

County Council
Thursday, 17th February, 2022



You can view the agenda at
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/>
or use a smart phone camera and scan the code above.



DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

To: Members of Devon County Council

County Hall
Exeter
EX2 4QD

9 February 2022

AGENDA

7. Questions from Members of the Council (Pages 1 - 4)

Answers to questions from Members of the Council pursuant to Standing Order 17.



QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS

Thursday 17 February 2022

1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: Down Syndrome Bill

How many people in the Devon County Council area are living with Down Syndrome?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

Total population aged 18-64 predicted to have Down's syndrome = 287

Total population aged 65 and over predicted to have Down's syndrome = 8

2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: DCC Representations to the Down Syndrome Bill

Has Devon County Council made recommendations and representations about the current Down Syndrome Bill making its progress through Parliament?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

Devon County Council supports the aims of the Down Syndrome Bill, which would create a new duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance to relevant authorities (health, education and local authorities in respect of social care and housing) on how to meet the specific needs of people with Down Syndrome.

3. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: Strategies to Implement the Down Syndrome Bill

What analysis, assessments, strategies and action plans, are Devon County Council doing to prepare the authority in the likely event that this cross-party measure becomes law?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

We are awaiting the guidance that will follow the passing of this legislation on appropriate steps for relevant authorities to take to meet the needs of people with Down syndrome in executing their existing relevant functions. We understand that the guidance will also help people with Down syndrome and their families/carers to have a clearer understanding of what they can expect and what support they are entitled to receive

Agenda Item 7.

4. **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD** **Re: Devon Down Syndrome Charter**

Will Devon County Council commit to, lead and champion a new Devon Down Syndrome Charter, to ensure that our local residents living with Down Syndrome, are living their best lives, as productive, respected, valued members in our local communities?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR MCINNES

Devon County Council along with a range of other partners, including the voluntary and community sector, independent providers, District Councils, schools and local employers, play a key role in supporting people with Down syndrome to live the lives that they want to lead within communities across Devon. Our work to improve support for people with a range of disabilities, including Down Syndrome, is rooted in what people and their families/carers have told us is important to them. We will continue to regularly listen to people with Down syndrome and make sure that they are informing the planning and delivery of support across Devon.

5. **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR BAILEY** **Re: New Highway Code**

The Highway Code was amended on 29th January 2022 to improve the safety of people walking, cycling and riding horses. Please can the Portfolio Holder for Highways advise what steps he will be taking to make the roads safer for people walking, cycling and riding horses on the roads in Devon.

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Changes to the highway code this year have introduced a new road hierarchy with those most at risk of harm like pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders at the top. There are some very significant rule changes within the new highway code like giving priority for pedestrians, cyclists and horses over motor vehicles at side road junctions. These and other key changes have already formed part of a Vision Zero South West (VZSW) partnership campaign to publicise the new highway code in time for its introduction and will continue to be used to increase public awareness online, at events and through the media.

The partnership, which involves blue light services and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner working collaboratively with Devon and Cornwall local authorities and National Highways has approved funding in 2022/23 for a range of media, training and enforcement initiatives targeted at priority high risk vulnerable road users.

VZSW are also joining forces this year with the British Horse Society for a “Dead Slow” road safety campaign in the Spring. This will include a social media campaign and targeted signage on key roads around Devon. There is also financial support to promote Operation Snap for more rider-submitted footage of poor driver behaviour which will support police enforcement action. Operation Snap has proven very successful within Exeter as a trial site and is now being rolled out to other Devon communities and across the partnership this year.

As well as changing peoples' behaviour on our roads, improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure is also a priority for Devon as we seek to support transition to low carbon and more physically active modes of transport. We are producing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans in Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple, Bideford and Northam to identify and prioritise new routes in our major urban areas. For the rural networks, we continue to pursue leisure trails to support access to the countryside and our market towns. This includes making provision for equestrian users where possible. Recent Government cycling design guidance is being used to ensure opportunities to segregate pedestrians, cyclists and traffic are maximised and creating attractive, direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists with minimal disruption on their journeys.

6. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HODGSON
Re: Rural Road Safety

With reference to the Rural Road Safety report brought by officers to the CIRS scrutiny committee (27.01.22), please could an explanation and costed timescale be provided for how the Vision Zero South West (VZSW) Road Safety Partnership's stated objective to 'reduce killed and serious injuries (on rural roads) by 50% by 2030 and, ultimately aims to cut killed and serious injuries to zero by 2040' be implemented? Will this require new non-vehicular routes to be developed in order to meet these targets? Will there be an all-member opportunity to propose new off-road routes that could help support VZSW's aims?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

Devon County Council is collaborating with other Peninsula highway authorities, National Highways, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the blue light services on Vision Zero South West (VZSW). The VZSW road safety strategy aims to reduce people being killed and seriously injured in road collisions through two activity areas. Activity A is for enforcement-related interventions by the police and Activity B is local authority-led behaviour change interventions targeting the highest risk road user groups in Devon & Cornwall.

These activities will be delivered using funds from previous speed camera partnership income, charges for driver education courses and projected income. This month VZSW approved a five year financial plan and its Road Safety Delivery Plan, which will work towards the 'zero' killed or seriously injured target. The financial information will be published online by VZSW. The VZSW budget is still a very limited source of funding and so physical engineering solutions, whether it be to tackle collision cluster sites or improving walking and cycling infrastructure, remains the responsibility of the constituent local highway authorities.

Improving walking and cycling opportunities will have benefits across several of the County Council's Strategic Plan priorities including climate response, economic recovery, peoples' health and wellbeing and helping our communities feel safe and connected. Delivering non-vehicular routes and/or off-road infrastructure is therefore something the County Council will continue to pursue. At the current time, funding opportunities to deliver our rural trails are extremely limited with grant opportunities instead focused on the urban routes so we need to focus on completing our priority trails before starting new ones. We are exploring options with the Department for Transport to refresh our Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Strategy at which point there will be an opportunity for Members to input on potential routes.

Agenda Item 7.

7. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HODGSON
Re: 20mph speed limits

What is the timescale for decisions and intended implementation for the 20mph speed limit routes now being invited for proposal?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES

We are committed to introducing new 20 mph speed limits in Devon in the coming financial year, as we resolved at our December Cabinet. As you will be aware elected Members and communities have been asked to submit their applications by the end of March. After this, officers will prioritise schemes for delivery. I will ask that an update is provided to Members as the prioritisation work is undertaken and a detailed delivery programme developed.