

Meeting date: 28 MARCH 2019
Report to: Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways



Subject/report title: **PETITION SUMMARY**
Report from: Head of Highway Services
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Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Select an Exemption paragraph from the Quick Parts drop-down list

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on 10 petitions received for the Transport and Highways portfolio, and where appropriate, agree the associated recommendations.

2. Decision(s) recommended

2.1 Cabinet Member is asked to:

- (a) Note the petitions received and the proposed programme for investigating and responding to them as detailed in Appendix 1, and
- (b) Agree the proposed outcomes for the individual petitions as detailed in the report.

2.2 What is the issue - Petition 1, Request for traffic calming on Knowle Wood Road

A petition bearing 52 signatures has been received from residents of Knowle Wood Road, Dorridge. The petition protested against the complete and flagrant disregard to

safety caused by vehicles travelling with an excessive speed. The residents request preventative action or the installation of measures to dissuade speeding.

2.3 What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

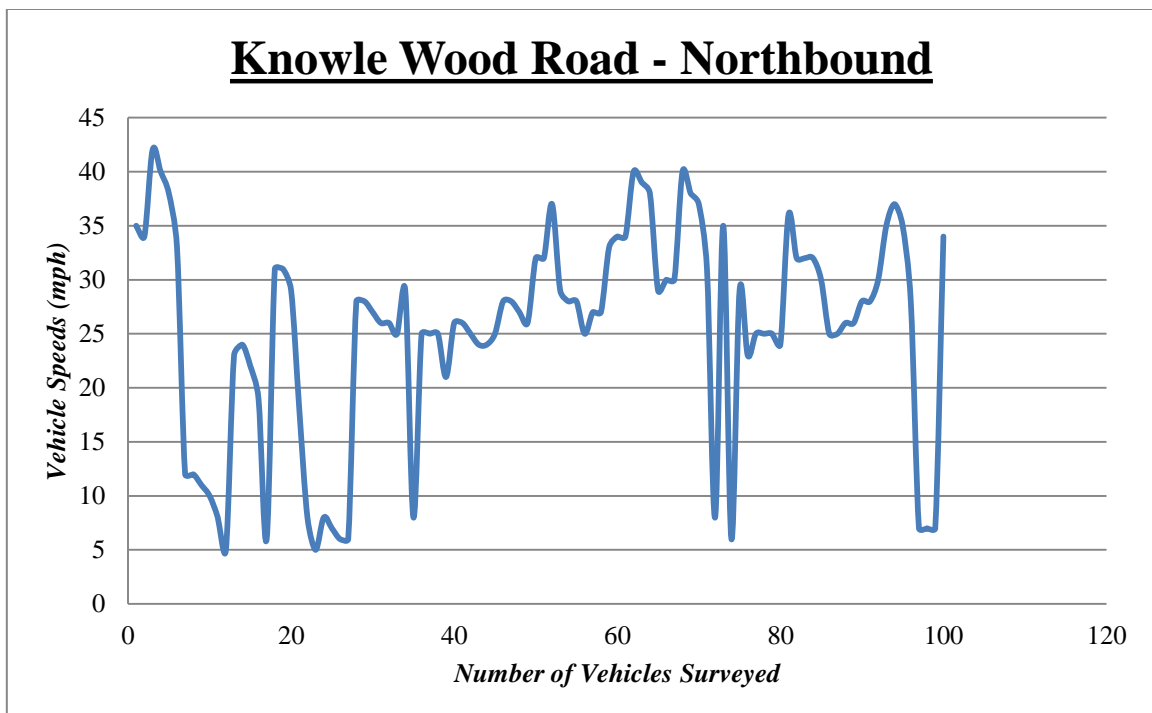
The Council has a duty under Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety. This duty encompasses a wide range of engineering, enforcement and educational activities to help discharge this requirement.

In the case of requests for traffic calming measures the Council has a difficult job to prioritise the requests received. To do this two key pieces of data are used; road traffic collision records and actual traffic speed data help determine whether any action is required, and if so, which of the road safety activities may be appropriate.

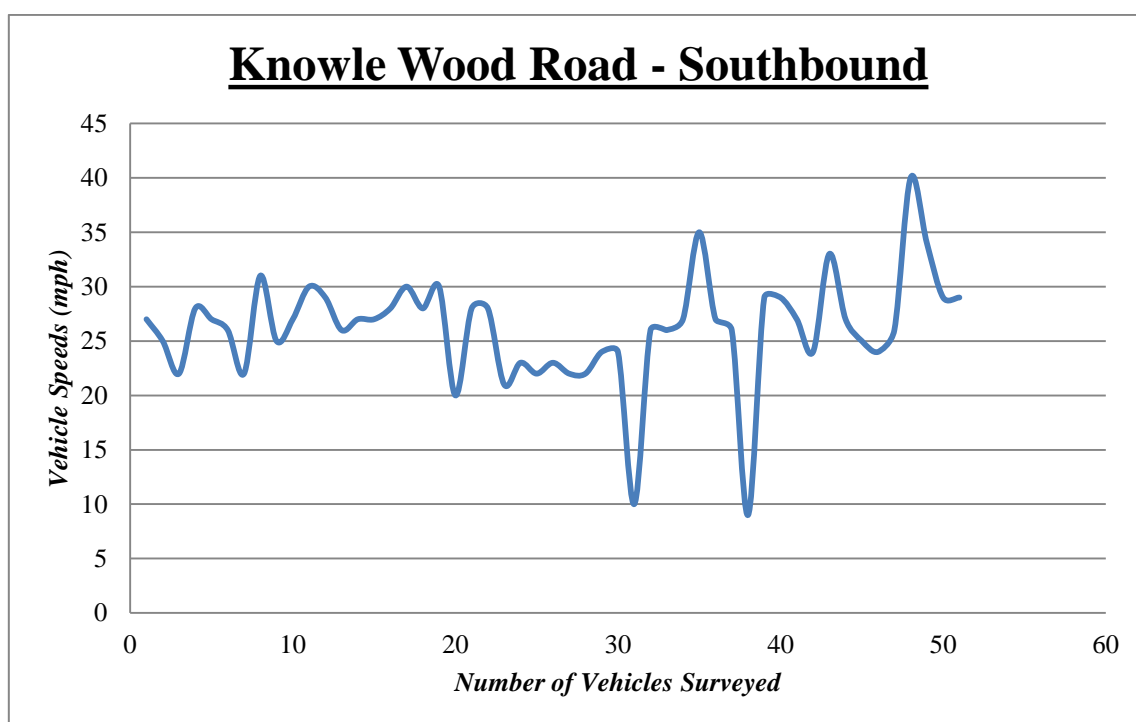
With regard to road traffic collision data, which is provided by the police, a 3 year period is used to help determine if there are any identifiable trends occurring in the collisions. For the most recent three year period (2016 - 2018) there have been no reported road traffic collisions involving personal injury in Knowle Wood Road. It would be difficult, therefore, to justify this location becoming a priority for the council, compared with the streets where collisions have occurred.

The speed of traffic travelling along Knowle Wood Road has also been investigated. Traffic speeds were surveyed on Friday, 15 February 2019, using the council's own community speed watch device. The results are shown in the graphs below:-

Northbound Traffic



Southbound Traffic



The results show that mean traffic speeds were 25mph (northbound) & 26mph (southbound). Whilst the majority of motorists are already travelling at or below the 30mph speed limit, there are unfortunately some drivers who will travel in excess of the 30 mph speed limit.

2.4 **Reasons for recommending preferred option**

Neither the road traffic collision or the traffic speed data supports Knowle Wood Road being considered to be a priority for the introduction of a traffic calming scheme or other engineering solution at this stage.

There is though evidence that a small proportion of motorists are exceeding the speed limit. Therefore, this evidence will be shared with the police to consider carrying out some form of enforcement activity in the area.

To support the police work, the council will add Knowle Wood Road to the 2019/20 Speed Aware Programme. This is where a Speedvisor sign and posters are deployed, for a period of about 4 weeks, to raise awareness of the safety concerns along the street.

2.5 **What is the issue - Petition 2, Request for the introduction of a 20 mph zone covering Ladbrook Road, Rectory Road and Rectory Gardens**

At Full Council on 4 December 2018, Councillor Tildesley submitted a petition on behalf of residents of Rectory Road, requesting the introduction of a 20 mph zone covering Ladbrook Road, Rectory Road and Rectory Gardens.

2.6 **What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

This compact residential estate is located on the south eastern side of Solihull Town Centre and is subject to a 30 mph speed limit by virtue of the presence of street lighting. Most of the time, traffic flows are very low except for the traditional school arrival and departures times, when traffic and pedestrian flows increase to and from the adjacent primary school and nearby sixth form college.

Councillor Tildesley has confirmed that this petition is requesting the introduction of a 20 mph traffic calming zone, including physical traffic calming features. The alternative option that could be considered here is the introduction of a mandatory 20mph speed limit, introduced with signage only.

As a condition of a zonal order, the 20 mph speed limit has to be self-enforcing. To achieve this level of compliance traffic calming features e.g. road humps, table top junctions and chicanes, need to be installed every 75 to 80m along all streets in this area.

For such a scheme, that comes at a significant cost, to have a positive Cost / Benefit justification the area would need to have a significant road traffic collision record. It is pleasing to report that this location does not have such an issue. Police records indicate there have been no reported personal injury collisions in this residential area in the last 3 year period.

Under these circumstances, it would be difficult to prioritise this scheme given the limited capital funding available from the Local Transport Plan's Community Liveability Programme.

2.7 Reasons for recommending preferred option

Without any evidence of a significant road safety risk, it is recommended that this request for the introduction of a 20mph traffic calmed zone should be declined.

The location could be placed on the Community Liveability programme's reserve list of schemes waiting available funding. However, this approach is likely to raise expectation that a scheme may come forward in the near future. This is unlikely to occur given the current number of schemes already known that have a better fit to the Council's current traffic and transport priorities, which include promoting cycling and walking; improving journey time reliability and public transport accessibility, improving air quality and reducing road safety risks.

In noting the residents' concerns about traffic speeds, there will be capacity later this year in the council's Speed Aware programme to offer some support for this area. This is where the council deploys a Speedvisor sign and road safety posters to help raise awareness of this matter to passing motorists. It is recommended that this residential estate is included in 2019/20 Speed Aware programme.

2.8 What is the issue - Petition 3, Request for the introduction of a puffin crossing on Fillongley Road, Meriden

At Full Council on 4 December 2018, Councillor Allsopp submitted a petition on behalf of local residents, requesting the introduction of a puffin crossing on Fillongley Road, Meriden.

2.9 **What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

As part of the Council's programme to provide more reliable crossing facilities outside primary and junior schools across the borough; following a service review undertaken in 2018, a number of school crossing patrol sites were disestablished in 2018, and replaced by Zebra crossings. The school at Meriden on Fillongley Road, had been established and operating with a School Crossing Patrol for many years without any problems, but in more recent times the site had become vacant and had to be manned by a mobile patrol, placing additional pressure on the service.

As a result Meriden was identified through our 2018 service review as a location that would benefit from the provision of a new permanent pedestrian crossing facility. This would provide a more consistent and reliable crossing facility for the village whilst enabling our existing resource to be redeployed to support existing locations across the borough.

A pedestrian crossing assessment was carried out in 2018 (this has been reviewed again in light of this petition). This study found that Fillongley Road, which forms part of the B4102 classified road network, is subject to reasonably high traffic flows in the peak periods, with very little pedestrian demand outside the two school arrival and departure periods. The assessment concluded that a Zebra crossing was the appropriate solution for the prevailing traffic conditions, which takes into account a variety of environment factors.

Consequently, in September 2018 the School Crossing Patrol operating at this site was withdrawn and the new Zebra crossing opened. During the initial weeks after the change, the Council received concerns from parents and local residents about a number of vehicles failing to stop for pedestrians on the crossing, who have the right of way. In response to these concerns, a plan was drawn up and implemented in a phased approach to allow a tailored solution to be developed for this location. This saw the introduction of three priority chicanes and new temporary signage, the intention of which has been to slow vehicle speeds and aid driver compliance with the new facility.

Following the introduction of the temporary chicanes, Officers have received reports that residents have concerns over one of the features. This feature has been removed and the impact is being monitored.

Officers are currently in the process of introducing a new part-time 20 mph speed limit in the vicinity of the school which when implemented in April, and will reduce the speed limit at the two key times of the day. If successful this may allow the two remaining traffic calming features to be removed, or if speeds do not reduce, the features could be made permanent.

During this period of transition and evaluation, traffic speed and volumes surveys are being carried out to monitor the impact of the measures and the results will help inform whether any further work is required.

The Zebra crossing has been operating for 6 months and there have been no road traffic injury collisions, although the council has received reports of several near

misses and other safety concerns about the new crossing, which gave rise to the petition requesting the introduction of a traffic signal controlled crossing facility which are perceived to be safer.

2.10 **Reasons for recommending preferred option**

Feedback from residents involved with the petition, suggest they consider a traffic signal controlled PUFFIN facility will make the situation safer. This view is not backed up by national statistics and is therefore not supported by Officers.

A comparison of personal injury collisions involving pedestrians at formal crossing facilities across the Borough, shows that, over the last 5 years, 21 pedestrians were injured on signal controlled (Pelican, Puffin or Toucan) crossings and 22 pedestrians on Zebras. This is in line with evidence nationwide.

It should however be noted that it is very difficult to do a “like for like” comparison in terms of safety between the different types of crossing because they are used in different environments, with differing traffic conditions.

The Council uses the Department for Transport’s recommended assessment process to help inform the decision-making process. On this occasion, the Zebra crossing is considered to be the appropriate solution. The assessment process has proved to be a successful method of determining which type of pedestrian crossing is most appropriate since the system was introduced in 1995.

An independent Road Safety Audit of the new crossing facility has also been undertaken. The Road Safety Audit process is used to evaluate highway improvement schemes. Conducted by independent trained road safety specialists, the process is intended to identify road safety hazards and to suggest measures to eliminate or mitigate any concerns associated with new road schemes.

The Road Safety Audit made a number of minor recommendations but did not raise any significant or fundamental concerns about the type of new facility.

The issues identified in the audit and the actions taken in response are summarised below:

- The installation of new Zebra crossing warning signage in both directions to aid driver compliance (New temporary road layout signage has been installed for the period of the trial and may be replaced if appropriate with permanent signage once the final scheme layout has been determined).
- The existing electronic signs to be repaired/reprogrammed (this has now been completed).
- The installation of hatch markings between the existing tapered central carriageway markings (this was not considered to be a critical issue and will be ordered as part of our routine lining refresh programme)
- The installation of a small section of single yellow line parking restrictions removed following the resurfacing of the carriageway (this has been impacted by the new temporary traffic calming feature and will be addressed

when a decision is taken as to whether this should be made permanent or removed).

Nevertheless, residents' concerns have not been dismissed. Getting children and parents to school safely remains a priority for Highway Services and this commitment can be demonstrated through the steps taken by Officers over the last 6 months to mitigate the concerns raised.

It is recognised that when any change to or new facility is introduced within a street environment there is inevitably a period of adjustment, as drivers become accustomed to the new layout and amend their driving behaviour in response.

This appears to have been the case in this instance, and combined with the introduction of the new priority chicanes, which slow traffic on the approach to the crossing, monitoring does indicate that driver compliance has improved since the introduction of the new crossing.

Results from monitoring of the crossing undertaken during the week commencing the 25th February showed that, over the course of a week, 1260 pedestrians used the crossing facility during the start and end of the school day. For 1258 out of the 1260 crossings, pedestrians were able to cross first time as drivers stopped on noticing the approaching pedestrians.

Whilst pedestrians have the right of way once on the crossing they are advised to wait on the footway at the crossing, indicating to drivers their intention to cross until both directions of traffic have acknowledged and stopped for the crossing. Children at the school have, since the introduction of the new facility, received road safety training which included using the new crossing. If used in this manner, a Zebra crossing operates in a similar way to a light controlled crossing, where pedestrians only cross once traffic has come to a standstill. In the case of light controlled crossing a pedestrian must push a button, monitor and wait for the light to turn red, and finally check that vehicles in both directions are complying with the light and have come to a standstill before crossing.

In the two observed occasions where a car failed to give way for a pedestrian at the Zebra crossing, the pedestrian had remained on the kerb as per the advice above. Subsequent cars stopped allowing the pedestrian to cross safely and as such posed no significant safety risk.

A video of the current layout has been prepared and will be shown as part of the report presentation which demonstrates the crossing in operation.

In order to reduce traffic speeds in the vicinity of the school it is proposed to introduce a part-time 20 mph speed limit in April 2019. If successful the temporary traffic calming features will then be either removed or made permanent depending on the results from the on-going monitoring of traffic speeds and compliance at the new crossing.

Your officers will continue to work closely with Ward Members and the Parish Council through the next phases of the project, but at this stage the recommendation is to not

agree to change the pedestrian crossing to a Puffin.

2.11 What is the issue - Petition 4, Request for parking restrictions Dovehouse Lane

A petition was received from Coppice Close Residents' Association, requesting parking restrictions on Dovehouse Lane.

2.12 What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

Initial site investigations indicate that the parking problem on Dovehouse Lane is associated with some temporary building works adjacent to Coppice Close. The new residential development is due to be complete later this year which is well before any parking restrictions could be brought into operation.

There is a low level of parking in this vicinity, generally of light trade vans and goods vehicles delivering to the site, which has been granted planning permission by the council.

The evidence would not support the introduction of emergency or temporary parking restrictions at this stage.

2.13 Reasons for recommending preferred option

It is recommended that this request should be put on the council's Traffic Regulation Order (parking restriction) request system for prioritisation in November 2019. As part of this piece of work, it will be necessary for officers to review the situation to see if conditions persist.

In the meantime, the lead petitioners will be advised to refer any dangerous or obstructive parking to the police. Officers have also contacted the owners of the development to ask for their co-operation to improve the situation and reduce the impact of their parking on neighbouring residents.

2.14 What is the issue - Petitions 5 & 6, Request to keep the 3 hours free parking in Shirley shoppers car parks

At Full Council on 5 February 2019, Councillor Tim Hodgson submitted two petitions on behalf of local residents, requesting that the 3 hours free parking in Shirley shoppers car parks should be retained.

2.15 What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

The option to remove the 3 hour free parking period from the park facilities in Shirley has been considered through the Council's budget setting process.

The Council agreed as part of the council's budget setting process for the 2018/19 financial year, to introduce a £150,000 saving target from the Parking Services budget. The proposal seeks to make changes to the existing parking tariff operating in Shirley to achieve that increased level of income.

2.16 Reasons for recommending preferred option

The Council's budget for 2019/20 was agreed at the council meeting on 28 February 2019 which supported the reduction of free parking from 3 hours to 1 hour in Shirley shoppers car parks.

2.17 What is the issue - Petition 7, Request for parking restrictions Saintbury Drive

At Full Council on 5 February 2019, Councillor Tildesley submitted a petition on behalf of residents of Saintbury Drive, requesting the introduction of parking restrictions on Saintbury Drive. This matter is currently being investigated, the outcome of which will be reported at the cabinet decision session on 16 May 2019. This will provide sufficient time for the matters raised to be considered and appropriate responses/actions prepared.

2.18 What is the issue - Petition 8, Request for the installation of a pedestrian crossing outside Mason House, Green Lane, Shirley.

At Full Council on 5 February 2019, Councillor Allen submitted a petition on behalf of residents of Mason House, Ruth Patrick House and the surrounding area in Green Lane, requesting for the introduction of a pedestrian crossing to be situated outside Mason House to the other side of Green Lane.

This matter is currently being investigated, and the outcome from the associated Pedestrian Crossing Assessment will be reported at the cabinet decision session on 16 May 2019.

2.19 What is the issue - Petition 9, Request to provide 1 hour free car parking in all council car parks in Knowle village

At Full Council on 5 February 2019, Councillor Rebeiro submitted a petition on behalf of local residents, requesting for the provision of 1 hour free car parking in all council car parks in Knowle village.

2.20 What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

The proposal has been considered as part of the council's budget setting process. A decision was taken by Council on the 28 February 2019 to increase the free stay to 1 hour in all of the car parks in Knowle.

2.21 Reasons for recommending preferred option

The decision has already been taken by Council therefore; it is recommended that no other action is required. The changes are planned to be implemented in early April 2019.

Ward Members, Stakeholders and customers will be informed when the Council publishes its notice of parking tariff change, which will be served 21 days before the changes become effective. A copy of this notice will also be served in the local press and posted in the car parks affected.

2.22 **What is the issue - Petition 10, Request that urgent action be taken to restrict large, articulated lorries from parking overnight or for more than a limited number of hours on Radway Road**

A petition was received from representatives of the industrial units in the area of Radway Road, requesting that urgent action be taken to restrict large, articulated lorries from parking overnight or for more than a limited number of hours on Radway Road. This matter is currently being investigated, the outcome of which will be reported at the cabinet decision session on 16 May 2019. This will provide sufficient time for the matters raised to be considered and appropriate responses/actions prepared.

3. Implications and Considerations

3.1 How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of Council Priorities (*select which priority/priorities and also specify which key programme/s*):

- The Council's priorities have been taken into consideration when making the recommendations contained within this report.

3.2 Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

3.2.1 Safety and accessibility is at the heart of everything the Council does when considering making changes to how the public highway operates. This includes the safety of children, young people and our most vulnerable road user groups.

3.2.2 Any specific risks identified during the detailed design process will either be designed out or mitigating measures proposed which may also be subject to an independent Road Safety Audit process.

3.3 Consultation and Scrutiny:

3.3.1 The matters arising from these petitions have not been subject to review by any of the Council's Scrutiny Boards. With any proposed changes the associated statutory consultation process will be followed.

3.4 Financial implications:

3.4.1 The cost of dealing with a petition is met from within existing Highway Services staff revenue budgets.

3.5 Legal implications:

3.5.1 None as a consequence of this report.

3.6 Risk implications:

- 3.6.1 The Corporate Risk Management Approach has been complied with to identify and assess the significant risk associated with this decision/project. This includes (but is not limited to), financial, political, legislation and reputation risks.

The Approach is not intended to eliminate all risks and not all the risks identified can be managed all of the time. Also, risks will still exist that have not been identified.

However, based on the information provided, no significant risks have been identified.

3.7 Statutory Equality Duty:

- 3.7.1 None as a consequence of this report. Specific Fair Treatment Assessment will be considered while investigating each petition.

4. List of appendices referred to

- 4.1 Petition Update March 2019 - Appendix 1.

5. Background papers used to compile this report

- 5.1 None.

6. List of other relevant documents

- 6.1 None.