

County & District Councillor's Monthly Report Cllr. Jacqi Hodgson - Date of Report: 6th March 2023
Devon County Councillor for Totnes & Dartington
(incl. Harberton, Harbertonford, Staverton, Landscope & part of Berry Pomeroy)
South Hams District Councillor for Dartington & Staverton

Devon County Council: key issues

The 2023/24 draft proposed annual budget was approved by Full Council (16.2.23): For 2023/24, for an average band D property, the Council Tax charge from DCC will be £1,634.13 (£1,556.46 in 2022/23). This is an increase of 4.99% or £77.67.

Children's services: As previously reported, DCC continues to struggle with delivering the quality of children's services expected of a County Council. The Ofsted report on the **River Dart Academy at Shinners Bridge**, issued in the last two weeks is attached. Very disappointingly, the Academy has been rated inadequate and the report makes for worrying reading.

DCC are hosting a programme of engagement sessions to hear the views of people, who access these services, their families and representatives. These consultations have been launched on the Council's '[Have Your Say](#)' pages where you can find further details on the proposals. Each consultation has been published alongside individual impact assessments.

Public consultation on proposals by DCC to make changes to a number of Integrated Adult Social Care services, now that the budget for 2023-24 has been agreed. There are five areas all of which are subject to public consultation, and three of which will also have a staff consultation element. The consultations went live on Wednesday 22 February.

Cllr James McInnis, cabinet member has said that "anyone who is impacted by the proposed changes who has eligible needs will continue to have their eligible needs met. We remain committed to delivering this statutory duty, working with people and their families as we do so to ensure choice and control and help people achieve the outcome that match their expectations and aspirations." The five areas DCC are proposing changes to are:

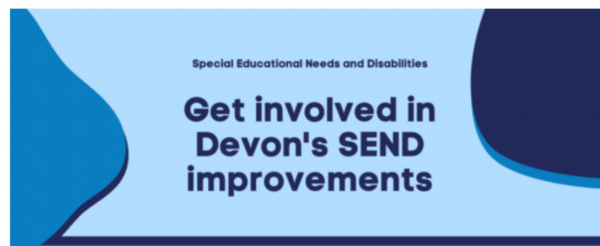
- **[Closure of the North Devon Link Service:](#)** We will work with everyone who is currently accessing the service to identify their eligible needs and find alternative support
- **[Learning Disability Respite Offer:](#)** We are proposing a reduction in the number of buildings from three to two
- **[Learning Disability Day Services:](#)** We are proposing a reduction in the number of buildings from nine to three. The remaining three to open for three days from five days a week.
- **[18+ Homeless Prevention Fund:](#)** Cessation of funding contributions to this non-statutory service
- **[Carers Support and Carer Offer:](#)** Reduction in contributions to Devon Carers contract

Reminder: Coronation Street Parties: DCC is inviting communities to apply for a **free street party licence** to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Charles and Her Majesty Camilla, The Queen Consort. If a community wants to hold a street party, the County Council is asking that they apply using their online basic street party application to close off your street available on their [website](#). The **deadline is 26th March**.

Local Matters:

South Hams HATOC (highways & Traffic Orders Committee) 03.02.23 items discussed included:
Pedestrian Crossing at the Lamb. The committee approved the proposal for the scheme that would provide a safer pedestrian link for the 2 ends of Leechwell Street to be investigated. This was with the proviso that it

Booking now open for SEND improvement family engagement sessions



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We are inviting all parent carers of children and young people with SEND to join us to discuss how we can improve SEND provision across the local area both now and in the future. You can now book a place at one of four sessions this March and April:

- [Sandy Park, Exeter: Tuesday 21 March, 10am to 12pm](#)
- [Willand Village Hall, Willand: Monday 27 March, 12pm to 2pm](#)
- [South Brent Old School Community Centre: Thursday 30 March, 10am to 12pm](#)
- [Bishops Nympton Parish Hall: Monday 24 April, 11am to 1pm](#)

These sessions are the first set in a series we will hold throughout the year, so if you cannot make one of these, please keep an eye out for future sessions. We will also be organising a virtual version for people who are unable to attend in person.

has local Town Council and community support and funding. The Chair of KHARA (Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents Association) addressed the meeting regarding local support for this pedestrian crossing. I outlined the importance of making this a safer pedestrian link:

- It was identified as an important Active Travel Route (during COVID) for enabling more people to walk into town instead of taking their car, and
- Any town centre calming will potentially push more through traffic onto the St. Katherine's Way route.
- The current road surface at this location was laid as cobbles when the Southern Development was built out ~2006-8, which indicated a 'Shared Space' link was considered appropriate at the time.

The next step will involve a Design for the scheme and a Safety Audit of the design and location. I have written to Gemma Bristow, recently designated Active Travel Officer at SHDC to ask when her Active Travel Fund could cover this item.

Pedestrian Crossing at the Lamb proposal - follow up: Concerns were raised at Totnes TC (06.02.23) regarding omissions in the DCC officer report provided for the SH HATOC meeting. The officer report had not included any mention, made reference to or considered further the issues regarding inclusivity, human rights, and disability legislation and assessments brought to South Hams HATOC last July ('22) in the form of a comprehensive written submission by Inclusive Totnes, the Chair of which had attended that meeting in person. Totnes Town Councillors discussed this matter and expressed their shared concerns regarding these important omissions in formulating a proposal and weighting for the need for this pedestrian crossing, further to which I have written to DCC officers raising these concerns and requesting an explanation.

Traffic Sensitive Routes review. The Committee noted that Devon County Council will be undertaking a full review of the traffic sensitive streets network across the county. Devon County Council has a legal duty (under the Traffic Management Act 2004/Section 59 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991) to Co-ordinate works activities on the road network. As part of this duty, a power is afforded to Devon County Council to enable the designation of certain streets as 'Traffic Sensitive'. When a street is designated 'Traffic Sensitive', timings of works can be better regulated to ensure the free flow of traffic so far as reasonably practicable through the council's Permit for Works Scheme. The following steps must be completed before a designation can be updated:

- Each street is crossed referenced against the statutory criteria.
- Proposals for revised designations are outlined.
- Communications are undertaken with affected stakeholders.
- A 1-month statutory consultation period is held.
- The updating of Devon's mapping data is completed.

Town and Parish Councils are stakeholders and will be notified of the formal consultation during April'23.

Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum. A new Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum has been established by Devon Bus Enhanced Partnership Board under the new Enhanced Partnership arrangements. The idea is to provide an opportunity to share information, receive feedback and discuss relevant issues amongst stakeholder representatives. I was approved as the representative from South Hams HATOC. Their first meeting took place in February. (FYI link to information about bus services in Devon ; <https://www.traveldevon.info/bus/bus-services-in-devon/>)

GRIT & Salt Bins: I have received some enquiries about DCC policy on grit spreading, grit bins and grit and salt bin refills. Here are links to various sources of information on this topic:

Link to Frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about grit bins on Devon County Council's website: [Gritting: frequently asked questions - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/faq-gritting)

Where are the grit bins? This is the link to map: [Map - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/map-grit). Residents (and others) can use this map to order a refill for any of the grit or salt bins already in place.

Although the FAQ link states that you can discuss a request for a new grit or salt bin with your County Councillor, in the past I have been refused by the officers on the basis that no additional bins (beyond those on the DCC map) are now being funded. However, I can make a request for a new one to be installed if I am approached, but given the extremely difficult financial situation at Devon County Council this year and next, I don't hold out much hope.

Generally DCC Highways Team advise that local people can request funding from their Local Councillor's Locality budget to purchase a grit bin and an initial fill, subsequent to which the local residents for that street / area then take on responsibility for maintenance and refills.

Scheduled Roadworks update: The following road works have been CANCELLED (due to unforeseen circumstances)

Moreleigh Road to A381, Harbertonford (due to have resurfacing & drainage works this month)

Emergency closure of Pennywell Lane, Landscope, due to hazardous erosion of the surface. DCC is working on a rapid repair response, so hopefully the lane will be re-opened in a couple of weeks.

South Hams District Council – key issues:

The following decisions were taken at the recent SHDC Full Council on 16th February:

RESOLVED

With South Hams' close connection with His Majesty's Armed Forces and, in particular, the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines, this Council formally adopts the Armed Forces Covenant. In so doing, the Council reaffirms its commitment to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community.

The Council recognises the contribution that Service Personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our Council, our community and to the country.

RESOLVED

That while recognising that planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise; and that changes to the development plan are subject to a statutory process, without fettering any discretion with regard to the determination of such matters, the Council:

1. Will be supportive of and seek out additional strategies and forms of development able to produce radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and strong uplifts in carbon sequestration, nature recovery and community and individual wellbeing;
2. Supports and progresses, where possible, all forms of development that are able to produce the changes that we need to fulfil our social and ecological needs;
3. So as to support members to be informed about and, where appropriate, engaged with community-led regenerative developments, and in line with existing communications and newsletters, officers will provide information to Members about regenerative development projects that it is already, or becomes, aware of. This information will include details on how the expected outcomes differ from those of conventional developers that can be provided from the regenerative development projects themselves; and
4. Through its social media channels and on its website, SHDC will publish an information piece about the benefits of regenerative development for the education of the public.

RESOLVED

SHDC will continue to ensure that food and drink provided at all meetings and events hosted by the Council will, whenever possible, be locally sourced and provided by a local caterer. The caterer to ensure that plant based options are always available.

Local Parish, Town and District Council Elections on May 4th 2023

Voter ID requirement: From 4 May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections. This will apply to:

- Local elections

- Police and Crime Commissioner elections
- UK parliamentary by-elections
- Recall petitions
- From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections.

If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate. Find out more about accepted forms of photo ID, how to apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate, and what to expect on polling day. <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id>
Anyone considering becoming a District Councillor? 'Becoming a Councillor' Information Evening that is scheduled to be held in the **Council Chamber** on **Thursday, 16 March** at **6.30pm**. Please **let Sarah Jasper** sarah.jasper@sedevon.gov.uk **know if you are intending to physically attend**. Feel free to let any potentially interested individuals know that it is taking place. Option to remotely attend this Event via MS Teams. Request ink to yourself and/or any other interested parties; <Darryl.White@swdevon.gov.uk>

This is the link for this year's Great British Spring Clean 2023

<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org>



South Devon Catchment Partnership quarterly meeting 2nd Feb. Received presentations and discussed:

- Progress DCC regarding the **Devon Local Nature Recovery strategy** (LNRS). A Devon Nature Recovery map has been produced. Devon based LNRS conference on June 13th
- **Friends of the River Dart** are making Bathing Water Applications (i.e. to protect key bathing water areas, including two wild swimming areas in the Dart at Dartington. They are also lobbying SWW to increase the water testing period (to include the winter months) and the number of testing metrics at 3 points along the R.Dart. They are planning a series of talks with experts.
- **Habitat projects** that could be funded by South West Water SWW are being sought: Contact jbeale@southwestwater.co.uk
- **Sustainable South Hams** are hosting a River Assembly on 18th March at Kingsbridge college
- **I requested Flood Risk modelling and Mapping to be carried out;** the Environment Agency are looking into this and will get back to me.

Totnes Climate & Ecological emergency working group: the next meeting will be held **6.30 – 8.00pm on March 21st 2023** in person at Totnes Guildhall and hybrid with Zoom access at this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81347699786> Meeting ID: 813 4769 9786. (**Totnes Climate Hub** events are posted on-line at this link: <https://totnesclimatehub.info/events/>)

Transition Streets – inviting new areas to participate:

“Transition Streets Intro Evening on Wed 22nd March (7-9pm) to recruit the next round of local streets for 2023. We worked with 13 groups locally in 2022, with another 2 just starting - and the results have been really positive and affirming - we'll be sharing full details soon.

This time we are widening our reach to offer the project to surrounding villages - e.g. Dartington, Staverton, Ashprington, Rattery, Berry Pomeroy etc...including up to a 10 mile journey from Totnes - as well as continuing to work with groups in the town itself. Link to the Event Info

[Transition Streets Intro Evening - more info & booking here](#)

Wed March 22nd, 7pm-9pm, Methodist Church, Fore Street, Totnes.”



Devon Climate Emergency News and Newsletter is at this link: <https://devonclimateemergency.org.uk>

Latest Devon Funding News Updates published by DCC Devon Economy, Enterprise and Skills Service.

[Community Ownership Fund](#)

The Community Ownership Fund is a government programme with £150m over 4 years to support community groups to take ownership of assets that are at risk of being lost to the community.

[Magic Little Grants 2023](#)

Small not-for-profit organisations will be able to apply for a grant of £500 when this year's Magic Little Grants open for applications on 1 March 2023. The grants are for organisations in their first year of operation

20's Plenty, Devon-Wide Campaign to put pressure on DCC for 20mph speed limits



20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

Ask your Parish or Town Council to vote for 20mph

20's Plenty for Us is asking Parish and Town Councils in **[your County]** to pass a motion to support the campaign for 20mph where people live, work and play. Each local council that does will help:

- 1) Achieve a 20mph speed limit on roads, with exceptions where 30mph is demonstrably safe, particularly for vulnerable road users.
- 2) Demonstrate to the Highways Authority the demand for 20mph county-wide, making it both cheaper and easier to implement across the county and achieving better driver compliance.

Speed limits are set by **[your County]**, as the Highway Authority, which also makes Traffic Regulation Orders to erect signs or change other road features like paint roundels or remove centre lines. Demonstrating widespread local community support is critical to securing the County's agreement to implement 20mph widely. Other counties, such as Lancashire and Sefton in England, have agreed 20mph for every settlement, as have counties throughout Wales. Scotland has promised to offer 20mph widely and places like Warrington have 20mph in all their satellite villages.

Motion

[Your Parish or Town council name]:

- Supports the *20's Plenty for [your County]* campaign;
- Calls on **[your County Council]** to implement 20mph in **[your place]**; and
- Will write to **[your County Council]** to request 20mph speed limits on streets throughout **[your county]** where people live, work, shop, play or learn, with 30mph as the exception on those roads, where full consideration of the needs of vulnerable road users allows a higher limit.