

Individual Executive Member Decision

Response to a Motion relating to Road and Pedestrian Safety Issues on Bowling Green Road, Thatcham

Committee considering report: Individual Executive Member Decision

Date ID to be signed: 19 December 2019

Portfolio Member: Councillor Richard Somner

Date Portfolio Member agreed report:

Forward Plan Ref: ID3805

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Executive Member for Highways and Transport of the findings of a safety evaluation review of Bowling Green Road due to perceived safety problems along its entire length.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive Member for Highways and Transport approves the proposals as set out in Section 9 of this report.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** The implementation of the proposed vegetation maintenance would be funded from existing budgets.
- 3.2 **Policy:** The report has been requested and undertaken in accordance with the Council's corporate policy.
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None arising from this report.
- 3.4 **Legal:** None at this stage.
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** None
- 3.6 **Property:** None arising from this report.
- 3.7 **Other:** None arising from this report.

4. Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Councillor Lynne Doherty –

Overview & Scrutiny Management Councillor Alan Law – no comments to date

Commission Chairman:

Ward Members: Councillor Keith Woodhams and Councillor Jeff Brooks

Opposition Spokesperson: Councillor Alan Macro – no comments to date

Local Stakeholders: Not consulted at this stage.

Officers Consulted: Jon Winstanley, Neil Stacey and Gareth Dowding.

Trade Union: N/A.

5. Other options considered

5.1 None.

6. Introduction/Background

- 6.1 On 2nd July 2019 the local ward member, Councillor Keith Woodhams laid a motion before the council requesting a full safety review of Bowling Green Road, between Tull Way and Northfield Road as a result of general road safety concerns at this location.
- 6.2 The main concern was low overhanging vegetation across the carriageway and vegetation extending out into the carriageway blocking forward sight lines and sight lines from accesses along Bowling Green Road. The volume/speed of cars and lorries along Bowling Green Road was also commented on.
- 6.3 Due to the requesting for a full safety review being received relatively close to the onset of the school summer holidays and the ongoing workload commitments it was deemed appropriate that a speed survey should be undertaken during term time and for this reason such a survey was programmed to be undertaken from mid September onwards. Councillor Keith Woodhams was informed of this in order to make him aware of the timescale involved in compiling this report.

7. Supporting Information

- 7.1 On the 17th July 2019 a site inspection was undertaken by the Project Engineer Robert Bosley the finding of which are detailed in Appendix C (Traffic Management Report Assessment TMA195).
- 7.2 In summary the findings of the above report found that the existing traffic signs, road markings and visibility splays to be to the correct standard. However, numerous locations within the area of concern were found to suffer from a large amount of overhanging vegetation and whilst not impairing use of the carriageway by road users it did restrict ease of use on the shared use footway/cycleway by both pedestrians and cyclists.
- 7.3 At the request of Councillor Keith Woodhams a joint site inspection was undertaken with the Senior Engineer, Chris Vidler on Monday 29th July at 10.00am. Several areas of vegetation overhanging the highway at numerous locations were identified as areas of concern and are detailed in Appendix C (notes of the meeting). The

existing pedestrian refuge situated to the west of the vehicular entrance to the Regency Hotel although of an older design provides a good location where pedestrians can cross the road and benefits from good forward visibility for both pedestrians and road users alike. However, visibility for pedestrians crossing from the Northern side could be improved by regular cutting back of the existing vegetation which is understood not be public highway. An existing dropped kerb crossing location without tactile paving is present to the East of the vehicular entrance to the Regency Hotel and whilst forward visibility is also good at this point the carriageway being relatively wide and without a central refuge is not considered a favourable location to cross for those less mobile.

- 7.4 Given the extent of the area of concern it was deemed appropriate to undertake a speed survey at two locations on Bowling Green Road in order to gain a true representation of traffic behaviour due to a number of adjoining access roads and also the expected level of usage.
- 7.5 One Speed Data Recorder was located opposite Conway Drive with another Speed Data Recorder located to the West of Mersey Way between 17th and 23rd September 2019. The results showed an average speed of 28.1mph East and 27.4 mph West at the Conway Road junction on Bowling Green Road with an 85th percentile speed of 31.9mph and 32.8 mph respectively and at the Mersey Way junction with Bowling Green Road an average speed of 28.6 mph East and 27.6 mph West and an 85th percentile speed of 33.4 mph and 32.2 mph respectively way. The average daily two way traffic flow was 5671 vehicles. (Full details as shown in Appendix C)
- 7.6 In the last 3 years there has been one injury accident recorded on Bowling Green Road. This was in April 2016 when a goods vehicle collided with a cyclist on the main carriageway causing minor injury to the cyclist. In the seven years prior there were two recorded accidents both a side roads involving turning vehicles with 3 minor injuries reported. A damaged only incident has been reported to us but we have no official details of that. The accident record for this road is therefore good and what would be expected.

8. Options for Consideration

- 8.1 There are no physical engineering options considered appropriate for this location apart from the installation of a long reach arm to the speed limit terminal sign at the Tull Way junction (northern side) to make the sign extend out further away from the adjacent vegetation. General highway infrastructure such as street lighting, traffic signs, road markings and surfacing will remain as general maintenance items and will be attended to as and when required.
- 8.2 Bowling Green Road would benefit from regular monitoring and maintenance of overhanging vegetation. This includes a number of large trees on the northern side of Bowling Green Road, some of which may be located beyond the bounds of the existing public highway and will therefore involve the issuing of a notice to the owners by our Asset Management Team. Our Countryside Team are currently developing a more proactive approach to the management of vegetation rather than the reactive maintenance that they work with at present.
- 8.3 Increased speed enforcement may prove beneficial with respect to the minority of road users who do exceed the current speed restriction. This may be welcomed by

local residents although requests for this service would need to be made by the Parish Council directly to Thames Valley Police as the Police are responsible for enforcement. Mobile enforcement using the “camera van” at the grasscrete area at the junction of Ashmore Green Road (the main form of enforcement along this road) will continue as and when Police resources allow

9. Proposals

- 9.1 That works to remove vegetation from locations identified in Appendix C are undertaken as soon as is practically possible and included within the Countryside team’s rota for cyclic routine maintenance that is being developed to be proactive to the cutting back and maintenance of vegetation adjacent to the Highway rather than wait for requests for reactive works and the long reach arm is installed on the terminal sign at Tull Way to bring it out more into view .

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Whilst there may be a perceived safety problem on Bowling Green Road between Tull Way and Northfield Road current accident data records and recent speed survey results indicate that the majority of road users are capable of using this section of public highway appropriately.

Background Papers:

None.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position ☐
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐
- Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐
- Report is to note only ☐

Wards affected:

Thatcham West

Strategic Priorities Supported:

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

- ☐ **PC1: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes**
- ☐ **PC2: Support everyone to reach their full potential**
- ☐ **OFB1: Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire**
- ☐ **GP1: Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy**
- ☒ **GP2: Maintain a green district**
- ☐ **SIT1: Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships**

Officer details:

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11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix A – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 11.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 11.3 Appendix C – Supporting Information 01.Motion Request 00.00.19, 02.Traffic Management Assessment TMA195, 03.Site Meeting Notes 29.07.19, 04.Dwg No: TM/279/001

Appendix A

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Place
Service:	Transport and Countryside
Team:	Traffic Services
Lead Officer:	Gareth Dowding
Title of Project/System:	Traffic Management Assessment for Bowling Green Road, Thatcham
Date of Assessment:	4 Nov 2019

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
<p>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</p> <p><small>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation”</small></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p><small>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</small></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p><small>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</small></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p><small>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</small></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</p> <p><small>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</small></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:***
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;***
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:***
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;***
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;***
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.***
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.***
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”***

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	To approve the proposals as set out in section 9.1 of the main report.
Summary of relevant legislation:	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Traffic Management Act 2004
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Chris Vidler
Date of assessment:	4 November 2019

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	No
Service	No		

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To maintain the quality of life for residents and those using the highway network. To address the concerns of the above regarding general road safety at the location in question.
Objectives:	To maintain the level of road safety at this location.
Outcomes:	To continue to provide a safe environment for all users of the public highway.
Benefits:	A safe highway network.

2 Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	None	All groups will be effected

		equally
Disability	None	All groups will be effected equally
Gender Reassignment	None	All groups will be effected equally
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	All groups will be effected equally
Pregnancy and Maternity	None	All groups will be effected equally
Race	None	All groups will be effected equally
Religion or Belief	None	All groups will be effected equally
Sex	None	All groups will be effected equally
Sexual Orientation	None	All groups will be effected equally
Further Comments relating to the item:		

3 Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: All highway users needs have been considered in undertaking this review.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: All highway users needs have been considered in undertaking this review.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:
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Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	N/A
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	N/A

Name:Gareth Dowding

Date:11/11/2019

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix C

Council Motion

The Council is aware that the stretch of road known as Bowling Green Road from Northfield Road to the start of Tull Way, acts as a significant part of the northern road system in Thatcham, linking Floral Way with Tull Way. As such, the road is used by people to get to and from Newbury and other parts of Thatcham from both east and west as well as from Ashmore Green and Cold Ash.

Along this stretch of road, three housing areas are accessed via Mersey Way, Conway Drive and Thames Road.

Among a wide range of issues are the following:

- The 30 mph speed limit is exceeded daily by numerous drivers.
- Drivers exiting junctions from the three housing areas encounter vehicles coming towards them at high speed.
- A 30 mph sign on the western approach is normally covered in foliage rendering the speed limit along the road unenforceable.
- Foliage extends towards the road at various points contributing to poor sight lines at junctions.
- Foliage narrows the footway at various points forcing pedestrians to walk closer to the edge of the pavement and thus closer to fast moving vehicles including HGV's.
- Regency Park Hotel staff & visitors cross the road to get to the facilities between fast moving vehicles, including HGV's.
- Pupils disembarking from the school bus and crossing the road between fast moving vehicles including HGV's.

Given these significant issues:

- This Council agrees to carry out an urgent and comprehensive review of Road and Pedestrian safety issues along this stretch of Bowling Green Road.