

Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 26 February 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Motion on Notice – Highways

Report summary:

The constitution provides that members of Council may submit written notice of motions for debate at Council. A motion must be signed by the proposer and seconder and at least 3 members and submitted not later than 10 clear days before the date of the meeting.

Motions must be about matters for which the council has a responsibility, or which affect East Devon District Council and will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice received.

Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received unless the member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Motion on Notice – Highways is debated and determined by Council.

Reason for recommendation:

The constitution makes provision for motions on notice to be debated and decided by Council.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Corporate Lead Democratic Services & Scrutiny
(andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☒ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☒ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Economy
- ☒ Finance and Assets
- ☒ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☒ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

The impact is low as this report is dealing with the submission of motions on notice. Any work undertaken following the consideration of the motion on notice would be subject to an equalities impact assessment being undertaken.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; A risk assessment would need to be completed on any works or further investigations resulting from the motions of notice.

Links to background information N/A

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☒ A greener East Devon
 - ☒ A resilient economy
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Report in full

Motion 2: Highways

Proposer: Councillor Paul Arnott

Seconded: Councillor Nick Hookway

The motion has been supported by Councillors Geoff Jung, Cllr Anne Hall, Cllr Susan Westerman, Cllr Eileen Wragg

Motion Received: 12 February 2025

East Devon District Council,

- A. Noting concern throughout Devon regarding the state of our region's roads, and the impacts of this on residents' lives¹,
- B. Recalling a significant history of issues raised with Devon Highways consultation responses on planning applications made to this authority, where residents and Ward Members cite material disagreements with Devon County Council Highways officers²,
- C. Highlighting with grave concern Devon County Council's admission that Devon's highways repair backlog is out of control, with an accumulated £200m backlog in highway maintenance and repair work continuing to grow year-on-year³,
- D. Alarmed that the County Council's response to the deteriorating state of Devon's roads is to continue with its existing – and failing – outsourced delivery model⁴, and that this decision was undertaken without meaningful consultation with communities or partner authorities
- E. Concerned that the County Council's provision for the introduction of new 20mph speed limit zones is woefully inadequate, with only six schemes approved for the 2024/25 financial year against 169 requests from Devon communities⁵, up from four granted requests against

¹ cf. Devon Live (2024): *Shocking revelation about state of Devon's roads* [21 Feb]. Available at: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/shocking-revelation-state-devons-roads-9112928>;

Devon Live (2023): *Cyclists afraid to ride on Devon's 'shockingly bad roads'* [9 Mar]. Available at: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/cyclists-afraid-ride-devons-shockingly-8225612>

² cf. East Devon News (2023): *Plans for 63 Ottery homes rejected for third time* [27 Oct]. Available at: <https://eastdevonnews.co.uk/2023/10/27/new-homes-ottery-st-mary/>

³ Devon County Council (2024): *Future Delivery Model for the highway Maintenance Service*. Available at: <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=50324>

⁴ Devon County Council (2024): *13/11/24 Cabinet – Decision Notice: Item 10*. Available at: <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/g5020/Decisions%2013th-Nov-2024%2010.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=2>

⁵ Devon County Council (no date): *Devon 20mph Schemes*. Available at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/traffic-regulation-orders/20mphschemes/> (Accessed 11 February 2025)

105 applications made in 2022⁶, putting residents in East Devon and across the county at unnecessary risk⁷:

1. Asks that the Leader call on Devon County Council to:
 - a. Urgently review the value and efficiency of its existing outsourced highway maintenance contract,
 - b. Urgently reconsider its decision to continue with “business as usual” at the earliest possible opportunity, inviting genuine consultation with partner authorities and communities through that process;
2. Requests that the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning:
 - a. Invite the relevant Director at Devon County Council to attend a discussion with East Devon District Councillors to air concerns regarding Highways’ input into the planning process, and to raise these concerns with the relevant Devon County Council Scrutiny Committee following that meeting,
 - b. Invite relevant Devon Highways officers to provide a briefing for East Devon District Councillors and Town & Parish Councillors regarding how they assess planning applications and provide consultation responses, and
 - c. Following the requested briefing session, to invite East Devon District Council’s Development Management team to consult with members regarding how the information provided in Devon Highways’ responses to consultation requests could be improved to provide additional reassurance to Members and the public; and
3. Recommends that East Devon District Council’s Scrutiny Committee consider undertaking an investigation of these issues in support of and in addition to the above measures.

Financial implications:

To be confirmed, subject to the outcome of the consideration on the Motion on Notice.

Legal implications:

The motions on notice have been submitted in accordance with the Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution – Rules of Procedure 10.1 Notice: Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 11, written notice of every motion, signed by at least 5 members, must be delivered to the Chief Executive not later than 10 clear days before the date of the meeting.

⁶ Sidmouth Herald (2022): *Council under fire after approving only four new 20mph zones in Devon* [3 Aug]. Available at: <https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/20598015.council-fire-approving-four-new-20mph-zones-devon/>

⁷ cf. Devon Live (2022): *20mph is not about convenience, it’s about not killing a child* [27 Nov]. Available at: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/news-opinion/20mph-not-convenience-its-not-7846590>