



Chris Hinchliff

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Dear Clerk and Councillors,

Having discussed local concerns with constituents at many parish council meetings since being elected, I have heard time and again the frustration at inaction on dangerous roads, apparently on the grounds that fatalities have not yet happened in the places of concern.

This has never been a good enough answer to the widespread road safety issues across North East Hertfordshire but I am writing to share with you a relevant comment made by Minister Lillian Greenwood during the Parliamentary debate I attended last week on the Government's newly published Road Safety Strategy.

During the session, the Minister stated that:

"...local authorities can and should draw on historical collision data when assessing road safety measures, but proactive measures to reduce risks should not be contingent on a fatal or serious incident occurring. Local authorities have the power and the funding to carry out interventions, so it is vital that they listen to the concerns of local people and act to prevent serious incidents..."

The Minister's comments provide a clear articulation of the Government's position: local transport authorities, including Hertfordshire County Council, through Hertfordshire Highways, are expected to use their existing powers and resources not only to respond to past incidents, but also to take proactive steps where communities raise concerns about potentially unsafe routes.

Her remarks underline that the Government does not view a serious or fatal collision as a prerequisite for action. Instead, the emphasis is on early intervention, informed by both available data and the concerns shared by local residents and parish councils.

Given the ongoing concerns raised about high-risk stretches of road in North East Hertfordshire, I thought it would be helpful for you to be aware of the Minister's stated position.

If you are ever told that action cannot be taken to improve road safety in your area, please refer to the Minister's words from the despatch box and do let me know too. With new funding and an ambitious national strategy, I hope we can finally move beyond baleful excuses for inaction.

Yours sincerely,

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