Cllr Horner – Kingskerswell Parish Article 13th October 2025

Business as Usual?

As your Reform UK Councillor, I was elected to challenge the "business as usual" mindset at County Hall. Despite Reform being the second-largest party, we hold no Cabinet seats and only one minor committee leadership role. While some positive relationships have formed, the promised collaboration from the ruling party has yet to materialise.

Our group is steadily learning the inner workings - and shortcomings - of County Hall. You'll soon see motions submitted to drive real change. This won't be easy and will face resistance, but we are determined.

At the Full Council meeting on 4th September, an unprofessional debate on a Liberal Democrat motion led to a walkout by the Reform UK Group. Formal complaints are being submitted, including breaches of the code of conduct. Concerns also extend to Council Officers for failing to manage the situation appropriately.

My Committee Work

I now serve on several committees:

- Investment & Pension Fund Committee
- Teignbridge Highways & Traffic Orders Committee
- Children's Scrutiny Committee
- Board of Trustees for Devon Educational Trust

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Alongside three Reform colleagues, I've been nominated to represent our group on LGR. While we believe this is a risky move during national uncertainty, we will engage constructively and bring common-sense thinking to the table. I would like to get the Parish Councils views on LGR as I understand that neither Parish or Town Councils will be consulted on the changes which will lead to increase workloads for both.

Locality Budget

I was pleased to be able to support Kerswella Care with a donation of £700 from my locality budget last month and have just confirmed to the Chairman of Kingskerswell Community & Leisure Centre that I will be more than happy to provide £1,000 for the replacement of carpets at the centre.

Recent Council Decisions

- *20's Plenty Campaign*: Parishes can apply for 20mph zones, but must fund them independently.

- *School Phone Ban*: Passed unanimously—phones banned during school hours.
- *Food Waste Redistribution*: Reform motion passed to mandate redistribution to food banks.
- *Strategic Plan 2025–2029*: Reform abstained due to lack of consultation.
- *Hate Speech Awareness Week*: Reform opposed this politicised initiative; formal complaints were submitted.

Council Finances

Devon County Council's debt now stands at approx. £517.8m—£621 per resident—with a forecast overspend of £10.1m and a SEND deficit of £53m. Reform will continue to push for essential services, value for money, and priorities that reflect what truly matters to you.