

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - 23rd FEBRUARY 2022
POSITION STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CABINET LEAD
MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

Recent Storm Damage

As the Leader mentioned over the past few days, the County has experienced three major storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin. Over this period, we have had additional highways crews out to help deal with the situation. Our teams responded to 176 trees down as well as a number of flood related issues. Over 350 enquiries have been dealt with over this period.

The staff involved who worked tirelessly over this period (including 24/7 over the weekend) and in very difficult circumstances. They have shown a real commitment to get the job done and I would like to acknowledge their hard work.

Member Highway Fund

498 requests have now been received from all 55 Members for works under the Member Highway Fund.

182 requests are currently in the processing stage, 33 are with Members for sign off and to date 108 jobs have been assigned for delivery. This work is continuing apace with officers supporting Members in finalising their projects for delivery and programming works. No new requests are being accepted for the current financial year, however to reassure Members new requests can be submitted for the next round of funding. Any agreed works that cannot be carried out by the end of March will be delivered in the new financial year.

A more streamlined process is being developed for us for the next round. This will start with an online application process followed up with individual meetings with officers to discuss potential requests. As you know, the MHF has been a new initiative for us all and the department is working hard to get this years' schemes on the ground for our communities as soon as possible and to ensure we are all on the front foot for the coming financial year.

SEN School Transport Digital Application Process

I am pleased to advise that parents now have the ability to apply for SEN transport online. This new system went live on 10 February and I can report we had our first compliment from a member of the public on how easy to use and effective the new system is the following week. We have also had positive comments on Facebook. Along with our ICT colleagues we will continue to progress and deliver similar initiatives to improve our customer service. Many thanks to all involved.

Recruitment Event

Across Highways and Transport we are experiencing significant problems recruiting to vacancies. As part of our work to address this we are holding a recruitment event here at County Hall on 3 March. This is being run in partnership with Reed and is specifically looking to generate interest in roles across Highways and Transport as well as our Waste operation. The communications supporting this event includes targeting more hard to reach communities such as people with disabilities and Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic audiences with the objective of not only getting good candidates into the department but helping us increase diversity across the workforce.

Mrs M. Wright

Cabinet Support Member