

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 19 DECEMBER 2019**

**Question to Helen Fisher  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**By Kyle Robinson**

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**Question**

Given the severe flooding experienced by residents of Staffordshire in 2019, what plan of action has been put in place by Staffordshire County Council to avoid repeat occurrences and what further funding has been committed to drain clearance and repairs?

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**Reply**

I hope you are aware that this autumn has been England's fifth wettest Autumn since records began, with Staffordshire experiencing 170% higher rainfall than the 1981-2010 average.

Rural areas in particular have suffered the effects of saturated ground conditions, resulting in significant amounts of water running-off from surrounding land, discharging onto roads and silting up the highway drainage systems.

However, flooding is only one effect of poor weather conditions and a balance has to be struck with other operational matters, like fallen trees that also present a significant risk to highway users.

Our highway teams have worked tirelessly, around the clock and often in very poor weather conditions, responding to incidents to help keep us all safe and on the move as quickly as possible.

The information we collect about localised areas of flooding is routinely captured and used to inform our future cyclical gully cleansing programmes and to also help establish priorities for improvements to highway drainage systems.

Next year's highway capital investment programme is currently being developed for Cabinet approval in April. This will include a 4<sup>th</sup> year of £5m/year continued extra investment from the County Council, since 2017/18. A proportion of this money will again be targeted towards highway drainage improvements.

However, it's also important to bear in mind that many cases of highway flooding is actually a direct symptom of local Water Authority carrier systems and/or watercourses simply being unable to accommodate the high volume of rain fall and run-off. Information on these locations is also shared with the local Water Companies and/or Environment Agency for their own respective improvement programmes.

