

## **County Councillor's Report, September 2018**

### **Seaton Area Health Matters**

On 2nd August, I attended a meeting of the working group on the health needs of the area and the type of hub which is needed. We have now learnt that the RD&E are ready to talk to us about provision of services in the Seaton area and I expect a meeting to take place in mid- or late September.

### **A35 speed management and Wilmington**

On 9th August I met with representatives of the SW region of Highways England in Exeter. They recognise the A35 as one of the worst roads, if not the worst, in the SW from a safety point of view, and have identified the 13-mile section from Honiton to Charmouth roundabout as most in need of measures to manage speed and reduce accidents.

The regional team's aim is to do a 'route treatment' of this whole section with a system of about 20 average speed cameras (ASCs). They have obtained approval within HE nationally and funds to commission a detailed study which will compare the ASC option with a conventional engineering-only option. This will be completed by the spring when a decision will be taken on which option will go forward. If approved and funded the ASC scheme will be designed in 2019-20 and implemented in 2020-21.

Both options will include elements in Wilmington like crossings and altered markings, as per the previous proposals. Their view is still that a crossing at the western end will not meet standards, however in some circumstances it is possible to do proposals which depart from standards, and they will consult DCC highways on this possibility. I told Highways England that a scheme that didn't include this would not be acceptable for people in Wilmington.

In the meanwhile, it is hoped to organise speed enforcement using a mobile camera from the area outside Wilmington village hall, together with joint operations by police with the Speedwatch team.

### **Proposed parking restriction at Western Place, Colyton**

Following renewed representations from the Parish Council for double yellow lines, I have asked for a meeting with the headmistress of the Primary School to discuss how parents' dropping off children could be managed if this proposal went ahead.

### **Proposed new zebra crossing in Harbour Road, Seaton**

Following pressure from residents, the Town Council and myself, Highways have accepted that there may be a need to reinstate a zebra crossing east of Royal Observer Way, and will be

discussing this with EDDC which as planning authority was responsible for allowing the previous crossing (which had to be removed as it was incorrectly sited) to be installed.

### **Speed Limits task group**

I am a member of this group at the County Council, which is looking primarily at the possibilities of implementing 20 mph limits in some village and town settings.

### **Planned and Reactive Maintenance task group**

I am also a member of this group. The most interesting news so far is that Highways are considering modifying their approach to potholes to allow the contractors to address holes which don't meet their strict criteria for 'safety defects'. However for cost reasons, this will be rolled out first of all for A and higher-category B roads. I have made the point that it is most needed for unclassified rural roads.

### **Petition against the Government's proposal to allow exploration for fracking under 'permitted development' rules**

I have signed a national petition by councillors against this proposal. Many people, including in our area, feel strongly that fracking should not be allowed, and I believe that local planning authorities should keep the power to examine proposals for exploration, on behalf of their communities.

### **Local preparations for the risks of Brexit**

I have put down a question at the County Council's Cabinet on what preparations the Council has made for the risks of a 'no deal' Brexit. Meanwhile, a study by the Heart of the South West Local Economic Partnership, which covers Devon and Somerset, has been circulated to councillors on the scrutiny committee on which I sit. It finds that the majority of local firms which export to the EU have made no formal preparations for Brexit at all. Just 1 business out of 29 who responded to the survey thought it would have a 'positive' impact for their firm.

### **Appeal Court to hear case over proposed 'Accountable Care Organisation' contract**

The Accountable Care Organisation Contract (now rebranded by NHS England as the Integrated Care Provider contract) proposes that healthcare providers are not paid per treatment, but by a 'Whole Population Annual Payment', which is a set amount for the provision of named services during a defined period. I have supported a case which argues that this unlawfully shifts the risk of there being an underestimate of patient numbers from the commissioner to the provider, and therefore endangers service standards. The Appeal Court has now agreed to hear this case.