

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 SEPTEMBER 2021	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	CIL LOCALLY FUNDED SCHEMES 2021: PROPOSALS FOR STATUTORY CONSULTATION		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions have enabled development of a number of local Transport-related schemes, following allocations this year.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval for officers to undertake necessary statutory consultation/notice processes to progress three scheme designs for zebra crossings on Norcot Road, Church End Lane and Addington Road. It also seeks agreement to implement lining schemes on Morpeth Close and to notify the Sub-Committee of the lining alterations to the roundabout at The Meadway/St Michael's Road, which do not require statutory consultation.
- 1.3 Appendix 1: The proposal for a new zebra crossing on Norcot Road
Appendix 2: The proposal for a new zebra crossing on Addington Road
Appendix 3: The proposal for a new zebra crossing on Church End Lane
Appendix 4: The proposal for marked parking bays on Morpeth Close
Appendix 5: The lining alterations for The Meadway

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.
- 2.2 That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation/notification processes for the proposed zebra crossing designs on Norcot Road, Church End Lane and Addington Road in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 2.3 That the Network & Parking Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, be able to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals.

- 2.4 That subject to no objections being received for a scheme, the scheme(s) be considered as agreed for implementation and scheme delivery planning will commence.
- 2.4 That should a scheme receive objection(s) during the statutory consultation period, that these be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration and decision regarding scheme delivery.
- 2.5 That the proposals for Morpeth Close be agreed for delivery and scheme delivery planning will commence.
- 2.6 That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposals align with the principles of the Council’s Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The zebra crossing proposals will complement the Council’s Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by removing barriers to the greater use of sustainable, healthy transport options.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Current Position

- 4.1 At Policy Committee in June 2021, the Council agreed to allocate local CIL funding to enable the development and intended delivery of initiatives across many Council service areas. Within these allocations were a number of traffic management schemes, the majority of which originated from the ‘Requests for Traffic Management Measures’ report that is brought to this Sub-Committee twice annually.

These schemes are specific and allow little scope for alteration to the deliverables.

These schemes were as follows:

Scheme	Allocation
Pedestrian crossing on Norcot Road, close to number 91	£50k
Pedestrian crossing on Addington Road, between the junctions with Erleigh Road and Eastern Avenue	£50k
Pedestrian crossing on Church End Lane, in the vicinity of Moorlands Primary School	£50k
Road marking on Morpeth Close, involving parking bay markings	£5k
Lining alteration on The Meadway at the roundabout with St Michael’s Road	£10k

- 4.2 Officers conducted initial investigation works, obtained indicative quotations and provided Ward Councillors with recommended concept designs that they feel should be deliverable, within the allocated budgets. Officers have

considered any feedback that has been received from the sharing of these initial scheme designs.

The following provides some information regarding each of the proposals.

a) Norcot Road (Appendix 1)

The scheme proposes the installation of a new zebra crossing close to its junction with Blundell's Road and exactly at the position proposed in the funding allocation. This will require the removal of the existing traffic island and the relocation of the bus stop, which has been informally discussed with Reading Buses.

b) Addington Road (Appendix 2)

The scheme proposes the installation of a new zebra crossing between its junctions with Erleigh Road and Eastern Avenue. This will require the removal of the existing traffic calming feature at this location. This is a challenging scheme and there are no other locations along this road where a crossing can be installed, that meets the requirements of the original request presented to the Sub-Committee.

c) Church End Lane (Appendix 3)

The scheme proposes the installation of a new zebra crossing outside Moorlands Primary School, which will require amendments to the kerb and new locations for the existing 'school keep clear' restrictions.

The proposed location of this crossing was one of two potential locations recommended to Ward Councillors and Moorlands Primary School and has been decided on the useful feedback that officers received.

d) Morpeth Close (Appendix 4)

The scheme proposes marking bays to help contain the parking in this area and make the bays accessible to all. The proposal also includes a 'Keep Clear' section to help prevent driveway blocking. It should be noted that the proposal does not introduce any enforceable restrictions - these are advisory markings only and do not require statutory consultation.

Ward Councillors have provided residents in the immediate area with information about the recommended scheme, have conducted informal surveys or door-knocking to gather views and to provide helpful feedback. Overall, it is suggested that the Keep Clear box has relatively strong support, but the bay markings appear to have less support locally, primarily due to a reduction to the theoretical parking capacity and concern about potential displacement.

It is acknowledged that the proposal reduces the theoretical maximum parking capacity for this area, but this theoretical maximum would only be achieved with elements of vehicle-blocking, which is a problem that is understood to have generated some local complaint.

e) The Meadway (Appendix 5)

This scheme reduces the approaching lanes to a single carriageway width and the painting of 'deflection markings' and 'islands' to visually change the perceived shape of the approaching road.

Officers have considered physical changes, such as kerbing build-outs or traffic islands to further encourage compliance with the use of the roundabout. While the modest budget would likely be insufficient for significant civils works, vehicle tracking analysis has shown that such features would compromise vehicle turning and driveway access/egress, so these will not be feasible.

- 4.3 Regarding the zebra crossing proposals in general, it is acknowledged that they would be positioned outside residential properties, which may be a cause of some objection. Within the limitations of what is possible, equipment will be chosen that minimises light from the beacons being directed toward nearby properties and any additional lighting will also be shielded. Unfortunately, however, Section 4.2 sets out the location challenges for these desirable facilities, with the number of dropped vehicle crossings, junctions and other street features that would compromise the placement of the crossings elsewhere.

Options Proposed

- 4.4 Officers have considered any feedback received through sharing the proposals with Ward Councillors and other stakeholders, as noted in Section 4.2.

On this basis, independent road safety audits have been commissioned for the zebra crossing proposals on **Norcot Road**, **Addington Road** and **Church End Lane**. It is recommended that the Sub-Committee agrees to officers progressing the separate statutory notices of intension to place new pedestrian crossings at these locations. This process essentially commences a statutory consultation, which officers intend to run for a 21-day duration. As part of the proposals for **Church End Lane**, it is also recommended that officers commence the statutory consultation necessary for the proposed alterations to the ‘School Keep Clear’ restrictions.

Should the Council receive objections during these consultation periods, officers will report these back to the Sub-Committee at a future meeting (expected to be November 2021), where they can be considered and a decision made regarding potential scheme implementation. Should this not be the case, it is intended that officers progress the schemes to delivery.

- 4.5 Officers acknowledge the feedback that has been received to the proposal in **Morpeth Close**, but recommend that the Sub-Committee agrees to the application of the proposal in Appendix 4. While a number of respondents have asked merely for the ‘Keep Clear’ markings, this is not what the local CIL funding has been allocated to deliver, but was a part of the overall scheme design. Officers consider that the proposal provides the maximum number of parking bays that can be implemented, while all being accessible, and can be delivered with the Keep Clear marking.

If it is considered that the bay markings are no longer desirable for this area, it is recommended that the Sub-Committee agrees to this scheme not being deliverable and, therefore, returning this CIL funding for future allocation to another scheme.

- 4.6 **The Meadway** was due to be resurfaced from the week commencing 5th September 2021. This has provided an opportunity to implement this scheme on

a new road surface (ideal conditions) and without the need to remove any existing lining. Implementation of this scheme is, therefore, being co-ordinated with the resurfacing work to ensure best value for money and to avoid unnecessary damage to the new surface caused by lining removal/adjustment work.

- 4.7 It is recommended that the Network & Parking Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, be able to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals. These may be necessary, depending on the outcome of the Road Safety Audits or due to unforeseen engineering reasons upon appointment of the scheme delivery contractors.
- 4.8 Should the Sub-Committee agree to the recommendations of this report and agree the outcome of any schemes receiving objection at their meeting in November 2021, it is expected that the schemes covered by this report will be substantially completed within this current financial year.

Other Options Considered

- 4.9 As noted in Section 4.2 c Officers proposed two potential locations for the zebra crossing on Church End Lane. Feedback received to the officer informal consultation with Ward Councillors clearly indicated that the proposal in this report was preferable to the alternative, which was proposed further north-east along the road (the other side of the school).
- 4.10 As referenced in Sections 4.1 and 4.2, the local CIL allocation was to fund specific schemes and there were few options considered viable during officer investigations. Therefore, no other options have been considered at this time.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan Themes, as set out below:

Healthy environment

The installation of zebra crossings will hopefully improve the experience of pedestrians in the area. Pedestrians will be more visible to motorists and vehicles will be required to stop for as long as is necessary for pedestrians to cross, without the use of traffic lights.

In complement to other Council initiatives, zebra crossings will contribute to encouraging people to make healthy transport choices through the removal of barriers toward doing so. This will contribute toward the Council's goal of making the town carbon neutral by 2030, through reducing emissions by private vehicle use.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

- 6.2 A Climate Impact Assessment has been conducted, which considers a net 'NIL' impact as a result of the Sub-Committee agreeing to the recommendations of this report.

The implementation of the zebra crossings are likely to be the most impactful elements of the report recommendations, as these require a level of civil engineering work to be undertaken and the installation of electrically-powered beacons. The recommendations for Morpeth Close and The Meadway are lining only schemes.

These will have a minor negative impact during installation and a very minor ongoing negative impact due to the continued energy use by the low-energy LED beacons. They will, however, be long-standing facilities and it is expected that the installation of these crossings will remove barriers that many people will have to walking, which will offset these impacts by a likely reduction in private vehicle journeys. This is particularly so with these proposed schemes, as they are on good links to/from school routes and/or shopping areas, so should encourage good footfall. While it is difficult to quantify, it is expected that the benefits will outweigh the impacts over time.

The impact of the scheme at The Meadway has been significantly reduced due to the resurfacing works that are due to commence from 5th September. This has enabled the implementation of this lining scheme without the need to remove any existing lining beforehand.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Ward Councillors and the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport were provided with some early concept proposals for the zebra crossings and Morpeth Close. This has provided an opportunity for comment and local informal consultation.

Feedback from this engagement, and that with Moorlands Primary School, has been very helpful in providing a steer on which of the two possible zebra crossing locations is preferable for development.

There has been significant and very helpful feedback from Redlands Ward Councillors, following their informal resident consultations regarding the recommended scheme on Morpeth Close.

Officers have provided Ward Councillors and the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport with the plan and implementation strategy for the scheme at The Meadway.

- 7.2 Statutory notifications/consultation required for the zebra crossing proposals will be conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. Notices of intention will be advertised in the local printed newspaper and will be erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The Police are a statutory consultee and will be directly notified. The consultation will be hosted on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'), where details and plans will be available.

- 7.3 Policy Committee and Traffic Management Sub-Committee are public meetings. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, 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 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics, nor do they significantly vary existing operations. Statutory consultation processes will be conducted, where applicable, providing an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 New, or changes to existing, Traffic Regulation Orders 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. The resultant Traffic Regulation Order will be sealed in accordance with the same regulations. This is applicable to the Church End Lane proposal, where the alterations to the 'School Keep Clear' restrictions will need to be advertised.

Notice will be given for the implementation of zebra crossings under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This will be applicable for the proposals on Norcot Road, Addington Road and Church End Lane.

This report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake these processes.

- 9.2 There are no foreseen legal implications relating to the proposals on Morpeth Close or The Meadway.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications arising from the proposals set out in this report are set out below:-

10.1. Revenue Implications

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Employee costs	NIL	NIL	NIL
Other running costs			
Capital financings costs			
Expenditure	NIL	NIL	NIL
Income from:			
Fees and charges	NIL	NIL	NIL
Grant funding			
Other income			
Total Income	NIL	NIL	NIL
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	NIL	NIL	NIL

The CIL contributions do not provide additional revenue funding, so the maintenance cost implications of any measure will need to be carefully considered.

Staff costs will be capitalised.

2. Capital Implications

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	£165 (see section 4.1 for allocation breakdown)	NIL	NIL
Funded by Grant (specify) Section 106 (specify) Other services Capital Receipts/Borrowing	Local CIL funding allocation - 2021	N/A	N/A
Total Funding	£165	NIL	NIL

These schemes in this report will be funded from the allocated local CIL contributions. These contributions are to cover the whole project costs, including surveys and investigation works, not just the deliverables.

3. Value for Money (VFM)

Officers consider that the recommended proposals within this report offer the best outcomes based on the funding available and the purpose to which it has been allocated. It is not considered that additional funding would deliver

schemes that offer significantly greater benefits against the purposes to which the funding has been allocated.

The schemes have been investigated and designed by officers of Reading Borough Council and all civil engineering work will be undertaken by the Council's in-house delivery team. The exceptions will be specialisms that currently lay outside of the Council's resources, such as lining implementation, sign creation and the supply, installation and electrical connection of the zebra crossing beacons. However, these will be appointed through existing contracts and using contractors that conduct these works to a scale that provides value for money through their chargeable rates.

Road Safety Audits have been outsourced to a contractor with these specialisms, but also providing an independent perspective on the zebra crossing scheme designs, which can assist in defending potential challenges.

The scheme at The Meadway is being delivered in co-ordination with Highway resurfacing of the road. This has removed the need to fund the removal/adjustment of existing road markings and provides value for money to the Council on both the CIL scheme and resurfacing programme.

4. Risk Assessment.

Should the recommendations of this report be agreed, there are no foreseen financial risks with the lining proposals on Morpeth Close and The Meadway. The road surfacing on Morpeth Close appears to be of a sufficient standard for the work and The Meadway will have been resurfaced prior to application.

There will always be an element of financial risk regarding more complex works that require excavation and adjustment to the Highway layout. These risks should be minimised pre-excitation, as officer investigations have included colleagues from the delivery team. However, there is always a risk of unforeseen engineering challenges, even following the receipt of utility plans. It is beneficial that the majority of the civil engineering work is being conducted by Reading Borough Council, as this ensures close communication and true joint working throughout delivery.

Officers have good experience in delivering schemes and although each site is different, can scale the deliverables to manage a level of contingency within the budget.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Allocation Of The Community Infrastructure Levy 15% Local Contribution (Policy Committee, June 2021)

11.2 Requests for new traffic management measures (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2021).