

CRAIG SMITH CC
LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR
COALVILLE NORTH DIVISION

Mr. Rupert Matthews
Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire and Rutland
Leicestershire Police Headquarters
St. John's, Enderby
Leicester LE19 2BX

8th February 2025

Dear Rupert,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to seek clarification on the enforcement approach taken by Leicestershire Police regarding the use of e-scooters on public highways.

A recent post on the North West Leicestershire Police Facebook page stated:

"E-Scooter Riders Beware.... more initial warnings have been issued to riders on the #BardonBeatTeam. This is per Force Policy and is one of the #BardonBeatTeam priorities. Second occurrence and we take it..... Simple."

I responded to this post, asking:

"I'm curious... You rightly state that it is illegal to ride an e-scooter on a public road. Yet, when someone is caught, they receive only an initial warning, and it's only upon a second offence that the scooter is seized. If it's illegal and constitutes a criminal offence, shouldn't the law be upheld from the outset? Would this same approach apply to other offences, such as drink driving?"

The response from the police was:

"It's Force Policy and as such has to be followed by officers. This is decided by senior officers within the organisation and not on the ground level."

This raises an important question regarding the force's stance on upholding the law. The UK Government has been clear that e-scooters are regulated as motor vehicles under the Road Traffic Act 1988, meaning they are subject to licensing and insurance requirements. Given this, can you clarify whether Leicestershire Police are enforcing the law as written, or whether they are applying discretionary policies that appear to contradict national legislation?

Furthermore, a recent Freedom of Information request by a local resident revealed that only **one** e-scooter was seized in Leicestershire between 1st November 2023 and 31st October 2024. In contrast, Derbyshire Constabulary has seized several hundred over the same period.

Additionally, a quick internet search shows how easily high-powered e-scooters can be legally purchased online. For example, the Rion RE90, a high-performance electric scooter, can achieve speeds of up to 100

mph under the right conditions. With such machines available to the public, enforcement and clarity on the law are crucial for public safety.

I would appreciate your clarification on the following points:

1. What is the official enforcement policy on the illegal use of e-scooters on public roads in Leicestershire and Rutland?
2. Why is there an apparent disparity between enforcement in Leicestershire and neighbouring forces like Derbyshire?
3. Given the legal classification of e-scooters as motor vehicles, why does the force apply a warning-first approach rather than immediate enforcement?
4. Would you support a legislative change to either allow these machines to be licensed for legal road use with appropriate training, safety equipment, and insurance, or would you prefer an outright sales ban?

I would be grateful for your response on this matter as I believe public confidence in law enforcement relies on clarity, consistency, and fair application of the law.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly 'A. J. ...', written in a cursive style.

