

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

<b>TO:</b>	<b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>2 MARCH 2023</b>		
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>CIL LOCALLY FUNDED SCHEMES UPDATE: PROPOSALS FOR STATUTORY CONSULTATION</b> <b>a. GATEWAY AREA PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (IMPERIAL WAY AND BASINGSTOKE ROAD)</b> <b>b. TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON SHAW ROAD &amp; BOSTON AVENUE</b>		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>TONY PAGE</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>CLIMATE STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT</b>
<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>HIGHWAYS &amp; TRAFFIC SERVICES</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>BATTLE, CHURCH, COLEY, NORCOT, WHITLEY</b>
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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 agreed in 2022.

1.2 This report seeks approval for officers to undertake statutory consultation/notice processes necessary to progress two scheme designs for zebra crossings on Imperial Way and Whitley Wood Lane and to implement traffic calming measures on Shaw Road and Boston Avenue.

1.3 Appendix 1: The proposal for new zebra crossings on Imperial Way and Whitley Wood Lane

Appendix 2: The proposal for traffic calming measures on Shaw Road and Boston Avenue

**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 Imperial Way and Whitley Wood Lane, and for the proposed traffic calming measures on Shaw Road and Boston Avenue, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

- 2.3 That the Highways and Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, be able to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals.
- 2.4 That subject to no objections being received each scheme, the scheme(s) be considered as agreed for implementation enabling delivery planning to commence.
- 2.5 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 implementation.
- 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 March 2022, 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, all of which had been previously captured within 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
1. Gateway area pedestrian crossings (Imperial Way and Basingstoke Road)	£160k
2. Traffic calming measures on Shaw Road and Boston Avenue	£50k
3. Northcourt Avenue speed reduction	£200k
4. 20 is plenty zone on streets around Oxford Road	£200k

With resource limitations and the development time necessary for these schemes, the order of schemes in the above table represents the development order of the schemes as agreed by the CIL Members Working group, following discussion with officers.

Development of these schemes will be undertaken alongside other works programmes, such as the Waiting Restriction Review Programmes, and follows completion of the traffic management schemes arising from the previous Local CIL allocation, namely:

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

4.2 Officers have undertaken initial investigation works for schemes 1 and 2. Recommendations have been discussed with Ward Councillors and initial independent Road Safety Audits commissioned for the resultant scheme proposals.

Officers and Ward Councillors have also commenced initial high-level discussions regarding schemes 3 and 4, which will continue as resource availability allows further scheme development work to be undertaken. This will include planned meeting(s) with the Northcourt Avenue Residents Association (NARA) for scheme 3.

4.3 For scheme 1 (pedestrian crossings for Imperial Way and Basingstoke Road), finding a suitable controlled location on Basingstoke Road has been challenging. The desirable area was identified between the Imperial Way roundabout and existing signalised crossing to the north, but it was considered that installing a zebra crossing in this section would create a negative impact to existing facilities and accessibility - loss of other uncontrolled facilities and a necessary movement of the bus stop further away from the popular shopping area.

An alternative solution was proposed, providing benefits to pedestrians wishing to cross Whitley Wood Road, where visibility at the uncontrolled crossing points near to the Imperial Way roundabout is not as good when compared with the other approaches.

4.4 For scheme 2 (traffic calming on Shaw Road and Boston Avenue), it is considered that full-width speed humps would be more effective at reducing traffic speeds compared with sets of cushions and that a comprehensive scheme of humps could be delivered within the budget. These streets are already within a 20mph zone, so no additional vertical signing is required.

The primary challenge with this scheme was finding suitable proposed locations for the speed humps, in the context of dropped footway crossings and gullies. As such, there is little scope to make significant adjustment to the proposal below.

## Options Proposed

4.5 Following discussion with Ward Councillors, officers have commissioned independent Road Safety Audits for schemes 1 and 2, using the proposals contained in Appendix 1 and 2. Subject to the findings and any necessary adjustments, which are not expected, it is recommended that Officers undertake the required statutory consultations for these two proposed schemes.

4.6 Should there be any objections received during the statutory consultation periods, Officers will report this feedback to a future Sub-Committee meeting where it may be considered before a decision is made regarding the delivery (or otherwise) of the advertised scheme.

Should no objections be received, it is recommended that the scheme(s) be considered as approved for delivery. Delivery planning may then commence and this will be communicated to Ward Councillors.

4.7 It is recommended that the Highways & Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy 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.

## Other Options Considered

4.8 As noted in Section 4.3, Officers explored alternative crossing options with Ward Councillors, but recommended that these would likely be unfeasible or negatively impact existing facilities and accessibility within the area.

4.9 As noted in Section 4.4, it was considered that the proposed scheme will provide the most positive reduction in vehicle speeds for the budget allocated. No alternative options have been proposed and enforcement of speeding remains outside of the Council's legal powers, although Reading Borough Council continues to lobby for a change to this position.

## **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 is expected to improve the experience of pedestrians in the area. They reinforce the spirit of the revised Highway Code in providing priority for pedestrians and require motorists and pedestrians to be more observant of their surroundings. Reductions in traffic speed and the potential reductions in cut-through traffic volumes as a result of traffic calming can lead to a nicer environment for cycling.

Complementing other Council initiatives, these measures 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 both schemes, if agreed, will require a level of civil engineering work to be undertaken and the installation of electrically powered lighting for zebra crossings.

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 zebra crossing lighting. They will, however, be long-standing facilities and it is expected that the installation of these schemes will remove barriers that many people will have to walking and cycling, which will offset these impacts by a likely reduction in private vehicle journeys. 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 Climate Strategy and Transport have been provided with briefing notes for the officer recommendations and have engaged in discussions with officers to arrive at schemes that are agreed in principle. This has also provided an opportunity for comment and local informal consultation.

CIL scheme development is communicated to Ward Councillors and to a CIL Members Working Group that has been established.

- 7.2 Statutory notifications/consultation required for the proposed zebra crossings and traffic calming measures 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 and feedback (support or objection) can be submitted.
- 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 required, 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 Notice will be given for the implementation of zebra crossings under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Notice will be given for the implementation of vertical traffic calming features under Section 90C of the Highways Act 1980.

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

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

### 10.1. Revenue Implications

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £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

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	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure Scheme 1 Scheme 2	£2.5 £1	£157.5 £49	NIL
Funded by	Local CIL funding allocation - 2022	Local CIL funding allocation - 2022	N/A
Total Funding	£165	NIL	NIL

This table reflects proposed expenditure for Schemes 1 and 2 of Section 4.1 only, as these have been sufficiently developed. The 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 modest levels of 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 and professional, constructive scrutiny of the 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 Allocation of The Community Infrastructure Levy 15% Local Contribution (Policy Committee, March 2022)
- 11.2 Requests for new traffic management measures (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2023).