

HAYES TOWN CENTRE - PETITION REQUESTING THAT FORMAL CONSULTATION IS UNDERTAKEN ON THE INTRODUCTION OF A 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT IN HAYES TOWN CENTRE TOGETHER WITH TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor John Riley
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Transport
Officer Contact(s)	Dr. Alan J Tilly – Infrastructure, Transport & Building Services
Papers with report	None

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a petition from residents requesting that formal consultation is undertaken as a matter of urgency on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit together with other traffic calming measures in Hayes town centre.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	This report supports the Council objective of Our People. The request can be considered as part of the Council's annual programme of road safety initiatives. Reducing the speed limit would be in full accordance with the Council's Transport for London Local Implementation Plan 3.
Financial Cost	Subject to the outcome of discussions with petitioners the Cabinet Member may be minded to commission speed and traffic surveys. The current cost of these is in the region of £85 per location and can be funded from within existing revenue budgets for the Transportation service.
Relevant Select Committee	Public Safety and Transport Select Committee
Ward(s) affected	Botwell and Pinkwell

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Transport:

- 1) Meets with petitioners and listens to their concerns in regard to inconsiderate drivers along Blyth Road, Botwell Common Road, Botwell Lane, Clayton Road, Dawley Road, Millington Road, Nestles Avenue, Nield Road, North Hyde Road, Printing House Lane, Redmead Road, St Anselm's Road, Station Road and Trevor Road;

- 2) Subject to the outcome of the above, asks officers to undertake 24/7 traffic speed surveys in suitable locations within the above road network, as agreed with petitioners and local ward councillors;
- 3) Asks officers in the Council's Transport and Town Centres Team to investigate any specific road safety concerns that petitioners may highlight along the roads identified;
- 4) Subject to the outcome of the above, instructs officers to consider appropriate measures which could be implemented as appropriate in the road network concerned, and reports back to the Cabinet Member on the findings, including projected costs;
- 5) Subject to the outcome of (4) asks officers to investigate suitable sources of funding to support the implementation of a suitable scheme;
- 6) Notes that any physical traffic calming measures would normally also need to be the subject of appropriate statutory consultation.

Reasons for recommendation

The petition hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners of their concerns and suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. An e-petition with a total of 141 signatures has been received by the Council, submitted by a Botwell Ward Councillor as the lead petitioner. The petition states "*we the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to request more action by Hillingdon Police to catch and charge those responsible. Formal consultation by Hillingdon Council as a matter of urgency on the introduction of a 20mph limit and other traffic calming measures*".

2. The justification for the petition is that residents "*deplore the use of roads in and around Hayes Town Centre by inconsiderate drivers who frequently drive at excessive speeds, often late at night and in the early hours of the morning. We believe that this anti-social behaviour is not only a threat to life and limb but also to physical and mental health because of excessive noise and air pollution*".

3. The Cabinet Member will note the specific exhortation for the Council to '*request more action by the police*' and whilst the Council clearly maintains a very positive and wide-ranging dialogue with police colleagues, from the Borough Commander downwards, the Cabinet Member

may wish to point out that the actual prioritisation and deployment of police resources is not within the Council's gift.

4. Many activities undertaken by the Police can only be managed by them, such as enforcement of speeding and the deployment of speed enforcement equipment. This is because speeding is an endorsable offence which may result in points on a driver's licence as well as penalties defined in law, and in some cases a Court appearance, and the Council does not have the necessary powers to mirror those of the Police.

5. There is also a common public misunderstanding about 'safety cameras' with a belief by many that they are operated by the Council. In Greater London, such devices (fixed or mobile) are operated by a consortium which includes the Metropolitan Police, Transport for London, Her Majesty's Courts and London Councils (the latter the body which looks after many aspects of common interest to the 33 local authorities in Greater London). Furthermore, this consortium presently only considers new fixed cameras at locations where there is already a high level of recurring serious or fatal road traffic collisions. In simple terms, therefore, whilst the Council can lobby for safety cameras where the criteria are appropriate, it does not own, install or maintain them.

6. Having explained the situation with regard to speed enforcement devices, it is worth noting that the Council is able to use devices known as 'vehicle activated signs' which use radar type equipment to detect the speed of approaching vehicles, and will flash a suitable warning message to any drivers exceeding the posted speed limit. These signs can be used as part of a road safety response to a speeding problem, but it is important to appreciate that they are advisory only.

7. 20mph speed limits aim to improve the safety and quality of life for local people by promoting more considerate driving. They may be introduced on a section of road, a single street or multiple streets across a small area. The limit is signed at the beginning and end together with repeater signs at regular intervals.

8. A similar way of calming the speed of traffic to improve the safety and quality of life for local people is by the creation of a 20mph zone.

9. 20mph zones are generally introduced over a number of streets across an area, typically bordered by physical barriers or main roads. The boundary of the zone is marked by signs at all entry and exit points. To create a 20mph zone, it is generally recommended that if speeds are significantly above 20mph, then suitable traffic calming measures should be considered to ensure that low speeds are maintained throughout.

10. As noted, the 20mph speed limit is signed only on entering the zone and no repeater signs are strictly necessary, although in some cases repeater signs can be added if deemed beneficial, particularly if their use can help reduce confusion.

11. Typical traffic calming measures that could be provided if appropriate could include speed tables, speed cushions, pedestrian refuge islands and road narrowing. The principle is that the traffic calming slows vehicles down to speeds below the 20mph limit, and in this way the zone becomes 'self-enforcing'. Cyclists and pedestrians are given priority over cars through physical alteration to streets.

12. In line with many other local authorities, the Council is moving towards the potential wider use of 20mph zones without significant amounts of new traffic calming, but in practice it remains important that each case is considered on its own merits, using adequate technical evidence to support the testimony of those affected.

13. All the roads listed by the petitioners are situated either within or on the edge of Hayes Town Centre and pass through busy built-up areas. With the exception of Millington Road, all roads have residential frontages suggesting that these are places where there will be a significant number of pedestrians and cyclists moving around. Speeding traffic presents a road safety risk to these vulnerable road users.

14. Some of the roads mentioned by the petitioners already have 20mph speed limits. These roads are along Botwell Common Road between Printing House Lane and Compton Road and the town centre section of Station Road. Parts of Millington Road has a 15mph speed limit. All the roads other roads have a 30mph speed limit. Botwell Lane, Dawley Road, North Hyde Road and Station Road form part of the Council's Classified Route Network and are bus routes. Botwell Common Road and Botwell Lane are also bus routes.

15. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, independent traffic surveys are a reliable and well-established means to understand the real situation on the ground. The surveys generally use special equipment, including pneumatic tubes which are mounted temporarily on the road surface, fitted transversely across the whole width of the carriageway. These devices are installed for a period of at least a week to ten days and monitor traffic movements on a '24/7' basis. The equipment is sufficiently sophisticated that not only can it record traffic speeds at any given time, it also records the size and type of vehicle, from motorcycle to large multi-axled lorry as appropriate.

16. It is therefore suggested that the Cabinet Member invites the petitioners to meet with him and state their case, and thereafter he may be minded to instruct officers to commission suitable traffic surveys at locations that can be suggested to him by petitioners and their ward councillors, at or subsequent to the meeting itself. In this way petitioners (and councillors) can be assured that the surveys should best illustrate where they believe the problems are most acute. It is normal practice to avoid times like school holidays or other times when traffic levels are lighter than normal to ensure that the surveys are truly representative of the situation on street.

17. The survey results will subsequently be reported to the Cabinet Member and ward councillors, and will be considered as part of the process of deciding the most appropriate next steps.

18. If speeding is shown to be a problem along some or all of the roads listed, the normal procedure is to undertake informal consultation with local residents asking them if they would support the introduction of 20mph speed limits or the creation of a 20mph zone. If these proposals are supported, then formal consultation is then carried out as part of the legal Traffic Order making process needed to allow the speed limit to be changed and become legally enforceable.

19. Funding for the implementation of the scheme may be sought from various sources, such as Transport for London or in many cases from developer contributions. Further work will be undertaken by officers in discussion with the Cabinet Member if and when the circumstances dictate.

Financial Implications

If the Cabinet Member is minded to agree to undertake independent speed and traffic surveys the cost is usually in the region of between £80 and £85 per location which can be funded from existing revenue budgets. If works are subsequently required, suitable funding will also be identified existing from revenue budgets within the Road Safety Programme.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member an opportunity to discuss in detail with petitioners their concerns.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the recommendations to this report and concurs with the financial implications as set out above.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Corporate Property and Construction

There are no corporate property and construction implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received