

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Structural Weight Limits on Bridges – Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Keith Chopping	on:	21 December 2006
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1314		

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Executive Member for Planning and Highways of the problems experienced on three under-strength bridges in the District and to recommend appropriate measures to address them.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in section 3 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To enable a proposed traffic regulation order to be progressed to implementation.

List of other options considered:

Not applicable.

Key background documentation:

Location Plan.

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Supporting Information

Background

- 1.1 There are two swing bridges in the parishes of Ufton Nervet and Sulhamstead, which carry minor local roads over the Kennet and Avon Canal and are owned and maintained by British Waterways. These bridges have a structural capacity of just 5 tonnes and are protected by traffic regulation orders which prohibit vehicles in excess of this weight from crossing them. However, these orders date back to 1969 and are difficult to enforce because the format of weight restrictions has changed in recent years.
- 1.2 There is also a permanent bridge over the River Kennet adjacent to the Sulhamstead Swing Bridge (known as the Tyle Mill Bridge) with a capacity of 7.5 tonnes, owned and maintained by West Berkshire Council. This bridge has been subject to a series of temporary 7.5 tonne "maximum gross weight" limits since it was found to be under-strength, but as there are no plans to strengthen it, the restriction could be made permanent.
- 1.3 The Council frequently receives complaints from residents living close to Sulhamstead Swing Bridge in respect of heavy goods vehicles using the road and crossing the bridges in contravention of the weight limit. These vehicles appear to be using Sulhamstead Hill and Kingston Hill as a route between the Burghfield Common area and the A4 in preference to using the more appropriate (but longer) route via Padworth Road and the A340. This is a concern both in respect of potential damage to the bridges and the use of unsuitable minor roads by large vehicles.
- 1.4 There are fewer complaints regarding the bridge at Ufton Nervet but it is nevertheless appropriate to consider it in conjunction with the Sulhamstead bridge.
- 1.5 The Council's Transport Strategy team are in the process of identifying a freight routing network in order to designate routes as being suitable or unsuitable for use by heavy goods vehicles with a view to introducing further weight limits in the district. Although this work is not yet complete, it is considered that the above issues can be resolved separately as they relate mainly to specific structures on the network, rather than to environmentally sensitive routes.

Conclusion

- 1.6 The Swing Bridges at Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet, and the Tyle Mill river bridge are not sufficiently protected against damage from heavy vehicles as it is difficult to enforce the existing weight limits on the structures.
- 1.7 Replacing the current 5 tonne "absolute" limit with a 3 tonne maximum gross weight restriction on both the Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet Swing Bridges and introducing a permanent 7.5 tonne maximum gross weight limit on the Tyle Mill Bridge would have the following benefits:
 - The Council's Trading Standards team would be able to take enforcement action against overweight vehicles, therefore reducing reliance on enforcement by the police;
 - Any enforcement activity carried out would serve as a deterrent to heavy goods vehicles using the routes through Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet;

Recommendations

- 1.8 In view of the above, it is recommended that:

- Statutory consultation is undertaken on the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order imposing 3 tonne maximum gross weight restrictions at the swing bridges in Ufton Nervet and Sulhamstead and a 7.5 tonne maximum gross weight limit on the Tyle Mill river bridge;
- If no objections to the proposal are received, that the restriction be implemented;
- Any objections to the proposal be reported back to the Executive Member for an Individual Decision on how to proceed.

1.9 Should the restrictions be introduced, it is further recommended that:

- A series of informatory signs be erected at key locations to draw attention to the weight limits and deter use of Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet by goods vehicles;
- The Trading Standards team undertake enforcement of the restrictions. This could be reinforced by a publicity campaign to alert goods vehicle drivers and local companies of the new restrictions.

Implications

Policy:	The above recommendations are consistent with the Council's policies to reduce the use of unsuitable routes by goods vehicles.
Financial:	The advertisement and implementation of the scheme can be funded from the approved Capital Programme.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal:	The statutory consultation and advertisement and sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order will be undertaken by Legal Services.
Environmental:	The proposed restrictions will protect and enhance the rural environment by limiting the number of heavy vehicles using unsuitable roads.
Equalities:	None arising from this report.
Partnering:	None arising from this report.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Community Safety:	None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:	No response received from Councillor Graham Jones by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 8 th November). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:	No response received from Councillor Jeff Brooks by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 8 th November). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
Ward Members:	No response received from Councillor Keith Chopping by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 8 th November).
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Keith Woodhams agrees with the recommendations as set out in the report.

Policy Development Commission Chairman:	N/A
Local Stakeholders:	Will be consulted as part of the statutory consultation process.
Officers Consulted:	Andrew Garratt, Mark Edwards, Miles Roberts, Sean Murphy, Jonathan Cole
Trade Union:	Not Applicable.

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Speed Limit Review October 2006		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Keith Chopping	on:	21 st December 2006
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1323		

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Executive Member for Planning and Highways of the recommendations of the Speed Limit Task Group following the speed limit review undertaken on 23rd October 2006 and to seek approval of the recommendations.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member for Planning and Highways resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in section 3 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken:

Speed limit review.

List of other options considered:

None.

Key background documentation:

- Criteria for speed limits
- Reports for Task Group
- Minutes of Task Group
- Appendix A – Ward Members comments

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Each year the speed limit Task Group carefully considers the introduction or amendment of speed limits that have been requested by Members, Parish or Town Councils, members of the public or officers. These requests are assessed with regard to the number of frontage developments, the character and nature of the road, the recorded injury accident record and any available traffic survey data.
- 1.2 The Speed Limit Task Group, which met on 23rd October 2006, is comprised of the following members:
- Councillor Graham Pask,
 - Councillor Alan Macro,
 - Andrew Garratt, Principal Traffic Engineer,
 - Alan Dunkerton, Speed Management Co-ordinator,
 - Jenny Noble, Principal Transport Policy Officer
 - PC Julian Weal, Thames Valley Police Casualty Reduction Officer,
 - Bob Bosley, Thames Valley Police Traffic Management Officer.
- 1.3 The Task Group considered a total of 12 requests for an amendment or introduction of a speed limit at the following locations:
1. Kintbury Village – Request for 20mph speed limit zone
 2. B4494, Snelsmore Common - Request for 50mph speed limit
 3. B3051, Brimpton Common – Request for 30mph speed limit
 4. Rood Hill, Boxford - Request for 40mph speed limit
 5. Hillfoot, Chapel Row - Request for extension to 30mph speed limit
 6. Enborne Road, Enborne - Request for 30mph speed limit
 7. Beenham Hill, Beenham - Request for 30mph speed limit
 8. A329 Reading Road, Streatley – Request for extension to 30mph speed limit
 9. Goring Lane, Burghfield Common - Request for extension to 30mph speed limit
 10. Hangar Road, Sheffield Bottom - Request for 50mph speed limit
 11. Waterside Drive, Theale - Request for 30mph speed limit
 12. High Street, Theale – Request for 20mph speed limit zone

2. Speed limit Process

- 2.1 If the recommendations contained in this report are approved then the individual sites will be taken forward to the statutory consultation stage, which means that the formal and public consultation of a speed limit can be undertaken. This will include consulting a wide range of statutory consultees together with the appropriate parish/town council, local members and local residents by the way of a notice published in the local newspaper, notices erected on site and publication on the Council's web site.
- 2.2 A report of any comments and objections received during the formal consultation together with an officer's recommendation will be presented to the Executive Member for Planning and Highways for

Individual Decision. Should the proposal to introduce or change a speed limit be considered appropriate then that proposal will be implemented.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Task Group considered all the above requests and recommended that the following are progressed to the statutory advertisement and consultation stage:

4. Rood Hill, Boxford - 40mph speed limit
8. A329 Reading Road, Streatley – extension to 30mph speed limit
9. Goring Lane, Burghfield Common - extension to 30mph speed limit
11. Waterside Drive, Theale - 30mph speed limit
12. High Street, Theale – 20mph speed limit zone

3.2 The Task Group recommended that no further action is taken on the following requests with regard to the speed limit, but further measures should be considered where shown below.

1. Kintbury Village – Request for 20mph speed limit zone – agreed to investigate various measures for Kintbury in consultation with the Ward Member and Parish Council to address the Parish Council concerns.
2. B4494, Snelsmore Common - Request for 50mph speed limit - review in October 2007 in accordance with the new speed limit criteria. Signing improvements to be undertaken at Snelsmore Common Car Park with advisory speed signs being introduced at Bussocks Hill.
3. B3051, Brimpton Common – Request for 30mph speed limit - investigate improved signing
5. Hillfoot, Chapel Row - Request for extension to 30mph speed limit - investigate improved signing
6. Enborne Road, Enborne - Request for 30mph speed limit – investigate improved signing
7. Beenham Hill, Beenham - Request for 30mph speed limit – introduce gateway feature at start of 40mph speed limit.
10. Hangar Road, Sheffield Bottom - Request for 50mph speed limit

3.3 A copy of all reports and plans will be left in the Member's room.

3.4 All the persons requesting the speed limit amendments will be informed of the Executive Members decision.

3.5 Subject to there being no objections received to the statutory consultation for individual Traffic Regulation Orders for each speed limit, the advertised restrictions will be introduced.

Appendices

Appendix A- Ward Members comments

Implications

Policy:	None arising from this report.
Financial:	The recommendations will be funded from the Council's capital budget.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal:	The speed limit traffic regulation orders will follow the statutory consultation / advertisement procedure.
Environmental:	The proposed changes to the speed limits will improve road safety and therefore provide environmental benefits to local residents.
Equalities:	None arising from this report.
Partnering:	None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:	No response received from Councillor Graham Jones by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 6 th November). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
OSC Chairman:	No response received from Councillor Jeff Brooks by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 7 th November). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
P&L Committee Chairman (where appropriate):	N/A
Ward Members:	See Appendix A for Ward Members comments.
Opposition Spokesperson:	No response received from Councillor Keith Woodhams by the end of consultation period (e-mail sent on 6 th November). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
Advisory Members:	N/A
Local Stakeholders:	Will be consulted as part of the statutory consultation process.
Officers Consulted:	Mark Cole and Mark Edwards.
Trade Union:	N/A

SPEED LIMIT REVIEW
October 2006

	Speed limit Request	Ward Member	Comments
1	Kintbury Village – Request for 20mph speed limit zone	Andrew Rowles	Support the recommendation to have a package of measures for Kintbury to reduce speed and manage traffic and not a blanket speed limit. The measures to be discussed with the Parish Council
		Anthony Stansfeld	Supports the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone as the concerns of the Kintbury Parish Council and the large proportion of the village that signed the petition are not being addressed.
2	B4494, Snelsmore Common - Request for 50mph speed limit	Paul Bryant	I am happy with the recommendation.
		Marcus Franks	No response received by the end of consultation period
		Kathleen French	No response received by the end of consultation period
3	B3051, Brimpton Common – Request for 30mph speed limit	Irene Neill	No response received by the end of consultation period
4	Rood Hill, Boxford - Request for 40mph speed limit	Paul Bryant	Is happy with the recommendation.
		Marcus Franks	Is happy with the decision.
5	Hillfoot, Chapel Row - Request for extension to 30mph speed limit	Graham Pask	Member of the Task Group and therefore supports the recommendations.
		Quentin Webb	I support the report and its recommendations.
6	Enborne Road, Enborne - Request for 30mph speed limit	Andrew Rowles	I am in favour of the 30mph limit.
		Anthony Stansfeld	No response received by the end of consultation period
7	Beenham Hill, Beenham - Request for 30mph speed limit	Keith Chopping	No response received by the end of consultation period
8	A329 Reading Road, Streatley – Request for extension to 30mph speed limit	Chris Webber	No response received by the end of consultation period
9	Goring Lane, Burghfield Common - Request for extension to 30mph speed limit	Sandra Harding	Agree with recommendation.
		Keith Lock	I agree with the decision to extend the 30 limit into Goring Lane.

SPEED LIMIT REVIEW
October 2006

10	Hangar Road, Sheffield Bottom - Request for 50mph speed limit	Royce Longton	No response received by the end of consultation period
		John Farrin	Thank you for the information, I have no comment
11	Waterside Drive, Theale - Request for 30mph speed limit	Alan Macro	Member of the Task Group and therefore supports the recommendations.
12	High Street, Theale – Request for 20mph speed limit zone	Alan Macro	Member of the Task Group and therefore supports the recommendations.

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Proposed Waiting Restrictions, High Street and The Broadway, Thatcham		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Keith Chopping	on:	21 st December 2006
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1325		

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Executive Member for Planning and Transport of the responses received during the statutory and public consultation on the proposals associated with the waiting restrictions within the High Street and The Broadway areas of Thatcham.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in Section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To enable the proposed waiting and parking amendments in High Street and The Broadway to be progressed to implementation.

List of other options considered:

- Not to implement the proposed waiting and parking restrictions.
- To delay consideration of options for High Street and The Broadway until the development of proposals for the whole of Thatcham programmed for 2007/08.

Key background documentation:

- Responses to consultation
- ID1271 - Proposed Waiting Restrictions, High Street and The Broadway, Thatcham
- Thatcham Parking Study Report (4th March 2005)
- Consultation Plan No. 19566/THTM/001/10/06

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 High Street and The Broadway are currently covered by a comprehensive system of waiting and parking restrictions. However, comments and complaints had been received from Thatcham local traders, that the current 30 minutes limit on waiting did not provide sufficient time for customers to visit a number of local shops. A request was received to extend the time of the limited waiting restriction from 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- 1.2 The Thatcham Parking Study has provided the background information that will be used to develop the revised parking facilities in Thatcham in 2007/08. These will be subject to extensive public consultation before the introduction of any changes. However, following the request from local traders the current proposal to extend the parking time from 30 minutes to 1 hour in High Street and The Broadway has been developed at this time.
- 1.3 Statutory consultation and advertisement of these proposals was undertaken between 26th October and 16th November 2006.

2. Responses to statutory consultation

- 2.1 At the end of the statutory consultation and advertisement period one objection had been received. This objection did not relate to the advertised proposals, the objector actually applauded the Councils' initiative in this respect. The objection is that the proposal does not include the whole of Thatcham, especially parking issues on Pipers Way
- 2.2 A response was received from Thatcham Town Council during the statutory consultation stage stating that 'this Council raises no objection in principle but would suggest provision be made for review in 12 or 24 months'. A further letter from Thatcham Town Council was received after the statutory consultation period and for completeness it has been included within this report. The letter stated 'Members of the full Council discussed this proposal last evening and agreed that the waiting restrictions as at present should remain in force'.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 It is considered that the majority of residents, businesses or other interested parties are either satisfied with the proposals, or do not feel strongly enough about the issues to express an opinion either way
- 3.2 If implemented, the proposals for the High Street and The Broadway can be monitored to determine their effectiveness and any revisions can be included as part of the Thatcham Parking Study programmed for 2007/8.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the proposed measures, changing 30 minutes parking to 1 hour in High Street and The Broadway in Thatcham, be introduced as advertised and that the respondent be informed accordingly.

Appendices

Not applicable

Implications

Policy:	The consultation is in accordance with the Council's Consultation procedure.
Financial:	The implementation of the scheme will be funded from the approved Capital Programme.
Personnel:	None arising from this report
Legal:	The sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order will be undertaken by Legal Services.
Environmental:	None arising from this report.
Equalities:	None arising from this report.
Partnering:	The Council is working in partnership with the police to ensure that that the project operates as it should.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Community Safety:	None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones supports the recommendation.
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:	No response received from Councillor Jeff Brooks at the time of writing, however any comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
Ward Members:	Councillors Alexander Payton and Paul Pritchard support the Town Council's position and agree that the restrictions should be left as they are.
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Keith Woodhams concurs with the comments made by Thatcham Town Council.
Policy Development Commission Chairman:	N/A
Local Stakeholders:	Have been consulted as part of the Statutory Consultation process
Officers Consulted:	Mark Edwards, Mark Cole
Trade Union:	N/A

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Group A Representation.		
Report to be considered by:	Cllr Graham Pask	on:	21 December 2006
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1332		

Purpose of Report:

To recommend Mrs Kathleen Penny as the Roman Catholic representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Recommended Action:

To agree the appointment of Mrs Kathleen Penny as the Roman Catholic representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Reason for decision to be taken:

Resignation of the previous representative

List of other options considered:

None

Key background documentation:

Education Act 1996.

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) was established in accordance with Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 by West Berkshire District Council acting as the Local Education Authority.
- 1.2 The SACRE was established to advise the Local Authority on such matters connected with religious worship and advise on methods of teaching, the choice of materials used and the provision of training for teachers.

2. Nominations for membership of the West Berkshire SACRE

- 2.1 The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education comprises four groups each with a single vote to use when voting is necessary.

The four committees are:

Group A: Representatives of Christian denominations other than the Church of England and of other religions	Group B: Church of England representatives
Group C: One representative from each of the following teacher associations: NUT, NAS/UWT, ATL, PAT, NAHT and ASCL	Group D: Representatives of the local authority

- 2.2 The Local Authority is responsible for appointing members to each of these four committees and this is usually achieved by seeking nominations from each area.
- 2.3 Members have taken the opportunity to consider the rationale for minority faith group representation taking into account that:
- “The 1996 Education Act says that group A should consist of ‘a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area’; ... and ‘The number of representative members appointed ...to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, as far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group’s functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.”
- 2.4 The SACRE has representatives from the Free Church, Jewish and Sikh communities, but has vacancies in other religious groups.
- 2.5 In accordance with the SACRE constitution, the Executive Member for Children and Young People is requested to accept Ms Kathleen Penny as the Roman Catholic representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Appendices

None

Implications

Policy:	In accordance with Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 the SACRE requires representation from the Roman Catholic Church.
Financial:	None as a result of this report
Personnel:	None as a result of this report
Legal:	None as a result of this report
Environmental:	None as a result of this report
Equalities:	The Roman Catholic Church would have representation on the SACRE.
Partnering:	None as a result of this report
Property:	None as a result of this report
Risk Management:	None as a result of this report
Community Safety:	None as a result of this report

Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Cllr Graham Jones - no comments received
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:	Cllr Jeff Brooks - no comments received
Ward Members:	None
Opposition Spokesperson:	Cllr Sally Hannon - no objections to the proposal
Policy Development Commission Chairman:	Cllr Gordon Lundie - no comments received
Local Stakeholders:	Jo Fageant, Adviser, the Diocese of Oxford.
Officers Consulted:	Maxine Slade, School Improvement Adviser, School/Curriculum Quality
Trade Union:	None