

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

14 June 2023



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Petition – Request to improve road safety of Hamilton Road junction with Crescent Road
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Jim Chen, Assistant Engineer, Network Services
Lead councillor	John Ennis
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.2. That Officers consider the comments and proposals contained in the petition and report their findings to a future meeting of this Sub-Committee, following engagement with the Lead and Ward Councillors.3. That the lead petitioner be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.4. That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To report to the Sub-Committee the receipt of a petition requesting the Council to improve road safety at Hamilton Road junction with Crescent Road
- 1.2. Officers will consider the contents of the petition, share their findings with the Lead Councillor and Ward Councillors and report the outcomes to a future meeting of this Sub-Committee.

2. Policy context

- 2.1. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:
 - Healthy Environment
 - Thriving Communities
 - Inclusive Economy
- 2.2. These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:
 - People first
 - Digital transformation
 - Building self-reliance
 - Getting the best value
 - Collaborating with others

- 2.3. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

3. The proposal

Current Position

- 3.1. On 2 March 2023, a petition was submitted to the Council, at the time of writing containing 23 reports of near misses/collisions and 26 comments and ideas to improve safety at crossroad from residents. These were submitted in two tables, which form Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this report.
- 3.2. The enclosed letter stated the following:

Because of ongoing expressions of concern, I recently asked residents of Hamilton Road to send me their examples of collisions and near-miss incidents at this crossroads, and their views on what might improve the situation. The responses are included in the attached document: Tables 1 and 2.

Near-miss incidents must be taken seriously as they are an indication of a danger that could result in death/injury/damage. Data from Crashmap.co.uk, shows only 3 incidents reported for this junction (2017 – 2020), but these data are based on reported incidents only, and exclude any unreported collisions, and the numerous, and highly significant, near-miss incidents.

The sample size of residents who responded is, not surprisingly, very small: only those on our local WhatsApp and Community email groups were consulted and this excluded the many residents not known to, or reached by, these internet-based groups. However, even this small number of residents has observed / experienced near-miss incidents on a weekly or daily basis, and some have been injured. Fortunately, so far, no one has suffered a serious or fatal injury, but we are all worried about such an occurrence, especially involving children and adults on bicycles.

Examples of Experiences/observations include:

- *The danger to life is primarily to cyclists going north or south on Hamilton Road*
- *Near misses affecting such cyclists are a frequent occurrence, but also affect car users*
- *There have been injuries/damage from collisions*
- *Road-users (both vehicles and cyclists) are not infrequently seen ignoring the Give-Way sign on Crescent Road, crossing Hamilton without pausing. Collisions have occurred for this reason*
- *Sight-lines for road-users on both Hamilton and Crescent Roads are poor, and without stopping at the junction, and easing forward, users cannot see approaching traffic, especially cyclists.*

Examples of Ideas for improving safety at this junction include:

- *Redesign junction with bollards and staggered entry to Crescent Road users*
- *Create a mini-roundabout with raised platform, and therefore no priority to any one direction*
- *Measures to force speed-reduction especially on Crescent Road*
- *A camera to warn users of scrutiny of their driving /cycling behaviour*
- *A continuous raised hump at the junction across Crescent Road, both West and East sides.*

Whilst these changes have cost implications, the costs of injury / loss of life and their treatment by health services, and the investigation costs etc by police / Council are also considerable, let alone the long-lasting and traumatic impact of such events on the people affected.

I and others are interested in helping the Council gather more data if that would help: for instance, by gathering more reports of near-miss incidents/collisions, helping to install a camera to record activity at this junction, or helping in any way that would help the Council come to an early decision.

- 3.3. Officers are grateful to receive these views, as they will be helpful in understanding local views around this junction.

- 3.4. For context, the crossroad of Crescent Road and Hamilton Road is situated within a 20mph zone, which benefits from existing vertical traffic calming measures, to encourage drivers to adhere to the speed limit.

The junction layout is presented with 'give way' on both approaches of Crescent Road to Hamilton road. Both Crescent Road approaches are signed and lined with the associated give way restriction in accordance with National Standard.

As the petition covering letter acknowledged, Police-supplied casualty data does not suggest a road safety issue at the junction, with a single 'slight' incident occurring in the latest 5-year period of supplied data (up to, and including, January 2023).

- 3.5. The 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report that comes to this committee twice-annually contains a long-standing request to reduce rat-running traffic along Crescent Road and beyond. Implementation of the School Street may have partially mitigated this issue, although it is acknowledged that this is currently in a trial (experimental) phase at the time of writing.

Options proposed

- 3.6. It is recommended that Officers consider the contents of the petition, share their findings with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, and Ward Councillors for discussion. The outcome of the discussions will be reported to a future meeting of this Sub-Committee.

- 3.7. There is currently no allocated funding for the development and delivery of physical changes to this junction. However, it is acknowledged that there is a desire to reduce risks, where feasible.

It is therefore likely that the recommendation of the future petition update report will be to add potentially feasible options to the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report, which is anticipated to be updated for November's Sub-Committee meeting. This report is a useful source for the Council when considering options for funding allocation through, for example, local 15% community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. Many schemes that originated from this list have been delivered and continue to be developed following funding allocations.

Other options considered

- 3.8. None at this time.

4. Contribution to strategic aims

- 4.1. The recommendation of this report does not directly deliver changes

5. Environmental and climate implications

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

- 5.2. The recommendation of this report does not directly deliver changes, so a Climate Impact Assessment has not been considered necessary.

6. Community engagement

- 6.1. The lead petitioner will be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee regarding the request that they have made, following publication of the meeting minutes.
- 6.2. Meeting reports and minutes are published on the Council's website and Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting that can be attended. Recordings of the meetings are also available via the Council's website (www.reading.gov.uk). Report authors must also consider engaging and consulting staff and Councillors to help them to draft the report.

7. Equality impact assessment

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant at this time as the report recommendation does not directly lead to any physical change. Assessment will be considered once funding for development and delivery of a scheme is identified.

8. Other relevant considerations

- 8.1. None expected from the recommendations and decisions for this report.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. There are no foreseen legal implications relating to the recommendation of this report.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1. None arising from the recommendation of this report.

11. Timetable for implementation

- 11.1. Not applicable.

12. Background papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices –

1. Residents' report of near-misses and collisions
2. Residents' comments and ideas for crossroad improvement.