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Councillor for the Hatherleigh & Chagford Division
Devon County Council

Hatherleigh & Chagford Division Annual Report 2019

The Budget

It has been challenging putting together the DCC budget for 2019/20. Since 2011 the County Council has had to make £250 Million in savings from its budget. The 2019/20 net budget has risen to £493,850 from 2018/19 £479,416. Budget savings have been identified of £13 million.

Children's Services have had a rise of 9.4% about £11.3 million and Adult services a rise of 2% about £11.75 million. There remain considerable pressures in Children's and Adult Services.

Highways has also had a small rise and this on top of the extra £18 million capital we received in 2018/19 for highways from central government.

Against the backdrop of changes to how Local Government is funded and the uncertainty of funding levels in the future we have reluctantly agreed a council tax rise of 3.9% which includes a 1% increase which will go to Adult care.

The Council continues to re-model its services around people and is starting to reduce the barriers that get in the way.

Cabinet Member

I continue to be Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Schools and have in the last year also become Deputy Leader of the County Council.

Child Social Care Services are continuing to improve, and we are investing extra money in Edge of Care Services and Crisis Care. The Children's Services budget is currently overspent, and we need to be forward thinking in how we can improve the services that can support

the whole family when a child is in crises, where possible.

Education funding is in crisis. We have seen 525 teachers and classroom assistants leave Devon schools in the last year. Schools are struggling to balance their budgets. Devon is working with schools to show government the pressures they are under. We are a Member of a group called F40. Over forty councils that are poorly funded for education are working together to campaign and put information and case studies to the Department of Education and H M Treasury. F40 has an education model for fair funding which we continually discuss with the Dfe. We were pleased to host Damian Hinds MP, the Secretary of State for Education in Devon, late last year and were able to have robust discussions about education funding. I find myself Chair of F40 and this gives Devon a central role in the F40's work.

Some of our services for children have been delivered by Virgin Care in Devon. This contract is coming to an end and on the 1st of April we are bringing Health Visitors and School Nurses in-house to the County Council. This has been a big decision for us and the aim is to get the system of services for children and families as seamless as possible.

Highways

It has been an average winter and we are still seeing potholes. Please help by reporting them, don't presume that someone else has. As I mentioned earlier we received an extra £18 million capital from government for highways in 2018/19. This is very welcome but will not help with the many years of low investment. All Divisions will see some investment from this funding.

I remain a Member of Dartmoor National Park Authority and chair the Development Management Committee. The local Plan is progressing well and following public consultation late last year the updated version will be out for consultation and go to the inspector later this year. The DNPA has suffered from funding pressures just like other local authorities. The Moor Than Meets The Eye project has been very successful, and we are looking at ways of continuing the best elements of the project going forward.

The four County Councillors for West Devon Borough Council area sit on the local Highways & Traffic Order Committee and the local County Committee. Challenging issues at times.

We continue to have the Locality Budget. Not large sums of money, but very helpful to kickstart local project.

Climate Change

Many residents ask me, what is the County Council doing about climate change and the environment. Below are some actions we are taking.

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – recommends 45% reduction by 2030 from 2010 levels, and ‘net zero’ by 2050.
- This will be an “unprecedented” and “rapid” change to the way we live:
 - How food is produced
 - How we travel
 - How we power our homes and businesses
 - What our countryside will look like
 - How often we use air travel
 - How many consumer items, like clothes and electronics, we buy
- The County Council’s emissions have reduced by 36% since 2012/13. Target set for 50% by 2030 – exceeding the IPCC recommendation by 5%. We have:
 - Installed LED lighting in buildings and streetlighting

- Switched streetlighting to part-night as appropriate
- Upgraded IT infrastructure
- Replaced boilers
- Replaced older fleet vehicles and started using electric vehicles
- Emissions pan Devon have reduced by 27% since 2005. Substantial effort in delivering energy efficiency and renewable energy is necessary to go further. We've applied, and are awaiting decisions, for funding to:
 - Install solar canopies on public car parks
 - Install a network of electric vehicle charging points at strategic locations
 - Help vulnerable households replace storage heaters with central heating
 - Install a solar farm on a redundant landfill site
- We have funding for projects that are:
 - Trialling innovative approaches from Holland to deep-retrofit homes and commercial buildings.
 - Testing the opportunity to produce and use energy produced locally, which is currently difficult due to the way the electricity grid works
 - Collaborating on energy initiatives with Plymouth, Exeter and Bristol councils
- All waste must be treated as a resource – recycling rate in Devon is 54%. In February the Brynsworthy transfer station opened enabling 100% of residual waste to be used to generate electricity. As a result, practically no waste in Devon goes to landfill, which limits methane production.
- Our Plastics Strategy aims to reduce the amount of single-use plastic consumed in Devon, which is a needless use of a material that is very energy intensive. The authority has already

removed about 100,000 single-use plastic items each year from its food outlets.

- Every sector of society and the economy will have to help achieve these carbon targets – no one organisation in Devon is responsible.
- Devon has 23 community energy organisations – the most of any county in England – many supported by schemes run by the County Council. They have already invested £14 million in renewable energy.
- We'll collaborate with partners to agree a carbon-neutral target for Devon and produce a plan to continue the work already done

Always here to help if I can.

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