

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	16 th SEPTEMBER 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	PETITION FOR A 20mph ZONE IN BRIANTS AVENUE AND SURROUNDING ROADS - UPDATE REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	CAVERSHAM
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update to the Sub-Committee the receipt of a petition received from residents asking the Council to improve road safety by implementing a 20mph zone in Briants Avenue and surrounding roads.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That Briants Avenue and surrounding roads continue to be monitored as part of the Council's ongoing road safety strategy and the Vehicle Activated Signs be used when possible as part of the annual sign rotation schedule.
- 2.3 That the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision of road safety, traffic calming measures and associated criteria is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 A petition has been received asking the Council to introduce a 20mph zone in Briants Avenue and surrounding roads.

The petition reads - *"We the undersigned request that Reading Borough Council improve road safety on our streets by implementing a 20mph zone in Briants Avenue and surrounding roads including, Nelson Road, Montague Street, Marscak Street, St John's Road, South View Avenue, Washington Road and Ardlar Road"*.

- 4.2 Briants Avenue and surrounding roads are standard width two way residential roads which are subject to a 30mph speed limit with street lighting. All of the roads have on street parking, which reduces traffic speeds, and Briants Avenue has a bus stop build out which also reduces traffic speeds.
- 4.3 The requirements for 20mph speed limits are included with the Department for Transport document 'Traffic Advisory Leaflet 9/99, 20mph Zones and Limits'. This document states *"20mph zones would be particularly appropriate where there is an existing record of accidents to children occurring over an area, or where concentrations of pedestrians and/or cyclists exist or are anticipated. They can help to protect children walking and cycling to and from school, and may encourage other children to walk or cycle."* The criteria continues that 20mph zones are unlikely to be appropriate where the observed speeds are above 24mph unless traffic calming measures are provided if there is an excessive speed problem.
- 4.4 Speed surveys were undertaken on Briants Avenue on Monday 3rd August in free flow conditions in accordance with national requirements. The results of the surveys showed that the mean speed along Briants Avenue in this location was 24mph and the 85th percentile speed was 28mph, which shows compliance with the existing 30mph limit.
- 4.5 The duty of the highway authority is to ensure that the highway is as safe as reasonably practicable. This is achieved by using accident data supplied by the police, where the Council can identify a pattern of those locations that have the worst records. The accident statistics have been checked for Briants Avenue and the surrounding roads and there has only been one injury accident recorded, which was not caused by excessive speed, in the latest 3 year period.

- 4.6 Many requests are received for measures to address specific issues such as speeding vehicles and traffic calming. Unfortunately there are insufficient funds to deal with every such request and therefore priority is given to those sites with an existing history of injury accidents where there is a causation factor that is treatable.
- 4.7 The vast majority of drivers do drive responsibly, but sadly there will always be a small minority of drivers who will not drive at an acceptable speed, whatever measures are placed on the road to encourage them to do so. It may be the case that speed enforcement is the only option, however, the focus is on casualty reduction and prolonged enforcement is targeted at those roads that already demonstrate a poor safety record.
- 4.8 Speeding within residential streets has been shown to be one of the greatest concerns for those that live there. Since the introduction of community initiatives both by the Police, Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) and the Council (community liaison officers) concerns of vehicle speed and/or the perception of speeding is one of the most requested areas for action. Speeding is only enforceable by the Police although the Council is responsible for the highway and the implementation of traffic management initiatives. With increasing concern of speeding being expressed by residents, the Council has developed a speed awareness strategy. The Council has a list of locations where concern of vehicle speed has already been raised throughout the Borough and the listed roads will be added to this list.
- 4.9 The speed awareness campaign is designed to provide the Council with a factual view of vehicle speeds within those areas of concern. The deployment of vehicle activated signs will enforce the message that a speed limit exists and encourage drivers to comply with that limit. Where there are higher speeds recorded, the speed awareness campaign will use the data collected to determine and justify other possibilities, for example enforcement and/or changes in traffic management.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The lead petitioner will be informed of the findings of the Sub-Committee.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None arising from this report.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 The Council will carry out an equality impact assessment scoping exercise prior to submitting the update report to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising from this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Petition report - TM Sub June 2015