

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

10 NOVEMBER 2022

QUESTION NO. 1

Councillor White to ask the Chair:

Tackling speeding on Northumberland Avenue

Green Party Councillors in Redlands and Katesgrove say residents are still complaining about drivers speeding on Northumberland Avenue in the downhill stretch between Christchurch Gardens and Hexham Road. We have requested the anti-speeding signage but don't think it will make a lasting difference. What further action is the Council able to take to tackle speeding on this road ?

REPLY by the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee.

I invite Councillor Page, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by Councillor Page, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport:

I thank Councillor White for his question.

This section of Northumberland Avenue is within a clearly signed 20mph zone and contains raised tables, build-outs, traffic islands and coloured paved surfaces as recognised traffic calming features. Complaints of continued speeding sadly further highlight the disregard that some motorists have for the law and the safety of others - they are *wilfully* speeding.

I would like to draw your attention to a report on tonight's agenda (item 8), relating to the evaluation of the Redlands CIL-funded scheme to enhance local traffic calming features. This scheme originated from similar experiences of wilful speeding within a 20mph zone.

Within this report officers have summarised the challenges that local authorities face in addressing speeding. You will be aware that despite many years of lobbying the government and police, *enforcement* of speeding rests solely with the police and this also extends to the installation and operation of speed camera devices.

Local authorities are therefore left only with the option of installing costly local physical measures, such as speed humps or cushions. Implementation of these measures, when funding is available, can have a positive influence on traffic speeds, but cannot be guaranteed to eradicate speeding. The report on tonight's agenda references the local objections and complaints that can arise from the introduction of these physical features.

In direct answer to your question, the Council could propose to install additional traffic calming measures along this road, subject to the identification of funding for scheme development and delivery, which would additionally require prior statutory consultation.

May I suggest that you engage with the local ward councillors who can work with residents to consider whether additional physical features would be supported by local residents. If so, local councillors could ask our officers to add the request to a future agenda ('Requests for Traffic Management Measures') where it can be considered for any possible funding allocations.

By way of a wider update, last week on November 2nd I attended a Thames Valley Road Safety Summit in Maidenhead hosted by the current Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Barber, at which I again raised the lack of TVP resourcing for enforcing 20MPH zones.

I reiterated the Council's policy of seeking decriminalised speed enforcement powers that would enable us to use cameras to back up 20MPH enforcement in Reading. This would be in the same way that we currently effectively use cameras to enforce bus lanes and, shortly, will be using to enforce yellow box junctions and other moving traffic offences.

It is my impression that TVP remain as resistant as ever to either sharing or transferring these enforcement powers, in the same way that over 20 years ago they opposed the transfer and decriminalisation of parking enforcement in the Borough. That transfer, too, was preceded by a lengthy period of lack of police enforcement which led to our eventually taking over those functions as well.

As was clearly set out at the beginning of this answer we have no further powers to enforce 20MPH zones, other than utilising physical measures which have already largely been put in place along Northumberland Avenue and in many other areas of the town.

We will continue to lobby TVP, the Local Government Association and the Government to facilitate a transfer of speed enforcement powers to Reading Council in the interests of delivering truly effective traffic calming in the Borough.

ENDS