

Agenda for the meeting of the Council Wednesday, 7th December, 2022, 6.00 pm

To: All elected Members of the Council; Honorary Aldermen

Venue: Ocean Suite, Ocean, Queens' Drive, Exmouth EX8 2AY

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Issued Monday, 28 November 2022



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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNHQruge3LVl4hcgRnbwBw>

Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-public-meetings/#article-content>

Dear Sir/Madam

Meeting of the Council of the District of East Devon on Wednesday, 7th December, 2022 at 6.00 pm

You are called upon to attend the above meeting to be held at the Ocean Suite, Ocean, Queens Drive, EX8 2AY. It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered at the meeting and resolution or resolutions passed as the Council considers expedient.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Howl", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chief Executive

- 1 **Public speaking**
Information on [public speaking](#) is available online
- 2 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 7 - 23)

3 **Apologies**

4 **Declarations of interest**

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

5 **Matters of urgency**

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 **Announcements from the Chair and Leader**

7 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way, but if confidential minutes from Cabinet and/or the Council's Committees are being discussed, Officers may recommend consideration in the private part of the meeting.

8 **To answer questions asked by Members of the Council pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 9.2 and 9.5 (Pages 24 - 25)**

9 **Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports (Pages 26 - 27)**

- a) Minutes of Cabinet held on 2 November 2022 Minute numbers 79 - 98 (Pages 28 - 36)
- b) Minutes of Cabinet held on 30 November 2022. Minute numbers 99 - 110 (Pages 37 - 42)
- c) Minutes of Cabinet held on 5 December 2022. Minute numbers 111 - 115 (Pages 43 - 46)
- d) Minutes of Scrutiny Committee Briefing meeting held on 2 November 2022. Minute numbers 39 - 41 (Pages 47 - 50)
- e) Minutes of Scrutiny Committee Briefing meeting held on 3 November 2022. Minute numbers 42 - 44 (Pages 51 - 53)
- f) Minutes of Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3 November 2022. Minute numbers 45 - 53 (Pages 54 - 57)
- g) Minutes of Housing Review Board meeting held on 11 October. Minute numbers 18 - 32 (Pages 58 - 65)

- h) Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 7 October 2022. Minute numbers 43 - 49 (Pages 66 - 75)
- i) Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 1 November 2022. Minute numbers 50 - 59 (Pages 76 - 94)
- j) Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 25 October 2022. Minute numbers 53 - 61 (Pages 95 - 98)
- k) Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 15 November 2022. Minute numbers 62 - 63 (Pages 99 - 100)
- l) Minutes of Licensing and Enforcement Committee meeting held on 26 October 2022. Minute numbers 10 - 16 (Pages 101 - 104)
- m) Minutes of Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022. Minute numbers 14 - 26 (Pages 105 - 107)
- n) Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 28 November 2022. Minute numbers 48 - 57 (Pages 108 - 111)

10 **Report: Changes to governance arrangements** (Pages 112 - 113)

11 **Motion: Local government needs adequate immediate and longer-term government funding**

According to a recent comment by the Local Government Association (LGA) *“Local government is the fabric of our country. It provides more than 800 services and positively impacts the daily life of every person in every community. However, the future financial sustainability of councils is on a cliff-edge, and the scale of the pressures cannot be met by reducing costs, making efficiencies or raising council tax.*

Many now face the prospect of having to make severe cutbacks to local services. This would not only damage our communities but massively undermine Government ambitions to boost economic growth, level up the country and help residents through the cost-of-living crisis. Inflation is not going to come down overnight. Reserves can only be spent once. A local service cannot be cut twice”.

In October James Jamieson, Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association said *“Councils are now having to try to find ways to meet these costs this year and limit the damage to the local services that so many people rely upon.*

In the past decade, councils have done more than their fair share of the heavy lifting when it came to putting public finances on a more sustainable footing, having faced a £15 billion real terms reduction to core government funding between 2010 and 2020.

The Government needs to ensure councils have the funding to meet ongoing pressures and protect the services that will be vital to achieve its ambitions for growth and to produce a more balanced economy, level up communities and help

residents through this cost-of-living crisis”.

All of this provides a backdrop to the current financial difficulties facing local authorities as the LGA has calculated that rising inflation, National Living Wage and energy costs have left councils facing £2.4 billion in extra cost pressures this year (2022/23), with estimated funding gaps of £3.4 billion in 2023/24 and £4.5 billion the year after.

Indeed, the LGA has warned against further cuts to local government funding, in addition to their cumulative loss of £15 billion of central government during the decade from 2010. Underfunding local services also has a knock-on effect on the wider economy, businesses and residents, and other public services.

To reinforce the difficult financial challenges facing local authorities on 1 November Conservative Leader of Devon County Council, John Hart said *"I have been a county councillor for more than 30 years and leader of Devon County Council for nearly 14 years during which time we have been through the austerity years and the pandemic, but our financial situation has never been so bleak as it is now."*

Indeed, this council has lost, £51.8 million in government financial support since 2010. This has held back service development, investment in key infrastructure, including building our own homes and led to local residents and businesses having to pay more as a result.

However, with adequate funding, councils can protect and invest in local services, deliver for our communities, support economic growth and level up everywhere. This is why the LGA is calling for a long-term government plan to manage the crisis in councils' finances and has warned against cutting their funding. We have to, by law, balance our books each year, which means when costs rise, we must find equivalent savings in our budget elsewhere.

To save the local services we all rely on, councils need adequate funding, in line with inflation and the demand for services, and certainty to plan their budgets to minimise service disruption. Which is why the LGA is running its Save Local Services campaign <http://www.local.gov.uk/save-local-services>.

This Council resolves to –

- (i) Endorse James Jamieson and John Hart's quoted concerns about the poor local government funding of the past decade and the need for the government to now adequately fund this sector;
- (ii) Register its support for the LGA's Save Local Services campaign;
- (iii) Publicly promote implications of the poor local government funding of the past decade and the need for the government to now adequately fund this sector;
- (iv) Work with other Devon local authorities, preferably through Team Devon, to lobby for adequate local government funding both in the immediate and longer term;
- (v) To invite our local MPs to support this council's local government funding

concerns and to work with it and other Devon local authorities in lobbying for adequate local government funding both in the immediate and longer term.

Proposed by: Cllr Jack Rowland

Seconded by: Cllr John Loudoun

Supported by: Cllr Cathy Gardner, Cllr Nick Hookway, Cllr Denise Bickley, Cllr Eileen Wragg, Cllr Geoff Jung, Cllr Marianne Rixson, Cllr Tony Woodward, Cllr Jo Whibley, Cllr Vicky Johns and Cllr Paul Hayward

12 **Motion: Voter identification**

The Government has recently instructed East Devon District Council, and other local authorities, that people attending polling stations to vote in the District and Parish/Town Council elections scheduled for May 2023 must provide photographic identification before being permitted to vote. This requirement would place a considerable burden on Returning Officers, Presiding Officers, and polling staff who would have to adjudicate on identification issues. Staff at polling stations would inevitably have to deal with angry would-be voters turned away from the polling stations.

In addition, the cost to this, and other councils, of administering elections under the new rules would increase substantially. This is extremely regrettable at a time when council budgets are under unprecedented pressure, threatening the council ability to provide essential services for residents.

This Council considers that the introduction of photographic ID for elections is completely unnecessary, as voter fraud is extremely rare, and would have the effect of suppressing voter participation in democratic processes.

The Council therefore agrees;

- 1 To ask the Local Government Association (LGA) and the District Councils Network (DCN) to raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities expressing its great concern about the proposed use of photographic identification for May 2023 elections.
- 2 In particular the Council stresses its concern about the procedures to be introduced, which will have a disproportionately detrimental impact on younger voters for whom the procedures will be more challenging than for older voters. The Council asks the LGA and the DCN to press the Government to actively seek to encourage young people to participate in elections, **not** to place obstacles in the way of young would-be voters.
- 3 Asks the LGA and the DCN to press the Secretary of State not to introduce voter photographic identification for the scheduled 2023 elections. The Council also asks the LGA and the DCN to urge the Secretary of State to engage in debate with the LGA and DCN about the need for voter photographic identification, and should it be concluded that it is necessary that a more acceptable system be considered.
4. The Council agrees to send a copy of its message to the LGA and the DCN to its three MPs.

Proposed by: Cllr Jess Bailey

Seconded by: Cllr Jo Whibley

Supported by Cllrs: Paul Millar, Geoff Pratt, Jake Bonetta, Tony Woodward, Vicky Johns, Megan Armstrong, Olly Davey, Paul Hayward, Sarah Jackson, Paul Arnott

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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