

Devon County Councillor report February / March 2021 [debo.sellis@devon.gov.uk](mailto:debo.sellis@devon.gov.uk)  
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**Budget:** The budget is predicated on a 4.99% rise in council tax. 3% for adult services and 1.99% for the running of the rest of the council.

This reluctant increase will provide just over £17million of additional funding. This represents an increase of £71.82 for a band D property or £1.38 per week making a band D property £1,511.27.

The Core Funding that the County Council will receive from Government for the 2021/22 is £103.2 million, which is the same as the current year. The Final Settlement from Government has also confirmed the additional £6.4 million Council Tax Support Grant, £14.8 million to support the costs of the ongoing Pandemic and the additional £3.1 million for Adults and Children's Social Care.

The headline figures for DCC's services are:

Adult Care and Health	£282.4 million an extra £21.7m or 8.3%
Children's Services	£158.3 million an increase of £11.4m or 7.8%

Communities, Public Health

Environment & Prosperity maintained at £39.9 million

Corporate Services £40.4 million an increase of £2.8 million or 7.5%

Highways, Infrastructure Developments and Waste set in January was £57.5 million a saving of £307,000 on the current year. This target budget took account of savings in energy costs from our invest to save projects to replace streetlights with new energy efficient LED lamps. The budget also includes an additional £600,000 for Highway maintenance & £100,000 for enhancements to street furniture. This will be made available to Towns and Parishes to bid for work for cyclic maintenance for street furniture in the public realm like painting ornate streetlights. DCC would expect these works to be match funded by those bidding for this money.

£600,000 has been added to the budget to help support people who are suffering extreme hardship & will be distributed to Devon's District Councils.

The budget also includes grants to voluntary organisations and extremal groups of almost £1.4 million.

Since austerity began DCC has seen a steady reduction in the number of directly employed staff, moving from 6,608 FTE on 2010/11 to a low of 3,809 in 2017/18.

More recently insourcing and service demands have seen a modest reversal of this trend with increases year on year. This will continue in 2021/22 with the budget including an additional 188 FTE number of staff.

There is no addition to DCC's reserves for next year. Due to the uncertainty of the CV19 Pandemic we don't know how long it will continue or what the longer-term impact on the economy, public health and demand for services will be.

The reserves are described by the County Treasurer as "adequate" £114.494 million. Which would be spent in about 4 days running DCC.

The County's long-term debt stands at £507.85 million. DCC hasn't borrowed funds since 2009. There is no opportunity to make further repayments until 2027 without incurring penal redemption premiums which is unwise. The average rate of interest paid on the loans is 5.11%.

**Health:** The Covid vaccination plan is working well as we are all aware, however I mention this as we thank all those professionals and volunteers who are working so well in our area. THANK YOU! Children's services are looking into securing more funding for children's mental health which we are all concerned about.

**Highways:** Many local estates and roads have been resurfaced or dressed and the local highway officer inspects the area regularly. The recent storms have created

some dreadful potholes. Some drains have been reported as blocked. Most drains were cleared last year and there is an on-going plan to use the gully sucker on many. I remind councillors that you can report issues on the DCC website [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk) There have been some issues with street lighting which have been reported to officers. I did have trouble using the website to report the issue & I asked officers to check the system. All councillors agreed to support the British Horse Society Dead Slow Campaign. [www.bhs.org.uk/deadslow](http://www.bhs.org.uk/deadslow) I have been happy to support the Tavistock local Gardeners who are going to plant wild (native) flowers around our town. This will be great! Something nice to look forward to.

**No 89 Tavistock Bus** As previously advised, unlike some local authorities, Devon County Council continues to maintain an extensive network of local bus services and utilises every available source of funding. In the case of the 89 bus, DCC has used funding from a succession of planning agreements, also as previously indicated, to ensure continuity of service the County Council is using its own funding for the 89 pending the intended use of funding from Embden Grange which will come on stream as soon as the site is at a stage where DCC can claim the amounts due. On present costings, the Embden Grange funding will be sufficient for just under four years from its commencement. I have asked if officers will meet TTC to explain the S106 details. A meeting is being organised by the Town Clerk.

**Education:**As we are all aware the CV19 lockdown has affected everyone. We note that children are being supported by their teachers and staff and we recognise the difficulties. There is an increase in children with SEND (Special Educational Needs) and EHCP (Educational Health Care Plans). We all thank those who support our children. DCC is aware that there is a back log and long waiting list. There are measures in place where there is improved shared multi-disciplinary working and improved IT (Information Technology). Children's Overview and Scrutiny is working with officers. There is much to improve.

**School placement and pupil numbers in Tavistock.** Officers have always worked within the legal framework surrounding securing developer contributions. The response to the latest application (3652/20/FUL Land to the South of Plymouth Road, Tavistock) provides a clear and detailed evidence base on why contributions cannot be legally sort. It also confirms that developer contributions have been secured for 163 primary school places despite spare capacity in the town schools as well as a school site. Given the apparent concerns from councillors, to reassure members, I have asked officers to attend a meeting @ TTC and thanks to the Town Clerk who is organising a meeting with DCC officers with responsibility for pupil places.

**Youth Service:**I thank Mayor Anne Johnson for her continued support for young people and to Cllr Ewings for what they do to support young people. We are constantly trying to secure funding for the Youth Café, and I have been happy to support what they are doing for our community. We cannot give up!

I am kept up to date with the Children's centre and I am glad that I am told they are doing well with services being better co-ordinated.

**Library:** I have not seen the work, but I am advised that the £2500 I was able to grant to the library has seen the completion of some interior work which has made the back office into 3 room. Our Library goes from strength to strength I am advised. I have seen the new outdoor signage which looks smart. WELL DONE!

Thanks to LiveWest and some locals who have created the Community Fridge. Thanks to all concerned and for the local businesses who are providing free food which would have gone to waste. As ever if I can help please contact me. Debo Sellis

WD59 - Tavistock

Cllr Debo Sellis

Brought forward	Budget 2020-21	Total Budget
0.09	10,000.00	10,000.09

Project name	Details	Requested	Paid
Tavistock Locals Help	Delivering food & medicine during COVID-19 outbreak		£1,000.00
DYS Space Ltd	for purchase of laptops and headphones for youth workers and SIM cards & phone credit for young people across Devon		£250.00
Led by Dreams	Mobile phones for support workers dealing with a rise in domestic violence		£500.00
<del>Live West project not going ahead</del>	3/4 additional parking spaces in Tamar Avenue & local green project		£0.00
Tavistock Rugby Football Club	Application to buy the land the rugby pitch is on		£200.00
Make a difference	Outreach to connect to people suffering mental health during the COVID-19 restrictions		£1,000.00
CF: Bright Futures	To support young adult carers		£200.00
Kingdon House Community Assoc	Improve disabled facilities		£1,000.00
Men in sheds	Refurbish shed for their use		£1,000.00
Cycling without Age	Tricycle for disadvantaged people		£1,000.00
Tavistock Community Sensory Gardening	Tavistock Lockdown Gardeniong competition		£50.00
CF: NHS Adventure Therapy	To improve the health of NHS & Police frontline workers		£200.00
Tavistock Library	Replace signage and purchase a laptop		£1,700.00
Libraries Unlimited	Refurbishment to mobile library		£400.00
Gulworthy Parish Council	Resurfacing parking area outside school, Parish Hall and Church	£1,500.00	£0.00
			£0.00

Requested	Paid	Monies remaining
1,500.00	8,500.00	0.09

