

Date: 11 October 2023

County Council - Thursday 12th October 2023

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have recently forwarded to you a copy of the agenda for the next meeting of the County Council.

I am now able to enclose a copy of the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was circulated.

8. **Questions**

(Pages 1 - 10)

Questions to be asked by Members of the County Council of the Leader of the Council, a Cabinet Member, or a Chairman of a Committee. The question will be answered by the relevant Member and the Member asking the question may then ask a follow up question which will also be answered

John Tradewell
Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services



Question No. 1

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023

**Question to Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

By Councillor Yates

Question

As all Members are very much aware, roads around schools are plagued by excessive numbers of cars parked both illegally and inconsiderately around schools, creating an inconvenience to residents and a direct danger to the safety of our children. Given that current traffic management around schools is obviously not working, what new and innovative initiatives are being considered for introduction to resolve this issue?

Reply

Staffordshire County Council works with a range of partners to keep the roads around schools safe. Finding sustainable solutions to school parking challenges will require continued collaboration between School Travel Advisors, the School Crossing Patrol team, Road Safety Education Team and the Civil Enforcement Teams. Ongoing engagement with schools is also essential, promoting active travel, educating pupils and asking parents to park considerately and safely. Current behaviour change initiatives include parking buddies, anti-idling and Pupil Parking Toolkits for schools.

Where serious issues and complaints are received from schools, higher enforcement may be required, with police presence over a short period, supported by communications to parents. The County Council has trialled enforcement by use of a camera car in East Staffordshire, which had mixed success and still requires Civil Enforcement Officer support to issue the Penalty Charge Notices (PCN).

The County Council can implement zero-minute observations for parking restrictions, where considered appropriate, such as where people are driving off during the observation period, however there is currently no progression of the PCN as the enforcement code (01) is not supported under the Traffic Management Act, so there is no follow-up when the driver does not pay.

We are also exploring bids to national funding pots to trial different ways of working, as well as learning from best practice across the Country. Bids

to Active Travel England that include School Streets are welcomed and have the potential to secure funding. They are being delivered by other local authorities, supported by Sustrans and Living Streets, and rely on the temporary removal of moving traffic outside school gates at drop-off and pick-up times, giving the street environment back to pedestrians for this short period within the day. As yet, we haven't delivered any School Streets in Staffordshire, but we are keen to discuss the idea with Councillors and identify schools where it could work.

Finally, I would like to highlight that the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is considering Civil Parking Enforcement at a future meeting which will provide a good opportunity to explore options for managing the areas around schools.

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023**Question to Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport****By Councillor Pardesi**

Question

Now that the HS2 line from Birmingham to Manchester has been cancelled, how soon can the residents of Staffordshire expect to see the promised significant road upgrades with the money that will have been saved?

Reply

The government have not yet released any details for any of the proposed schemes, including the proportion of funding that will be allocated to Staffordshire. Officers are seeking further information urgently and I will make this available as soon as possible.

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023**Question to Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport****By Councillor Charlotte Atkins**

Question

What assessment has the County Council made of the PM's local transport improvement plan Network North, its impact on Staffordshire and its timescale for delivery?

Reply

An initial assessment has been undertaken and the following schemes are included in the Network North plan for Staffordshire:

- Paras. 23 and 24: the construction of the Handsacre link.
- Para. 36: safeguarding will be lifted in weeks on Phase 2a. Land acquisition will be halted with immediate effect. Property no longer required for HS2 will be sold and a programme is being developed to do this.
- Para. 40 f: J15, M6 strategic road project is mentioned. No further details are provided.
- Para. 40 k: A50/500 corridor improvements Stoke to Derby.
- Para. 62: £2.2b investment in rail, improvements to Kidsgrove and Longport stations.
- Para. 63: a new station at Meir.
- Para. 66: £2.2b additional funds for pothole repairs in Midlands. No breakdown for Staffordshire has been provided.

A dialogue will be opened with Government to discuss provision of high speed services to Stafford and Stoke and the making good of existing damage. Further ways in which Network North could support local transport infrastructure and economic development in Staffordshire will also be discussed (the details of this are not yet finalised).

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023**Question to Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport****By Councillor Hussain**

Question

We are deeply saddened to report that in the past few weeks, we have witnessed two tragic fatalities resulting from road accidents. Unfortunately, both incidents occurred in the same area, which falls under my division. Can the cabinet member assure me that he will implement the necessary steps and strategies to prevent this from happening in Burton on Trent? Will he provide me with information about his initiatives?

Reply

Our condolences go out to the family, friends and communities affected by the tragic incidents that recently took place in Burton.

At this point in time, we have not received detailed information concerning the circumstances of the collisions; however, the County Council will work with the Police and the Coroner to understand the factors involved and take appropriate action to reduce the number of tragic incidents on our roads.

Staffordshire County Council takes road safety extremely seriously and, as the Local Highway Authority, the Council has a statutory responsibility to study road collisions in its area and promote measures and actions to improve safety.

All reported injury incidents are continually reviewed by a dedicated team to identify those sites and routes where actions can be taken to reduce the number of people hurt on our roads. We also work with wider agencies within the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership to ensure the Council's limited resources are being used in the most effective way in response to the most pressing road safety needs. Our annual programmes of interventions include road safety engineering, education in schools, training activities, and the control of traffic where appropriate. Most importantly, we liaise with our local communities to understand their individual aspirations and work collaboratively to tackle any road safety issues.

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023**Question to Councillor Julia Jessel
Cabinet Member for Health and Care****By Councillor Afsar**

Question

General practitioners (GPs) are essential to the functioning of the National Health Service (NHS). They serve as expert risk managers and proficient communicators. If general practise is not successful, then the NHS as a whole will also fail. Recently, I have been contacted by numerous residents in Burton on Trent who are registered for various surgeries. They have expressed their frustration regarding the lack of available appointments when they need to see their doctors. As a partner of NHS Could the county council please investigate this matter as an urgent health concern for our residents and work towards finding a mutually agreeable and sustainable solution?

Reply

I am sorry to hear about the difficulties that residents in Burton on Trent are experiencing in getting a GP appointment. We know that access to GPs is a high priority for the NHS nationally with the 'Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care' published last month. I will raise the issues in Burton on Trent with the Integrated Care Board who are responsible for GP services. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee may also wish to consider investigating these concerns further.
