

Report by Jim Knight Devon County Councillor

There has been a small increase in Council Tax for the 2014/2015 year due to the severe cutbacks by the government; Councillors' have not raised their allowances saving over £100,000 per annum; The County debt has been reduced by another £20m. In addition we have restructured our services to reduce waste and bureaucracy,

Campaign for better funding for our schools

I have continued the campaign to remove the anomaly between the school funding each child is allocated in Devon compared to some areas of the country, particularly the north of England and the London boroughs. A successful outcome was made with the government raising the amount our pupils receive by around £180 still below other areas by around £220.

Provide better care for elderly people

Most elderly vulnerable and disabled people welcome the opportunity to live an independent life, as opposed to an institutionalised setting. Consequently, we have given vulnerable elderly people a personalised care budget tailored to their needs. Due to the enormous government savings we have to make £110 million over the next 3 years we are consulting on 2 areas day centres and care homes these two areas are not self-supporting and could be commissioned to the private sector.

Support local businesses to protect local jobs

Employment in Devon has risen recently in spite of the bad weather we have sustained at the beginning of the year. Broadband allocation in our rural areas is moving very slowly and we will still have areas that will not receive a fast broadband connection. There is a financial scheme in place to help businesses that were affected by the floods.

Create new jobs by attracting new businesses and providing training

The new Science Park and Sky Park in the west end of East Devon are now well underway and attracting new businesses. East Devon is looking to move its offices there this I believe will put a tremendous burden on people who have to travel to the EDDC offices as public transport will be a no goer from our areas to the Skypark.

Improve our roads and pavements

In spite of suffering even more bad weather we have invested extra money on improving roads and pavements. Our local service teams have been relentless in filling the hundreds of potholes that have appeared after every heavy downfall of rain and many of our pavements have been treated with bitumen slurry to make them safer for pedestrians. You will see white marking on several areas within the Seaton Coastal area which will be patched and surface dressed.

Support and promote tourism in Devon

We still want to encourage walking, cycling, sailing holidays and farm stays but due to a legal hic up with land owners we are still awaiting the stop-line way to reach Colyford. The new multi-use path Cowsley Way is still a problem with it ending with no footpath to Berry Hill which I am still working on. I was successful in getting a new coastal footpath in place along New Beer Road that emerges out at Seaton Hole where the

coastal path can be resumed. We again had a serious cliff fall at both ends of Beer Road which meant that the fencing had to be moved further down and at the other end Seaton Hole was fenced off due to a serious cliff fall which has now cut off the passageway down to the beach.

Reduce waste to landfill

Devon has slipped to second place with its recycling performance over the last year although it has opened a new centre at the Boywed Sidmouth.

Support Parishes and Towns through local funding

I have supported all my parishes equally with any funding made available to me, TAP (Town and Parish) funds which have proved very popular and will continue again this year. I also work with the six parishes by allocating them each funding from this year's locality budget to be administered by the town and parish councils within the Seaton Coastal area.

I have supported the parishes with a variety of things which I have managed good outcomes for, and hope those that are still outstanding will come to an end with good results all round.

Other areas that the county council are going out to consultation with are libraries, youth centres and meal on wheels, Seaton library will remain and will become a hub for other services

Axmouth footpath outside village hall to church entrance will be slightly altered to take in the caravan movement on and off the site.

Branscombe and Uplyme flooding programme moving forward slowly.

I have been re-elected to the same committees I was on last year.

I was also elected last Thursday vice chairman of Devon county council.