

**Date:** 15 May 2024

**County Council - Thursday 16th May 2024**

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have recently forwarded to you a copy of the agenda for the next meeting of the County Council.

I am now able to enclose a copy of the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was circulated.

---

14. **Questions**

(Pages 3 - 12)

Questions to be asked by Members of the County Council of the Leader of the Council, a Cabinet Member, or a Chairman of a Committee. The question will be answered by the relevant Member and the Member asking the question may then ask a follow up question which will also be answered

John Tradewell  
Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services





**Question No. 1****County Council Meeting – 16 May 2024****Question to Councillor Deaville  
Cabinet Member for Strategic Highways****By Councillor Charlotte Atkins**

---

**Question**

When was JCB's Pothole Pro first used by Staffordshire County Council? Since that time, please list month by month the County Council Divisions in which it has been used and the length of time it was allocated to each of those Divisions. What is the future operational schedule for the Pothole Pro and in which Divisions will it be used over the next year?

---

**Reply**

SCC first took delivery of the JCB-PotholePro (JCB-PHP) in July 2023. The timing coincided with the delivery of the A522 Beamhurst roundabout carriageway resurfacing scheme, which is where it was first used.

Following that, between July and Sept 2023 the JCB-PHP was located at Leek highway depot, carrying out reactive pothole/patching repairs on a day-by-day and week-by-week need basis across the Staffordshire Moorlands. It would take more work to retrospectively extract the precise dates and durations of individual visits and also to map these to Member's divisions. This can be provided if needed, but in the first instance the following is a list of all the sites visited:

- Ashcombe Way, Leek
- Ashenhurst Way, Leek
- Birdsgrove Lane, Okeover
- Blythe Close, Blythe Bridge
- Compton, Leek
- Douse Lane, Onecote
- Dunwood Road, Rudyard
- Golling Gate, Hollinsclough
- Harveys Lane, Kingsley Moor
- Hough Hill, Brown Edge
- Leek Lane, Biddulph Moor
- Middlecliff Lane, Bradnop
- Park Lane, Ipstones

- Park Nook, Winkhill
- School Lane, Longsdon
- Shawfield Road, Newtown
- Shawfield Road, Shawfield
- Stallington Road, Blythe Bridge
- Three Pools, Heaton
- Tittesworth Estate, Blackshaw Moor
- William Avenue, Biddulph
- Woodhouse Lane, Brown Edge
- Yerley Hill, Okeover

Since September 2023 the JCB-PHP has been deployed on delivering vital pre-patching works ahead of the planned 2024/25 surface treatments programme at the following locations:

- From 29 Sept 2023 - Kingsford Lane, Wolverley
- From 13 November 2023 - Battlefield Lane, Six Ashes, Bridgnorth
- From 26 November 2023 - Lutley Lane / Church Lane, Bobbington
- From 11 December 2023 - High Gate Common, Enville
- From 15 January 2024 - Church Lane / Six Ashes Road, Bobbington
- From 5 February 2024 - Leaton Lane, Gospel Ash Road, Bobbington
- From 2 April 2024 - Streetly, Little Aston
- From 8 April 2024 - A519 Newcastle Road, Hanchurch
- From 15 April 2024 - Wharf Road, Gnosall
- From 22 April 2024 - Bramshall Road, Uttoxeter
- From 29 April 2024 - Halls Road, Biddulph
- From 13 May 2024 (scheduled) - Wedgewood Lane, Biddulph

Over the coming weeks the JCB-PHP is likely to be delivering further vital pre-patching and other highway repair works right across Staffordshire. Details will be available shortly, following ongoing post-winter analysis of current road repair needs.

---

**County Council Meeting – 16 May 2024****Question to Councillor Simon Tagg  
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate  
Change****By Councillor Yates**

---

**Question**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change confirm whether the Member Climate Change Fund Programme will be repeated for the current financial year?

---

**Reply**

As I announced at the Cabinet Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024, the next round of the Climate change Action Fund will be launched in June. The aim is to coincide with "The Great Big Green Week" ([www.greatbiggreenweek.com](http://www.greatbiggreenweek.com)) which runs from 8<sup>th</sup> June.

Round 4 of the Climate change action fund, which closed early in 2024 has been another success story, providing support for community based organisations around Staffordshire to reduce their impact on the environment and to positively benefit their communities in a response to climate change with an array of projects.

Round 4 saw 94 applications submitted, with the majority of schemes delivering projects under led lighting, energy efficiency, active travel and waste minimisation.

Projects have been delivered across all of the districts and boroughs within the County and over the past 4 years over £267,000 has been given to community groups around the County to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Staffordshire County Council is dedicated in our priority to tackle climate change and has an annual budget allocation to drive our organisation and services forward to a greener future, within this financial year we have dedicated £582,600 to be invested in carbon reduction, natural environment and behaviour change initiatives, e.g., the Members Climate Change Action Fund.

---



**County Council Meeting – 16 May 2024****Question to Councillor Deaville  
Cabinet Member for Strategic Highways****By Councillor Pardesi**

---

**Question**

What has SCC learnt from the feedback of residents, businesses and road users on the simultaneous ongoing roadworks in and around Stafford town centre?

---

**Reply**

Good, connected highways are a key priority for this council and that's why we are investing an extra £50m over the next three on improving our roads.

We have also successfully secured additional central government funding to improve walking and cycling facilities around the town, for example on Chell Road, as well as maintenance works on key parts of the Main Road Network, including the A34 between Queensville and Weeping Cross.

Successful economic growth and inward investment creates further roadworks in the form of road improvements, creating new accesses and the need for new utility connections and upgrades.

The delivery of such significant investment into the town, inevitably brings some level of disruption.

If done in isolation, the works and disruption to local residents and businesses would need to be prolonged over several years – something we all want to avoid. Therefore, where possible opportunities are being taken to join-up the delivery of different elements like walking and cycling improvements, traffic signal upgrades and road maintenance. Whilst this can appear to extend work durations in the short-term, it is only being done where overall the impact is less disruptive.

Every effort is also made to plan and co-ordinate activities in order to avoid additional short-duration work on approved and signed diversion routes. However, there are occasions such as utility leaks where work needs to take place on safety grounds and cannot wait until the route is clear again.

---

In these instances, conditions are applied to these works to reduce the impact such as working outside of peak times only and manually controlling the temporary traffic signals to keep traffic flowing as much as possible.

Early notification and publicity of works is essential to help businesses and the public plan their journeys. This includes project specific communication plan, including media releases, on street notices and additional online information.

Members of the public can also sign-up to the national One.Network website, to receive up to date publications of all planned roadworks in any chosen area.

Finally, we are, of course, always grateful to receive local feedback and will endeavour, wherever possible, to make further changes that can help to complete works as quickly and efficiently as possible.

---



**County Council Meeting – 16 May 2024****Question to Councillor Wilcox  
Cabinet Member for Health and Care****By Councillor Hussain**

---

**Question**

Unfortunately, suicides occur often in our communities. What extra steps can Staffordshire County Council take to avoid such tragedies, improve mental health, and help suicide survivors in the future also, could the council provide county-wide data on this tragedy?

---

**Reply**

In the decade prior to 2018 there were typically about 70-80 suicides registered by the coroner per year in Staffordshire. We saw a rise from 2018 to 2020 with numbers all between 90-100 which raised our suicide rate significantly higher than the national average. However, it is important to note that this coincided with a relaxation in the standard of proof required for coroners to record deaths as by suicide. As such, we cannot be sure if or how much of that sharp increase was an actual true reflection of an increase in suicidal activity in Staffordshire. Nevertheless, from 2021 to 2023, total numbers have reduced somewhat to an average of 82 suicides per year and are no longer significantly higher than the national rate. Whilst men remain more likely to take their own lives, at present, the published rate of suicides in women in Staffordshire remains significantly above the national average (there were more than 30 incidents in 2020), but unpublished annual figures do suggest that numbers are returning to being similar to the national average.

We have a number of ongoing initiatives around suicide prevention. Most notably our Suicide Prevention Awareness Training (delivered by North Staffordshire Mind) which has reached nearly 2,300 people since we launched it in 2021. We are the lead commissioners for the NHSE funded Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Suicide Bereavement Service which launched towards the end of last year, and which is working well. A close working relationship with Staffordshire Police means that we weekly monitor all new suspected suicides with a view to spotting any potential trends or clusters, and we also monitor public sites where suicidal activity is more prevalent, for example Shobnall Fields, where we are working with partners and the community on a range of interventions to tackle high

levels of suicidal activity at a local bridge. We are just beginning a project to develop a toolkit/guidance for schools and colleges who experience suicide in their setting.

Broadly speaking, we have the Staffordshire Good Mental Health Strategy and action plan to keep us on track with promoting mental health and wellbeing, and this includes a number of suicide prevention actions. Suicide Prevention is most effective as a partnership activity, and we are currently developing a new joint Strategic Action Plan for the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Suicide Prevention Partnership.

---

**County Council Meeting – 16 May 2024****Question to Councillor Wilcox  
Cabinet Member for Health and Care****By Councillor Afsar**

---

**Question**

As a County Councillor, I am concerned about the rising incidence of Type 2 diabetes in my division / communities. Can the Council provide an overview of the current initiatives and programs aimed at making residents aware of diabetes, its risk factors and the importance of prevention and early detection.

---

**Reply**

Staffordshire County Council, on behalf of the Integrated Care Board, are the lead organisation responsible for the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme (NHSDPP) for referral management and programme implementation. Reed Wellbeing are the existing provider of the NHSDPP in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.

The NHSDPP enables the identification of people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and referral onto a nine-month, evidence-based lifestyle change programme.

Based on NHS England's (NHSE) verified data from November 2023, Staffordshire is the top performing system in the West Midlands for referrals and for conversion rates (referral to programme start 65.2%).

We overachieved our NHSE referral target in 2023-24 with 6,610 referrals against a target of 5,354.

Achieving these referral and uptake levels is a result of our continual engagement with GPs and with a wide range of stakeholders to build trust in the programme. This ensures they make patients aware of the risk factors for diabetes and promote the importance of the NHSDPP to those who are diagnosed as pre-diabetic. We have systems in place to enable all GPs to search their practice database to invite their eligible population onto the programme. Staffordshire has excellent GP engagement, with 100% of practices actively referring to the programme on a regular basis.

In partnership with Reed Wellbeing, we also actively provide information about type 2 diabetes, its risk factors and promote the 'know your risk' tool and NHSDPP at community events, specifically targeting communities that are at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes (people from ethnic minority groups, males, and deprived communities). For example, we recently attended the health events at Uxbridge Street Mosque in Burton-upon-Trent.

We actively promote the risks factors for type 2 diabetes, the 'know your risk' tool and NHSDPP to Staffordshire residents, tying into planned National communications activity and localise this by using local case studies where available.

---