

Devon County has issued a press release indicating there will be a double digit increase in cash for children and more money for adult care, climate change and transport in the target budget for 2024/25.

New figures presented at Cabinet show a proposed 10.4% increase in the budget for children's services with a 6% rise in adult services and 4.7% extra for climate change, environment and transport. The 9.8% increase in the national living wage announced by the Government last year mean an additional £25.7 million has had to be added to the target budget to cover the cost, councillors heard.

Reductions in other departmental spending means an overall rise of 6.3% in our budget for next year with a total spend of over £743 million.

The full council are set to debate the budget in February.

The director of finance, Angie Sinclair, said: "Local authorities across the country continue to face financial challenges due to high inflation and interest rates as well as demands on local service provision."

Devon is braced for a cold snap which will see a sharp fall in temperatures in the coming days.

Although conditions are forecast to be drier and brighter, it's expected to be much colder and our highways teams are preparing for a prolonged cold spell.

Overnight road surface temperatures are set to fall slightly below zero in some places and will be close to freezing in others, increasing the risk of icy patches.

Gritters will be out across the county treating several precautionary salting routes. Other routes will also be monitored in case more treatments are needed.

At the moment, temperatures are set to be lower than average and the UK Health Security Agency has issued a cold weather alert covering the whole of England.

Please remember the following advice:

- Allow additional time for your journey. Never drive through floodwater or swollen flowing water, you don't know how deep it is. Find an alternative route;
- Never assume a road has been salted. Remember that showers or rain will wash salt off roads leaving them prone to ice, and in extreme cold even salting will not stop ice from forming;
- Reduce your speed and leave more space between you and the vehicle in front;
- Drive with care and according to the conditions;
- Try to maintain indoor temperatures to at least 18C, particularly if you are not mobile, have long-term illness or are 65 or over.;
- Listen to local radio for updates on current weather conditions and ensure you are stocked with food and medications.

For more information and travel advice visit Devon County's winter travel webpages or for updates follow @DevonAlert on Twitter (X) and Facebook.

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