

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	SOUTH STREET / SIDMOUTH STREET ROAD SAFETY UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	ABBEY
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 There is a history of incidents at the junction of Sidmouth Street and South Street, which have resulted in casualties, in addition to a perception of speeding traffic along Watlington Street and South Street.
- 1.2 This report provides a proposal for the introduction of traffic management measures that should reduce the number of casualties at the junction and the perceived level of speeding along Watlington Street and South Street.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultation and advertise the closures as explained in 4.4, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 2.3 That subject to no objection(s) received, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.

- 2.4 That any objection(s) received following the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.
- 2.5 That no public enquiry be held into the proposals.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Improving road safety through the reduction of casualties is a statutory duty of the Council, as highway authority.

4. BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Abbey Ward Councillors initially conducted an informal consultation on proposals to close South Street (east-side), at its junction with Sidmouth Street, to remove rat-running traffic that occurs between London Road and Sidmouth Street. The consultation also requested resident views on the installation of traffic calming (speed cushions). However, the relatively low level of mixed responses did not allow for a clear recommendation to be made.
- 4.2 There is a continuing road safety issue on Sidmouth Street, which is demonstrated by Police-supplied casualty data and anecdotally by nearby residents and Reading Borough Council, as Local Highway Authority is required to address this issue.
- 4.3 Whilst an obvious solution is a full road (carriageway) closure of South Street, at a point immediately east of its junction with Sidmouth Street, there appears to be little support from those directly affected.
- 4.4 However, an option that does appear to have substantial support would be a closure at two junctions namely Watlington Street/South Street and Watlington Street/The Grove. This would create a cul-de-sac in Watlington Street served from the London Road, whilst allowing residents of South Street and The Grove to continue to use the Sidmouth Street/South Street junction.
- 4.5 Any such closure within this area and ending of through traffic would significantly reduce traffic movements at the junction of Sidmouth Street with South Street thus leading to:
- a) Reduced risk of vehicle conflicts on Sidmouth Street and a subsequent reduction in casualties;

- b) Removal of 'rat-run' traffic along Watlington Street and South Street, in both directions, reducing road safety risks and improving the environment for residents; and
- c) Reduced vehicle speeds by removing the 'rat-run' traffic and creating an area that will be used by residents and their visitors only.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:

- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Changes to Traffic Regulation Orders will require advertisement and consultation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

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 An Equality Impact scoping exercise has been conducted. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory and a statutory consultation will be conducted, providing an opportunity for

objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the closure.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The required advertising for the statutory consultation will be funded from the capital Highway safety budget.
- 9.2 Implementation will need to be funded from the capital Highway safety budget.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Watlington Street / South Street - Informal Consultation (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, September 2016).
- 10.2 Watlington Street / South Street Informal Consultation - Update (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, November 2016).