

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 th JUNE 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	16
TITLE:	CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT TRAFFIC SIGNS REGULATIONS & GENERAL DIRECTIONS (TSRGD) 2015 BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the Sub-Committee on the review of the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions (TSRGD) 2015 currently being undertaken by central government.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the areas under consideration by central government in consultation with local highway authorities.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision of road signs and associated criteria is governed by central government and this review may allow more flexibility in the use of road signs in the future. The use of road signs is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards where we are currently obliged to follow national standards. Where local flexibility is permitted as a result of the central government review we may need to carry out our own local review.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions has historically been reviewed, on average, every 10-15 years. The current TSR&GD was made in 2002 and, therefore, now being reviewed. The commencement of this process culminated in 'Signing the Way' published in 2011 which set out recommendations for delivering a modernised TSRGD.
- 4.2 TSRGD has been restructured to provide more flexibility and a much greater range of sign designs that should substantially cut the need for the Department to specially authorise signs. This will be a significant saving for local authorities, and reflects the fact that they are best placed to know what signing solutions are suitable for their roads.
- 4.3 The new TSRGD allows more discretion in placing signs, in many cases removing the requirement for upright signs and markings to be placed together. It also relaxes the requirements for lighting signs, which is likely to save local authorities money in energy costs. These changes will also help reduce sign clutter.
- 4.4 It is worth noting that on the whole the appearance of the signs themselves to road users will not change. The consultation is about creating a flexible legislative framework for the future, rather than new signs.
- 4.5 Appendix 1 summaries the main areas covered by the review.
- 4.6 The consultation is of a technical nature and aimed at practitioners within local authorities. This current phase of consultation has been supported by a number of road show events. As a part of those events there has been the opportunity to feedback on particular points of detail. The most recent period of consultation closed early June 2014 with a summary of responses, including the next steps, to be published during June/July 2014.

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 When the new TSRGD is produced there will be a need to carry out our own review on its use. It has been suggested that statutory consultation on parking restrictions may be relaxed. Should this be

the case we will be required to review how we carry out local consultation to ensure any change is appropriately communicated.

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 Minutes of Council meeting held on 25th March 2014 where the petition was originally presented.