

## **Axminster Division Report February 2025**

As we move in to the Budget-setting month at Devon County Council, it has been just as difficult as in previous years to be able to produce a Budget to full council later this month, which balances and provides the best taxpayer value for council services.

The table below gives an idea on where the £784 million council payer money goes; where 79% alone goes to Adult and Children services, which greatly reduces the amount available for other things that matter to residents, such as roads and public transport. The DCC part of Council tax bill is proposed to rise by 4.99%, which includes 2% for social care, but is less than some other councils.

DCC is the least well-funded County Council in England and the next increase in what is termed 'core funding' for 2025/26 is 2.6%, around the current rate of inflation.

This is set against a period of uncertainty in terms of Local Government, which is likely to see the end of District Councils and the County Council in Devon, replaced by unitary authorities, after the Local Governance Review is completed and the Government decides on the way forward. A far more detailed breakdown of how the budget is compiled can be found at

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s50974/Budget%20report.pdf>

### **Mental Health Support Team**

Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD) is proud to announce that schools across all districts in Devon are now able to access support from the 'Mental Health Support Team' in Schools (MHST). This milestone achievement ensures that from 2025 nearly 70 per cent of children attending schools within Devon and Torbay can access early intervention that supports children and young people with their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

MHST's initiative represents a significant investment in the future of children and young people across Devon and Torbay, bringing specialised mental health support to the classroom. With this rollout, MHST is not only levelling the playing field for students across all backgrounds but is also providing educators with powerful tools to create an enriched and mindful learning environment.

Please note:

The Mental Health Support Team in Schools (MHST) is an NHS service commissioned to work with a number of schools across Devon and Torbay and in the community. MHST offer early intervention to help children and young people with their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

MHST offers individual and group Low-intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Li-CBT) evidence-based interventions. Which additionally work within schools to support their 'whole school approach' to mental health by offering:

- workshops and training to children, families and education staff
- consultations
- Mental Health Ambassador Programme
- Mental Health Audits and much more.

For more information on The Mental Health Support Team in Schools (MHST) or Children and Family Health Devon, visit the Children and Family Health Devon website at <https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/>

### **Free energy efficiency support for your home on offer**

Householders who want to make their homes more energy efficient but are unsure of what steps to take next can get free impartial advice from trusted local experts at <https://www.energysavingdevon.org.uk/>

The Energy Saving Devon Advice Service provides personalised consultations, helping residents to make informed decisions about improving energy efficiency in their homes.

This could include a free home visit from a local energy advisor to help you understand which energy saving measures are best suited to your home, advice on grants you may be eligible for as well as solutions to issues such as damp and mould, condensation or under heating.

Energy Saving Devon is a partnership of all the local authorities in Devon, local community energy organisations and other strategic partners, administered by Devon County Council.

The Energy Saving Devon team will be able to advise you on the suitability of your home for measures such as insulation, energy efficient windows, heating and hot water systems and renewable energy systems like solar panels.

Retrofitting these measures can make your home warmer and more comfortable as well as providing healthier living conditions, lower energy costs and lower carbon emissions.

To find out more, or to book your free home visit, contact your local community energy organisation by phone or WhatsApp on 0800 999 1439, or email [energysavingdevon@devon.gov.uk](mailto:energysavingdevon@devon.gov.uk)