

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 SEPTEMBER 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	PETITION FOR TRAFFIC CALMING IN NORTHCOURT AVENUE - UPDATE REPORT		
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#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To report to the Sub-Committee on the review of the petition received from residents requesting the Council to introduce traffic calming measures in Northcourt Avenue.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That Northcourt Avenue continues to be monitored as part of the Council's ongoing road safety strategy and that vehicle activated signs be used when possible as part of the speed of awareness programme.
- 2.3 That the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.

#### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision for the introduction of traffic calming measures is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.

#### 4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 A petition containing 162 signatures was received from residents of Northcourt Avenue, Wellington Avenue and Stansfield Close, requesting the Council investigate and resolved speeding issues on Northcourt Avenue. The petition was reported to Traffic Management Sub-Committee in June 2016 for further investigation.

4.2 The wording of the petition reads:

*'We the undersigned are very concerned with the speed of traffic in Northcourt Avenue and are asking the Council to consider raising the carriageway to footway level to create priority for crossing pedestrians and encourage drivers to slow down to 20mph at the following locations:*

1. *Cressingham Road - north arm*
2. *Stansfield Close junction*
3. *Ennerdale Road junction*
4. *Wellington Avenue junction*
5. *Sherfield and Benyon Halls access road junction*
6. *Christchurch Road - south arm'*

4.3 In response to this petition an automatic traffic count was undertaken on Northcourt Avenue on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016 for the duration of a week.

4.4 The result of the survey indicates the mean speed is recorded as 28.3mph. The mean speed is the speed at which most drivers are travelling and is used by local authorities for speed limit setting. Based on the results, the average vehicle speed complies with the speed 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 record. The accidents statistics have been checked for Northcourt Avenue and no injury accidents have been recorded within its entire length during latest 36 month 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 Northcourt Avenue 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 This proposal supports the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and helps to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:
- 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 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 Traffic Management Sub-Committee June 2016