

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 11 FEBRUARY 2021

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

By Cllr Brookes

Question

Over the years, very sadly Staffordshire, like other roads and highway networks throughout our Country, has seen many unfortunate fatalities. What policies do we have for permanent memorials on, or adjacent to our public highway network to enable the families of those victims or for others for whatever reason to erect permanent memorials either on or adjacent to our Highways and what policies do we have for pedestrianised highways or Town Centre Market places regarding memorial benches and monuments etc, and have we or do we have a policy to close highways and what would happen to this land?

Reply

The County Council's programme of road safety engineering, education and training activities has contributed to Staffordshire having one of the safest highway networks in the country. By working closely with organisations through the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, a considered and evidence led approach is adopted that ensures best use of resources as we continue to put measures in place to further reduce the number of tragic incidents on our roads.

The County Council recognises that the placing of a tribute at the roadside can be an important part of the grieving process for some individuals following the loss of a loved one; however, we have a responsibility to ensure that no items placed within the highway serve as a distraction to passing motorists and consideration must be given to how the tribute would affect drivers using the road.

Paying tribute at a memorial placed within the highway setting can also present a road safety risk and, therefore, the Council will work with local communities and their representatives to ensure any locally agreed memorial bench or monument is appropriately sited. The County Council's statutory responsibility is to ensure the highway is not obstructed and that any items placed within the highway are covered by an appropriate legal agreement. Within a town centre / pedestrianised setting, full consideration must also be given to maintaining accessibility for all.

The legal process to close a section of public highway is known as "stopping up" which permanently removes highway rights from the road and results in the area of land reverting to the adjacent landowners.