

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Paynesdown Road area, Thatcham
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	30 September 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2359

Purpose of Report:	To inform the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services of the results of a public consultation on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone with traffic calming and to seek approval of the recommendations.
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Recommended Action:	That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in section 5 of this report.
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Reason for decision to be taken:

Other options considered: N/A

Key background documentation:

The petition.
Results of vehicle surveys.
Speed Limit Review minutes December 2010.
Individual Decision report (ID 2144) - Speed Limit Review December 2010.
Results of the public consultation.

Portfolio Member Details	
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Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andrew Garratt
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Implications

Policy:	The consultation is in accordance with the Council's Consultation procedures.
Financial:	The cost to introduce the scheme would be in the region of £25,000. At present there is no available budget within the Council's approved capital programme for introducing such a scheme.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal/Procurement:	The speed limit traffic regulation order and speed cushion Notice would follow the statutory consultation / advertisement procedure.
Environmental:	The proposed 20mph speed limit and speed cushions would reduce traffic speeds and give a perception of improved safety.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	A Stage One EIA was undertaken on 25 August 2011 and is attached as Appendix A. This indicated that a Stage Two EIA would not be required.

Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.
Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:	Councillor Brian Bedwell - If residents and the ward member wish for the reduction of speed limit AND the introduction of speed humps to be implemented, I am in agreement. That said I am not really in favour of speed humps which have a detrimental effect on ambulances and we should not introduce them if there is any alternative!.
Ward Members:	<p>Councillor's Keith Woodhams and Jeff Brooks are of the opinion that traffic calming measures in the form of road cushions do not work. Councillor Woodhams has followed vehicles in other areas of Thatcham where cushions have been installed and is of the opinion that they have little to no effect in slowing traffic down.</p> <p>Councillor Woodhams has received an email from Thatcham Town Council on behalf of a resident in Henwick Lane where cushions have been installed to support a 30 mph speed limit and he is asking for speed enforcement to be taken.</p>

Councillor Woodhams has commented that the specific reasons for not supporting cushions are as follows:

Cushions do not slow vehicles down.

Cushions are expensive to install and maintain.

Residents do not want cushions installed outside their property.

Cushions cause vehicles with low exhausts (normally noisy exhausts) to slow down then speed up causing a noise nuisance to residents and cause additional pollution.

Residents would rather have the money spent on fixing the potholes or having the road resurfaced.

We should wait until new legislation comes in taking away the need for traffic calming measures.

For the record, we do not support traffic calming measures for the above scheme.

**Opposition
Spokesperson:**

Councillor Keith Woodhams - See ward members comments.

Local Stakeholders:

Will be consulted as part of the statutory consultation process.

Officers Consulted:

Mark Edwards, Mark Cole

Trade Union:

N/A

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by O&SMC or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 A petition containing 136 signatures was submitted to the Council on 23rd September 2010. The petition states:

"We the undersigned request West Berkshire Council implement a 20 mph speed limit in Paynesdown Road Thatcham. The road is used as a rat run between Lower Way and the A4 and 30 mph is too fast in a residential area. We are very concerned for the elderly and children crossing the road between parked cars. We need urgent action to be taken to reduce the speed of vehicles on this road."

- 1.2 Paynesdown Road is a through road in a residential estate which provides access to other residential culs-de-sac. There are footways on both sides and on-street parking occurs throughout its length.
- 1.3 In the latest three year period, to the end of June 2011, there have been no recorded injury accidents within the residential estate.
- 1.4 To establish existing traffic speeds surveys were undertaken during September 2010 at two locations and the results are shown in the table below:

Location	Direction	Average speed	85 th percentile	Average two way daily volume
Outside number 38 Paynesdown Road opposite Crowfield Drive	Northbound	23	27	226
	Southbound	25	29	
Outside number 78 Paynesdown Road	Eastbound	24	29	532
	Westbound	27	31	

- 1.5 The request for a 20mph speed limit was considered by the speed limit task group at its meeting on 1st December 2010 when it was agreed that a 20mph zone be approved in principle subject to support from a public consultation and there being sufficient funding available to implement any necessary measures. This recommendation was subsequently approved by Individual Decision (ID 2144).

2. Results of the public consultation

- 2.1 A consultation on the proposal was undertaken during March 2011 with residents of Paynesdown Road and the adjacent culs-de-sac. The consultation was in the form of an explanatory letter, a plan showing the location of possible speed cushions and a questionnaire seeking residents views on whether they considered there to be a speeding problem and whether they would support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone with speed cushions.

- 2.2 At the close of the public consultation a total of 198 responses had been received, including one which did not provide a name or address.
- 2.3 The responses to the questionnaire were:
- | | |
|--|---|
| Do you consider there to be a speeding issue? | Yes = 140 No = 56
No Indication = 2 |
| Would you support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone with speed cushions | Yes = 133 No = 63
No Indication = 2 |
- 2.4 Details of the comments received during the public consultation are listed in Appendix B together with an officer's response.
- 2.5 During the ward member consultation on the draft report Councillor Woodhams commented that traffic calming measures in the form of speed cushions do not work. There has been extensive research into the effectiveness of cushions and schemes where they have been used which show that a reduction in the speed of traffic is achieved. The requirement for traffic calming in conjunction with a reduced speed limit was explained at the speed limit review meeting held on 1st December 2010. Councillor Woodhams attended this meeting to support the petition.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The results of the speed surveys indicate that speeds are well within the 30mph speed limit, even though the consultation survey results would indicate that residents perceive a speeding problem. However, speeds are too high for a 20mph speed limit. To provide this traffic calming measures would be required.
- 3.2 Due to the nature of the road, any form of horizontal traffic calming measure such as build outs and narrowings are not appropriate. The introduction of vertical calming measures i.e. speed cushions would therefore need to be introduced to reduce traffic speeds and make the 20mph zone comply with Department for Transport regulations.
- 3.3 The petitioners stated that the road (Paynesdown Road) is used as a "rat run" between Lower Way and the A4. However, correlation between volume figures taken at both survey points would indicate that the substantial majority of vehicular movements are generated from within the estate. Whilst a proportion of the overall vehicles are 'through' traffic, the term "rat run" would not be appropriate in this instance.
- 3.4 Based on the survey figures for accident statistics, speeds and volumes, a reduced speed limit employing traffic calming features would not normally be considered. However, contrary to the survey figures, the overall perception of the large majority (71%) of those residents who responded to the consultation was that a speeding issue existed. Although the 85th percentile speeds are close to 30mph the residents consider this to be too fast for this road.
- 3.5 Also on the basis of the consultation 67% of the respondents supported the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone supported by physical traffic calming features in the form of speed cushions.

- 3.6 It is clear from the petition and subsequent consultation that the Paynesdown Road estate residents would favour the introduction of a traffic calmed 20 mph speed limit zone and that notwithstanding the survey results, in this instance the general consensus of the community could be permitted to take precedence.
- 3.7 To introduce a suitable scheme, consisting of regulatory signing, lining and appropriate calming features is likely to cost in the region of £25,000. However as the current approved 5 year capital programme (2011/12 – 2015/16) is fully committed, the scheme will need to be assessed for inclusion in a future capital programme or accommodated within the programme if funding becomes available.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the scheme be assessed for inclusion in a future capital programme.
- 4.2 Given the number of signatures to the petition and the resident's wishes as established through informal consultation, it is recommended that a 20 mph Speed Limit Zone with associated traffic calming measures be progressed to statutory consultation if sufficient funding becomes available in the future.
- 4.3 The petition organiser to be advised accordingly.

Appendices

Appendix A – EIA Stage 1

Appendix B – comments received during the public consultation.

APPENDIX A

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	Paynesdown Road area, Thatcham
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	25 August 2011
Owner of item being assessed:	Andrew Garratt – Principal Traffic & Road Safety Engineer
Name of assessor:	Andrew Garratt
Date of assessment:	25 August 2011

1. What are the main aims of the item?
The main aim of this item is to respond to a petition that has been submitted to the Council.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Local Residents	Improved road safety	Lower vehicle speeds.
Elderly Pedestrians	Improved road safety	Slower speeds will make safer environment.
Persons with less mobility	Will feel safer using the public highway.	Slower speeds will make safer environment.
Child pedestrians	Improved road safety	Slower vehicle speeds will give motorists more time to react to an unexpected situation.
Further comments relating to the item:		

3. Result (please tick by double-clicking on relevant box and click on 'checked')
<input type="checkbox"/> High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

√	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
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For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	√

Name: Andrew Garratt

Date: 25 August 2011