

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 NOVEMBER 2021	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	CIL LOCALLY FUNDED SCHEMES 2021: RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATIONS		
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions have enabled development of several local Transport-related schemes, following allocations this year. In September 2021, the Sub-Committee approved proposals for zebra crossings on Addington Road, Church End Lane and Norcot Road to progress to statutory consultation. A separate consultation was also approved for amendments to the 'school keep clear' markings on Church End Lane, which would be needed if the zebra crossing is approved for implementation at that location.
- 1.2 This report informs the Sub-Committee of objections received during the statutory consultations for the agreed proposals. Members are asked to consider these objections and conclude the outcome of the proposals.
- 1.3 Members are also asked to approve a new statutory consultation for amendments to the Norcot Road Red Route restriction as described in 4.4, should it be necessary for the implementation of this scheme.
- 1.4 Appendix 1: Feedback received to the four statutory consultations.  
Appendix 2: Drawing showing the proposal for a new zebra crossing on Addington Road.  
Appendix 3: Drawing showing the proposal for a new zebra crossing and lining amendments on Church End Lane.  
Appendix 4: Drawing showing the proposal for a new zebra crossing on Norcot Road.  
Appendix 5: Drawing showing the proposal for amendments to the Red Route on Norcot Road, to facilitate the new bus stop location.

## **2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1** That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.
- 2.2** That consultation feedback in Appendix 1 is considered and the Sub-Committee agrees to either implement, amend or reject each proposal.
- 2.3** That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order for the amendments to the 'school keep clear' restrictions on Church End Lane and no public inquiry be held into the proposals.
- 2.4** That respondents to the statutory consultations be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.
- 2.5** That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation processes for the proposed amendment to the Red Route on Norcot Road (Item 4.4 and shown in Appendix 5) in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, should this be necessary to facilitate the scheme delivery.
- 2.6** That subject to no objections being received for the proposal in item 4.4, the scheme on Norcot Road be considered as agreed for implementation and scheme delivery planning will commence.
- 2.7** That should objection(s) be received during the statutory consultation period, that these be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration and decision regarding scheme delivery.
- 2.8** 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** Consultations for the proposed zebra crossings on Addington Road, Church End Lane and Norcot Road took place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021. A separate consultation took place for the proposed changes to the 'school keep clear' restrictions on Church End Lane between 14<sup>th</sup> October - 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021, due to the different legal process involved.

- 4.2 For the zebra crossing proposal on Addington Road (appendix 2), we have received 41 comments of support, 1 comment and 2 objections. Many have mentioned that there is a need for a crossing over the double roundabout on the Eastern Avenue junction, as it is felt that this is a dangerous and difficult location to cross. There are comments about speeding in the area, and the fact that cars do not slow down despite the 20mph zone that is in place. There is also a concern on the impact of the crossing on resident driveways and access. Officers believe that the placement of a zebra crossing could lead to some reduction in this perceived issue, as approaching motorists will need to be prepared to stop and take notice of the environment around them.

The funding allocated to this proposal was specific for a crossing to be considered on Addington Road, not Eastern Avenue. Having carried out detailed investigations on site, Officers are satisfied that there are no other locations that the crossing could be installed, within the remit of the original request. The design standards for installing controlled crossings also require a good level of visibility between approaching motorists and the crossing facility, which would not be achieved with placement at the roundabouts.

The existing speed table at this location will require removal before the zebra crossing can be installed.

Officers commissioned the undertaking of an independent road safety audit for this scheme. An item has been raised regarding unknown vehicle speeds and its potential impact on visibility distance requirements. A speed survey has been commissioned but the results which have not yet been received. Officers are confident that only minor alterations, at most, will be necessary to meet these requirements, and these would not involve moving the location of the pedestrian crossing.

- 4.3 Only 1 comment and no objections have been received to the zebra crossing proposals on Church End Lane (appendix 3).

The statutory consultation for the alteration to the 'School Keep Clear' markings had to be conducted under different regulations. As such, the consultation was ongoing at the time of writing. Should objections have been received, an update to this will be circulated and any necessary officer response updated verbally at the Sub-Committee meeting.

Officers commissioned the undertaking of an independent road safety audit for this scheme. No significant items were raised for the proposals on Church End Lane.

- 4.4 For the zebra crossing proposal on Norcot Road, we have received 2 objections. The objections are not related to the proposal for the crossing; however, they do raise concerns relating to the proposed relocation of the bus stop as shown in the drawing (see appendix 4), which is necessary for accommodating the crossing facility.

The relocation of the bus stop has been proposed to maintain the visibility of the crossing for pedestrians and motorists. Should the bus stop remain in its current position and the crossing be installed, this will cause inter-visibility issues for vehicles approaching the crossing from the west whilst a bus is waiting.

Vehicles are likely to overtake the bus and not notice the crossing is there, which is a safety risk. Pedestrians will also not be able to clearly see approaching vehicles.

Officers commissioned the undertaking of an independent road safety audit for this scheme. An item has been raised regarding unknown vehicle speeds and its potential impact on visibility distance requirements. A speed survey has been commissioned, however, the results have not yet been received. Officers believe that it *may* become necessary to relocate the eastbound bus stop further to the east of the crossing than was initially anticipated. If necessary, this would result in the nearest viable location being outside property no.105 and involving the removal of 2.5 parking spaces outside these properties. As this alteration would require a change to the Red Route Traffic Regulation Order, it would require a separate statutory consultation to be carried out.

Officers therefore recommend that the Sub-Committee agrees to the undertaking of this statutory consultation if the results of the speed survey necessitate this further work. Officers will communicate the findings of the speed survey to the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors.

- 4.5 Regarding the zebra crossing proposals in general, it is acknowledged that they would be positioned outside residential properties, which has been 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.
- 4.6 Following September's report to this Sub-Committee, Officers have delivered the lining alterations at the roundabout with The Meadway and St Michaels Road and are planning the delivery of the Morpeth Close parking bay markings following the implementation of the 2020 Waiting Restriction Review programme - ward Councillors will be informed of the proposed implementation date. These two schemes were also funded from the 2021 allocation of local CIL contributions.

#### Options Proposed

- 4.7 The Sub-committee is asked to consider the consultation feedback received against the zebra crossing and 'school keep clear' proposals and can make the following decisions:
  - Agree with objections - the recommended proposal will not be implemented
  - Overrule objections - the recommended proposal will be implemented, as advertised.
  - Amend a proposal - an amended proposal will be implemented, provided such proposed modifications do not compromise the legality of the consultation process and resultant Traffic Regulation Order. The detail of that amendment will need to be agreed by the Sub-Committee and officer representatives at this meeting.

Those proposals that did not receive objections, nor other comments, will be implemented as advertised.

## Other Options Considered

- 4.8 None at this time. The schemes have been proposed based on the limitations of use for the local CIL funding allocations and following site investigation.

## **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.

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.

## **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. This has provided an opportunity for comment and local informal consultation.

- 7.2 Statutory notifications/consultation required for the zebra crossing proposals have been conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. Notices of intention were advertised in the local printed newspaper and erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The Police are a statutory consultee and have been directly notified. The consultation was also hosted on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'), where details and plans are 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 have been 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 The Order for the proposals to amend the 'school keep clear' restrictions in Church End Lane will be made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

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

- 9.2 Following the making of this Order, the public must be afforded a period of six weeks to raise any legal challenge, prior to any alterations to the restrictions within being proposed through statutory consultation.
- 9.3 There are no foreseen legal implications relating to the proposals for the zebra crossings.
- 9.4 For the proposal to make amendments to the Red Route on Norcot Road, 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 report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake this process.

## 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			
<b>Expenditure</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL
Income from:			
Fees and charges	NIL	NIL	NIL
Grant funding			
Other income			
<b>Total Income</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL
<b>Net Cost(+)/saving (-)</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL

### 10.2. Capital Implications

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

The transport projects referenced in this report and September's report were funded from local CIL funding allocations agreed in June 2021. These contributions are to cover the whole project costs, including surveys and investigation works, not just the deliverables and the above figure is the total allocation for delivery of the schemes. The split of this allocation was reported in September as follows: £50k each for the zebra crossing proposals at Addington Road, Church End Lane and Norcot Road, £10k for lining alterations at the roundabout on The Meadway/St Michaels Road and £5k for the parking bay marking on Morpeth Close.

### **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 provide an independent perspective on the zebra crossing scheme designs, which can assist in defending potential challenges.

### **4. Risk Assessment.**

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-excavation, 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.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 CIL Locally Funded Schemes 2021: Proposals for Statutory Consultation (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, September 2021).
- 11.2 Allocation of The Community Infrastructure Levy 15% Local Contribution (Policy Committee, June 2021).
- 11.3 Requests for new traffic management measures (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2021).
- 11.4 CIL Locally funded schemes 2021: proposals for statutory consultation (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, September 2021).