

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

Thursday 3 October 2019

**1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and medical supplies**

How certain is the Council, in the light of its Brexit coordination role, that supplies of insulin and other medicines will be maintained without disruption in Devon and the South West if there is a No Deal Brexit on 31 October? What work is going on to mitigate threats in this area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The Council works to the Devon, Cornwall and Isle of Scilly Local Resilience Forum which is the statutory partnership responsible for planning the risks and mitigations for a No Deal Brexit including medicines and medical supplies, food, fuel and agricultural supplies under the Government's Operation Yellowhammer. The Council reviews its own service contingency planning based on advice from the LRF and Government.

**2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and fuel supplies**

How certain is the Council, in the light of its Brexit coordination role, that fuel supplies for vehicles and homes will be maintained without disruption in Devon and the South West if there is a No Deal Brexit on 31 October? What work is going on to mitigate threats in this area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

Please see response to question 1.

**3. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and food supplies**

How certain is the Council, in the light of its Brexit coordination role, that food supplies, both in general and in particular for school dinners and food banks, will be maintained without disruption in Devon and the South West if there is a No Deal Brexit on 31 October? What work is going on to mitigate threats in this area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

Please see response to question 1.

**4. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and agricultural supplies**

How certain is the Council, in the light of its Brexit coordination role, that agricultural supplies, especially animal feed, and agricultural exports, especially meat, will be maintained without disruption in Devon and the South West if there is a No Deal Brexit on 31 October? What

consequences are envisaged from serious disruption to either, and what work is going on to mitigate threats in this area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

Please see response to question 1.

5. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and Devon and Cornwall Police

Is it still envisaged that if there is a No Deal Brexit on 31 October, police from Devon and Cornwall may be sent to maintain law and order in Northern Ireland, and if so, what effects are envisaged on policing in Devon and the South West, especially if there is civil unrest as a consequence of a No Deal Brexit? What work is going on to mitigate threats in this area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The planning for the management of policing and civil unrest is handled by the Devon, Cornwall and IoS Local Resilience Forum.

6. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit council funding

How much dedicated funding has the Council received for its work in this area and how much extra cost has been involved, and what have been the effects on Council activity?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The County Council has received £262,500 from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to help with Brexit preparedness to cover activity across the financial years of 2019/20 and 2020/21.

The additional activity to prepare our organisation for a No Deal Brexit has been contained within this budget. We have, however, made representations to Government that if we move into response and recovery, we would need to look at cost recovery models for any additional burdens the County incurs. In the event of an incident the Government can decide to apply a series of financial tools to provide additional monies to first responders such as the County Council.

7. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and Devon residents

What steps is the Council taking to reassure and assist EU citizens in Devon and the South West in the event of a No Deal Brexit on 31 October?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The County Council continues to put in place actions to support and assist EU citizens irrespective of whether there is a deal or a no deal outcome. This includes one to one support for our staff, offering an identity documentation verification point for all service users and promoting the EU Settlement Scheme to residents. EU, EEA and Swiss Citizens have up until December 2020 to apply. We are building on our work to look at how we can encourage all EU citizens in Devon to apply to the scheme and how we can support the Home Office in assisting hard to reach groups through our network.

The Government has established an EU Citizen Response Centre that can help customers with accessing the scheme. They have also funded a voluntary organisation in the South West, International Organisation for Migration, to provide local authorities with specialist legal advice and support to vulnerable EU Citizens such as those in our care system or identified as vulnerable by our front-line staff.

8. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and South West businesses

What is the Council's estimate of the preparedness of Devon and South West businesses, especially small and medium businesses, for a No Deal Brexit on 31 October?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

We have been working with the Local Resilience Forum, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Heart of the South West Joint Committee to raise the issues identified by businesses, especially micro, small and medium businesses, to Government.

As a result of representations from Devon County Council and other local authorities, Government has made £108 million available to the Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Hubs to improve the support available to businesses through a No Deal Brexit. We will continue to support the Growth Hub and develop our monitoring mechanisms for businesses.

9. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: No Deal Brexit and Government appeal

Will the Leader now make an urgent appeal to the Government, on behalf of the Council, that under no circumstances should the UK leave the EU without a deal on 31 October?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The County Council will continue to do all it can to support its communities and businesses irrespective of the outcome of Parliamentary process on this issue.

10. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR SHAW
Re: DSFRS consultation

Why did not the Cabinet follow the example of Somerset County Council and make a submission to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's 'Safer Together' consultation?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service undertook a public consultation from 3 July to 22 September on the proposed redesign of its services. The consultation included seven options for change, including closure of fire stations, removal and relocation of fire engines and changes to crewing arrangements. DSFRS invited responses via an online questionnaire, in writing and through a series of local engagement events. Following a request by the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee the DSFRS did add an additional engagement event at County Hall on the 4th September.

11. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR ASVACHIN
Re: Street Lights

I have a resident who first reported that their street (Hurst Avenue) had no streetlights on 19th July. This was apparently the responsibility of WPD who fixed the lights but then they promptly broke again. They had given a completion date of 18th September to fix them properly, but they are still not working now. After both myself and my constituent queried this, we were told the target completion date is now not until 17th October, which is some way from the 30 days specified within the rules set by OFGEM.

Does the Cabinet Member find this an acceptable length of time for residents to be without any street lighting? This is a particular issue as steps that run between Hurst Avenue & Rifford Road, which are normally lit by lamppost No. 4, are now dangerous for walking. I believe the lack of lighting has also contributed to a problem with littering in this location.

If the Cabinet Member does not find this acceptable, what can be done to rectify the situation in a timely manner and ensure it does not happen again?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

I would agree that the situation is unacceptable to us, but reiterate your observation that once our contractor has passed the matter to Western Power Distribution (WPD), it is beyond Devon County Council's immediate control. WPD have a protracted process for identifying the location of the fault before they can commit to repairing it. My officers have contacted a local manager at WPD to escalate the matter within their organisation and have been given an assurance that the urgency of this particular fault will be raised and undertaken in the very near future, possibly this week, depending on the weather.

**12. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT
Re: DCC Streetlamps**

Could the streetlamps owned by Devon County Council be adapted for use by 5G?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Street Lighting Columns could be adapted for delivering 5G, but some may need structural testing to confirm.

**13. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT
Re: 5G street furniture**

Are any streetlamps or other highways furniture owned by the council currently used by/for 5G?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Not that we are aware.

**14. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT
Re: rollout of 5G in Exeter**

Has Devon County Council said that from 2020 it will assist the roll-out of 5G in Exeter?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

No such commitment has been made by the County Council to the City Council to date. The County Council is not involved with mobile infrastructure planning applications, this is a District Council responsibility as part of the planning authority remit. Where street furniture is concerned, we are not aware of any Council assets that are currently hosting mobile network operators 5G technologies, but we would review any such request from mobile network operators in accordance with Government guidance and PHE guidance.

**15. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT
Re: Decision to permit 5G**

How will Devon County Council consider and decide whether it will permit 5G to use its lamp posts or other street furniture. (What will be the decision-making process? Will it go to cabinet for example, and scrutiny, or would it be a decision under delegated authority to officers?)

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Any policy decision concerning 5G will be taken by Members, based on suitable professional advice, for example from Public Health England. The technical suitability of street furniture to take 5G will be made by officers.

16. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT

Re: Independent 5G evidence

What independent evidence would the County Council rely on to determine if 5G was 'safe', in deciding whether to permit its infrastructure, such as lamp posts, to be used.

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

Public Health England is the statutory organisation responsible for providing local authorities including Devon County Council with advice on health risks.

17. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT

Re: tree felling and 5G

Is the County Council aware of any programme under its authority to fell trees in order to facilitate the introduction/roll out of 5G?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

The County Council is not aware of any programme under its authority to fell trees in order to facilitate the introduction/roll out of 5G.

18. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD

Re: Purple Tuesday Campaign

Can the Cabinet Member please inform Council how Devon County Council, and other key partners, will be supporting and promoting the Purple Tuesday Campaign day on 12th November, that seeks to improve the customer experience for disabled people?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR GILBERT

As a retail centred event, Devon County Council hasn't previously directly engaged in Purple Tuesday, with the focus traditionally having been upon individual employers and retail organisations.

This year however, the Council is seeking to play a more active role, with the launch of its new Disability Employment Hub service on 12th November. A collaboration between the Council / Learn Devon and Jobcentre Plus, the Hub seeks to build on the success of our 'Ready When You Are' campaign through supporting employers in the recruitment and retention of staff members with a disability or other long term health condition. This will include a new training offer for employers who are seeking to take on relevant staff, a broader support and information service aimed at supporting individuals and business to connect, and the pulling together of a group of exemplar disability confident employers who can work with their peers to share ideas and their experiences.

Building on the spirit of Purple Tuesday, the Council will seek to work with retailers and all other employers over the next few years to support individuals with a disability or other long term health condition into the workplace, helping businesses to not only recognise the value of the purple pound, but also the benefit that wider recruitment and talent development can have.

For more information, Debbie Stafford in our new Employment Hub team (debbie.stafford@devon.gov.uk) would be happy to help.

19. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: Child Vaccinations

Nationally child vaccination rates have fallen again. Can the Cabinet Member please update Council on the current trends and numbers within the Devon County Council area?
 Furthermore, can the Cabinet Member please inform Council what work is being done across departments, and with key partners, to inform, educate and promote the vital importance of vaccinations for children to protect their immediate and long term health?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

In April 2013, responsibility for screening and immunisation programmes passed from NHS Primary Care Trusts to Public Health England (PHE). PHE has an agreement with NHS England/NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) to plan, implement, commission and deliver these programmes including all childhood immunisation programmes.

The national target for coverage of childhood immunisations is 95%. Of the 13 routine childhood vaccination programmes, the national target was achieved for five programmes in Devon in 2017/18 (awaiting 2018/19 figures). Only two programmes in Devon (Rotavirus and pre-school booster) achieved less than 90%. Whilst coverage continues to be high, efforts are focused on reducing local variation between general practices and Devon's communities. Both nationally and locally, measles continues to be of concern following publication of Dr Andrew Wakefield's disgraced research and mis-information about vaccine safety shared on websites and via social media. As a result of low coverage (below the 95% target for herd immunity), there has been an increase in cases and outbreaks of measles, which is a highly infectious and serious illness. The MMR coverage rates for Devon are shown below in Table 1 and Figure 1, highlighting the recent trend.

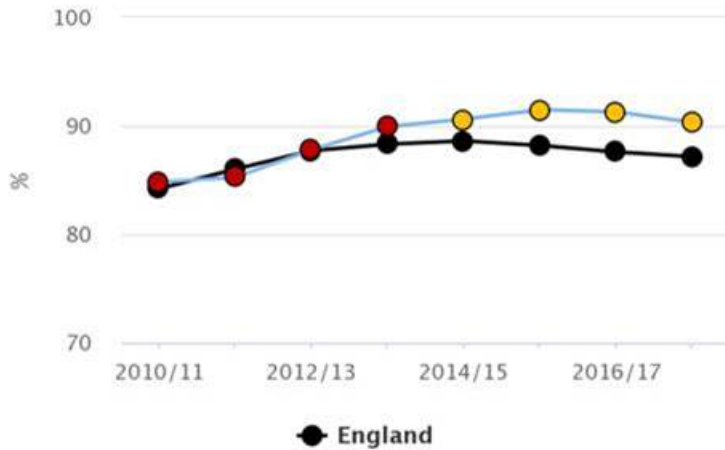
Table 1: Population coverage of MMR vaccine at 2 years and by 5 years of age

Benchmarking against goal: <90% 90% to 95% ≥95%

Period	Devon		South West region		England	
	1 dose MMR at 2 years	2 doses MMR by 5 years	1 dose MMR at 2 years	2 doses MMR by 5 years	1 dose MMR at 2 years	2 doses MMR by 5 years
2013/14	94.1%	89.9%	94.2%	90.4%	92.7%	88.3%
2014/15	93.6%	90.6%	93.7%	90.9%	92.3%	88.6%
2015/16	92.5%	91.5%	92.9%	90.6%	91.9%	88.2%
2016/17	93.4%	91.3%	93.1%	90.0%	91.6%	87.6%
2017/18	92.7%	90.3%	93.3%	90.9%	91.2%	87.2%

Source: Cover of Vaccination Evaluated Rapidly (COVER) data collected by Public Health England

Figure 1: Population coverage of two doses of MMR vaccine by 5 years of age (Devon compared to the England average)



This Council works closely with PHE and NHSE/I and through the Health Protection Committee to support local action to achieve and sustain $\geq 95\%$ coverage across the routine childhood immunisation programme. This includes participating in regional and local immunisation networks and groups, supporting national and local campaigns, and working in partnership with families, education settings, public health nursing, immunisation providers, primary care colleagues and other key stakeholders to promote the benefits of immunisation. For example, information has already gone out to education settings across Devon about preparing for winter, managing outbreaks and promoting uptake of flu vaccinations. This year, Devon County Council is supporting delivery of the local response to the UK's Measles and Rubella Elimination Strategy 2019 by working with Devon's locality immunisation group to explore personalised approaches to invitations and extended access, catch-up campaigns in primary care, and strengthening surveillance and response where cases of measles occur. The Council is also supporting targeted work with individual practices who are struggling to achieve good coverage of childhood immunisations.

**20. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE
Re: Pilton Bridge junction and Abbey Road**

At the last Council meeting Cllr Hughes replied to my question about road safety at the Pilton Bridge junction and in Abbey Road. In his reply he commented on the situation at Pilton Bridge but offered no comments about Abbey Rd. I drew attention to this in my supplementary question and he promised to write to me about this. Thus far I have not heard from him. When will I be favoured with a reply?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Apologies for the delay but you should have now received a written response to your concerns on Abbey Road.

**21. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE
Re: school crossing patrol, Yeo Valley School**

Recently I received an email from Colin Savage informing me that an officer decision had been taken to remove school crossing patrols from Yeo Valley School and from Ashleigh Rd School.

I certainly was not consulted about this before a decision was taken and as far as I can see no other consultations were carried out. I had thought the principle of consulting local members about service changes in their divisions was hammered home within DCC clearly not.

Therefore, will the Portfolio Holder cancel this officer decision to allow for full and proper consultation to take place?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Due to difficulties with recruitment and with the site not meeting the required criteria for a school crossing patrol site, consideration has been given to decommissioning the site. However, we are happy to suspend this following further review and consultation as requested by the Local Member.

22. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE

Re: school funding

Can the Portfolio Holder be able to comment on what the promised additional funding for school pupils by the Prime Minister means for the position of our pupils in the national league table of funding for school pupils?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

It is not possible to advise how Devon compares to the national position as yet as we have only received the headline detail of funding. The DfE have advised that the operational guidance for 2020-21 will be released in October and at that time we shall receive information of the indicative allocation being given to Devon and the rest of the country.

23. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE

Re: North Devon District Hospital maternity unit

Some while ago concerns were raised about issues at the maternity unit at North Devon District Hospital. At that time the Hospital management assured me that the outstanding issues would be resolved by the 31st March 2017. Subsequently it was learnt via the Health Scrutiny Committee that this had not been achieved.

The matter now seems to have slipped off the radar. Does this mean all the issues have been resolved or that there are outstanding matters still to be dealt with?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR LEADBETTER

There has been a significant amount of progress in NDHT's maternity services since the CQC inspection in 2017. This has included:

- Support from a joint director of midwifery post for North and East and joint clinical director with RD&E bringing expertise and enhanced leadership to the team;*
- The appointment of a head of midwifery for NDHT to implement new model of care;*
- A programme of work focused on improving the experience for mothers through providing continuity of care;*
- Three new consultant obstetricians and gynaecologists (shared posts with RD&E); and*
- A review of governance processes across the Trust and at maternity service level.*

This progress was recognised by the CQC in their last inspection report (published in September 2019), with the rating for how 'well-led' the service is going from requires improvement to good. The Trust recognise that there is more to do, however there is a high degree of confidence that the Trust is moving the services in the right direction.

24. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WHITTON

Re: Atlas Care

Following the enquiry into abuse at Atlas Care, can the Cabinet Member provide details of the number of Devon residents placed in residential care a) outside of Devon and b) outside of a reasonable travel distance from family and friends within the county. Can the Cabinet Member also detail measures in place to monitor out of area placements to ensure care meets the standards expected for Devon residents?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR LEADBETTER

597 people are placed outside the Devon County Council area:

- *318 of these are placed within geographical Devon i.e. Plymouth, Torbay;*
- *176 are placed in other neighbouring local authority areas i.e. Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset; and*
- *103 are placed further afield.*

The main reasons why people from Devon are placed outside of the Devon County Council area are:

- *They were living near the borders of Devon and the most appropriate and preferred available service close to their networks of social and family support is in a neighbouring local authority area.*
- *Their main family and support networks are outside of Devon in other parts of the country.*
- *They require highly specialist care and health services that are not available within Devon.*

Measures in place to monitor out of area placements to ensure care meets the standards expected for Devon residents:

- *We monitor people's care and support needs and how they are being met through Care and Support Reviews.*
- *We monitor the quality and safety status with the Care Quality Commission of providers for all homes where DCC people are placed including for those placed outside of Devon.*
- *Quality monitoring reports focus on the quality and safety status of out of county placements on a weekly basis.*
- *Operational teams are informed of services rated 'Inadequate' or 'Requires Improvement' where DCC has people placed in these services operational team take follow up action.*
- *Where we receive notifications from other local authorities that there are safeguarding or quality concerns in a service that Devon has people placed in the relevant operational teams will be informed and act.*
- *In these circumstances our Quality Assurance Team QAIT will also monitor the situation with the host local authority until it is satisfactorily concluded.*
- *We have a specialist placement team for Learning Disability Out Of County Placements which oversees and reviews the care of all adults with learning disabilities placed outside of Devon.*
- *We are investing and expanding our Contract Management Team alongside the existing Business Relations Officers to provide an enhanced monitoring role for any out of county care providers that we use.*
- *These arrangements have been reviewed and further developed through our learning from the Atlas Care case, as well as other local and national Safeguarding Adult Reviews.*

25. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR BIEDERMAN Re: Cedars Roundabout improvements

Given the recent Cabinet decision to not go ahead with the improvements, following the successful trial at Cedars Roundabout, and it being put on a future work programme. When will this happen, given the significant delays experienced by residents and significant sums of S106 money collected by the County Council?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

The current situation is that insufficient S106 funding has been received to deliver the Cedars Roundabout. S106 contributions have been agreed from multiple developments but currently only a small proportion has been received. The contributions are required to fund a mixture of road,

public transport, walking and cycling improvements in the town. When the necessary funding has been received, discussions will take place between the Local Members and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Development and Waste on the priorities for delivery.

As previously explained, we continue to look for opportunities to fund improved access and alleviate congestion in Barnstaple.