

**Meeting date:** 25 November 2020  
**Report to:** Cabinet Member for Environment & Highways  
**Subject/report title:** **PETITION SUMMARY**  
**Report from:** Head of Highway Management  
**Report author/lead contact officer:** Paul Tovey  
Tel: 0121 704 6479  
Email: [ptovey@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:ptovey@solihull.gov.uk)



---

**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:** N/A

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To provide an update on 5 petitions received for the Environment 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.

**3. Matters for Consideration – Petition 1, Request that the installation of average speed cameras on Water Orton Road be considered**

3.1 On 11 February 2020, the Castle Bromwich Green party submitted a petition on behalf of local residents calling on the Council to consider the installation of average speed cameras on Water Orton Road.

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

- 4.1 When this petition was received, it was expected that the Average Speed Enforcement (ASE) project would have been drawing to a conclusion. Unfortunately, due to other priorities emerging during the COVID situation this work is still continuing.
- 4.2 Whilst the council's ASE partnership with WM Police and Birmingham City Council has continued, the scheme was suspended for a few weeks at the start of lock down as officers were re-deployed to other duties.
- 4.3 The review has now moved on to being a regional conversation and is being discussed with colleagues at Transport for West Midlands and the other West Midlands Highway Authorities, with a view to establishing new arrangements for the next ASE partnership.
- 4.4 It is expected that the new partnership will agree the associated business case, objectives and deployment strategy amongst a wider range of other potential out-puts and outcomes. However, this means that unfortunately, there is no news to share with petitioners at this stage and the way forward is not expected to be known until shortly before the current partnership ends in June 2021.
- 4.5 The team have received several other requests for deployment of ASE equipment in the Borough and it is suggested that as part of this on-going project that all such requests are recorded with a view to developing a prioritisation process.
- 4.6 The local police have, during COVID, carried out more speed enforcement with the neighbourhood policing teams using Prolaser handheld equipment, and as an interim measure details of this petition have been shared with the police to see if this location can be included in their programme of work in the future.
- 4.7 Traffic conditions, which are currently being affected by the current COVID restrictions again, means that surveys results are un-reliable, nevertheless. Speed data will be collected as soon as possible and will be used to inform future priorities the council's Speed Awareness programme.

#### **5. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

- 5.1 It is therefore recommended that no decision should be made until the ASE project has been brought to a conclusion and the way forward for ASE equipment in the West Midlands region has been agreed.
- 5.2 It will therefore be necessary to keep this matter on the petitions register until the way forward for ASE has been agreed. This will then enable the request for ASE equipment to be assessed against the new operating protocols agreed by the new partnership. The programme for the next ASE update report has been revised to May 2021.

**6. Matters for Consideration – Petition 2, Request the closure of the alleyway at the rear of 611 Auckland Drive**

6.1 On 24 July 2020, Saqib Bhatti MP submitted a petition on behalf of local residents calling on the Council to close the alleyway at the rear of 611 Auckland Drive.

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

7.1 Colleagues in Community Safety and at West Midlands Police have now contributed to the investigation in order to understand and obtain evidence in respect of the scale and frequency of antisocial behaviour occurring at this location.

7.2 The Police have provided records covering the period commencing January 2020 for the alleyway and surrounding roads. Whilst these appear to show that this area has been subjected to repeated instances of both crime and antisocial behaviour, it is unclear from the records provided how many occurred on or were a direct result of the alleyway in question.

7.3 Officers have requested that the figures provided are broken down into further detail, which will require a manual trawl and sort of the data. This is necessary to demonstrate and justify the requested closure and therefore until such time this data is made available it would not be appropriate to progress a closure of the alleyway

7.4 It is noted that the schemes of delegation set out that matters associated with Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, including the authorisation of applications for Anti-social Behaviour Orders such as Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) are delegated to the Director of Economy and Infrastructure. As such any decision as to whether an order should be progressed will need to be taken to and considered by the Director of Economy and Infrastructure.

7.5 It should be noted that there is still lawful use of the alley way and this will also need to be taken into consideration. At the present time, no funding and staff resource is available to progress a closure and this would need to be identified should it be deemed appropriate to progress a PSPO. The estimated cost for gating the alleyway is £8,000 and this includes the cost of gates, the legal costs associated with advertising and making an order and the costs associated with establishing a key management system.

**8. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

8.1 The data provided to date is not sufficient to justify the progression of the requested alley gating using the appropriate Public Space Protection Order powers. As such it is necessary to obtain further clarity around the data that has been provided so that issues and events associated specifically on and as a result of the alleyway may be identified.

8.2 A pedestrian count of the alleyway has been commissioned and is due to take place in November. The figures from this count will assist and inform considerations as to whether it would be appropriate to progress the requested closure.

- 8.3 The schemes of delegations set out that Public Space Protection Orders should be determined by the Director of Economy and Infrastructure which will enable and ensure inter-agency collaboration in reduction of crime and disorder.
- 9. Matters for Consideration - Petition 3, Request to reopen the remaining closed blue badge parking spaces on Drury Lane and Mill Lane, Solihull Town Centre**
- 9.1 At Full Council, on 6 October 2020, Councillor Kathryn Thomas submitted a petition on behalf of local residents calling on the Council to reopen the remaining closed blue badge parking spaces on Drury Lane and Mill Lane.
- 10. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**
- 10.1 The scheme, introduced as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund, to reallocate the available road space in Drury Lane and Mill Lane, together with those blue badge parking spaces in Station Road, to aid social distancing has been reviewed regularly since the meeting of this cabinet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September.
- 10.2 These reviews showed that whilst demand to park in all 3 areas of Solihull Town Centre remained high, customers had the choice to wait a short period of time for one of the on-street parking spaces to become available or alternatively, park in one of the council's other parking facilities, where throughout the COVID situation, there has been plenty of spare free parking capacity which was available all of the time.
- 10.3 Towards the end of September, it became apparent that the potential environmental benefits of the wild flower mix in the planters was reducing. This gave rise to an opportunity to carefully relocate the planters into alternative locations.
- 10.4 On the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, the difficult relocation process began and as a result 22 out of the 23 blue badge spaces were opened for customers to use. The remaining planters provide a welcoming gateway into the street, with the rest of the planters being relocated into the pedestrianised area in Mell Square.
- 10.5 In Station Road, 8 blue badge parking spaces were initially suspended to facilitate pedestrian access to the temporary bus stops. With Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) agreeing to use these as "set down" stops only, this allowed 4 of these spaces to be re-opened back in August. More recently, a review was carried out with colleagues from TfWM who agreed that passenger numbers are such that the additional space is not required and this has enabled the remaining 4 spaces to be re-opened.
- 10.6 The situation is being monitored and the parking situation has returned to near normal, with blue badge holders waiting for space to become available when there are plenty of spare free parking spaces available in the adjacent town centre multi-storey car parks.
- 11. Reasons for recommending preferred option**
- 11.1 The on-going review process of the Council's Emergency Active Travel Measures has worked satisfactorily and has enabled the Blue Badge parking spaces. The current arrangement of the planters is working well and are helping to provide a balanced

environment. It is recommended that no further action is required.

**12. Matters for Consideration - Petition 4, Request to install CCTV cameras in Elmdon Park and Damson Lane Park**

12.1 At Full Council, on 6 October 2020, Councillor McCarthy submitted a petition on behalf of local residents calling on the Council to install CCTV cameras in Elmdon Park and Damson Lane Park.

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

13.1 Explore the feasibility of investing in a 'bank' of 4 cameras, and using these for set periods of time at park locations with highest need.

13.2 Explore installation of static cameras at Elmdon Park and Damson Park.

13.3 Do nothing.

**14. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

14.1 Our preferred option and recommendation is option 1 - Explore the feasibility of investing in a 'bank' of 4 cameras, and using these for set periods of time at park locations with highest need. This is a strategy Officers were already in the process of exploring and therefore this petition and request is timely. The purpose of these cameras would be the prevention and detection of crime, but careful consideration needs to be given as whether to use this method or not. We will take into account what benefits can be gained, whether better solutions exist, and what effect it may have on individuals.

14.2 The majority of parks within the borough do not have the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate mains powered static CCTV cameras. To facilitate this would require significant funding and resource. A bank of cameras would give officers a flexible and cost effective tool to support in addressing issues relating to anti-social behaviour, crime and nuisance at appropriate park and park car park locations within the borough where we have evidenced need and reason to deploy. Again this will need careful consideration.

14.3 The cameras in the first instance would be installed in the parks stated above. This would provide a good opportunity to fully test new equipment if this approach is deemed appropriate. We would work with ward members to understand the local issues and how best to deploy this intervention longer term.

14.4 A procurement exercise is being carried out to help determine the best technical solution available. Intervention involving the use of cameras must also be deployed in accordance with current operating and data protection legislation. As a result, and if possible, it is expected to have the equipment and associated operating protocols in place early in the new-year.

**14.5 Matters for Consideration - Petition 5, Request to reduce traffic on Valley Road and Rangoon Road**

- 14.6 At Full Council, on 6 October 2020, Councillor Slater submitted a petition on behalf of local residents calling on the Council to reduce traffic on Valley Road and Rangoon Road.
- 14.7 This matter is currently being investigated, the outcome of which will be reported at the cabinet decision session on 5 January 2021. This will provide sufficient time for the matters to be considered and appropriate responses/actions prepared.

**15. Implications and Considerations**

15.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revitalising our towns and local centres.</li> <li>2. UK Central (UKC) and maximising the opportunities of HS2.</li> <li>3. Increase the supply of housing, especially affordable and social housing.</li> </ol>	<p>The Council’s priorities have been taken into consideration when making the recommendations contained within this report.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Enhance Solihull’s natural environment.</li> <li>5. Improve Solihull’s air quality.</li> <li>6. Reduce Solihull’s net carbon emissions.</li> </ol>	<p>The Council’s priorities have been taken into consideration when making the recommendations contained within this report.</p>
<p>People and Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Take action to improve life chances in our most disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>8. Enable communities to thrive.</li> <li>9. Sustainable, quality, affordable provision for adults &amp; children with complex needs.</li> </ol>	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

## **15.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:**

15.2.1 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.

## **15.3 Financial implications:**

15.3.1 The cost of dealing with a petition is met from within existing Highway Services staff revenue budgets. Any financial implications associated with actions identified in the report will be prioritised and managed within existing revenue and capital budgets.

15.3.2 There are no other financial implications as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

## **15.4 Legal implications:**

15.4.1 None as a consequence of this report.

## **15.5 Risk implications:**

15.5.1 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.

## **15.6 Equality implications:**

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

## **16. List of appendices referred to**

16.1 Petition Update November 2020 - Appendix 1.

## **17. Background papers used to compile this report**

17.1 None.

## **18. List of other relevant documents**

18.1 None.