

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 SEPTEMBER 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	13
TITLE:	HIGHMOOR ROAD / ALBERT ROAD - PETITION FOR A SAFER CROSSROADS - UPDATE		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update the Sub-Committee on the resultant review of the road safety improvement options to reduce accidents and the concern of accidents at the crossroads of Highmoor Road/Albert Road.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 lists the options reviewed with an officer recommendation of the best solution. By closing the west to east movement from Highmoor Road across Albert Road to general traffic the risk of collision is almost completely removed. By creating a short length of 'bus lane' the restriction will allow public transport, emergency service vehicles, cyclists and public services vehicles to use the junction.
- 1.3 The review of this junction forms part of the annual road safety programme. The authority to carry out statutory consultation for waiting and movement restrictions for has already been granted by the Sub-Committee at its meeting of 13th March 2014. However, as there is now a specific option being offered the Sub-Committee is asked to approve option 1 as a scheme that can be delivered.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee note the review of the options (Appendix 1) to improve safety at the junction of Highmoor Road with Albert Road.
- 2.2 That the Sub-Committee approve the officer recommendation to remove general traffic movements across the junction (option 1).
- 2.3 That in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee, the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to advertise the Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the option 1 scheme in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 2.4 The results of the statutory consultation process will be shared with the sub-committee at a future meeting. If no objections are received to the proposal, option 1 will be implemented.
- 2.5 That the Head of Transportation and Streetcare, in consultation with the appropriate Lead Councillor be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Under the 1988 Road Traffic Act the highway authority has a duty to take steps to both reduce and prevent collisions on the road network. In addition under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the authority has a duty to maintain and manage the road network and secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic. Traffic is defined as encompassing all road users including pedestrians.

4. CURRENT LAYOUT AND DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

- 4.1 Despite there being a requirement on drivers to STOP at both approaches of Highmoor Road to Albert Road very few do and consequently conflicts have occurred. Both Highmoor Road approaches are signed and lined instructing drivers to STOP in accordance with national legislation. Failure to STOP is regarded as a driving offence which is only enforceable by the police.
- 4.2 There is a central hatch on Albert Road with a narrow right turn provision that was the result of a previous road safety scheme. The previous road safety issues involved right turning accidents from Albert Road into Highmoor Road. Therefore, any change at the

junction has to be mindful of the previous problems that existed albeit a number of years ago.

5. SUMMARY OF PETITION AND ISSUES RAISED AT SITE MEETING WITH RESIDENTS

- 5.1 A petition was received by Traffic Management Sub Committee in January 2014 containing 288 signatures requesting that the cross roads of Highmoor Road with Albert Road is made safer for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles. A meeting was held with residents where a number of views and opinions were shared on what is considered to be wrong with the junction and the measures needed to improve safety. Appendix 1 includes some of the ideas shared at the site meeting, together with officer assessment of the junction.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is unlikely that we will be able to improve visibility for drivers exiting the West side of Highmoor Road onto Albert Road due to the alignment of Albert Road South of the junction. Whilst other views, opinions and ideas have been put to us evidentially the problem is only the vehicle movement across the junction West to East.
- 6.2 Therefore, there is a very strong argument in closing the West side of Highmoor Road at the junction of Albert Road to general traffic except for public transport and cyclists and also emergency services and other public service vehicles. This potentially is relatively straightforward to deliver and can be supported through civil enforcement rather than relying on Police enforcement. From the perspective of Albert Road, the junction still exists, therefore, additional measures may need to be considered highlighting the presence of the junction through improved signage.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

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

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 8.1 Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The list of options has been shared with the lead petitioner and ward members for wider circulation within the community.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Proposals for movement restrictions are advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 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.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The annual road safety programme is funded through existing Transport Capital Budgets.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 TM Sub Committee 16th January 2014 petition submission. TM Sub Committee 13th March 2014 Annual Road Safety Review.