

**CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

22 September 2022

Present:-

Councillors C Slade (Chair), M Asvachin, J Brook, P Bullivant, M Hartnell,
R Radford, I Roome, J Trail BEM and J Wilton-Love

Councillor Y Atkinson (remote, non-voting)

Apologies:-

Councillors A Dewhirst, J Berry, R Chesterton, P Crabb and J Hodgson

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillors S Hughes and F Letch

* 63

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* 64

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no matter raised as a matter of urgency.

* 65

Public Participation

There were no oral representations from Members of the Public.

* 66

Covid Update

The Consultant in Public Health (Intelligence) updated the Committee on COVID -19. The details were included on the County Council's live demonstration Website - Covid-19 dashboard: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) dashboard - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(devon.gov.uk\)](#). The information related to all of Devon (including Torbay and Plymouth).

Members' questions and discussion points with the Officer related to the impact of the vaccination programme in reducing the transmission of infections which was reflected in the low hospital admission and death rate and reduced severity of illness.

* **67** **Highways Performance Dashboard - Summer 2022**

(Councillor S Hughes attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item at the invitation of the Committee and introduced the Report. He made reference to the new Dashboard format, the extension of the Term Maintenance contract and resulting benefits, the support from the Digital Transformation and Digital Communications Teams, the additional challenges which arose from the extreme weather experienced across July and August, and the carbon reporting project that continued to gain national recognition).

(Councillor F Letch attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item and referred to highway maintenance and 'fretting').

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/22/47) on an updated Performance Dashboard Report which provided an overview of the performance of the Highways and Traffic Management Team over the summer period. This related to Reactive Works, Cyclical Operations, Tree Safety including vegetation, preparations for Winter Service, a Customer Engagement Project, development of @DevonAlert, Road Wardens and Highway Management Community Enhancement Fund; and delivery of the Capital Programme.

Members' comments and discussion points with the Highways and Traffic Management Group Manager included:

- the encouraging performance to date in the first four months and noting the additional pressures during the Winter months with a fragile highway network and within limited revenue and capital resources;
- policy relating to line painting with priority for safety defects (which were limited in number (for 'give way' and 'stop' lining) and these and any other issues should be reported to the local Neighbourhood Highway Teams (or via the website reporting pages: [Report a problem - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](#));
- the increased flexibility for Highways Inspectors and contractors and their work gangs to address any additional pot hole issues within a works order as necessary to improve efficiency; and
- definition of 'fretting' in terms of highway maintenance.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and Officer for their report.

* **68** **Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Head of Scrutiny updated the Committee on the work programme following a recent Masterclass on the programme available via: [Scrutiny Work Programme - Democracy in Devon](#).

Most notably the Work Programme now reflected the priorities in the Strategic Plan, which allowed evaluation of Scrutiny contribution to the Council's priorities.

Items could also be addressed via the Standing Over Groups or masterclasses as appropriate. There were two Reviews currently scheduled which related to the proposed replacement of the FINEST finance system (Spotlight review); and Cost of Living crisis (Task Group or Spotlight review, to be confirmed). The programme would be updated following the outcome of this meeting.

* 69 **Reference from the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee**

(Councillor S Hughes attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item as Chair of the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee in support of the reference and request to this Committee).

The Committee considered a reference from the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders and Committee on 22 July 2022 (Minute*31) to this Committee under Local Waiting Restriction Programme as follows: "*(c) that the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Committee be asked to look at the county-wide problem of the parking of motor caravans in towns and residential areas.*"

Members, in view of the problems encountered in Exmouth and the decision to restrict overnight parking on the Esplanade, referred to the need for a county-wide review (noting the emphasis on coastal towns) and development of a Devon policy. They also referred to issues relating to impact on local residential areas of inappropriate on-street over-night parking by Recreational Vehicles and Camper Vans etc, the need for provision of dedicated sites with associated amenities and services (in addition to current commercial sites), winter-storage and consideration of appropriate fees. Members also emphasised that there should be no ban and to balance the needs of RV users and desire to promote the local tourist economy against the impact on local residents/communities. Reference should also made to local policies relating to the traveller community.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor J Trail, **SECONDED** by Councillor M Hartnell and

RESOLVED

(a) that a Task Group be established (comprising Councillors Bullivant, Hartnell, Roome and Trail to consider a county-wide policy for the provision of longer and short term sites for Recreational Vehicles and Campers etc (with reference to include issues outlined above);

(b) that this Task Group be included in the Committee's Work Programme with a view to completion by Easter 2023.

* 70 **Moving Traffic Offences Spotlight Review**

(Councillor F Letch attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item and referred to Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in Crediton during the recent bank holiday).

The Committee considered the report of the Spotlight Review on Moving Traffic Offences held on 4 July 2022.

This Spotlight Review had been established following the invitation from the Lead Officer and the Cabinet Member who had asked Scrutiny to provide a policy steer on whether adopting the enforcement of Moving Traffic Offences was the right option for Devon County Council. The Scope of the review was as follows:

'to examine the evidence on Moving Traffic Offences on the benefits and disbenefits of applying to become the enforcement agency and make recommendations as to the policy direction that the Council should take'.

The Report detailed the findings and the recommendations of the Spotlight Review.

A Member referred to the possible perception that these proposed measures could be seen as a revenue generating exercise. The Review Members and Officers assured that the aim was for improved management of the network with safety paramount and in accordance with rules relating to implementation and use of any surplus income; and the Officer confirmed that the PCNs issued in Crediton on the recent bank holiday related only to illegal parking (double yellow lines) to help ensure that arterial roads remained open.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor C Slade and **SECONDED** by Councillor P Bullivant and

RESOLVED

(a) that the Spotlight Review Report be approved and the six recommendations contained therein be commended to the Cabinet for approval and implementation; and

(b) that, subject to approval of the Report by the Cabinet, a report come to this Committee one year after the introduction of the powers, for Members to review the number of contraventions captured, and number of appeals (including those upheld).

* 71 **Climate Change Standing Overview Group**

The Committee considered the Report of the Climate Change Standing Overview Group which had met on 6 July 2022. The Report highlighted the key points raised during discussion and proposed actions.

Members received a brief presentation by the Head of Procurement and questions and discussion points included:

- the challenges in ensuring carbon reduction measures relating to monitoring and within limited financial and staffing resources; and
- the officers' market analysis exercises and the need to balance the capacity of local smaller suppliers in terms of climate change assurances.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor C Slade, **SECONDED** by Councillor M Asvachin and

RESOLVED that the Report be approved and the following recommendations contained therein be commended to Cabinet:

(a) that the draft 2030 Net-zero Carbon Supply Chain Strategy be commended;

(b) that further options for carbon offsetting, including how the Council can work with local research institutions to further the development of this area and increase the variety of options available, be explored; and

(c) that further clarity on how the strategy will be resourced by indicating an approximate FTE (Full Time Equivalent) value to achieve these targets.

* 72 **Commissioning Liaison Members**

The Commissioning Liaison Members, Councillors Y Atkinson and I Roome reported on their discussions with Officers (held on 7 September 2022) in relation to Advertising on the Highway; and Pay and Display roll out (Minutes of the meeting attached, including subsequent considerations for policy).

The Commissioning Liaison Members referred to the success of sponsoring of road signs by local businesses and the work of the Economy Team in terms of Pay and Display proposals.

* 73 **Customer Feedback Q1 2022-23 (April to June 2022)**

The Committee received the Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support on the level of customer feedback Q1 2022-23 (April to June 2022) and the key messages from them. The Report explained the Council's formal complaints procedures and the work of the central Customer Relations Team which handled all formal customer feedback to ensure complaints, MP and Councillor enquiries, representations (a comment or

concern that was not a complaint) and compliments were dealt with appropriately.

The Council's complaint procedure and details of the Statutory complaint procedures were available here: [complaint and other feedback procedures](#).

Members' comments and discussion points with the Customer Relations Manager included:

- the majority of complaints received were about Climate Change, Environment, Connectivity and Growth and the main teams complained about were the Neighbourhood and Traffic Management Groups; and difficulties for the Neighbourhood Highway Team officers in addressing complaints when the possible outcomes were limited and resulting perceptions of the complainants;
- the second highest number of complaints received were about Children and Young People's Futures and the main teams complained about were Children & Families and SEN 0-25; and the cost pressures relating to investigation of stage 11 complaints (details of the level of complaints would be sent to the Children's Scrutiny Committee's Task Group);
- the relatively low number of complaints upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman; and
- the level of complaints relating to the Registration Service and the Blue Badge Scheme.

The Chair thanked the Customer Relations Manager for the Report and responses to Members' questions.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 3.53 pm

Commissioning Liaison Meeting

7 September 2022 13:45pm
Virtual Teams Meeting

Councillor Ian Room –	Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Yvonne Atkinson –	Scrutiny Committee
Ian James -	Traffic Management Group Manager
Christopher Rook -	Traffic management Team Manager

Highways intend to take a report to cabinet in November concerning the following three items

- a) *Moving Traffic Offences*
- b) *Pay and Display Role Out*
- c) *Advertising on the Highway*

Item 'a' has already been the subject of a Spotlight Review therefore scrutiny committee are informed of these proposals.

Scrutiny are not aware of Items 'b' and 'c' therefore the meeting focused on these proposals. The proposals were presented by the officers and discussed in detail with challenge and suggestions from the Scrutiny members.

Pay and Display Role Out – Details presented to Members

To effectively manage traffic visiting our key communities P&D is often used to manage on-street parking opportunities. Tariffs are set to assist in managing parking stock effectively, to minimise congestion and assist in ensuring the right parking opportunities were available to support town centres.

It is helpful to ensure that tariffs for longer stays (of more than an hour) are at least equal or higher than equivalent off-street tariffs to encourage parking in longer stay car parks, reducing the recirculation of traffic; minimising traffic congestion and improving air quality.

To ensure on street parking opportunities are available and encourage shorter stays / higher turnover to increase footfall to businesses a free period (20 or 30 minutes) may be considered as part of any new scheme.

This Policy position aligns with the Authority's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 to address climate change; by reducing carbon emissions and encouraging sustainable lifestyles whilst continuing to support economic activity. The Policy position also aligns with the Local Transport plan

Proposals have been developed in discussion with economy colleagues and the following factors have been considered when prioritising communities for treatment:

1. Need
 - Town Centre / Seafront location
 - Alternative off street parking should be available
2. Resilient Local Economy
 - Prosperity / Deprivation index
 - Retail vacancy rates, Low (below national average), not in significant decline
3. Design
 - No (or minimal) P&D already in place
 - Half hour free
 - Focus to be on conversion of Limited Waiting, no change to seasonality or hours of operation
 - Investigate cashless options where appropriate to minimise impact on pedestrians and streetscape.

Minute Item 72

In all schemes existing national exemptions for Blue Badge Holders would apply allowing free parking as close as possible to the blue badge holders destination. Along with Health & Care Worker permits for those delivering care to residents in central areas. An Impact Assessment will be carried out for the proposals.

Pay and Display recommendations discussed: -

- Principals as discussed are acceptable and the emphasis should be on need and resilience
- Free periods to be introduced where appropriate, based on officer knowledge (eg. A 20 minute free period where it benefits businesses)
- Free periods to be reviewed after an initial period of use to check the locations / application is correct.
- Cashless option preferred to reduce initial investment pressure on the On Street Parking Account, street clutter, ongoing maintenance costs, ongoing cash collection (note: impact assessment to be carried out)

Advertising on the Highway - Details presented to Members

A link to Devon County Council's Advertising and Sponsorship Policy is shown here [Advertising and sponsorship policy - Devon County Council](#)

The above policy is in place and any future advertising would comply with this policy.

The purpose of advertising on the highway is to create a revenue income for the Council. This process is proposed to be carried out by a third party on behalf of Devon County Council, with a share of the income stream coming to the Council.

There is already permission to advertise on lamp columns as per the attached link at item f [Environment, Economy and Culture Directorate Committee Report - Standard Format \(devon.gov.uk\)](#) Care must however be exercised with any advertising banner placed to protect the ongoing and future maintenance and the structural integrity of Devon County Council's 79,000 street lighting asset. Officers will make locations available where advertising can take place to avoid conflict zones.

Roundabout advertising space is proposed to be offered to companies via the third party.

The signing would have to comply with any planning permission and road safety audits.

Areas where roundabout sponsorship exists would not be affected for the remainder of any agreement in place.

Advertising on the Highway - recommendations discussed: -

- Any advertising on Lamp Columns must avoid domination of singular businesses
- All roundabouts deemed suitable by officers should be made available for advertising.
- Existing arrangements for roundabout sponsorships must remain.