

Report by County Councillor Christine Channon – 18th January 2022

- Traffic Orders will be discussed at the East Devon HATOC meeting on 14th February. However, the Officer in charge has already removed the request for a speed reduction to 30mph on the road between Brick Cross and Sleaf Cottage on the grounds that this is a rural road.
- The Council Tax is likely to rise by 3%, i.e., 2% general + 1% extra for Social Care
- However, there is a huge overspend in the Adult's Social Care budget (£8.58m) and an even greater overspend in the Children's budget (£23.9m). There has been an increase in referrals for children's social care, but the greatest increase is in the Special Education Needs (SEND) budget. Currently Devon CC is overspent to the tune of £88.098m on SEND. A similar situation is true for other Local Authorities. Fortunately DCC has managed to build up substantial reserves in recent years by prudent housekeeping, but we will be using £127.633m of these reserves this year to balance our books. So that money will not be available next year!
- Like other Local Authorities DCC has applied to the DoE for a large grant to cover some of the debt incurred by SEND
- The COVID pandemic has meant that we have been able to make savings with officers working from home and virtual meetings, but this has been at the cost of efficiency