

Highways Review – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Report to Cabinet on 18 October 2022

Background

1. The Highways Review Panel met on 23 June, 26 July and 9 August 2022 to:
 - To understand the current situation on how highways schemes are prioritised and funded and explore the options available for future highways improvements.
 - To explore how we can work with our key partners and utilities on major highways projects (such as Network Rail and BT Openreach).
2. The Review Panel comprised of Councillors Atiya-Alla, Barnby, Douglas-Dunbar, Hill, Kennedy, Chris Lewis and Mills (with Councillor David Thomas representing Councillor Barnby for the first meeting and Councillor Lewis at the final meeting) and was Chaired by Councillor Kennedy, Scrutiny Lead for Place.
3. The background papers, including the detailed Scope for the Review and the recordings of the meetings can be found at <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=1905>
4. Key evidence considered by the Panel included:
 - Highways Review Scope and Timeline;
 - Details of the public engagement for the Network Rail bridge replacement and Torwood Street resurfacing by the Council;
 - Presentation from Network Rail;
 - Letter dated 2 November 2021 from Network Rail to the Council regarding the bridge works;
 - Letter dated 25 March 2022 from the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance to Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport regarding Network Rail bridge works;
 - Letter dated April 2022 from Department for Transport to the Leader of the Council regarding Network Rail bridge works;

- Letter dated 16 June 2022 from the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance to Ed Vokes, Department for Transport;
- Letter dated 18 July 2022 from Department for Transport to the Leader of the Council regarding Network Rail bridge works;
- Transport Asset Management Plan;
- Local Transport Plan 3- 2011-2026;
- Local Transport Plan Action Plan 2021-2026;
- Briefing note on highways budget, where the funding comes from and how the additional £570,000 allocated to the budget for 2022/2023 would be priorities and allocated;
- Road Safety Strategy 2017-2020;
- Presentation on Vision Zero South West – (more details can be found on their website at <https://visionzerosouthwest.co.uk/>; and
- Timeline of communications between BT Openreach, South West Highways and SWISCo regarding the damage to the BT chamber during the Torwood Street reconstruction works.

5. Key Findings

- 5.1 **Who is responsible for activities on our Highways?** Ian Jones, Head of Highways advised that the overall responsibility for the management and safe running of the highways was Torbay Council as the Local Highways Authority, who had commissioned SWISCo to manage all the highways functions on behalf of the Council. This included deciding what maintenance was required and how to distribute the budget and managing permitting to other utilities who need to carry out work. In turn the utility companies have a statutory duty to maintain their services. The Council works with its partners through the Highways Authority Utilities Committee (HAUC) to discuss upcoming works and forward planning. Utility Companies notify the Authority of programmed works through the highways permitting scheme which was required to be in place before they can carry out any work on the highways. Whilst there was no requirement for the Highways Authority to consult on highways maintenance each scheme was assessed to see what the appropriate levels of engagement should be and details were published on the Council's website see <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/roads/roadworks/>.
- 5.2 **Engagement Activities.** The Panel received a paper which set out the engagement activities which had been carried out in respect of the Network Rail bridge repair and the Torwood Street resurfacing. It was noted that more engagement had been carried out on these two schemes with residents and businesses than had been previously carried out on other highways schemes. However, the Panel acknowledged that not all the engagement had been done in a timely manner and improvements could be made to ensure continued and ongoing engagement, especially where issues or delays occur. Jo Penhaligon, Community Engagement Officer advised the Panel of the improvements in communications between the Highways Team and Communication and Engagement Team with more notice being provided on other upcoming highways schemes e.g. Penny's Hill, Teignmouth Road and Meadfoot Sea Road enabling them the opportunity to get the right messages out at the right time.

5.3 **Network Rail bridge repairs.** Mike Contopoulos (Project Director – Buildings and Civils) and Mike Smith (Regional Assistant Manager – Structures) from Network Rail gave evidence on the timeline of events and causes of the delays which occurred in connection with the bridge replacement at Torbay Road, Livermead, Torquay. This included initial development and design delays, assumption that the BT cables could be diverted prior to the new deck being installed, working around critical BT cables which provided key broadband to residents and businesses in Torbay – resulting in further design changes, storms in January and February and delays in equipment and supply of the bridge beams.

5.4 The Panel acknowledged the following key lessons which had been learned from the project which would be assessed and evaluated for any future major Network Rail schemes in Torbay:

- Earlier escalation of Network Rail design consultant not being able to maintain their design programme for the replacement scheme.
- Fragmented contracting strategy – Network Rail procuring sub-contractors and suppliers had led to ambiguity relating to risk. There was a need for an improved procurement strategy for awarding of contractors.
- Earlier constructability and buildability discussions between Principal Contractor and Designer. This could have improved construction programme sequencing.
- Improved engagement between Network Rail, Principal Contractor and Network Rail appointed sub-contractors and suppliers.
- Designer availability for modifications and on-site attendance during critical works.
- Constructability review of the design – beams on cant, weight of cill units, difficulty in getting appropriate lifting equipment to site, heavily congested areas of reinforcement within the bridge deck, significant temporary works required throughout.

5.5 It was anticipated that the final works to the bridge and public walkway would be completed within eight weeks and Network Rail were meeting with the suppliers on 23 June 2022 to seek assurance that the work would be completed within this timescale and they agreed to communicate the outcome to the Council and the community. At the meeting of the Panel held on 9 August 2022, Members were advised that there were further delays and that the work was not expected to be fully completed for a further two months due to difficulties with the contractors. A further meeting was due to be later in August to agree a more detailed timeline for the remaining works.

5.6 The Panel Heard from June Pierce (Chairwoman) and Paul Lidstone (Secretary) from the Cockington, Chelston, Livermead Community Partnership on the impact of the delay of the bridge works and the communication and engagements with the residents on the scheme. They outlined the difficulties residents had joining the flow of traffic and occasions when the road was closed for longer than expected and the impact that this had. Concerns were also raised in respect of the Livermead Hill overbridge which had taken higher numbers of vehicles because of the diversion. Reassurance was provided by Network Rail that the bridge was subject to an

annual inspection which was due during June and would pick up any structural issues with the bridge. They felt that if the Council had engaged with the Community Partnership sooner they would have been able to help share communications and updates with the community and hope that lessons had been learned and they can work together with the Council in the future on other schemes in their area. Since the meeting and as a result of the challenges put forward by the Community Partnership to Network Rail, the Chairwoman had been advised that communications have greatly improved.

- 5.7 The Leader of the Council advised that he had written to Network Rail in late October and had received response back on 2 November 2021 which confirmed the plan to demolish the existing bridge while the line was already closed for planned rail upgrade works on the weekends 8-10 January and 15-17 January 2022. The construction of the new bridge would then take place over five Saturday nights when trains were not running at the end of January and beginning of February to allow them to deliver the work more quickly – reducing the impact on the road and rail network. The letter did caution that due to the complexity of the scheme there was a risk that issues may arise that could impact on the programme of work.
- 5.8 The Leader of the Council also summarised his letter to Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport dated 25 March 2022 where he raised concerns over further delays on the Network Rail scheme with the work due to be completed on 23 May 2022 and the impact that this would have on Torbay's tourist season. It also highlighted issues with poor communications between Network Rail and the Council and sought mitigation for the pressures this placed on highways and consideration of potential subsidies for bus users. The response from the Secretary of State for Transport apologised for the delay and explained the reasons for this and referred to a productive meeting with the Council and Network Rail on 31 March 2022 which had resulted in improved communications between both parties.
- 5.9 The Leader of the Council referred to his follow up letter dated 16 June 2022 to Ed Vokes, Department for Transport highlighting that the Network Rail works had taken three months longer than planned, with the rebuilding of the parapet on the railway bridge resulting in overnight closures well into July and the impact that this had on residents. He requested that the Government should facilitate compensation to local residents on the diversion route and others immediately affected by the works on the bridge. The Panel also noted the content of a letter dated 18 July 2022 from Department for Transport to the Leader of the Council in response to this letter confirming that the bridge had opened to all traffic and pedestrians with one way traffic signal controls overnight whilst work to the bridge parapet was completed. Which was expected to be the case until September and that Network Rail had agreed to write to residents to keep them informed. They confirmed that the Government would not be able to help with compensation payments, but that Network Rail had offered to help with a community project that would give something back to the people that had been affected and that the Council was considering what may be most beneficial.
- 5.10 Ian Thomas, BT Openreach advised that they were informed back in 2020 about the proposed works and brought in solicitors to extend their concern as

the time for the bridge deck works was fast approaching and the risk of network damage given the fibre optics and major services was a concern.

- 5.11 The Panel heard from Councillor Morey, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture that communications with residents in the early stages could have been better. Over the last two months this had improved with weekly or bi-weekly meetings with Network Rail, Communications and Engagement Team, Highways, the Leader of the Council and Councillor Amil as Ward Councillor. They had also walked the areas to see what the issues were and whilst residents were unhappy with the delays they appreciated the walk around. There had been three delays in completion time and Network Rail have apologised for the delay. The main concern was ensuring that the road was open for the Airshow and if possible a pedestrian link between Torquay and Paignton, this was completed with a temporary pedestrian route by this date.
- 5.12 The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services, Councillor Carter, highlighted the importance of communication and explained that lessons had been learned from the rail project which relied on information being provided by a third party before the Council was able to update the community.
- 5.13 The Panel felt that the Council had underestimated the amount of traffic which would use the diversion through Livermead with heavy goods directed via the Ring Road. Large vehicles and buses were still using the residential route which added to the congestion and difficulties faced by residents entering and existing their properties on the diversion route.
- 5.14 **Torwood Street resurfacing.** Ian Jones, explained that the works to Torwood Street were planned for a twelve week period (this was longer than normal works to allow for any contingencies) over the winter to replace the road surface at Torwood Street which was in a poor state of repair. During the work contractors had issues with a South West Water sewer which was in poor condition and not shown on the plans due to its age which was addressed promptly. They also caused damage to the roof of a BT Openreach chamber which was also not shown on the plans and caused further delays as they were unable to get the cover off themselves to check and required action from BT Openreach. They had contacted BT Openreach at the end of January but following no action SWISCo raised the issues with BT Openreach in March. The Panel heard from Ian Thomas (BT Openreach) that they had not been informed about the damage until March. They had to seek the views of a structural engineer on the suitable remedy to safely repair the chamber and were informed that the contractors would not be able to repair this until August, which they felt was too long, therefore alternative solutions were put in place and the carriageway box was rebuilt on 27 May 2022.
- 5.15 The Panel noted that the main part of the road opened in March (earlier than planned) with the area around the chamber blocked off until it could be repaired. The Panel felt there was ambiguity in respect of the timeline for communications with BT Openreach on the damage to the chamber and who had told who and the timing of this and sought a timeline of the events. The Panel received a copy of the timeline at its meeting held on 9 August 2022.

This showed that South West Highways (SWH) had reported the damage to BT Openreach on 20 January 2022 which was followed up by a site inspection and photos being taken of the site. SWH had chased action and resulted in a further visit by BT Openreach on 16 February 2022. Following further delays SWISCo then became involved and telephoned and sent several emails between February and April which resulted in a further site meeting on 4 May to plan the works with BT Openreach. Works commenced by BT Openreach to build the chamber on 23 May with the final section of the road surfaced and opened by SWH on 30 May 2022. Members concluded that whilst the representative from BT Openreach who attended the meeting had been unaware of earlier communications about the issue, there had been considerable dialogue between the contractor and BT Openreach over a period of several months before final responsibility and action was taken by BT Openreach.

- 5.16. The Panel heard from Councillor Morey, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture that early engagement had been carried out with businesses, including a Facebook Live event, initial meetings held in October, pre-warning signs before Christmas in addition to press releases and social media communications. The businesses were consulted on the timing of the works to determine if they wanted them to start in December or January. A special parking promotion was introduced in neighbouring car parks to pay for one hour and stay for three hours to encourage people to the area.
- 5.17 Susie Colley, Chairwoman of the Torquay Chamber of Commerce outlined the difficulties faced by the traders and visitors, particularly the access to the Hilton Hotel and parking at the Terrace car park which was accessed via Museum Road. She raised concern over the time taken by BT Openreach to repair the chamber and felt that this should have been actioned and communicated quicker.
- 5.18 The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services, Councillor Carter, advised that lessons had been learned and the Communications and Engagement Team were working on plans to solve some of the difficulties around communication not just to the public but also between the Council/SWISCo and other suppliers, as was the case with the Torwood Street works. This included regular and continued engagement throughout projects to keep key interested parties updated and informed. The affected businesses had been informed that they may be able to claim some money back on their business rates. Consideration also needed to be given to what happens if a scheme runs over and how the communications would be managed.
- 5.19 **How highways schemes are funded and prioritised.** The Panel noted the contents of a briefing note which provided the background to how highways schemes were funded and prioritised. Torbay Council's Highways Management Service was delivered annually by SWISCo. Highways maintenance and improvement works were generally funded from the following 3 allocations.
 1. Torbay Council Revenue. – This allocation has been reduced considerably in recent years and funds routine highway maintenance, statutory issues, fees and charges, emergency and temporary works,

investigatory works, energy costs, communications and control costs and cyclical maintenance. This funding may be used to support the Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital programme if funding was available.

2. LTP Structural Maintenance Block – This was grant capital funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) and includes the ‘Pothole fund’ and ‘Incentive Fund’ elements. This may be used for permanent repair works and should be primarily used in the delivery of improvement of the Highway Asset. This funding was used for major resurfacing works, preventative maintenance, street lighting replacements, repairs to bridges and retaining walls. Due to the recent reductions to the Revenue funding, this allocation was also used to fund reactive permanent repair works to carriageways, footways and highway drainage, which had previously been funded by the Revenue budget.
3. LTP Integrated Transport Block – This was also a grant capital funding from the DfT which could be used for transport initiatives. The allocation was therefore split between initiatives managed by Spatial Planning (Transportation) and SWISCo highways. The highways elements were generally highways and transport upgrades, which could include highway improvements, road safety engineering, traffic engineering, traffic systems and associated traffic studies and modelling.

Torbay Council had also provided additional highways funding in the years 2021/22 and 2022/23 (see extract of the Council Minute from the meeting held on 3 March 2022). Some of the 2021/22 funding was carried forward into the current year. The briefing paper provided an outline of how this additional funding would be allocated in the current financial year.

- “1) that for 2022/23 net revenue expenditure of £120.8m resulting in a Council Tax requirement of £78.1m for 2022/23 (a 2.99% increase in Council Tax, of which 1% is for Adult Social Care) be approved, now including £570,000 for one-off highways improvements (including repairing pot-holes, repainting double yellow lines, improved signage, improved road safety, the introduction of new traffic regulation orders) to be allocated from the Comprehensive Spending Review Reserve. The reserve balance to be reinstated as the first allocation of any underspend in 2021/22 and 2022/23;”

Members requested a more detailed breakdown on how the additional £570,000 would be spent to meet the requirements of the above Minute. This document was provided for the meeting on 9 August 2022 and the Panel was satisfied with the content.

- 5.20 The Panel heard how there was currently no formal agreement on how the budget allocated for lines and signs would be spent and prioritised and suggested the merit of including this within the Service Level Agreement with SWISCo and the Council to include clear expectations on how this would be managed moving forward to ensure regular maintenance to enable appropriate enforcement. Members questioned if some of the income

received from parking enforcement could be ringfenced to help with the maintenance of lines and signs etc.

- 5.21 Members discussed the Council's Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) Policy and if residents were still able to apply for controlled or residents parking due to a potential moratorium on spend in this area. They suggested that the Policy should be reviewed to ensure that it was fair and fit for purpose and then the current operational policy to be made clear on the website and also to all Councillors to help them support their communities with any future requests. It was noted that new CPZs were on hold pending the update of the CPZ Policy which would be updated as part of the review of the overall Parking Strategy to ensure that the two documents were aligned.
- 5.22 Members noted that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) was a 15 year strategy document which was developed with Devon County Council in 2011 recognising the resources of Torbay Council and Devon County Council and how we could best work together to develop our shared priorities, whilst still maintaining a local Torbay element. Alongside the LTP were five yearly action plans 2011 to 2016, 2016 to 2021 and 2021 to 2026. Each version of the action plan had changed how it allocated funding to schemes and used flexible pots of funding taking into account National and Local Policies and priorities as the time of the action plan. The Panel acknowledged the anticipated changes to the way LTPs would be developed and funded in the future, particularly in respect of decarbonisation and improved focus on public transport, walking and cycling etc. linking in with LCWIP (Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plans) and improved infrastructure for electric charging points etc. It was proposed that Torbay would develop its own plans but would continue to work with Devon County Council also using the same consultancy team who would help develop some aspects of the plan.
- 5.23 The Panel also had regard to the climate emergency and discussed what SWISCo was doing to explore use of sustainable materials other than tarmac or concrete for highways repairs and maintenance. It was noted that the availability of alternative materials was limited in the South West and there had to be a balance between spending more money on alternative materials or investing more in preventative maintenance which would save money in the medium to long term.
- 5.24 **Road safety in Torbay.** The Panel noted that the Road Safety Strategy shows how the Council plans to deliver safer roads in Torbay and was a ten year strategy from 2010 to 2020. This had to be changed in 2017 due to removal of Road Safety revenue funding and the loss of 1.5 FTE (full time equivalent) staff which limited the resources available to deliver the Strategy including elements such as education interventions and campaigns. The current Strategy 2017 to 2020 had not yet been replaced as the Council was working with Vision Zero South West on a regional strategy which would then support the development of a local strategy for Torbay.
- 5.25 The Panel heard from Natalie Warr, Partnership Manager from Vision Zero South West, which was a collection of strategic and operational leaders and organisations who sought to reverse the negative trends in terms of casualties on the road network in the South West Region. Their four key principles were: to collaborate with each other and co-ordinate use of resources;

maximise opportunities to invest in road safety; engage with and involve our communities and stakeholders in delivering their aims; and be evidence led to explore innovative solutions. Their strategic aims were:

“To deliver our vision, we will work together in partnership, to drive changes which:

- Prevent death and serious injury as a consequence of using our road network;
- Improve our post collision response and care;
- Reduction in the number of road related deaths by 50% by 2030;
- Reduction in number of road related serious casualties by 50% by 2030.”

- 5.26 The Panel noted the governance and funding arrangements as set out in the submitted presentation. Torbay Council was represented by Ian Jones (Head of Highways), John Clewer (Senior Engineer, Strategy and Project Management) and Councillor Mike Morey (Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture). Superintendent Adrian Leisk, Roads Policing acknowledged the great contribution provided by Ian Jones and John Clewer but advised that other local authorities were represented at Director level to ensure strategic input from the Senior Leadership Team.
- 5.27 Vision Zero South West Partnership had set a Strategy to run until 2030, which was refreshed every two years with a Road Safety Delivery Plan with 50 initiatives which had been agreed and were progressing. They were working with lots of organisations and want to extend this further through the establishment of a wider stakeholder forum to enable connection with other groups.
- 5.28 Superintendent Leisk highlighted the importance of road safety in Torbay and provided reassurance that this was a key priority for the Police, who were also a key Lead Partner of Vision Zero South West with him Chairing the Activity A Group. He advised that the Police had recruited additional speed detection officers (an increase from 6 to 14) and introduced a dedicated speed detection hub in South Devon. They made use of the latest technology with mobile units which were regularly deployed across the network, including in Torbay. They have Community Speed Watch Co-ordinators with administrative support and would be holding awareness campaigns in Exeter and Cornwall later this year. They had increased the number of Community Speed Watch volunteers across the region from 410 in 2021 to 837 in July 2022 who were regularly engaged with Speed Watch. It was noted that compared to other areas Torbay did not have as many volunteers and Councillors were encouraged to raise awareness in their communities and encourage people to join Community Speed Watch. Members of the public could also use Operation Snap where they can upload videos of highways offences, they were then reviewed by a Team funded through Vision Zero. Approximately 4,300 drivers had been dealt with through this channel (more information can be found on their website at - <https://operationsnap.devon-cornwall.police.uk/>). The Police take an evidence-based approach to target areas where intervention was most needed. They want to reduce the number

of people killed but this needs to be done through creation of a culture where people drive safely and reflect on their behaviour. They put people through education via the driver awareness courses, 5,000 people a month were being put through these courses in Devon and Cornwall. They were developing an online tool where people would be able to put in a street and see the number of road traffic collisions and reasons.

- 5.29 Members requested the Police to provide information to be circulated to all Councillors raising awareness of Community Speed Watch and encouraging residents to sign up and get involved in the process and also to provide a quarterly briefing on current road safety initiatives.
- 5.30 The Panel discussed hazards caused by poor parking and the confusion between if these offences would be dealt with by the Council or Police. The Council's enforcement officers were only able to enforce where there were parking restrictions, dangerous parking and obstructions would be a matter for the Police but they would have to consider the severity of this due to their limited resources. The Government was consulting on a number of parking options such as footway parking and blocking boxes on junctions to see if this could be dealt with by local authorities with them collecting the fines and reinvesting them within the local area, but this had not yet been finalised.
- 5.31 The Panel heard how school crossing patrols had been maintained but they were now funded through the schools rather than the Council. Members noted a pilot scheme in Plymouth where they deny parking on streets by schools during certain hours through Vision Zero South West and initiatives such as school speed watch. Cornwall Council had worked with Sustrans to deliver training on walking and cycling (more information can be found at <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/>), there was also Bikability the Government's national cycle training programme which helps young people to learn practical skills and understand how to cycle on today's roads (more information can be found at <https://www.bikeability.org.uk/>). Consideration of schemes like this need to be considered in the wider context of strategic planning and transport strategies to ensure a consistent and fair approach across Torbay.
- 5.32 The Council would be introducing 20 mph zones in key areas to reduce speed, in priority order Fore Street, Barton; Fisher Street Area, Paignton; and Queensway, Torquay but it was noted that there may not be sufficient resource to implement all three schemes in a single financial year. It was proposed that this would be reviewed as the schemes progress and may be supported by the Integrated Transport Block funding if budget allows.
- 5.33 The Panel noted that following the reductions in 2017 the Council had very limited road safety professional expertise. John Clewer was retiring at the end of August (he worked between SWISCo and Strategic Planning on road safety issues) and SWISCo was looking to appoint a senior officer for Traffic Support Scheme but the wider elements of his role had not yet been decided.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Panel reflected and debated all the information provided to them, both in writing and orally and concluded that whilst there had been increased communications in respect of the Network Rail bridge repairs and Torwood

Street resurfacing works, further improvements still needed to be made. The Council needs to look at different and timely communications with Councillors, residents and businesses to keep them informed and updated as well as improving communication with our contractors and utilities. Network Rail have acknowledged the need to work differently to prevent the delays which occurred for the bridge repairs. The Panel acknowledged that their first meeting had helped to bring together key representatives from our Highways Department, BT Openreach and Network Rail which would help improve relationships and communications moving forward.

- 6.2. The Panel thanked all those who had contributed towards the review, particularly the representatives from Network Rail and BT Openreach for their honesty and their proactive approach to reach out to each other and the Highways Team following the first meeting to facilitate closer working together in the future and to the representatives from the Cockington, Chelston, Livermead Community Partnership and Torquay Chamber of Trade and Commerce for putting across the views of the communities and local businesses. Also representatives from Vision Zero South West and Devon and Cornwall Police.
- 6.3 The Panel welcomed and supported the principle of the highways spending and allocation of the additional £570,000 approved by Council on 3 March 2022 set out in the submitted briefing note to Members, but were also concerned over the backlog in maintenance and repairs and the lack of sustainable funding to address this. As a result lines and signs were not always fit for purpose to enable appropriate enforcement and income generation.
- 6.4 The Panel acknowledged the excellent partnership working through Vision Zero South West but felt that more should be done to raise awareness of their work across the Council as most of them had not heard of the partnership prior to the review. Torbay's input and influence in this work would also be strengthened by the suggested involvement of the Director of Place as well as strategically reviewing how this linked to other Council areas and strategies. Members were concerned over the reduction in the budget for road safety in 2017 but felt that this would be alleviated by reviewing our policies and improved partnership working with the Police and Vision Zero South West.
- 6.5 The Panel did not get a chance to gather evidence from schools on how they were promoting road safety but felt it was important that they work together with the Council, Police and Vision Zero to share good practice to help improve road safety within the school communities.
- 6.6 The Panel formed the following recommendations to the Cabinet, which were approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 14 September 2022. On being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried unanimously.

7. Recommendations

Recommendations to the Cabinet:

That the Cabinet be recommended:

1. to share with Communications and Engagement Team, Councillors, communities and members of the public the planned works for highways to give early notification of planned schemes, to ensure:
 - better communication with the businesses and residents before the works started i.e. either virtually or face to face meetings and followed up with an email or letter to ensure all the businesses hear the full discussions, timelines, reasons for delays etc.
 - these meetings/communications to continue throughout the scheme to keep everyone updated – including representatives from Highways, Communications/Engagement, contractor / utilities, local Ward Councillors, relevant Community Partnership etc. The meetings to be followed up with notes so those that weren't in attendance get to see what was discussed;
 - the Communications and Engagement Team to include within their Comms & Engagement Plan actions for what would happen if the schemes overruns;
 - that SWISCo ensure that where contractors find issues with utilities and chase them up with the relevant provider, if a response is not received within a reasonable timescale they escalate the issue to ensure robust action is taken in a timely manner;
 - that improved signage be provided for future road schemes showing routes which are suitable for HGVs to discourage them from using residential routes, where appropriate;
2. to ensure that the Communications and Engagement Team are notified of schemes at the earliest opportunity to help them plan and ensure early and regular communication and engagement is carried out with communities and affected businesses and other parties prior to any highways works being carried out, where possible involving contractors and utilities on major schemes;
3. to identify a contact point with the communities prior to the start of the highways work to help share communications with the community such as the community partnerships;
4. to request the Leader of the Council to write to Network Rail to express concern over the continued and excessive delays to repair the bridge and the impact that this is having on our communities and businesses;
5. to request the Managing Director of SWISCo and the Divisional Director Economy, Environment and Infrastructure to review the Service Level Agreement with SWISCo to specify the budget allocation and expectations for lining and signing to ensure they are maintained and fit for purpose;

6. to request the Director of Place to review the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) Policy to ensure it is up to date and fit for purpose and to provide a timeline for completion;
7. to review the income received from parking/highways enforcement and consider if a percentage of this can be ringfenced to help with the maintenance of lines and signs etc.;
8. to dual track the road safety schemes for Queensway at the same time as implementing the scheme for Fore Street, Barton;
9. that the Director of Place be recommended to regularly engage with the Vision Zero South West Project Board and other relevant Groups to ensure appropriate strategic input from Torbay Council and to access available support and share learning which can be implemented in Torbay and provide updates to all Councillors to keep them informed;
10. that the Director of Place be requested to work with the Senior Leadership Team to undertake a strategic review on how road safety can be improved in Torbay, focussing on safety outside schools, working alongside the work of Vision Zero South West whilst encouraging greener and more sustainable travel and to identify any additional resources required to support this;

Recommendation to TAPS/TASH:

That the Torbay Association of Primary Headteachers (TAPS) and Torbay Association of Secondary Headteachers (TASH) be requested to review and share good practice on how they support and promote road safety and what action they can take to improve road safety within the school communities.

Recommendations to the Police:

That the Police be requested:

- i. to provide information to be circulated to all Councillors raising awareness of Community Speed Watch and encouraging residents to sign up and get involved in the process for Councillors to share with their Community Partnerships; and
- ii. to provide a quarterly briefing on current road safety initiatives;