

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 JUNE 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	15
TITLE:	SCHOOL EXPANSION AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT UPDATE		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a further update to the Sub-Committee on the progress made towards encouraging sustainable travel to schools through the development of new Travel Plans for the primary schools that are currently expanding.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 That the Sub-committee agree to the use of Section 106 monies secured from the expansion of EP Collier Primary School to upgrade the pedestrian crossing across Caversham Road by York Road as set out within this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposals are in line with current Transport, Education and Planning Policy.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Further to that previously reported at March meeting of the Sub-committee it is proposed to up-grade the pedestrian crossing across Caversham Road by York Road. This up-grade will involve the removal of the older style 'pelican' crossing and introduce newer

technologies that extend the crossing time for pedestrians that need more time to cross. The 'PUFFIN' crossing includes additional detectors that monitor pedestrian activity within the roadway. These detectors extend the red time to vehicles to ensure that the carriageway is clear of pedestrians before returning to vehicle green.

- 4.2 The pedestrian crossing further along Caversham Road by the Richfield Avenue roundabout was up-graded to a PUFFIN during the summer of 2015 resulting in a number of positive comments from people on foot. An up-grade of the crossing by York Road is particularly relevant as it can be used by groups of parents and school children of EP Collier School.
- 4.3 By improving the pedestrian crossing facilities at this location people will feel safer crossing the four lanes of Caversham Road with greater confidence. The current pelican crossing has a flashing amber period where drivers are required to remain stationary whilst people are still using the crossing. With such a wide crossing it is often the case that drivers will carry on with their journey during the flashing amber period and whilst pedestrians are still in the road. Particularly for parents with young children the current operation of the pedestrian crossing can become a barrier to walking.
- 4.4 By securing funding to up-grade this crossing from the EP Collier School expansion the monies will be used to benefit school children directly. The cost of this up-grade is estimated to be no more than £50K (exact amount to be determined by the final design). This work and the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, as already agreed at the March meeting of the Sub-committee, is expected to improve active and sustainable travel to the school with less reliance on car travel.

20mph proposal

- 4.5 Further to March TM Sub-committee agreeing to implement a wider coverage of 20mph around EP Collier School this work has been delayed slightly. The introduction of 20 mph was subject to specific requirements as defined by the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions (TSRGD) which the Government finally brought into force on 22nd April earlier this year. Now that the TSRGD has been revised we can promote the lower speed limit with confidence that it is affordable and enforceable within areas such as this.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The delivery of School Travel Plans as outlined in this report help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:
 - Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living.
 - Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Public planning exhibition events were held at each expanding school for parents, pupils, staff and the neighbouring communities in 2014 to inform the community about the proposed building works and their impact. Comments and concerns related to transport issues, particularly parking and extra road traffic were gathered at these events and informed the planning application submissions and the School Travel Plans. Once the Travel Plans are submitted, these are accessible to the public on the Council's website.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any future proposals for waiting and movement restrictions would be advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

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 up-grade of this crossing from a pelican to a PUFFIN and the introduction of a lower 20mph speed limit will improve specifically the walking experience for everyone including groups with protected characteristics.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Funding for the pedestrian crossing up-grade and 20mph speed limit will be funded from Section 106 monies collected as a part of the EP Collier School expansion.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMOTS) March 2010.

10.2 School Expansion and Sustainable Travel in Reading, Traffic Management Sub-Committee report, March 2014, November 2015, January 2016 and March 2016.