

APPENDIX A

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25TH MAY 2017 QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Question to the Leader of the Council, from Councillor Jason Zadrozny

The Leader may have seen in the local and national press the plight of my constituents and their son, Dawson Willcock who has a form of cancer so rare that he has been named the 'One in a Million' boy.

The local community in Ashfield have been amazing and are fundraising with vigour to help raise part of the £500,000 needed to get Dawson to America for specialist treatment. As of this morning they have raised £70,000 this week.

Would the Leader please agree to meet with me and representatives of the family to explore what the County Council may be able to do to help raise the profile of this case and hopefully help raise the vital funds needed to save this little boy's life?

Response from Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE, Leader of the Council

It is a very sad case and I think that all of us feel very strongly that a child like this needs the treatment.

I would like to thank you for your question. I have seen the media coverage about Dawson Willcock, who has been diagnosed with Hepatoblastoma, an extremely rare form of liver cancer which has also spread to his lungs.

I know I speak for the whole Council in saying I have huge sympathy for Dawson and for his parents, for whom this must be an increasingly stressful time. It is always distressing to cope with illness affecting a family member, but it is especially sad when it affects a young child.

As well as the shock of the diagnosis of such a rare condition, Dawson's parents have suffered the further blow of discovering that conventional chemotherapy has not been successful. However, Dawson's consultant in Nottingham has been in contact with a specialist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital regarding further treatment.

To raise the money for both travel and treatment, a 'Just Giving' campaign called 'A Dollar for Dawson' has been established, and the fundraising total had already passed £66,000 the last time I looked, which is 13% of the £500,000 required. It is touching to see the support offered by the Ashfield community, and the charitable spirit in evidence from donors further afield.

I have spoken to the Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council and we both feel that the family will glean the most practical benefit from meeting with the Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services.

I have asked Colin Pettigrew to arrange a meeting as soon as possible in order to explore all options and ways in which the Council can support Dawson and his family at this most difficult of times.

I also hope that by recognising Dawson's plight in the Council Chamber today, we are all helping to raise the profile of the 'Dollar for Dawson' campaign.

I am sure everyone will join with me in sending our best wishes to Dawson and his family, and also we have an opportunity now to promote the Just Giving site, to help raise the profile of the campaign even further.

Can I thank you for bringing this to the Council Chamber today.

Question to the Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee, from Councillor Samantha Deakin

I represent the new Central Sutton in Ashfield Central and East Division. An area that has had its highways neglected by the previous administration for decades.

I would like to welcome the new chairman with responsibility for Highways to their post and ask them to look favourably on highways improvements for my area, which has been virtually forgotten. Not least white markings, which have all but vanished from many roads and junctions, leading to dangerous hotspots, particularly around local schools.

In the Conservatives alternative budget this year they promised £1 million more for highways.

Would the chairman take this opportunity to reassure residents that highways will again be a priority under the new administration, and that future funding for improvements will be fairly distributed and not spent by political bias as it was by the Labour Party?

Response from Councillor John Cottee, Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee

May I thank Councillor Deakin for welcoming me to my new position. I am sure I am going to have fun, in return I would like to welcome her to Nottinghamshire County Council. I look forward to working with her constructively and with all Members to help them with the issues they have in their patches.

Councillor Deakin defeated Labour councillor Steve Carroll in the Sutton Central and East division election, and I hope she will not mind me taking this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Steve for his many years of hard work for his community. Irrespective of our political differences, he was always well-liked and well respected within this authority.

Councillor Deakin is correct that highways maintenance and improvements will be a priority for this administration. You do not need to have served as a County Councillor for very long before you realise that the correspondence in your mail bag and emails

each week is largely to do with highways matters. This is clearly a priority for the public, so it follows that this should be a priority for us. Much of the correspondence is not about major or expensive projects, but about routine issues such as the white line problem that you have raised with me.

All highways improvement schemes are prioritised based on evidence of need, and the current 2017/18 highway capital programme includes allocation funding to schemes in Ashfield district, and specifically 25 schemes in Sutton in Ashfield. Whilst 11% of the county's road network is in Ashfield district, 12% of the 2017/18 capital maintenance funding will be spent in Ashfield and 17% of the integrated transport funding will also be spent in Ashfield.

With regard to road markings, white lining is relatively cheap to maintain if delivered as part of a coordinated programme. The annual lining programme runs from April until September on a seven week cycle, so each district has a week where it is done. I will ask the highways district manager for Ashfield to spend some time with you to work through the specific areas of your concern in your division, including the white lining elements.

The County Council will continue to invest significant funds in maintaining its highway assets countywide, whilst ensuring that the county's residents receive efficient, value for money services. As Councillor Deakin points out in her question, we are also looking to increase the amount of funding available for maintenance to improve the condition of our highways assets across the county. The additional £1 million promised will be included in our financial programme, to be released in the near future. Ashfield will certainly get its fair share.

Question to the Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee, from Councillor Helen-Ann Smith

There have been a number of serious accidents in my Sutton North division recently due to speeding traffic, on particular roads on the High Street in Stanton Hill, Mansfield Road in Skegby and on Dalestorth Road in Sutton.

Would you please take the time to consider the accident reports and look to finding a resolution to these problem areas before there are further fatalities in the area?

Response from Councillor John Cottee, Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee

Currently there is a target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Nottinghamshire on our roads by 40% by 2020, when compared to the 2005-2009 average, a target we are on course to meet.

Working on behalf of the Council, the Accident Investigation Team within VIA East Midlands Ltd maintains a database of reported road accidents which result in injury to somebody. In 2016 there were 1,692 such incidents across the county – of these 2,289 people were injured, including 303 who were killed or seriously injured.

A team of specialist road accident investigators study this accident data, identifying patterns or clusters of similar accidents, and prepare appropriate education, enforcement and engineering programmes to reduce them. The improvements target the specific problems revealed by in-depth analysis of the accidents and the site. The number and severity of accidents which can be prevented by a proposed scheme is measured against the cost of the works.

These casualty reduction schemes are prioritised on the basis of the number and severity of accidents which can be prevented. This work is a major contribution to the County Council's efforts to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads.

I have asked the Accident Investigation Team to investigate the accident record at the locations referred to in your question, and I have asked them to contact you to discuss the findings and we can take it on from there.

Question to the Chairman of Policy Committee, from Councillor Tom Hollis

Under the last administration the promised roll out of superfast broadband was withdrawn in some areas of my division, particularly the Mill Lane area of Huthwaite, without explanation.

With broadband essential for small and home based businesses, and for the wider economic regeneration of Ashfield District, would you please review this situation urgently to help find a resolution for my residents?

Response from Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE, Chairman of the Policy Committee

I recognise that there are still issues we must address with broadband coverage, especially in rural areas. This is important, because business generation is not an issue that is limited only to built-up areas and towns, but is also relevant to the wider countryside.

I have consulted officers regarding your specific question and I am advised that the majority of properties in the Mill lane area have access to superfast broadband provided by BT, Virgin Media or both. When the programme commenced it was identified that around 77 properties in the Mill lane area do not have access to superfast broadband. A solution for these properties has been identified and will be delivered through 'Contract Two' of the Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire Programme. This particular solution is a 'fibre to the premise' solution offering speeds of up to 330 Megabits per Second (Mbps). Work is underway and this solution is expected to be delivered by October 2017.

The Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire Programme has already vastly increased coverage across Nottinghamshire. Currently, 96% of premises across the county have access to superfast broadband and the programme is continuing to increase this to 98% by summer 2018.

Work is underway for a third contract to increase coverage even further, but of course, Members are welcome to raise with me any concerns they have about coverage in specific areas. Working with our officers, we shall examine very carefully any such issues.