

District Councillor Julie Hunt

Urgent / Important Information:

New planning committee legislative changes that come into effect on 31 October 2026

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) have produced a presentation that can be used to brief councillors on the planning committee reforms. It is aimed at both ward councillors and planning committee members.

The presentation covers the committee reforms, how they impact local authorities and what authorities will need to think about. How the reforms impact an authority is very dependent on how the council presently manages the applications that go to committee i.e.:

- how the applications that presently go to the committee compare to what would go from when the regulations are in force on 31st October;
- how authorities might want to "triage" Schedule 2 applications into or out of the "gateway test" compared to what they already do;
- how the "significance" test at "gateway" would be judged, and even the number of committee members and committees a council presently has.

The PowerPoint presentation can be sent to councillors or delivered by officers: [Member Briefing Materials | Local Government Association](#)

If Planning Committee Members have any questions for the pre-Planning Committee session in October, then please email Hannah Pettifer, Tracey Blackmore and Carol Norman in advance of the meeting so that they can be addressed in the session prior to the Committee on 7 October 2026.

Coming up at NDC's next Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.....

The Chief Executive is presenting a report regarding support and initiatives within rural areas.

View the agenda, and report at: [Agenda for Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee on Thursday, 8th October, 2026, 6.15](#)

The following press releases have been issued:

North Devon Council statement on local government reorganisation in Devon

Deputy Leader of North Devon Council, Councillor Peter Leaver, has issued a statement on the UK government's decision to review local government reorganisation in Devon.

Councillor Peter Leaver, Deputy Leader of North Devon Council, said: "We are awaiting further detail from the government following the announcement of a review of plans for local government reorganisation (LGR).

"While it is clear the decision to pause the process is likely to affect the current timetable, we need to understand the full implications of the government's review before commenting further on what this means in practice.

"LGR is a landmark process that will affect all of Devon's residents. We ultimately welcome the decision to pause and review the path we are on and make sure this significant change to local government will be for the benefit of everyone.

"A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken by councils across Devon, both before and since the government's decision to create four new unitary authorities. We will continue to work constructively with our partners while considering the implications of today's announcement and any further guidance from government.

"I would like to thank our officers who have been involved in this process to date. They have devoted a considerable amount of their time and effort to this project in addition to their day-to-day roles. I sincerely hope all the work that has been carried out will not simply be wasted, and we end up with a local government structure that benefits everyone.

"In the meantime, we remain focused on delivering services for our residents, businesses and communities as normal."

Elections scheduled for May 2027 will go ahead with existing district council boundaries.