

Meeting date: 9th January 2024

Report to: Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Report title: PETITION SUMMARY

Report from: Paul Tovey - Head of Highway Management and Dean Ward –
Head of Highway Infrastructure

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Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: N/A

1. Executive Summary

1.1 To provide a formal response to 3 petitions received for the Environment and Infrastructure Portfolio, relating to various matters affecting:

- (a) Proposed 30mph speed limit - Birmingham Road, Meriden
- (b) Average Speed Cameras - Stratford Road, Shirley West
- (c) Footway maintenance - Arnold Road, Shirley West

1.2 To formally receive 3 petitions handed in at the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 5

December and note the timescales to provide detailed responses.

2. Decision(s) Recommended

2.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to:

(a) Note the current position regarding petitions received for this Portfolio, as set out in Appendix 1

(b) Agree the recommendations for each petition as set out within the report.

3. Matters for Consideration Petition 1: Objection to the proposed reduction of the speed limit on Birmingham Road from 40 mph to 30 mph.

3.1 A petition has been received from Mr Aaron Chadwick on behalf of residents, objecting to the proposed reduction of the speed limit on Birmingham Road Meriden, from 40 mph to 30 mph.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

4.1 The petition relates to one of the Council's three priority Active Travel routes. The project in Meriden aims to support the Council's transport priorities and increase the proportion of walking and cycling trips. To help achieve this change in travel behaviour, a section of mandatory cycle lane was introduced, with soft segregation measures in accordance with the Department for Transport's (DfT) advice.

4.2 The cycle lane between Millisons Wood and Meriden Village Centre, along the B4104 Birmingham Road, included the use of "Orcas" which are small kerbs used to delineate and divide the space for cyclist to use. These features have proven to be problematic and at the Cabinet Member decision-making session on the 5 September, the removal of these measures was approved, based on the introduction of a lower 30mph speed limit.

4.3 Alternative solutions were discussed with the DfT and Active Travel England (ATE) and, on balance, the lower speed limit was deemed the appropriate solution. Ward Members have been consulted and they also support this option.

4.4 To support the scheme, a temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was introduced in October, whilst the statutory TRO process was followed. The statutory consultation process took place last year and in addition to the petition signed by 31 people, 10 individual representations were also received, (6 objections (3 of these also signed the petition), one neutral and 3 supporting the reduced speed limit.

4.5 Appendix 2 sets out and responds to the individual points raised in the representations. One of the main concerns is the lack of enforcement, leading to poor compliance. To address this concern the Council has already approved, as part of the HS2 Road Safety Fund project, the installation of Average Speed Enforcement (ASE) equipment along this route. This is currently planned to be implemented Spring 2024 and should resolve these concerns. The other key point raised is the impact on journey time. Motorists have two options to consider - a reduction of 10 mile per hour for the additional length of 30mph restrictions equates to about 1 minute extra in travel time, or alternatively use the A45, which is subject to a 60mph speed limit, as the most appropriate route for those travelling further.

4.6 If the 30mph speed limit is not confirmed, the future of the cycle lane will need to be

reconsidered in a future report.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option.

- 5.1 The introduction of a 30mph speed limit is in accordance with the DfT advice on setting local speed limits. It is also supported by ATE and supported by the Ward Members.
- 5.2 The lower traffic speeds will create a safer environment for all road users, but especially cyclists using the un-segregated cycle lanes. It is therefore recommended that, notwithstanding the representations received, the 30mph Speed Limit Order for Birmingham Road should be approved.

6. Matters for Consideration Petition 2: Request to install Average Speed Enforcement (ASE) Cameras along the Stratford Road between Robin Hood Island, Hall Green and "Poppy Island" Shirley.

- 6.1 A petition has been received from Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Birmingham City Council), on behalf of residents of Hall Green South Ward and the wider area, calling for the installation of ASE cameras along the section of the Stratford Road between Robin Hood Island and Poppy Island, Shirley.

7. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 7.1 The section of the A34 Stratford Road referred to in the report falls partly within the area managed by Birmingham City Council (BCC). Having consulted BCC, they confirmed that this route does not currently feature in the priorities for the expansion of the ASE system.
- 7.2 The petition refers to "boy racers" and anti-social driving behaviours taking place. However, the provision of ASE equipment has been prioritised at locations where speeding has been identified as being a contributory factor where injuries have been sustained from multiple road traffic collisions. This is not the case in this location.
- 7.3 The results from the Council's bi-annual review of road safety in the Borough is due to be published at the decision-making session in February 2024. It is therefore recommended that this location should be referred to that piece of work and considered alongside the Council's other road safety priorities to see if any other measures or actions are considered necessary at this time.

8. Reasons for recommending preferred option.

- 8.1 The collision history for this section of the A34 Stratford Road in Solihull is not generally speed related and therefore the deployment of ASE equipment is not considered to be the right solution.
- 8.2 The location is included in the Council's bi-annual review and, as part of that project, officers will consider if any engineering or educational measures may be appropriate. The location will also be promoted as part of the Speed Awareness project where one of the SpeedVisor signs is deployed for up to 4 weeks, together with associated road safety information signage which helps raise awareness of residents' concerns raised in this petition.

9. Matters for Consideration Petition 3: Request for pavement improvements on Arnold Road.

- 9.1 A petition has been received from Mrs Mary Hawkeswood on behalf of residents of Arnold Road and Arnold Grove, calling for pavement improvements, removal of overgrown trees and repair of tree root damage to enable ease of use of the public footpath which in places is perceived to be currently not usable by wheelchairs or

pushchairs and is a danger to residents.

10. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 10.1 Arnold Road and Arnold Grove are typical examples of tree lined streets present across the borough. Officers have been made aware of issues with tree roots damaging the footway surfaces at this location and several trees have already been removed and new smaller trees planted.
- 10.2 Recent safety inspections in the area, following submission of the petition, identified several additional trees where intervention will be required to repair the footway.
- 10.3 Where possible, works will be designed to retain the tree, however, once the tree reduces the available footway width to below 1.2m, (the width necessary for a wheelchair or double pram to pass safely), then removal of the tree may be necessary. This location is included in the 2024/2025 financial year programme to undertake detailed inspections that will inform a solution. in accordance with the council's approved tree removal policy.

11. Reasons for recommending preferred option.

- 11.1 The policy summarised above is the approved approach for dealing with safety issues regarding tree roots and the associated safety concerns. Any tree considered dangerous will be replaced in line with the policy.

12. Matters for Consideration Petition 4: Request that the Council implement traffic calming measures to reduce speeding and dangerous driving on Barn Lane

- 12.1 At Full Council on 5th December 2023, Councillor Kathryn Thomas submitted a petition on behalf of 103 residents of Barn Lane, requesting that the Council implement traffic calming measures to reduce speeding and dangerous driving on Barn Lane.
- 12.2 This matter is currently being investigated, and the outcome will be reported at the Cabinet Member decision session in March 2024. This will provide sufficient time for traffic and road traffic collision data to be reviewed and the request to be considered and appropriate responses prepared.

13. Matters for Consideration Petition 5: Request that the Council provide safe pedestrian crossing on Moordown Avenue for school children attending St. Andrews RC Primary School and their parents.

- 13.1 At Full Council on 5th December 2023, Councillor Ade Adeyemo submitted a petition on behalf of 127 people from St Andrew's RC Primary School, Moordown Avenue, requesting the Council provide safe pedestrian crossing on Moordown Avenue for school children attending St Andrews RC Primary School and their parents.
- 13.2 This matter is currently being investigated, and the outcome will be reported at the Cabinet Member decision session in March 2024. This will provide sufficient time for traffic and road traffic collision data to be reviewed and the request to be considered and appropriate responses prepared.

14. Matters for Consideration Petition 6: Request that the Council address the speed of vehicles on Falstaff Road

- 14.1 At Full Council on 5th December 2023, Councillor Shahin Ashraf submitted a petition submitted a petition on behalf of 92 residents of Falstaff Road requesting that the Council address the speed of vehicles on the Street. Falstaff Road gets used as a cut-through between Shakespeare Drive and Bills Lane. The speed that vehicles travel through the road is a risk to pedestrians crossing the road and pulling off their drives.

The sound of speeding vehicles is also a noise disturbance.

14.2 This matter is currently being investigated, and the outcome will be reported at the Cabinet Member decision session in March 2024. This will provide sufficient time for traffic and road traffic collision data to be reviewed and the request to be considered and appropriate responses prepared.

15. Implications and Considerations

15.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>People and Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. 2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 	<p>Safety and accessibility are at the heart of everything the Council does when considering making changes to how the public highway operates. This includes the safety of children, young people, and our most vulnerable road user groups.</p>
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Develop and promote the borough's economy, revitalise our town and local centres and maximise the opportunities of UK Central and HS2, 5. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable. 	<p>The Council's priorities have been taken into consideration when making the recommendations contained within this report. It is considered that there are no direct implications because of the recommendations of this report.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions. 	<p>The Council's priorities have been taken into consideration when making the recommendations contained within this report and there are no significant environmental implications.</p>

15.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

15.2.1 The matters arising from this petition have not been the subject to review the Council's Scrutiny Boards. With any proposed changes, the associated statutory consultation process will be undertaken.

15.3 Corporate Parenting Implications:

15.3.1 None associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

15.4 Financial implications:

15.4.1 The costs associated with managing petitions are funded within existing service budgets.

15.4.2 Any financial implications associated with proposed and agreed actions identified in this report will be prioritised and managed within the service revenue and capital

budgets.

15.5 Legal implications:

15.5.1 None because of the recommendations in this report.

15.6 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

15.6.1 The Corporate Risk Management Approach has been complied with to identify and assess the significant risk associated with these recommendations. This includes (but is not limited to), financial, political, legislation and reputation risks.

15.6.2 The approach is not intended to eliminate all risks and not all risks identified can be managed all the time. Also, risks will still exist that have not been identified. However, based on the information provided, no significant risks have been identified.

15.7 Equality implications:

15.7.1 None because of the recommendations of this report.

15.8 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and/or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

15.8.1 None.

16. List of appendices referred to.

16.1 Petitions Update January 2024 – Appendix 1.

16.2 B4104 Birmingham Road Representations Summary Report – Appendix 2.

17. Background papers used to compile this report.

17.1 None.

18. List of Other Relevant Documents.

18.1 None.