

# Annual Report Hatherleigh & Chagford Division April 2022

As I write this report, Covid 19 infection in Devon is very high. We are seeing unrepresented demand for Children's and Adult Services. This is putting tremendous pressure on services and staff are still in emergency response mode. Living with Covid is the way forward, it is not going away.

## **Proud to Care**

Across Devon, Adult Social Care has over 2000 vacancies and we are working hard to encourage carers to return and welcome new carers, through the Proud to Care Program. Proud to Care Devon is calling for people who are interested to complete a quick online form at [www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling](http://www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling). Applicants will get a call back and the offer of free one-to-one telephone support, providing careers advice and information about jobs and training in care and health.

Furthermore, thanks to the European Social Fund, there are free and flexible courses to support people to find the right role, or to take a step up, in health and social care. The courses are being offered by partners across Devon including Learn Devon, City College Plymouth, South Devon College, Exeter College and Petroc.

## **Vaccination**

The vaccination program has been very successful which has allowed us to live a more normal life.

How many of us work has changed for ever, with a combination of working from home and going to our place of employment.

We must also remember that over the last two years many residents have continued to work on the front line, in our Businesses, and Public Services as well as those in Social Care and the NHS.

## **Budget**

Putting together the County Council budget for 2022/23 has been the most difficult in living memory, more difficult than the period of austerity.

The DCC portion of the Council Tax will rise by 2.99%, including 1% additional funding for Adult Social Care. We have taken the unprecedented step of using £23 million from reserves to support the budget. That rainy day has arrived, and we need to support the most vulnerable children and adults as best we can with the resources available. The Budget for 2022/23 is £629.362 million.

Below is a table with the high-level detail of DCC net budget:

	2021/22 Adjusted Budget *	Inflation & Pressures	Savings & additional Income	2022/23 Budget	Net change	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Adult Care & Health	283,294	47,875	(18,241)	312,928	29,634	10.5%
Children's Services	159,036	28,787	(11,675)	176,148	17,112	10.8%
Community Health, Environment & Prosperity	40,280	3,809	(2,846)	41,243	963	2.4%
Corporate Services	40,937	3,612	(2,830)	41,719	782	1.9%
Highways, Infrastructure Development & Waste	57,124	3,349	(3,149)	57,324	200	0.4%
	<b>580,671</b>	<b>87,432</b>	<b>(38,741)</b>	<b>629,362</b>	<b>48,691</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

\* Adjusted for permanent virements

This is a challenging budget with high savings targets to achieve. We are grateful to the NHS in Devon for the one year only funding of £10 million to support Adult Social Care.

## Devolution Deal

Working closely with Devon Districts, Plymouth and Torbay, the partnership has put proposals to Government for a Devolution Deal. This is not a change to Local government structures in Devon. We are asking for powers to be able to work closer together in the eight areas below, to speed up the recovery from the pandemic.

### What do we want?

Partner authorities, working closely with stakeholders have identified eight initial areas to focus on in negotiations with Government:

- **Housing**, more affordable housing for key workers and local families and drive economic growth.
- **Skills, Employment and Education**, better support for young people and adults to learn and gain the skills that the economy needs.
- **Transport and Infrastructure**, tackling gaps in our public transport, and improving our broader transport, energy and digital infrastructure, supporting the area to thrive
- **Economic Development, Business Support and Innovation**, working with the business community to ensure that they have the support they need to drive economic growth.
- **Health and Care**, working together to better align national funding to support the health and care needs of Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay's residents.
- **Climate Change**, working together and aligning national funding and activity to accelerate our progress towards net zero

- **Regeneration and Place**, securing the funding and flexibilities we need to accelerate levelling up, and ensuring that every community can meet its potential.
- **Governance**, securing a governance approach for the Devolution Deal that builds on our existing strong approach to collaboration and partnership working.

## Devon Climate Emergency

All through the pandemic Devon County Council and partners have continued to work on the Devon Climate Emergency follow this link for the latest information: <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/response-to-devon-climate-assembly/> We have held a citizen's assembly and there is a consultation till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2022, for you to take part in.

## Highways

We have had a mild winter/spring so far. The best way to report any highway issues is online at this link: [www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/)

A new Neighbourhood Highways Officer has been appointed, Josh Scillitoe.

## Ukraine

The Council is stepping up its response, alongside key partners, to the **Homes for Ukraine** scheme. This went 'live' on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, enabling local **sponsors** to match with **guests** from Ukraine. This initial phase of the scheme is designed to supplement the **Ukraine Family Visa** for people in the UK to now support friends and colleagues. In addition, we have seen matches of guests and sponsors, often through third-party organisations supporting those fleeing the conflict. We are now seeing several hundred people in Devon being matched and, following permission to travel, we will start to see those families arrive in Devon.

At a later point, the government will extend the scheme in order for local charities, organisations and businesses to sponsor families directly, potentially in larger groups. This may be a further opportunity for local VCSE partners to engage and support.

The key initial role for Local Government, as outlined in Government guidance, is to develop processes to i) conduct a DBS check for all adults within the sponsor family; ii) assess the sponsor's accommodation; and iii) to assess any key safeguarding risks arising in each match. We are awaiting further guidance from Government around the specific nature of each assessment.

As you will appreciate this is a significant undertaking, across local councils in partnership, but we have already made good progress in devising routes to meet these requirements safely and at pace.

The situation is evolving rapidly, with updated guidance coming through from government daily. All Team Devon partners are working together to develop a rapid response.

In addition, we will have a range of other logistical challenges regarding the co-ordination of wellbeing and wrap-around support and funding for each guest (and sponsor) and are in active dialogue with local councils, VCSE partners, health, DWP and schools. We are also mindful of the significant risks and issues, including the potential future break up of arrangements between guests/sponsors, and with it the need to find emergency accommodation solutions. We are working through related contingencies.

You will be well aware of a huge groundswell of positive local support and goodwill and we will want to ensure that this can be utilised by guests, sponsors and partners in a safe way and where appropriate to give guests consistent opportunities to settle and feel welcome. In the coming days we will work with partners to map out an approach in which sponsors, guests, communities and organisations can access responses particularly to sign-post to key support and services.

The Council's website is being updated with the latest information and provides wider background and links. [Devon stands with Ukraine - Devon County Council](#)

## **Locality Budget**

I have supported many Locality Budget applications in the last year, not a lot of money, but it can make a difference having the support of the Local Member through the Locality Budget, when applying for other grants. Link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/councillors-nav/locality-budgets/>

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