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**Legal Services**  
Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4RL  
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Mr Sean McGovern  
Senior Coroner

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

24<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Dear Mr McGovern

I am writing in response to the concerns raised by your investigation and report of 1st May 2018 into the death of Mr Neil Jones. Mr Jones died as a result of a road traffic collision which occurred on 16th December 2017 during the hours of darkness on the A446 Lichfield Rd, Wishaw near the Belfry hotel. Our understanding is that excessive speed and lighting were not given as causative factors.

The County Council has carefully considered your report and the matters of concern raised in it, specifically that there have been 4 fatal collisions at this site over 10 years despite a reduction in the speed limit to 50 mph in 2008.

Notification of the collision was received by the County Council on 18th December 2017. Following this notification Lee Williams a Road Safety Engineer, from the Traffic and Road Safety Group attended the site with Rod Lake, the traffic Management Assistant from Warwickshire and West Mercia Police's Road Safety Team. This site visit is a normal procedure following any fatal road accident.

The purpose of the site visit is to ascertain whether for safety reasons there are any immediate actions that need to be taken in respect to the highway and any possible defects and/or improvements that should be remedied or carried out without delay. At the time of the inspection officers attending agreed that there were no immediate actions that needed to be undertaken.

The County Council addresses road safety in a number of ways. In the case of this length of road, the relevant programme is the casualty reduction programme. We undertake an annual review of all collision cluster sites and routes across the County in order to identify those with the worst collision records and where there is a pattern of causes which can be addressed by engineering measures. The number of possible schemes considered each year across the County exceeds the annual funding available for the programme and, therefore, it is necessary to prioritise schemes according to objective criteria. The criteria identify those schemes which will deliver the greatest reduction in casualties for the money spent.

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As part of the annual casualty reduction scheme analysis, the review of the A446 Lichfield Road revealed that there had been 36 collisions within a 5 year period, of which 12 were serious and 4 fatal. 4 of the 36 accidents occurred during the hours of darkness. One of the fatal accidents was comparable to the death of Mr Jones in that it involved a pedestrian affected by intoxication being struck by a vehicle at night.

The death of Mr Jones increases the number of casualties on this length of the A444 and thus will affect the prioritisation of schemes. However, until we have completed our scheme short listing process it is not possible to commit to any scheme. Given that the resources available are finite, any decision to implement one scheme will mean that one or more other schemes cannot be implemented elsewhere. Therefore, it is important that the prioritisation process is adhered to before committing funds to a scheme. We are currently undertaking this process and would expect to make a decision by the end of September at which point we will be able to confirm the outcome.

Options for consideration should a casualty reduction scheme be prioritised at this location could include extending the 50 mph limit over the whole length of the A444 from Bassetts Polo to the A4091 roundabout and introducing average speed cameras to enforce the limit. In addition to enforcing speed limits, average speed cameras can encourage vehicles to travel at more regular and consistent speeds and that can help other road users judge their speed better. However the final design of any scheme introduced would be dependent upon more detailed work that would be required along the stretch of the highway concerned.

The County Council has taken very seriously your report and the concerns raised in it. I do hope that through this letter both you, and the family of Mr Jones, can be assured of the County Council's commitment to casualty reduction schemes and to reducing the number of tragedies on the county's highways in the future.

Yours sincerely

