> Carers UK - [Home | EFC \(employersforcarers.org\)](https://www.employersforcarers.org/)

<sup>12</sup> Carers UK - [Carer Confident | Carers UK](#)

<sup>13</sup> Carers Week (2024). [No choice but to care. Carers Week report 2024.](#)

<sup>14</sup> Office for National Statistics, Census 2021.

<sup>15</sup> NHS Staff Survey 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Austin, A., & Heyes, J. (2020). [Supporting Working Carers: how employers and employees can benefit.](#)

CIPD/University of Sheffield.

<sup>17</sup> This maybe due to 63% of public sector employees who responded to the survey being women (in comparison to 44% of the sample of private sector employees). The report states a larger percentage of women than men find it difficult to combine work and care.

<sup>18</sup> Department for Work and Pensions. (2019). [Informal carers and employment: summary report of a systematic review.](#) London: UK Government.

Risks to Employment Exit	Difficulties Obtaining Formal Care	Inflexible Employer	Workplace Hostility	Care Intensity	Carer Health	Difficulties Concentrating	Age/Gender
Barriers to Employment	No time/energy to search for work	Unable to Find Flexible Employment	Difficulties Obtaining Formal Care	Outdated Skills	Health	Carer Beliefs	Age
Employment Retention Strategies	Formal Care	Flexible Working	Technology	Carer Friendly Employer	Family Support	Change Working Pattern	Statutory Care Assessment

Figure 5: DWP Research Review findings on issues encountered by Carers in work and those Carers looking to enter employment.

For the sustainability of public services in Devon, especially Adult Social Care, we need to turn the tide so that, for employed carers, their employers are the first line of identification and support. This should mean fewer carers dropping out of or reducing their employment commitments, resulting in healthier and wealthier carers and better bottom lines for Devon Businesses, as well as lower rates of demand for support. **Employers who are part of the Health and Wellbeing Board can achieve this and lead others in the Devon economy** on this by joining and supporting Carer Friendly Devon (Employers) and/or the national scheme, Employers for Carers, and achieving their accreditation standards. Note that DCC’s “Umbrella” membership of Employers for Carers already covers SME’s in Devon for policy advice but as yet, DCC has not achieved accreditation, although work is under way.

## 5) Options/Alternatives

None.

## 6) Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

Survey of Adult Carers in England 2023: [Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2023-24 – NHS England Digital](#)

## 7) Strategic Plans

The Devon “Commitment to Carers”: [Carers – One Devon](#)

[Caring well – Promoting independence \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

## 8) Financial Considerations

For Social Isolation and Loneliness considerations, none.

For employment considerations:– membership of the Carers Friendly Employers Scheme – none; for membership and accreditation by Employers for Carers there are modest costs related to the size of the organisation.

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## 9) Legal Considerations

None

## 10) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

Adult Social Care sustainability will be supported by both the Social Isolation and Loneliness considerations, and the Employment considerations. Economic sustainability will be supported by the Employment recommendations.

## 11) Equality Considerations

Carers are protected by Equality legislation on account of their association with persons with disabilities.

Recommendations will improve equality of carers within geographic communities in services and at work.

Recommendations should contribute to the equality of people with disabilities in communities and in services.

Recommendations will improve equality of access to support of carers of working age.

## 12) Risk Management Considerations

No risks have been identified.

### **Name**

Solveig Wright  
Deputy Director – Adult Commissioning & Health

**Electoral Divisions:** All

## **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Carer Social Isolation – A Devon Carers Partnership Summary Report.  
Working Age Carers in Devon – A Working Group Report.

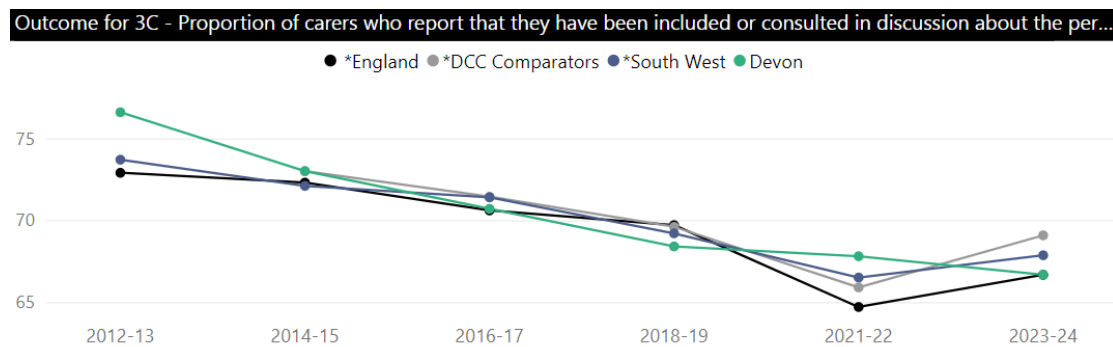
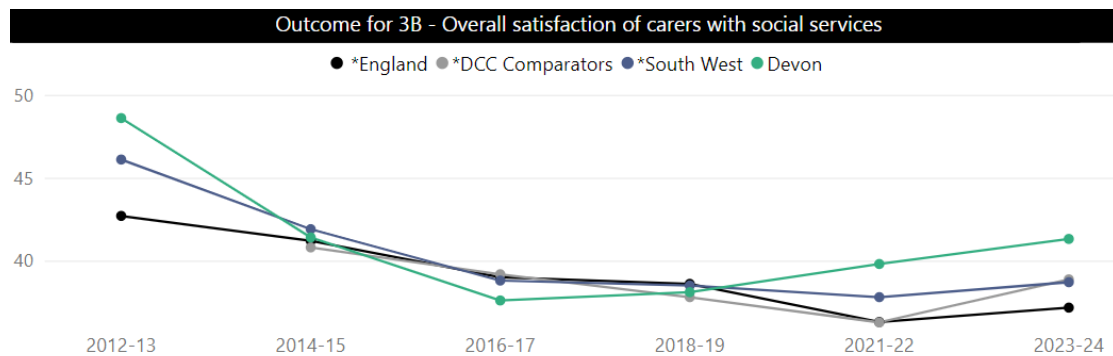
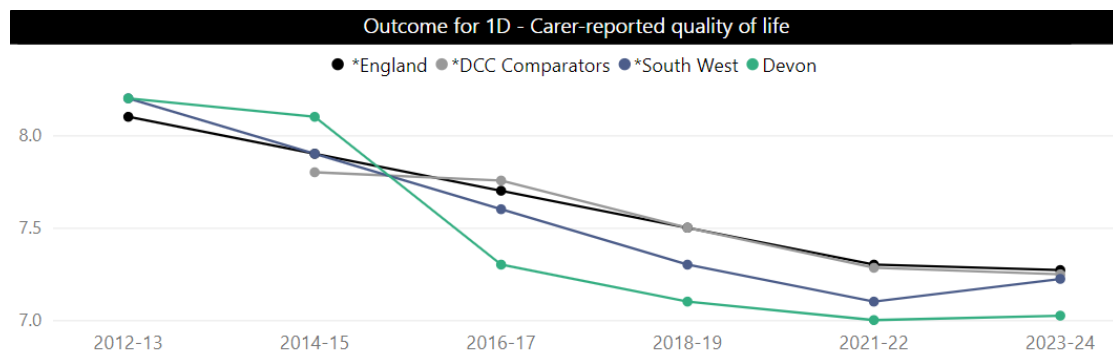
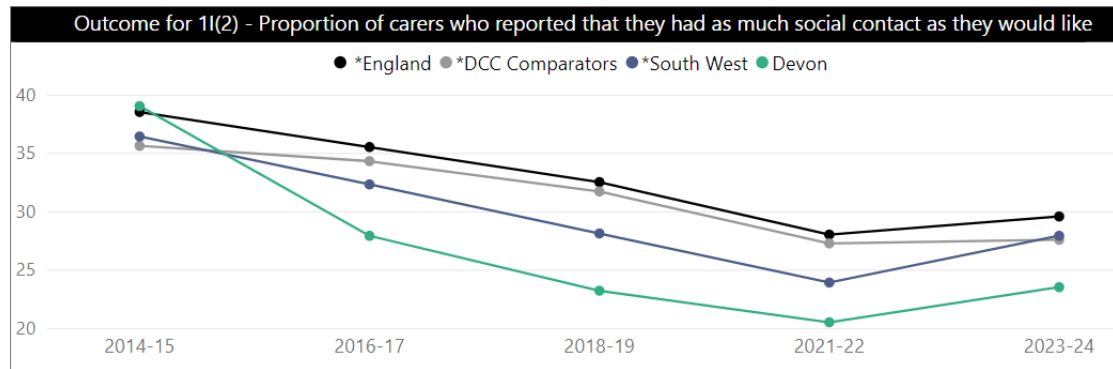
### **Contact for Enquiries:**

Email: [carersstrategy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:carersstrategy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk)

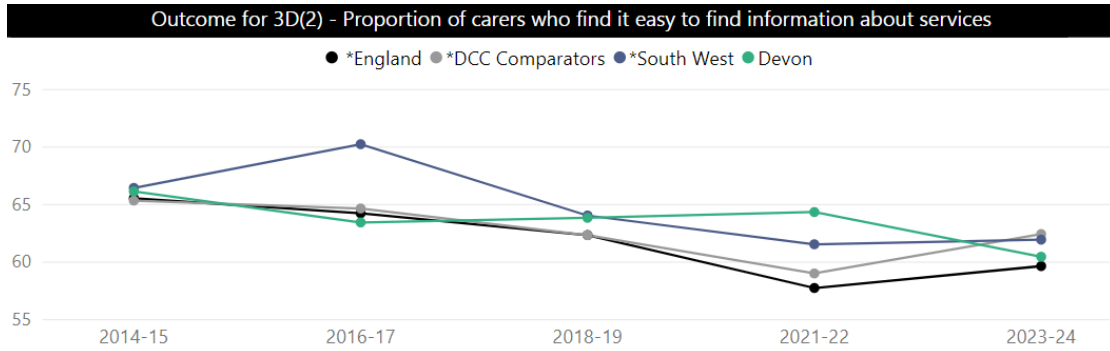
Copies of the reports on Carer Social Isolation and Working Age Carers in Devon can be requested via this mailbox: [carersstrategy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:carersstrategy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk).



## Appendix 1:



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## Appendix 2: Carer Recognition Tool (“CRT”) Questions

(Note that the CRT is available as a physical card, like an ID card, that may be fixed to a lanyard)

**Carer Recognition Tool**

TORBAY Devon NHS Devon County Council

This card is for professionals to identify, signpost, and refer Carers for support

**1: Identify the Carer**

**A Carer is anyone, including a child, who provides care**  
(including emotional support and practical help\*)

**\*Excludes:** (1) under or by virtue of a contract, (2) as voluntary work, or (3) ordinary parenting

03 3000 TBC TBC

**Carer Recognition Tool**

TORBAY Devon NHS Devon County Council

**2: Ask the Carer...**

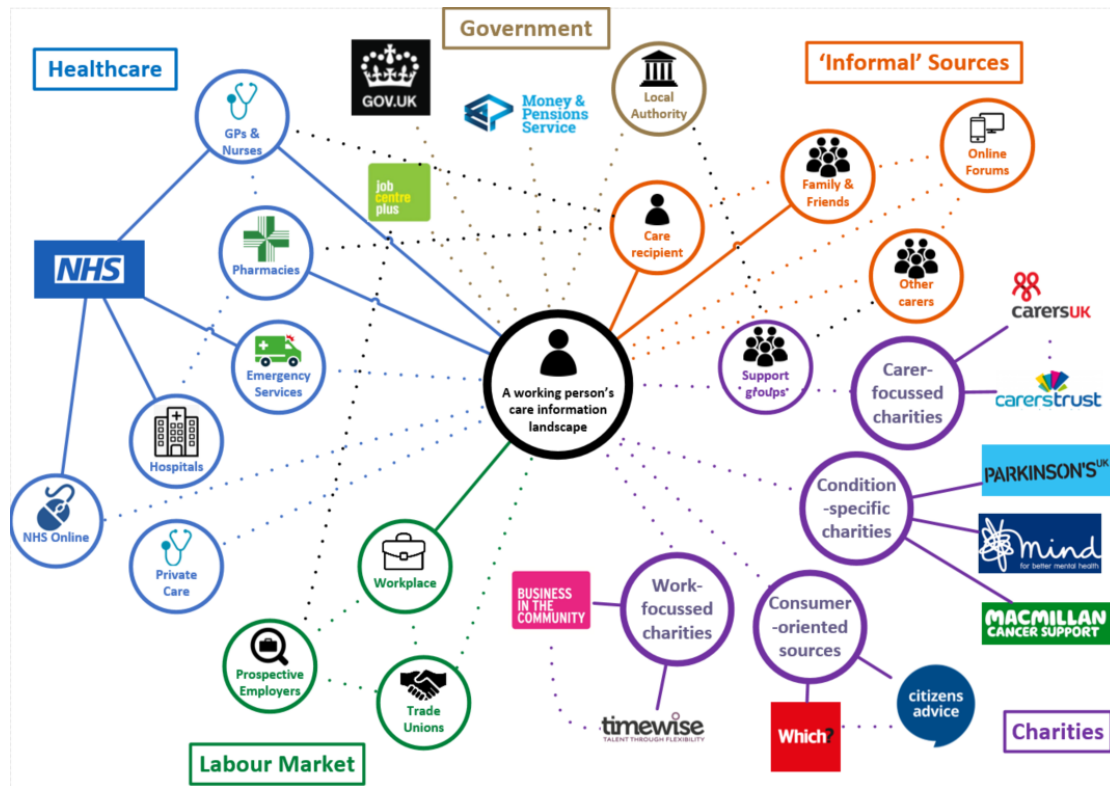
Are you looking after yourself?  
 Do you have all the help and support you need?  
 Is your health (or that of the person you care for) ??

**YES to all** Refer to Carers Services for Advice and Support  
 **\* NO to any** Refer to Carers Services for Information and Advice

**Call us: 03000 TBC TBC**

03 3000 TBC TBC

## Appendix 3: Output of cross-Government study on Working Carers





## DEVON AUDIT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

11 July 2024

Present:-

Councillor R Scott	Devon County Council
Councillor M Hartnell	Devon County Council
Councillor S Coles	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
Councillor C Slade	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
Councillor L Kennedy	Mid Devon District Council
Councillor L Knight	Mid Devon District Council
Councillor C Norman	North Devon Council
Councillor J Orange	North Devon Council
Councillor A Luggier	Plymouth City Council
Councillor J Goslin	Plymouth City Council
Councillor L Bonham	South Hams Borough Council
Councillor A Nix	South Hams Borough Council
Councillor M Brook	Torbay Council
Councillor N Penny	Torbay Council
Councillor P Hackett	Torridge District Council
Councillor J Gubb	Torridge District Council
Councillor G Dexter	West Devon Borough Council
Councillor R Oxborough	West Devon Borough Council

Apologies:-

Councillors Orange and Gubb

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

- \* 10      **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**
- \* 11      **Declarations of Interest**
- \* 12      **Minutes**
- \* 13      **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

# Agenda Item 15a

2

DEVON AUDIT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

11/07/24

- \* 14      **Devon Audit Partnership Budget Outturn 2023/24**
  
- \* 15      **Devon Audit Partnership Committee Annual Report 2023/24**
  
- \* 16      **Devon Audit Partnership Budget 2024/25**
  
- \* 17      **Strategy and Risk**
  
- \* 18      **Devon Audit Partnership Committee Governance**
  
- \* 19      **What's in a Name**
  
- \* 20      **15 Years of Devon Audit Partnership**
  
- \* 21      **Future Meetings**
  
- \* 22      **Future Meetings**

## **NOTES:**

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

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

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.25 am

# DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

## COUNCIL/CABINET FORWARD PLAN

In line with the public's general rights of access to information and the promotion of transparency in the way which decisions are taken by or on behalf of the Council, Devon County Council produces a Forward Plan of any Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet and any Framework Decisions to be made by the County Council. The Plan normally covers a period of a minimum of four months from the date of publication and is updated every month.

The County Council has defined key decisions as those which by reason of their strategic, political or financial significance or which will have a significant effect on communities in more than one division are to be made by the Cabinet or a Committee of the Cabinet. Framework Decisions are those decisions, which, in line with Article 4 of the Council's Constitution must be made by the County Council.

The Cabinet will, at every meeting, review its forthcoming business and determine which items are to be defined as key decisions and the date of the meeting at which every such decision is to be made, indicating what documents will be considered and where, in line with legislation, any item may exceptionally be considered in the absence of the press and public. The revised Plan will be published with the papers for the meeting. *Where possible the Council will attempt to keep to the dates shown in the Plan. It is possible that on occasion may need to be rescheduled.* Please ensure therefore that you refer to the most up to date Plan.

Click to see an [up to date version of the Forward Plan](#) on the Council's web site at any time.

Also see the website for [Copies of Agenda and Reports of the Cabinet or other Committees of the County Council](#) referred to in this Plan

## FORWARD PLAN

All items listed in this Forward Plan will be discussed in public at the relevant meeting, unless otherwise indicated for the reasons shown

Any person who wishes to make representations to the Council/Cabinet about (a) any of the matters proposed for consideration in respect of which a decision is to be made or (b) whether or not they are to be discussed in public or private, as outlined below, may do so in writing, before the designated Date for Decision shown, to The Democratic Services & Scrutiny Secretariat, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QD or by email to: [members.services@devon.gov.uk](mailto:members.services@devon.gov.uk)

PART A - KEY DECISIONS (To Be made by the Cabinet)					
Date of Decision	Matter for Decision	Consultees	Means of Consultation*	Documents to be considered in making decision	County Council Electoral Division(s) affected by matter
	<i>Regular / Annual Matters for Consideration</i>				
9 October 2024	Adult Social Care - Market Sustainability Plan and Sufficiency Assessment			Report of the Director of Integrated Adult Social Care outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions



9 October 2024	Transport Capital Programme 2024/25 and 2025/26: Update and Proposed Allocation	Public, District Councils, Stakeholders and Delivery Partners	Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 consultation, meetings, planning applications and local plan consultation	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
13 November 2024	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment - Annual Return			Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
12 December 2024	Target Budget and Service Targets for 2025/2026			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
14 February 2025	Education Travel Review: Approval to arrangements for subsequent academic year and School Admissions Policies 26/27	All relevant stakeholders		Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions

12 March 2025	Flood Risk Management Action Plan 2025/2026			Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
9 April 2025	County Road Highway Maintenance Capital Budget, Progress on 24/25 schemes, proposals for 25/26 and On-Street Parking Account 25/26			Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
23 May 2025	Revenue and Capital Outturn 2024/2025			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
<i>Specific Matters for Consideration - KEY</i>					
14 August 2024	Family Hubs (Part exempt)			Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
14 August 2024	Independent Education Provision Commissioning and Procurement Strategy			Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions

11 September 2024	Budget Monitoring - Month 4			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
11 September 2024	Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 4 2026 - 2040: Approval to go to Consultation	N/A at this stage	N/A at this stage	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
11 September 2024 Page 131	Bus Service Improvement Plan: Tranche 3	Local Member, Cabinet Member, Public, Stakeholders and Delivery Partners	Public engagement to be held prior to Cabinet meeting	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	Barnstaple South

<p>11 September 2024</p> <p>Page 132</p>	<p>Devon County Council's Low Carbon Supply Chain Strategy</p>	<p>Environmental Performance Board, Climate Change Standing Overview Group of the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Committee, Devon County Council suppliers</p>	<p>Meetings and surveys</p>	<p>Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport, Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.</p>	<p>All Divisions</p>
<p>11 September 2024</p>	<p>Part 2 - Tender and Contract Award of the Community Equipment Service (previously DILIS)</p>		<p>Doc's to be considered - Final Decision Paper; Service Specifications (Service and IT)</p>	<p>Report of the Director of Integrated Adult Social Care outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.</p>	<p>All Divisions</p>

Between 11 September 2024 and 9 October 2024	Public Open Space off Matford Lane			Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	
13 November 2024	Budget Monitoring - Month 6			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
13 November 2024	For approval - Future Delivery Model for the Highway Maintenance Service	a. Other Local Authorities on same procurement timeframe or recently procured contracts b. Supply Chain c. Elected Members	a. Discussions with lead officers b. Market engagement questionnaire through ProContract c. Spotlight Review and Scrutiny Committee	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions

<p>11 December 2024</p> <p>Page 134</p>	<p>Barnstaple Longbridge Phase 1 Scheme for approval to construct (subject to public consultation results)</p>	<p>Public, Councillors and Stakeholders</p>	<p>Previous North Devon HATOC approval to carry out public consultation. Full public consultation - online ('Have your say'), hard copies in libraries, press releases, social media adverts</p>	<p>Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.</p>	<p>Barnstaple North; Barnstaple South</p>
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11 December 2024	Tipton St John C of E Primary School – School Rebuilding Programme	Parents/care rs, staff, MP, County Councillors, District Councillors, Parish and Town Council, Union representatives, Equality Groups, all Schools, DfE, SOCA.	wide distribution of consultation document, school website, DCC Have Your Say website, consultation meeting	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	Otter Valley
12 January 2025	Budget Monitoring - Month 8			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions

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<b>PART B -FRAMEWORK DECISIONS</b> (Requiring approval of the County Council)					
<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Means of Consultation**</b>	<b>Documents to be considered in making decision</b>	<b>County Council Electoral Division(s) affected by matter</b>

14 August 2024	Annual Youth Justice Plan			Report of the Head of Service (Early Help and Partnerships) outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
5 September 2024					
11 September 2024	Terms of Reference for Team Devon Joint Committee			Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
5 <del>December</del> 2024					
11 <del>December</del> 2024	Framework Decision -Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 4 2026 - 2040: Approval of Plan	Public consultation, interested parties, all County Council Members	Online on Have your say   Help shape services across Devon, briefing sessions	Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
20 February 2025					
13 January 2025	Pay Policy Statement 2025/2026			Report of the Director of People and Culture outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
20 February 2025					



14 February 2025	Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/2026 - 2028/2029 and the Capital Programme for 2025/2026 - 2029/2030			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
20 February 2025					

**PART C - OTHER MATTERS**

(i.e. Neither Key Nor Framework Decisions)

Date of Decision	Matter for Decision	Consultees	Means of Consultation**	Documents to be considered in making decision	County Council Electoral Division(s) affected by matter
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<b>Regular / Annual Matters for Consideration</b>					
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Between 14 August 2024 and 8 May 2025	Standing Items, as necessary (Minutes, References from Committees, Notices of Motion and Registers of Delegated or Urgent Decisions) <i>[NB: Items relating to the letting or occupancy of individual holdings may contain information about, or which is likely to reveal the identity of, an applicant for a holding and about the financial and business affairs of the Council and any prospective or existing tenant that may need to be discussed in the absence of the press and public]</i>	To be considered at the Farms Estates Committee, including any advice of the Council's Agents South West Norse Ltd.		Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services, Director of Transformation and Business Services outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
Between 14 August 2024 and 8 May 2025					

Between 14 August 2024 and 8 May 2025	Standing Items, as necessary (Minutes, References from Committees, Notices of Motion and Registers of Delegated or Urgent Decisions)	As necessary		Report of the TBC outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
9 October 2024	People First Strategy - Action Plan - 12 Months Progress Report			Report of the Director of People and Culture outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
Page 138 3 November 2024	Corporate Performance Framework - Quarterly Report			Report of the Director of Performance and Partnerships outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
11 December 2024	Treasury Management Stewardship Mid Year Report			Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
9 July 2025	Public Health Annual Report 2024/2025			Report of the Director of Public Health and Communities outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions

14 February 2025	Corporate Performance Framework - Quarterly Report			Report of the Director of Performance and Partnerships outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
23 May 2025	Corporate Performance Framework - Annual Report			Report of the Director of Performance and Partnerships outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
9 July 2025	Treasury Management Stewardship Outturn Report	CIRS Scrutiny		Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value outlining all relevant considerations, information and material including any equality and / or impact assessments, as necessary.	All Divisions
Page 139	<i>Specific Matters for Consideration</i>				

