

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 NOVEMBER 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	TRAFFIC SIGNS REGULATIONS AND GENERAL DIRECTIONS		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The government have been reviewing the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) following a review of signing policy culminating in 'Signing the Way', published in 2011. It is typical for the government to review the TSRGD every 10-15 years and the current 2002 version is out of date and in need of an overhaul.
- 1.2 It has been expected that the new TSRGD will be laid before Parliament in 2015 and coming into force before the end of the year. However, this has now been delayed as further consultation has been deemed necessary around a small number of policies which were not part of the earlier public consultation.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to inform the Sub-committee of the detail of the additional consultation and highlight the delay to the new version of the regulations. The delay is of particular relevance as we have schemes waiting for delivery that are expected to be affected by the change in signing regulations.
- 1.3 This is important to all local highway authorities as there are a number of changes expected in the new version. Most noticeably we are expecting a change to the requirement to illuminate 20mph speed limit signs. This is expected to result in a significant reduction in costs when implementing new schemes. However, until the new TSRGD has been laid before Parliament we are legally required to use the current 2002 version.
- 1.4 There have been extensive levels of stakeholder engagement over the past 4 years including a full public consultation last year and a series of roadshows across Britain to promote and explain the new policies. It has been expected that the new TSRGD will be laid before Parliament in 2015 and coming into force before the end of the year. However, this has now been delayed as

further consultation has been deemed necessary around a small number of policies which were not part of the earlier public consultation.

1.5 Appendix 1 - Summary of the consultation (now closed) with our response.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Sub-committee note the report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The government have been reviewing the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) following a review of signing policy culminating in 'Signing the Way', published in 2011. It is typical for the government to review the TSRGD every 10-15 years and the current 2002 version is out of date and in need of an overhaul.

3.2 The new version (which will replace the 2002 version) has been completely restructured. The purpose of the new version is to provide significant deregulation and a new approach for local authorities in delivering their traffic management and traffic signs. This review is about creating a flexible legislative framework for the future, rather than new signs. The appearance of the signs themselves to road users will not change.

3.3 Local Highway Authorities are bound by an Act of Parliament to use the TSRGD for signing and lining the public highway. Until the new version is laid before Parliament and comes into law we must continue to use the current 2002 version.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 There have been extensive levels of stakeholder engagement over the past 4 years including a full public consultation last year and a series of roadshows across Britain to promote and explain the new policies. Officers have been involved in this consultation at a number of different levels and have given feedback at every opportunity. Until now it has been expected that the new TSRGD will be laid before Parliament in 2015 and coming into force before the end of the year. However, this has now been delayed as further consultation has been deemed necessary around a small number of policies which were not part of the earlier public consultation.

4.2 This delay is significant to all local highway authorities as there are a number of changes expected in the new version. Most noticeably we are expecting a change to the requirement to illuminate 20mph speed limit signs. This will have an impact on the costs of delivery of 20mph as previously reported to the Sub-committee. However, until the new TSRGD has been laid before Parliament we are legally required to use the current 2002 version.

4.4 There has been no official announcement as to when the new TSRGD will come into force. The draft documentation has consistently been dated 2015 in line with expectation that the new regulations will come into force this year. However, the very latest draft publication is now dated 2016 confirming that there is no possibility of the new version being laid before Parliament this

year. Our best guess is that the new version will be laid before Parliament early in the new-year coming into force during the spring. Therefore, our plans to implement 20mph across east Reading remain on hold.

4.5 Appendix 1 is a summary of the now closed additional consultation with our response. The consultation ran from 28th August 2015 to 6th October 2015.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 This proposal supports the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:

- Keeping the town clean, green and active.
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 We have taken every opportunity to engage with the Department for Transport through their official consultation and workshops events since 2011. We have already consulted formally and informally on 20mph for east Reading.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 We are legally required to continue to use the 2002 version of the regulations until a new version comes into force. If the new version of the TSRGD is not available by May 2016 we will have to re-take the decision to introduce 20mph in east Reading and possibly re-advertise the restriction. Officers will inform the Sub-committee of what action it may need to take at the March 2016 meeting as appropriate.

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.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 To implement new signing particularly 20 mph schemes are likely to cost significantly more under the 2002 version of the TSRGD.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Various TMAP and TM Sub-committee reports on 20mph and east Reading 20mph.