

Report February 2026

Fostering: A fostering recruitment event takes place on Friday 20 March at the Future Skills Centre, Exeter 10am - 12pm or 1pm - 3pm. are desperately needed across the county so please share this widely.



Hearts and Homes -
print poster 2026.pdf

Something to share: The Priority Services Register (PSR) helps utility companies, including energy suppliers, electricity, gas and water networks to look after customers who have extra communication, access or safety needs e.g. who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills, and also in the unlikely event of a power cut, gas or water supply interruption. You can [find out if you're eligible to join the Priority Services Register](#), by checking online.

Highways: Devon is continuing to recover from the severe weather - widespread flooding (some parts of the County receiving 200% of the average rainfall amount), major travel disruption and significant damage to Devon's road network; repeated cycles of freezing temperatures followed by thaws. The volume of defects is unprecedented. DCC has significantly increased resources, including:

- Additional repair crews - about 50 repair teams are now working across Devon
- Extra inspectors carrying out assessments
- Out of hours working, wherever possible, to keep up with demand

It is welcome news that the Government has pledged to eliminate 90% of DCC's historic SEND deficits (close to £200m) – a sum set to reach £6.6bn nationally by the end of March.

The government also announced its final local government funding settlement (w/c 10/Feb), which continues a long-term shift away from national funding to place increasing reliance on Council Tax to pay for essential local services.

On 24 Feb the Liberal Democrat administration at Devon County Council presented its 2026/27 budget, prioritising children, young people and families, while also addressing

long-standing issues with the county's roads. The balanced budget was passed unanimously.

Major highlights:

Children's services:

- Largest funding increase in years: a 7.7% rise for children's services.
- Additional £600,000 to speed up SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) assessments.
- £300,000 more for foster care support

Highways investment:

- Nearly £20 million in new investment for road repairs in the coming year.
- £15 million capital injection for resurfacing and maintenance in 2026/27, with £10 million more each following year.
- £4 million allocated for drainage and vegetation management.

Libraries:

- No library closures and reversal of £650k proposed savings; plus, a £1 million transformation fund to secure their future as community hubs.

Support for families:

- Reversal of planned increases to post-16 and concessionary transport fees.
- £500,000 new investment in bus travel for young people and foster carers.
- £106,000 to strengthen domestic abuse services.

Local empowerment:

- Locality Budget Scheme increased to £10,000 per councillor, totalling £600,000 for local priorities.

Financial responsibility:

- The budget is balanced, with nearly £39 million in savings achieved through operational transformation rather than frontline cuts.
- Forms part of a five-year financial plan, demonstrating long-term fiscal responsibility.

Council Tax:

- A 4.99% increase, including a 2% Adult Social Care precept, in line with government expectations that were baked into their funding settlement. Proposed amendments to the budget by an Independent councillor to increase council tax to 10% were voted down.