

Item 5) – Scrutiny Review of Planning

Response from Lancashire County Council Highways to recommendation number 20

Firstly I would like to assure you that LCC Highways officers will always respond as helpfully and as promptly to South Ribble Councillors as we do to queries raised by County Councillors in relation to local planning matters.

The key point you have raised for my colleagues and myself is that Lancashire County Council Highways be asked to review its capacity for assessing and challenging information provided by developers so that they can provide assurance it is robust and takes all issues into account.

I would like to respond positively and assure your Councillors that we routinely review and seek to improve individual officer experience and ability through our process of annual personal development reviews and periodic progress reviews. I review monthly (or more frequently if need arises) the share of duties and caseload of our local officers to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible service to the local planning authorities subject to their needs and to and fluctuations in our available resources.

The current restructure of all the County Council's services will provide an opportunity over the next 6 – 12 months to review our service to you and the other planning authorities at a fundamental level and to adjust our skill base and resource levels in line with corporate priorities. I trust that continuing with these commitments will address the recommendation.

On a final point, I should be most grateful if you could inform the Scrutiny Members that if the Chair of Planning Committee should convene cross-party briefings in advance of Committee meetings and he/she feels it would be appropriate to have highway officer support with any detailed technical matters relating to an item on the agenda, we will always do our best to support such meetings by personal attendance of a highways officer (although I should point out that we may not be able to maintain this firm commitment if the event should become a routine meeting outside of normal working hours).

Rachel Crompton
Developer Support Manager
Lancashire Highways Service
Lancashire County Council

31 July 2014