

Careful Choices – Survey DRAFT KS V6

Like all councils, East Devon District Council faces significant budgetary challenges and going forward will need to make ‘careful choices’ as it works towards bridging a £2.7 million funding gap over the next 4 years.

Budgets have decreased due to cuts in central government funding. Over the last decade, the council has lost 60p in every £1 of government funding.

These reductions coupled with rising demands on our services, continue to impact everything we do and we no longer receive general funding from central government to support the services we provide.

Careful choices is about achieving a shared understanding of the services which the council has to provide even though the Government is no longer funding them. It is also about protecting as best we can other services which people care most about. The council wants to make these choices by engaging with its communities before final decisions are made.

We’ve already taken significant steps to deal with the reductions in our finances; compared with 10 years ago, we’ve reduced the cost of running our quality services by a total of £4.4m. We are also making progress towards bridging the funding gap by:

- actively assessing commercial investment opportunities and ways we can maximise the way we use our assets
- generating more income through services such as green waste collections
- making organisational changes to ensure we are ‘fit for purpose’
- going digital to deliver services as cost effectively as possible.

We're confident that together we can make the careful choices needed to balance our budgets for the future.

What priority do you think the council should give to the following in your community?

(please select one option per row)

- Supporting the development of good housing and helping provide decent homes for everyone.
- Keeping people healthy and safe.
- Supporting the development of good businesses and the ability of people to access decent, well paid and local jobs.
- Making our facilities and services easier to access.
- Maintaining the quality of East Devon's environment and countryside. Providing and supporting sports and leisure opportunities, including parks and play areas, nature reserves, arts and culture.
- Providing and looking after physical outdoor facilities and services such as beach huts, public toilets, car parks and cemeteries.
- Regenerating towns.
- Helping communities help themselves by providing skills, signposting and advice.
- Supporting vulnerable people.
- Taking action on climate change.
- Collecting fees and charges that are owed to us, including council tax and business rates.
- Local democracy, giving people a say and letting you know what we're doing.

Options for question above:

- Essential
- High Priority
- Medium priority
- Low priority
- Not a priority
- Unsure / don't know

Services the council has to provide

These are the services that as a District Council we provide as a legal requirement. For each service, please select based on your experience whether you think spending on these services should be protected as much as possible, or reduced. (please select one option per row)

- Collecting recycling, refuse and garden waste from your home.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/>
- Making sure everyone has a good, suitable, safe home and providing advice to landlords. Including providing around 4,200 council homes and helping the tenants that live in them. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/housing-and-homelessness/>
- Assessing and controlling environmental factors that could affect people's health such as pollution, pests, noise nuisance, dogs and food hygiene.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-wellbeing/>

- Collecting money in the form of Business Rates from businesses including shops, offices, pubs, warehouses and factories. Sending central government half of this money and distributing the rest to Devon County Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and ourselves. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/business-rates>
- Processing licences and permits for people, events and buildings needing them including pubs, clubs, betting offices, taxis, street vendors and charity collections <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/licensing/>
- Produce plans and policies to control how and where new developments such as housing and workspaces are built in East Devon. Assess planning applications against these policies and approve good development. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/>
- Collecting council tax from households, then distributing it to town and parish councils, Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and ourselves. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-tax/>
- Making sure, where possible, all new and current buildings are safe, energy efficient and accessible to people with disabilities. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/building-control/>
- Making sure everyone eligible is registered to vote in national and local elections, and carrying out elections. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/elections-and-registering-to-vote/>
- Assessing people for, and distributing Council Tax Benefits and Housing Benefits. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/>
- Protecting and managing trees. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/trees/>
- Having Councillors and council meetings. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/>
- Working with some businesses to make sure employees and others using those businesses are safe: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-wellbeing/health-and-safety/>
- Supporting work to reduce flooding and provide coastal protection in East Devon. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/flooding/>
- Looking after our five beaches to make sure people are safe using our beaches and four areas of seashore cliffs in East Devon. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/beaches-harbours-and-coastal-information/>

‘Other services’

These are services which the council provides but is not legally required to do so. For each service, please select based on your experience whether you think spending should be protected as much as possible, or reduced. (please select one option per row)

- Making our towns better places by working with and investing in them.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/regeneration-projects/>
- Providing and managing the Manor Pavilion Theatre in Sidmouth and the Thelma Hulbert Gallery in Honiton.
- Supporting LED Leisure Centres and facilities in East Devon, including the Exmouth Pavilion Theatre.
- Providing and looking after our 10 nature reserves, providing countryside events throughout East Devon. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/countryside/>
- Cleaning the streets. Cleaning and looking after public places (Devon County Council is responsible for roads and highways, not us).
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/environmental-maintenance/>
- Supporting East Devon’s businesses to continue and to grow, including providing the East Devon Business Centre for small start-up businesses.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/business-and-investment/>
- Providing and looking after our public gardens, parks, play areas, sports facilities such as skate parks, and our other open spaces such as allotments.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/parks-gardens-and-recreation/>
- Providing and managing our off street public car parks, including parking permits for those car parks. <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/parking/> (Car parking on streets is Devon County Council’s responsibility, not ours)
- Providing and looking after our 26 public toilet blocks.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/environmental-maintenance/public-toilets/>
- Providing and looking after our cemeteries at Seaton, Sidmouth and Sidbury.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/cemeteries/> Regenerating towns.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/regeneration-projects/>
- Providing support services for elderly, disabled and vulnerable people through our Homesafeguard alarm service.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/housing-and-homelessness/housing-support-for-elderly-disabled-and-vulnerable-residents/home-safeguard-alarm-services/>
- Making best use of the assets that matter to our residents and businesses such as our cafes and concessions, commercial workshops, beach huts and chalets.
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/property-services/>

Options for question above:

- Protect service as much as possible
- Reduce service spending a little
- Reduce service spending a lot
- Don’t know / unsure

To what extent do you get involved in arranging activities/supporting your local community?

- Very involved
- Fairly involved
- Not very involved
- Not at all
- Don't know / unsure

Do you think communities could play a bigger role in the running of local services?

- Yes – please move onto question ??
- No
- Don't know / unsure – please move onto question ??

If you don't feel that communities could play a bigger role in running local services, please tell us why:

Free text box

What could we do to help your community support itself?

- Help to find funding to get you started
- Provide training
- Give out information and advice to where you can find help and support
- Other – please type in box below

Would you be prepared to be more involved in helping your local community support itself?

- Yes, I already do and would like to do more
- Yes, I'd like to get involved
- No, I'm already involved and don't think I could do more
- No
- Don't know / unsure

Which of the following do you currently do, or would consider doing in the future?

- Volunteer or help to run a local service. For example helping our countryside team look after nature reserves, organising litter picking or helping look after a park.
- Reduce waste, recycle or reuse.
- Use our services online, rather than by letter or phone

Options:

- Currently do
- Would consider
- Don't currently do, and wouldn't want to do

Do you have any other ideas for how you and your community could do more to support itself?

Free text box

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way we have dealt with the significant reduction in the funding we have to run our services over the last two years?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know / unsure

The following questions will help us compare results – for example, if people of different ages have different needs or experiences. All results will be grouped together for reporting so no individual is identifiable.

Are you:

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Which age group do you fall into:

- Under 29
- 30 to 49
- 50 to 59
- 60 and over

What's the nearest village or town to where you live?

- Exmouth
- Axminster
- Seaton
- Budleigh Salterton
- Cranbrook
- Ottery St Mary
- Honiton
- Colyton
- Broadclyst
- Woodbury
- Beer
- Sidmouth
- Feniton
- Whimble
- East Budleigh
- Dunkeswell
- Newton Poppleford
- West Hill
- Other – please type in below

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes
- No