

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **CHARTERS ROAD SUNNINGDALE - PETITION**

Date: 17 December 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Rayner, Lead Member for Highways and Streetcare

Contact Officer(s): Tony Carr, Traffic and Road Safety Manager

Wards Affected: This report will have direct, or indirect impact on Sunningdale ward.

1. SUMMARY

Cllr Mrs Bateson presented a petition to Council requesting that the Council consider traffic calming measures for Charters Road, Sunningdale.

The concerns of the community in relation to road safety risk and vehicle speeds are clearly understood and acknowledged. It is, therefore, recommended that a package of lining and signing improvements be introduced; that the existing monitoring of speed, and casualty data be continued; that the regular deployment of Speed Indicator Devices (SID) continues and that the regular police speed checks are maintained.

This approach provides a positive, effective and justifiable response to address community concerns regarding vehicles speeds and road safety in the area.

2. RECOMMENDATION: That;

- i) **A package of lining and signing improvements be introduced with the final details being agreed between the Head of Highways & Engineering and Ward Councillors**
- ii) **Traffic speeds and road safety data for Charters Road continue to be closely monitored and a proactive approach be adopted which responds to significant changes;**
- iii) **Temporary speed indicator devices (SID) be deployed on a regular basis;**
- iv) **Regular speed checks be undertaken on Charters Road in conjunction with the Police and the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership;**
- v) **The Lead Petitioner be informed of the resolution to this report.**

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?

Appropriate local road safety interventions will be introduced, aimed at reducing excess vehicle speeds in the area in response to local concerns.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

Cllr Mrs Bateson presented a petition containing 42 signatures to Council on 22nd September 2009. The petition stated:

‘...We wish to express our concern about the speed of vehicles moving in excess of the 30mph limit in both directions between Dry Arch Road and the A30 stretch of Charters Road

....We would ask the RBWM council to carry out as a matter of urgency a feasibility study into traffic calming measures for this section of Charters Road’.

Charters Road is an un-classified road that provides a link between the A30 London Road and A330 Devenish Road in Sunningdale (attached plan refers).

Charters Road provides a main access to Charters School and is well used by pupils walking and cycling to school. The northern part of the road is mainly rural in character, whilst the section of road south of the junction with Dry arch Road, which is the subject of the petition, is predominantly suburban in character, with mainly large houses that are set back from the edge of the road. The road is completely straight with good forward visibility. The road is street lit and therefore the national 30mph speed limit applies.

Vehicle speeds on Charters Road are relatively high, with a significant proportion of vehicles exceeding the speed limit. This problem has been exacerbated by previous decisions to remove on-street parking on Charters Road, which had an informal traffic calming effect.

A speed survey was undertaken adjacent to Woodby Drive in June 2008. The results of the survey indicate that for vehicles travelling away from London Road, average vehicle speeds are 33.2mph, and that 15% of vehicles were exceeding 40.3mph. Speeds for vehicles travelling in the opposite direction, are slightly lower, with average speeds of 32.4mph, and 15% of drivers exceeding 39.4mph.

A manual speed survey was undertaken prior to the removal of on-street parking in the area, which indicated slightly lower speeds, with 15% of vehicles exceeding 36 and 35mph respectively.

On-site observations have been undertaken in Charters Road, by officers and local Members and it is believed that vehicle speeds are, generally, comparable with the surveys referred to above and may be marginally higher.

The Royal Borough also continuously monitors road crash data for all roads and there have been no recorded personal injury accidents on this section of Charters Road over the past five years.

In this particular instance, the introduction of traffic calming measures (as requested in the petition) is not considered the most effective solution as resources are currently targeted at locations which will achieve the greatest impact in reducing road accident casualties. It should also be emphasised that vertical traffic calming measures, such as speed cushions and road humps are not without their drawbacks – we are receiving an increasing number of complaints about noise and vibration, and such measures tend to be ineffective for 4x4 vehicles, which are a common feature in the area.

However, the concerns of the community in relation to road safety risk and vehicle speeds are clearly understood and acknowledged. Therefore, the following is recommended as a positive, effective and justifiable response:

- introduce an improvement scheme based on a package of lining and signing. 'Slow' markings on a red backing could be introduced at key locations which would be supported by road safety signs emphasising key road safety messages, including '30 for a reason' and 'Kill Your Speed'.
- continue to monitor traffic speeds and road safety data and adopt a proactive approach which responds to any significant changes
- continue with the regular deployment of 'Speed Indicator Devices' (SID)
- maintain regular speed checks in the area in conjunction with the police and the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership

Whilst this approach relies upon an improvement in driver behaviour it is recommended as a positive approach to address the concerns of local residents.

The approved capital programme includes £150,000 for 'Traffic Management Schemes'. In March 2009, Cabinet Prioritisation Sub-Committee agreed to allocate £10,000 of this budget for '*Proactive response to local issues*' which was designed to respond to petitions and community concerns which could not be identified at the commencement of the financial year.

The recommendations of this report can be funded from this capital budget allocation.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	Do-nothing.	This option is not recommended as this will not address the concerns of local residents.	None.
2.	Introduce a signing and lining improvement scheme	This options relies upon an improvement in driver behaviour but is recommended as a positive approach to address the concerns of local residents	The final implications of this can be met from the approved capital budget for 'Traffic Management Schemes'
3.	Continue to monitor speeds, deploy SIDs on a regular basis and to undertake speed enforcement operations in conjunction with the Police and the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership	This option is recommended to ensure that local needs are met and financial efficiency is achieved	The financial implications of this can be met from within existing budgets.
4.	Implement a traffic calming scheme based on either speed cushions or chicanes.	This option is not recommended.	The cost of implementing a traffic calming scheme would be between £25,000 and £45,000. There is presently no budget available to fund a scheme of this magnitude.
5.	Re-introduce a limited amount of car parking on Charters Road, arranged to create a chicane effect.	If physical traffic calming is considered essential, this option would be recommended as the most cost-effective	The financial implications of this can be met from within existing budgets.

4.2 Risk assessment

- A risk assessment would indicate that although the impact of a road crash is high, the likelihood of a crash occurring is low, especially given the current casualty record for the area.
- Whilst the introduction of traffic calming measures would reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of further crashes, the high cost of the scheme would mean that other road safety schemes at sites with a worse road safety record could not be implemented. This would represent a greater risk to the

Council achieving its objectives and performance targets relating to reducing personal injury as a result of a road crash.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

5.1 The request for the investigation of traffic calming measures originates from a local petition containing 42 signatures which indicates a level of local support.

5.2 A widespread consultation was undertaken between June and October 2009 regarding speed limits to support the report considered by Cabinet in October 2009 entitle 'Speed Cameras'.

The views of all Members; Parish and Town Councils; Neighbourhood Action Groups and Headteachers were sought. Councillor Mrs Bateson highlighted the petition as part of this process whilst the Parish Council made comment about other sections of Charters Road and the Headteacher at Charters School responded with concerns, and positive suggestions, in the roads around the school relating to narrow footpaths, poor lighting, excessive vehicle speeds and the basic lack of traffic awareness by some students.

5.3 The 'Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Action Group' have identified speeding / parking as one of its top three priorities and have acquired a 'Radar Traffic Classifier' to measure vehicle speeds and establish whether traffic calming is required. The deployment of this approach has commenced and, to date, Charters Road has not been identified as a priority.

5.4 Subject to the adoption of the recommendations contained in this report, no further public consultation is planned although the details of the proposed lining and signing scheme will be agreed between the Head of Highways & Engineering and the Ward Councillors.

6. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6.1 The Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel considered this report on 15th December. Comments will be included prior to consideration by Cabinet on 17th December 2009.

7. IMPLICATIONS

The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A

Background Papers:

- None