

County Council Meeting – 12 October 2023**Question to Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport****By Councillor Yates**

Question

As all Members are very much aware, roads around schools are plagued by excessive numbers of cars parked both illegally and inconsiderately around schools, creating an inconvenience to residents and a direct danger to the safety of our children. Given that current traffic management around schools is obviously not working, what new and innovative initiatives are being considered for introduction to resolve this issue?

Reply

Staffordshire County Council works with a range of partners to keep the roads around schools safe. Finding sustainable solutions to school parking challenges will require continued collaboration between School Travel Advisors, the School Crossing Patrol team, Road Safety Education Team and the Civil Enforcement Teams. Ongoing engagement with schools is also essential, promoting active travel, educating pupils and asking parents to park considerately and safely. Current behaviour change initiatives include parking buddies, anti-idling and Pupil Parking Toolkits for schools.

Where serious issues and complaints are received from schools, higher enforcement may be required, with police presence over a short period, supported by communications to parents. The County Council has trialled enforcement by use of a camera car in East Staffordshire, which had mixed success and still requires Civil Enforcement Officer support to issue the Penalty Charge Notices (PCN).

The County Council can implement zero-minute observations for parking restrictions, where considered appropriate, such as where people are driving off during the observation period, however there is currently no progression of the PCN as the enforcement code (01) is not supported under the Traffic Management Act, so there is no follow-up when the driver does not pay.

We are also exploring bids to national funding pots to trial different ways of working, as well as learning from best practice across the Country. Bids

to Active Travel England that include School Streets are welcomed and have the potential to secure funding. They are being delivered by other local authorities, supported by Sustrans and Living Streets, and rely on the temporary removal of moving traffic outside school gates at drop-off and pick-up times, giving the street environment back to pedestrians for this short period within the day. As yet, we haven't delivered any School Streets in Staffordshire, but we are keen to discuss the idea with Councillors and identify schools where it could work.

Finally, I would like to highlight that the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is considering Civil Parking Enforcement at a future meeting which will provide a good opportunity to explore options for managing the areas around schools.

