

12. PETITION FOR OLD WINDSOR TRAFFIC SURVEY

CABINET: 24th July 2008.

MEMBER REPORTING: COUNCILLOR RAYNER

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider a petition presented to Council on 22nd April 2008 by Councillor Beer containing 697 signatures stating:

"...We the undersigned urgently request that the Borough Council authorise a village wide traffic survey in Old Windsor with a subsequent action plan to alleviate the problems in the village with particular emphasis on the A308 (Straight Road), St Peter's Road, Church Road intersection where a serious accident is waiting to happen..."

2. **MEMBER'S RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- (i) **traffic speeds and road safety data for A308 Straight Road, Old Windsor are closely monitored over the next twelve months**
- (ii) **the results from the feasibility study into improvements at the A308 Straight Road/St Peters Road/ Church Road junction are reported to the Lead Member for Highways, Transport and the Environment for consideration**
- (iii) **Old Windsor Parish Council be encouraged to prepare a 'Traffic / Transport' plan for the area that reflects local concerns and priorities**
- (iv) **the Lead Petitioner be informed of the resolution to this report**

3. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Wards Affected

Old Windsor

3.2 Relevant Matters Upon Which Decision is Based & Reasons Supporting Recommendation

- i) Councillor Beer presented a petition containing 697 signatures to Council on 22nd April 2008 as set out above.
- ii) Old Windsor is a predominantly residential settlement, located approximately 5km south-east of Windsor. The village has developed either side of the A308 Straight Road, which extends for about 2km through the village. The A308 provides the main link into Windsor from the south-east, as well as providing a link between Junction 6 on the M4 and Junction 13 on the M25. This route is identified as the M4/M25 emergency diversion route, although it is not presently signed as such. Straight Road clearly bisects the village and represents a considerable barrier to movement for local journeys for all modes of travel, but particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Although there are two existing signalised pedestrian crossings in the village, there are other locations that would benefit from crossings and the feasibility of additional pedestrian refuge islands are being considered.

- iii) The most up-to-date traffic surveys were undertaken on the A308 during June last year. The surveys would indicate two-way traffic volumes of around 1800 vehicles per hour during both the morning and evening peak periods, with continuously high flows throughout the day. Comparison with figures from other roads would indicate that Straight Road is the busiest two-lane road within the Borough. These figures would also indicate that the road is operating at a level of 10-20% above its' theoretical traffic capacity, which would have an adverse impact upon traffic flows and road safety.
- iv) Straight Road is subject to a 40mph speed limit. Survey data indicates that average speeds over a whole day are around 30mph, and that 85 per cent of vehicles were travelling at speeds under 36mph. These figures drop by around 15% during the peak periods as a result of traffic congestion.
- v) There have been 28 recorded vehicle crashes within Old Windsor over the latest three year period for which data is available (01/04/2005 to 31/03/2008), resulting in 31 slight and 2 serious injuries. Of these 28 crashes, 24 occurred on the A308. Analysis of the crash data indicates that the most common type of crash was a rear-end shunt, which is typical of a congested urban link. The data would also suggest that there were no common contributory factors identified in the pattern of crashes that could be treated with engineering measures.
- vi) It should be noted that the petition specifically refers to road safety concerns about the A308 Straight Road/St Peters Road/ Church Road junction. Road safety records indicate there have been no recorded injury crashes at this particular junction over the latest three year period. Nevertheless, this is a critical junction in the area, particularly following changes to traffic flows as a result of the recent St Lukes Road pedestrianisation scheme, which have increased traffic movements through this junction.

Funding has, therefore, been allocated for feasibility work in 2008/09 as part of the approved capital programme. This work has been commissioned and is in progress. A number of options will be evaluated, including the introduction of traffic signal control or a roundabout. It is anticipated that traffic surveys would be undertaken in September, with options developed before Christmas.

- vii) Although the petition calls for a village-wide traffic survey and the development of a subsequent action plan, the recent new approach of this council has been to encourage parishes to develop their own travel plans in order that they fully reflect local needs and concerns, and then to match fund the implementation of identified schemes. Also, any wider traffic surveys should only be considered once the impact of changes at the Straight Road/St Peters Road/Church Road junction have been fully assessed.

3.3 Options Available and Risk Assessment

	Option	Comments
1.	To undertake a village wide traffic survey and develop an action plan to alleviate the identified problems	This option is not considered appropriate and is not recommended.

	Option	Comments
2.	To continue monitoring speeds and road safety data on the A308 Straight Road over the next twelve months.	This is recommended as an appropriate and effective option
3.	To continue with the feasibility study into improvements at the A308 Straight Road/St Peters Road/ Church Road junction and to report back to a future scrutiny panel.	This is recommended as the most appropriate and effective option
4.	Note the content of the petition and take no action	This is not recommended

A risk assessment has been conducted and concluded that:

There have been 28 recorded vehicle crashes within the petition area over the latest three year period for which data is available. A risk assessment would indicate that although the impact of a road crash is high, given the volume of traffic movements through the area, the likelihood of a crash occurring is very low. Although there are no recorded crashes at the A308 Straight Road/St Peters Road/ Church Road junction, the introduction of a scheme at this location is likely to have wider road safety benefits on the adjacent sections of Straight Road, and this approach would contribute towards the Council objective of reducing personal injuries as a result of road crashes.

Due to the nature of this junction on the main highway network, inappropriate traffic management measures could lead to increased traffic congestion.

3.4 Relevant National/Regional Guidance

Department of Transport – TA 79/77 – Traffic Capacity of Urban Roads

3.5 Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

Community Strategy
The Local Transport Plan
Road Safety Strategy

The recommendations contained in this report also contribute to the Community Strategy in the following ways:

Key principles

The proposed consultation with local representatives will be effective in *‘involving people’*

Key themes:

The recommendation supports and contributes to the objectives of the *‘Getting About’* ambition group in improving road safety

The recommendation supports and contributes to the achieving the aims and objectives of the *‘Safe & Secure’* Ambition group through improving road safety

	Relevant? Yes / No
Key Themes:	
Supporting Children & Younger People	Yes
Supporting Adults & Older People	Yes
A Thriving, Cleaner, Greener Borough	Yes
Safer & Stronger Communities	Yes

4. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The recommendations of this report respond to the concerns of the community raised in the petition presented to Council by Councillor Beer.

5. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TBA – (Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny 30/06/2008)

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

The cost of undertaking a traffic survey, as suggested by the petitioners, would be in the order of £25,000, which is not presently identified in any current budgets. The cost of undertaking the feasibility study into possible junction improvements is £5,000 for which budget provision has been made in the 2008/09 capital programme. If these junction improvements prove to be feasible and are considered to represent value-for-money, then funding for a possible scheme would need to be identified as part of a future capital programme.

6.2 Legal

There are no legal implications as a direct consequence of this report.

6.3 Human Rights Act

Rights relevant to this report are Article 1 of the First Protocol – Protection of Property and Article 14 Prohibition of Discrimination.

Article 1: Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Article 14: The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Neither right is adversely affected by the recommendations.

6.4 Planning

There are no planning implications as a consequence of this report.

6.5 Sustainable Development

An improvement in road safety will have positive effects in terms of sustainable development

6.6 Diversity and Equality

There are no diversity and equality implications as a consequence of this report.

Background Papers: None