

REPORT TO NEWTON POPPLEFORD AND HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 2022

CLLR JESS BAILEY, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL OTTER VALLEY

ROAD SAFETY IN NEWTON POPPLEFORD

I called for an agenda item on the East Devon HATOC on the 14th February to be advised of the actions being taken by DCC following the tragic death of Mr Ken Cooper after a collision on the 'puffin' crossing on the A3052 on 23rd December 2020. The coroner's inquest took place on 10th December 2021. The HATOC report advised that the coroner noted that a number of witnesses have stated that the crossing is poorly illuminated and that there appears to be insufficient time for pedestrians to cross the road before the lights change to green, indicating to waiting vehicles that it is safe for them to drive across. The officers recommended that the request from the Assistant Coroner that consideration is given to allowing time for pedestrians to cross and to improve any existing lighting at the pedestrian crossing is noted and a full report is presented to the next HATOC. The report can be found here:

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=4223&Ver=4>

Beverley Raw, the bereaved daughter of Mr Ken Cooper addressed the HATOC committee on 14th February and urged the committee to support the speed reduction to 20mph, give consideration to changing the crossing to a zebra crossing and improve the lighting. Beverley spoke with great dignity in such difficult circumstances.

As the ward member I too felt that the officers' recommendation did not go far enough and proposed that the committee recommended that Newton Poppleford should be the first in the new 'wave' of 20mph zones, that the report should address the potential for a zebra crossing and that plans for two additional pedestrian crossings should be brought back to the July HATOC. Unfortunately, my proposal was voted down by the Conservative led committee. Cllr Ranger was told by Cllr Hughes that as an East Devon District Councillor on HATOC her vote did not count. This is incorrect. What is more, another East Devon District Councillor present was also under the misapprehension that his vote did not count.

The position taking by the HATOC committee in voting down my proposal was particularly disappointing in light of the earlier agenda item, also on the A3052, where it seems that an additional light-controlled crossing between Crealy and Hill Barton Business Park is being progressed. Whilst I am all in favour of improving road safety *everywhere*, it is not clear to me why the one at Crealy is being prioritized when surely the situation in Newton Poppleford is far more serious with many more accidents having taken place. As a result of this apparent prioritization of another location on the A3052 at the Devon County Council meeting on 17th February 2022 I formally asked Cllr Hughes as portfolio holder for highways about the framework for prioritizing pedestrian crossings and made specific reference to Newton Poppleford. I await a response.

I continue to press Nigel Flower (road safety officer) and Tom Vaughan (neighbourhood highway manager) for updates on progress since our site meeting on 10th January (please see at Appendix 1 my email to highways officers of 9th February).

I fully intend to work with Beverley Raw, Cllr Ranger, the Parish Council and residents to fight for the much-needed road safety improvements in Newton Poppleford.

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET

Devon County Council met on 17th February in the Great Hall at the University of Exeter to approve its annual budget. The Independent and Green Group put forward reasonable and sensible amendments, which were supported by colleagues in the Labour and Lib Dem Groups at DCC. But our amendments were rejected outright by the ruling Conservative Group,

The Conservative Group:

- refused to increase the budget for rolling out 20mph zones across Devon. Each scheme costs £15-25k. The budget to cover *all* schemes across the county is only £100,000 meaning hardly ANY will be funded. We proposed a budget of £500K.
- refused to withdraw the £200 charge for disabled parking bays from the budget. They claim they wont actually charge it after all, so why leave it in the budget? My question whether this charge is even lawful went unanswered.
- refused to withdraw £2k cut in locality budget used by county councillors for helping community groups - reducing it from £10k to £8k per councillor - despite it being more important than ever due to cost of living crisis and 12 years of austerity.

The council is grappling with very significant and sustained financial pressure due to more than ten years of Conservative government austerity. This year savings of more than £30 million are required. Despite these financial challenges the Conservative group *could* have funded our proposals through the reserves and from the organisational development budget, but instead they voted them down. I am also very concerned about the cuts to made to adult and social care and the impact that this is going to happen on some of our most vulnerable residents in Devon.

Appendix 1- Email to DCC highways/road safety officers of 9th February 2022

Dear Tom and Nigel,

Following our meeting on 10th January Newton Poppleford Parish Council resolved that they would like two additional crossings, with zebra crossings as a preference.

I would be grateful if you could please advise:

- 1/timescale for a survey of the road which I understand needs to be completed before interventions can be progressed
- 2/what are the timescales for the resurfacing of the road
- 3/roughly when do you think the speed survey will be completed (thank you for ordering)
- 4/any further thoughts you have to the adjustments of linings, additional pavement section/other safety interventions.
- 5/what are the next steps in progressing the two additional crossings

I am extremely concerned about safety issues around the existing 'Puffin' crossing where very sadly a pedestrian was killed. As you will be aware I have called for this crossing to be an item on the agenda for the forthcoming HATOC. [Agenda for East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee on Monday, 14th February, 2022, 10.30 am - Democracy in Devon](#)

Many thanks
Jess
Cllr Jess Bailey,
Otter Valley Ward