



**QUESTIONS TO THE  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, CABINET MEMBERS  
AND/OR  
CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES**

Thursday 25 July 2019

**1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD  
Re: Housing Infrastructure Fund Awards**

At the Cabinet meeting on the 10th April the successful HIF awards were announced for the DCC area. No awards were apparently granted for the Exeter (excluding the land in Teignbridge to the South West of the city), South Hams, Torridge and West Devon areas.

- Were any submitted or considered for these areas?
- Will there be further bidding rounds and opportunities to apply?
- What work or support could be done to ensure that this infrastructure investment can and will reach all parts of the County?
- Especially those with high levels of rural poverty, economic and employment underactivity and deprivation?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR DAVIS**

*The Housing Infrastructure Fund was split into two tranches. District Councils could bid for funding as part of the Marginal Viability tranche and County Councils could bid for the Forward Funding tranche. Whilst more than one bid could be submitted by authorities, if more than one was submitted, they were required to be ranked. Given the significant amount of work required to submit a bid and likelihood of winning two bids was very small, the Council decided that it was only feasible to submit one bid as part of the Forward Funding tranche. The South West Exeter bid was considered the best fit for a number of reasons including scale, deliverability and evidence of a stalled housing site.*

*In terms of the Marginal Viability HIF process 5 District Councils were successful, Teignbridge, Exeter, Mid Devon, East Devon and North Devon. As far as I am aware the other Districts did not have proposals that fitted the criteria.*

*There is no indication of further bidding rounds at present as far as we are aware.*

*The Government announces bidding rounds for infrastructure investment on occasions, every effort is made to ensure there is a proportionate spread of investment around the County, whilst ensuring that any bid fits the criteria and consequently has the best chance of success.*

**2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE  
Re: House of Lords Select Committee report on the rural economy**

Does the Leader intend to consider the fairly recent House of Lords Select Committee report on the rural economy at Cabinet with a view to teasing out any messages pertinent to Devon and any actions that DCC may take as a result?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART**

Members may be aware that Government's response to the House of Lords Select Committee report on the Rural Economy was released by Defra relatively recently, on 2nd July 2019. Following this response from Defra, the Council is now in a position to consider the report and the planned actions identified by Defra over the next few months. The response primarily states that Government will work harder across departments to undertake to "rural-proof" their policies, rather than provide a separate rural strategy.

This Council welcomes the report and supports the findings, which broadly address the same issues as the Rural Productivity Commission (RPC) report, on which MPs are being engaged through the Great South West All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG). Devon County Council plays an active role in providing evidence to the RPC and is working with regional partners as part of the Heart of the South West Joint Committee to seek recognition of rural issues highlighted and gain a rural deal.

There are challenges and opportunities for rural areas, including higher employment rates, poor connectivity and a lack of affordable housing. The majority of Devon geographically is defined as rural and the needs of rural businesses and communities are central to our economic development strategies and plans, including the Council's Strategy for Growth and the wider HotSW Joint Committee and LEP approved HotSW Productivity Strategy, as well as the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy currently in development.

The Local Industrial Strategy will provide opportunities and benefits for rural areas, through raising productivity and prosperity for all. Focussing on clean growth this will transform the economy, ensuring that proceeds of growth are more equitably shared across the area and are for the long-term.

The rural Devon economy is varied and in line with the national picture, has different issues arising in different rural communities. The Council's Strategy for Growth in development reflects this with a strategic priority on inclusive growth to help every area and individual achieve their potential.

Some examples of the Council's activities towards addressing rural issues includes: support for rural businesses through hosting of £2.89m EU LEADER funding in 2 Local action groups and the EU funded Growth Support Programme; Trading Standards support for farmers and farm visits; Connecting Devon and Somerset rollout of rural broadband; development of transport infrastructure – roads and cycleways; rural employment space development, such as through our work hubs programme and Duchy Square; the Careers Learning Pilot providing additional skills opportunities; and working with LEP Partners on housing strategy.

**3. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE  
Re: Zero Carbon Targets**

In light of the increased public interest in zero carbon targets could the relevant Cabinet Member tell me what actions the County Council has implemented in recent years to reduce the DCC carbon footprint and what further plans are in place to further reduce the DCC carbon footprint?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD**

DCC reports its carbon footprint annually, which is published online at the bottom of this page <https://www.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-policy>. The current target is to reduce the 2012 carbon footprint by 50% by 2030.

Since 2012, The Council's reported carbon footprint has reduced by 36% in response to various initiatives including part-night street lighting, LED conversion of the all-night street lighting, building upgrades (including rooftop solar PV arrays) and more efficient fleet vehicles and school-transport routing.

£8.6m has been allocated to convert the part-night street lighting to LED over the next 2 years. By the end of this programme, the street-lighting carbon footprint will have reduced by 75%.

In response to this authority's declaration of a climate emergency, a revised Corporate Energy and Carbon Strategy will be prepared for the autumn.

**4. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREENSLADE**  
**Re: A39 Pilton Bridge junction**

There is significant pedestrian flow, especially school children, at the A39 Pilton Bridge junction and in Abbey Rd, Pilton where there is considerable pedestrian/vehicle conflict. Parents are becoming more and more concerned at the risks to safety this poses.

In recent months I have had meetings with DCC Officers like the excellent Bill Banting from the local services group and Damien Jones from County Hall to discuss options to improve pedestrian safety in these areas. Thus far I have not received any concrete suggestions about improvements that could be made. I have indicated my willingness to contribute towards costs from my community funds.

Can the Cabinet Member provide any positive feedback for me to relay to concerned parents?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

Feasibility design work for introducing pedestrian improvements at the A39 Pilton Causeway junction will be progressed this year. The design will consider options for either incorporating pedestrian facilities with the signals or for providing a stand-alone crossing on the northern side of the junction between the garage and Pilton Quay.

Subject to identifying a recommended scheme option to take to HATOC, there is potential for utilising already secured S106 contributions to fund its delivery or that funding is sought through the next local transport plan capital programme.

**5. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WAY**  
**Re: Park and Ride – North West Exeter**

Has any progress been made towards providing a Park and Ride car park on the north western side of Exeter for those commuters travelling on the A377 and A3072?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR DAVIS**

The Local Transport Plan aims to develop a series of Park and Ride sites around Exeter including one in the North West quadrant. Unfortunately, we have been unable to find a suitable site which would be a good candidate for a successful planning application due to a number of environmental and topographical constraints. The recent public consultation on the Exeter Transport Strategy included an aspiration to double the number of Park and Ride spaces serving the city including a facility to the north of the city which would capture car trips from Crediton and Tiverton corridors. The results of the consultation were in favour of this. Consequently, we have

recently commissioned a study to review previous sites and investigate new sites on all the radial corridors into Exeter.

**6. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WAY**  
**Re: Fixed Penalty Notices issued on Bank Holidays**

I have received an increasing number of complaints from motorists who are issued Fixed Penalty Notices in Crediton's high street during bank holidays and from traders concerned about the effect the publicity has on their trade. This seems particularly a problem when bank holidays occur on Mondays. The high street has part time loading bays. Anyone not loading or unloading is able to use them after 2pm Monday – Saturday and at any time on Sundays. Whilst notices on the plates mention this, there is no mention concerning bank holiday parking on the plates covering the loading bays or the 45-minute maximum stay parking spaces. Few, if any of the business receive deliveries on bank holidays.

How many Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued on bank holiday Mondays over the past 12 months? How does this compare to Mondays during a normal week?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HUGHES**

I assume the query relates to Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) rather than Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). With the limited time available to respond, Officers have analysed data for Crediton High Street over the past 12 months comparing the number of PCNs issued on Bank Holiday Mondays with those issued the Monday prior or after the Bank Holiday.

Bank Hol date	Issued	Standard Day	Issued
27/08/2018	0	20/08/2018	0
22/04/2019	0	15/04/2019	0
06/05/2019	5	13/05/2019	2
27/05/2019	0	20/05/2019	5

As can be seen the numbers are relatively low but do compare in terms of total issued, with 5 PCNs being issued on Bank Holiday Mondays and 7 PCNs being issued on the 'normal' Mondays.

Officers would be happy to discuss the perceived issue with Councillor Way if wanted.