

## **Devon County Okehampton Rural update for January 2023**

What a great start to 2023 to hear of the fantastic news that Okehampton's levelling up bid was successful - £13.5m to deliver the WD Transport hub in Okehampton. The bid was put in by West Devon Borough council and they have collaborated with DCC, GWR and Network Rail to deliver the project.

The various bodies are working out all the logistics of the project and once we have any more information to share with timelines we will update you.

### **DCC Finance update**

This month's report is information regarding the financial budgets for 23/24 which council will be agreeing next month.

In previous years, Cabinet has agreed target budgets for services in December, based on financial planning forecasts constructed in advance of the provisional settlement. However, this year, there has been much more uncertainty in terms of central government funding to local government, combined with the most challenging budget round that the Authority has faced in recent decades.

It was therefore prudent to defer setting service budget targets until January, after the announcement of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. Meeting on 11th January, Cabinet approved revenue net budget targets as set out below.

The cost of living and geopolitical situation has created huge financial pressures nationally. As a consequence, the authority has faced unprecedented price and demand pressures in the current year and although significant savings have been found to offset this many have been one off measures.

The ongoing impact of this and other pressures have been included within the target budgets with investment of £51.5 million to cover inflation and national living wage being required and a further £63.8 million to cover demand pressures.

To enable the authority to set a balanced budget, savings, alternative funding and additional income of £49.1 million have been identified. Overall, there is additional funding of £66.2 million or 10.5% for service budgets next year.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24 3.1 On 19th December 2022, the Rt Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, released a written Ministerial statement to Parliament setting out the provisional local government finance settlement for 2023/24 financial year.

The 2023/24 local government finance settlement is for one year only and is in line with the Spending Review 2021 (SR21) and updated for the announcements made in the Autumn Statement on the 17 November 2022. Government has outlined national funding levels for 2024/25 but uncertainty remains at individual council level, as distribution mechanisms for 2024/25 are unconfirmed.

Spending Power – The government has increased the Authority’s overall Core Spending Power by 9.6% which provides some welcome additional flexibility to respond to national inflationary pressures and protect services that local people rely on as far as possible.

Council Tax – it is important to note that the provisional settlement confirms that the Core Spending Power includes the flexibility in setting Council Tax for 2023/24 by setting the referendum limit at 2.99% and that social care authorities may increase the adult social care precept by 2% - and therefore raise Council Tax by up to 4.99% overall without a referendum being required.

Business Rates – the business rates system and government compensation grant for underindexing will overall, increase in line with September CPI (which stood at 10.1%).

Set out in the table below.

	2022/23 Adjusted Base Budget *	Inflation and National Living Wage	Other Pressures	Savings, alternative funding and additional income	2023/24 Target Budget	Net change	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Integrated Adult Social Care	311,968	29,535	29,999	(32,200)	339,302	27,334	8.8%
Childrens and Young Peoples Futures	176,205	9,585	32,376	(9,563)	208,603	32,398	18.4%
Public Health, Communities & Prosperity	20,308	874	617	(404)	21,395	1,087	5.4%
Corporate Services	42,213	4,470	623	(2,458)	44,848	2,635	6.2%
Climate Change, Environment & Transport	79,117	7,037	214	(4,468)	81,900	2,783	3.5%
<b>Service budgets total</b>	<b>629,811</b>	<b>51,501</b>	<b>63,829</b>	<b>(49,093)</b>	<b>696,048</b>	<b>66,237</b>	<b>10.5%</b>

\*2022/23 Base budget adjusted for permanent virements

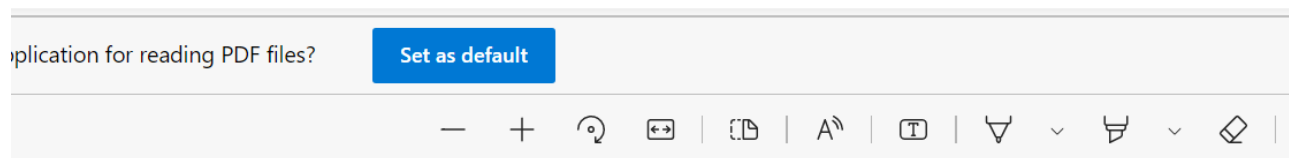
Social care grant – it was announced in the Autumn Statement that adult social care charging reforms that were due to be introduced from October 2023 will be postponed for 2 years, but that the funding that had been allocated by government would be repurposed and still allocated to councils. This repurposed funding has been added to the social care grant, and the former Independent Living Fund grant has also been consolidated within the social care grant for 2023/24.

Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund – this is a new grant through which nationally, local government has been allocated £400 million that was announced in the Autumn Statement as new funding to support hospital discharge. Also, existing funding for implementation of adult social care reforms has been repurposed and consolidated into this new grant.

Adult Social Care Discharge Fund – the Autumn Statement also announced £600 million of funding nationally, that would be split equally between councils and the NHS, to support hospital discharge. This new grant contains the Authorities’ allocation of the fund, which must be pooled into the Better Care Fund.

Service grant – this grant has been reduced by government due to the cancellation of the National Insurance increase and to transfer funding to Supporting Families programme.

Local Government funding reform – The Review of Relative Needs and Resources (generally referred to as the ‘Fair Funding Review’) and a reset of Business Rates growth will not be implemented in the next two years.



	<b>Provisional Settlement £000</b>
Revenue Support Grant	(669)
Business Rates - Central Government Top Up	(83,428)
Business Rates - Local Element*	(23,064)
<b>Core Funding</b>	<b>(107,161)</b>
	<b>Provisional Settlement £000</b>
New Homes bonus	(883)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(7,823)
Social Care Grant	(54,015)
Improved Better Care Fund	(29,127)
Adult social care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	(8,373)
Adult Social Care Discharge Fund	(4,084)
Services Grant	(3,987)
<b>Other grants</b>	<b>(108,292)</b>

The tables above set out the Authority’s Core Funding of £107.2 million and shows the other government grants that have been announced so far. Other existing grants are expected to be published soon and will be reported as part of the overall budget papers in February, if known by then

## REPORT FROM ADULT SERVICES

The budget is very challenging, we can’t get away from that, and that reflects the wider challenges and uncertainty impacting of everyone’s daily lives. What we can be certain of is that Integrated Adult Social Care will remain focused on meeting the needs of people in Devon who are in most need, and the budget for next year will be about working towards sustainability in the longer term, and that will take time.

Here are a few other things I wanted to highlight this month:

### **Engaging with our Community Health and Social Care Teams**

- Community Health and Social Care Teams have been working together for over 15 years, jointly managed and co-located across the coastal and market towns of Devon. I am going to be making arrangements to connect with our local Community Service Managers to arrange a visit to find out more about what's happening on the ground in their teams, gain insights into the pressures being faced and also the difference they make to people's lives.

### **Integrated Adult Social Care Annual Report 2022**

- I want to draw attention to our adult social care [Annual Report](#) that is now published. This comprehensive document sets out and describes our performance over the last year. It includes areas where we are improving and area where we are doing better than most locally, regionally and nationally, including overall satisfaction ratings of those using services and their own reported quality-of-life.
- The Annual Report also provides an honest assessment of our challenges and concerns, including capacity within the independent personal care market and also the number of people waiting for care assessments and reviews given our capacity challenges. The production of an annual report sets us up well for our preparations for CQC Assurance of Adult Social Care duties including the requirement to produce a self-assessment.

### **Devon Health and Wellbeing Board update**

- [The Integrated Care Strategy for One Devon](#) was discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board last week. There is clearly a lot of ambition within the strategy, and partners across Devon recognised this and also the need to ensure that the strategy is achievable. Partners continue to work together to develop the strategy and also to ensure that the wider health and wellbeing issues are taken forward through the 5 year Forward Plan for the Integrated Care System.

### **Mental health collaborative targeting six priorities**

- A partnership of mental health care providers is finalising spending plans which will focus on tackling six key priorities across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. Devon's Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neurodiversity (MHLDN) Provider Collaborative, formed in July 2022, brings providers together to more effectively meet the needs of people with mental illness, a learning disability and/or neurodiversity needs.
- National benchmarking suggests at least 20% growth in demand for specialist MHLDN services on pre-pandemic levels, as well as increased acuity across services, in particular children and young people. The Collaborative will create much closer working between NHS Devon, Devon Partnership NHS Trust (DPT),

Livewell Southwest (LSW) and the recently-created [Devon Mental Health Alliance](#) – a partnership between six Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations dedicated to providing support for people experiencing challenges with their mental health.

#### **Cost of living fund up and running**

- We have a cost of living fund of £300,000 given to [One Devon](#) from NHSE South West region. That fund is now live and is helping voluntary, community and social enterprise partners run projects tackling cost-of-living pressures. The fund will be administered by the VCSE sector for the sector using established networks to work with local groups to allocate grants of up to £10,000 for projects that directly support people who are experiencing difficulties due to the cost of living.
- A set of criteria and a light-touch application process has been developed and the fund will be open to all VCSE organisations delivering services that address the cost-of-living crisis. There will be an emphasis on projects that also help tackle other system priorities such as health inequalities, loneliness and isolation. The fund launched in January 2023 and will run until March 2023. Organisations interested in applying should contact [Darin Halifax](#) who will put them in touch their local lead VCSE partner.

#### **Recruitment and retention within the independent provider market**

- In the ten weeks from September to December 2022, the Workforce Development Recruitment and Retention Team in Integrated Adult Social Care, secured employment for 37 people within the independent provider market. If this rate of success can be maintained across the year it would mean between 180 and 200 people recruited which translates to between 8% and 10% of the current vacancy levels

#### **New films support people with a learning disability**

- People who have a learning disability and those who care for them are being reminded that it's not too late for them to have a [free flu vaccination and additional COVID-19 booster](#). Preventing COVID-19 and flu is particularly important for people with learning disabilities, who are much more vulnerable to both viruses.
- A series of three films, launched by NHS Devon and Devon County Council highlight the importance of having both the vaccinations and annual health checks. The films follow [Damon](#), who has a learning disability and is needle phobic as he has his vaccination and [Kylie](#), who also has a learning disability and is a carer for her mum.

Like always if you have anything specific you would like me to look into on behalf of you parish, then please do contact me at anytime by email or phone.

Best wishes

Lois Samuel