

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda  
Item No.

Report of Corporate Director of Enterprise, Tourism & the  
Environment  
to  
**Traffic & Parking Working Party and  
Cabinet Committee**  
on  
**9th September 2010**

Report prepared by: Richard Backhouse, Team Leader,  
Highways and Traffic Management Services

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**Traffic Calming Scheme, Earls Hall Area, Westcliff on Sea:  
Proposed Installation of 20mph Zone with Speed Cushions and Raised Junction Entry  
Treatments.**

**Executive Councillor: Councillor Flewitt**  
***A Part 1 Public Agenda Item***

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## **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the proposal to reduce the vehicle speed limit to 20mph, install speed cushions and junction entry treatments in the Earls Hall area (encompassing Earls Hall Avenue, Mayfield Avenue and Parkstone Drive), and to seek approval to proceed with detail design and to seek approval to advertise the necessary Statutory Notices.

## **2. Recommendation**

### **2.1 That the following be approved:**

- The detailed design for the raised junction entry treatments and speed cushion locations to be progressed.
- The Cabinet Committee resolves that the Chief Executive and Town Clerk be authorised to advertise the relevant Notices.
- Should no objections be received, the proposals to be implemented.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Recently, concerns have been raised regarding pedestrian safety due to high vehicle speeds and rat running believed to be caused by the Cuckoo Corner Junction Improvement works. These concerns were presented by the 'Mayfield Avenue Group' in the form of a petition to the February Council meeting as well as correspondence from residents.

Cllr Flewitt the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport has received correspondence from residents within Earls Hall Avenue reporting traffic queues on Victoria Avenue due to the advance utility works resulting in drivers deviating onto Earls Hall Avenue and Mayfield Avenue in significant numbers and at speeds exceeding 30mph. It has also been reported that some of these drivers are unfamiliar with the alignment of Earls Hall Avenue and are negotiating the bend on the wrong side of the road. It is also believed to be used as a rat-run during the weekend.

Area plan with proposed locations of new speed cushions shown circled in **Appendix 1**.

- 3.2 Speed/volume and destination surveys were carried-out within the proposed zone, see **Appendix 2+3**.

The destination survey taken 7.30 to 9.30am on Tuesday 08<sup>th</sup> June 2010 shows of the 99 vehicles that entered the area via Victoria Avenue/ Earls Hall Avenue 20 of these vehicles (20%) exited the area via Mayfield Avenue/ Hobleythick Lane within 5 minutes. Another survey taken at the same locations later in the day (4.30pm to 6.30pm) shows of the 142 vehicles that entered 20 exited (14%) within the 5 min time period.

Speed survey results were taken over 24 hour periods in Mayfield Drive, Parkstone Drive and 2 locations in Earls Hall Avenue. These results show 85 percentile vehicle speeds of between 13 mph in Parkstone Drive to 24mph in Mayfield Avenue.

- 3.3 DfT guidelines for 20mph zones recommend that where the 85 percentile vehicle speeds are above 24mph, traffic calming measures should be introduced to reduce them to beneath this figure. Current measured 85 percentile speeds do not demonstrate the need for traffic calming.
- 3.4 The scheme proposals were put to the residents in the form of an informal consultation with a questionnaire delivered on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 with responses to be returned by 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010. Of the 260 addresses consulted 60% were returned giving the following results (result are by number of addresses) (more detailed response can be seen in **Appendix 4**):

Q4. Would you agree that speeding vehicles are a problem on your street?  
**Yes =92 No =57 Unsure =7**

Q5. Would you agree that through traffic is a problem on your street (rat running)?  
**Yes =90 No =55 Unsure =10**

Q6. Are you in favour of making the area shown on the enclosed map a 20mph Zone?  
**Yes =114 No =36 Unsure =6**

Q7. If you answered YES to Q6. would you be in favour of the installation of speed cushions as shown on the plan?

**Yes =79 No =46 Unsure =10**

#### **4. Other Options**

In order to achieve a reduction in vehicle speeds various physical traffic calming measures have been considered including:

- Making Earls Hall Avenue 'Exit Only' onto Victoria Avenue, so vehicles would not be able to enter Earls Hall Avenue from Victoria Avenue.

This will cause long detour routes for residents living near the Victoria Avenue junction of Earls Hall Avenue and increase traffic at the entry point at the junction of Hogleythick Lane / Mayfield Avenue.

- Installing 'Chicanes' in the affected roads (Mayfield Avenue, Earls Hall Avenue and Parkstone Drive).

This type of horizontal deflection involves construction of islands or 'kerb build-outs' at the side of the road in-order for the vehicles to weave around and as such parking within the area of the construction would have to be removed. Any existing dropped kerb vehicle accesses would also need to be removed.

- Installing 'Road Humps' in the affected roads (Mayfield Avenue, Earls Hall Avenue and Parkstone Drive).

Road humps are rarely used as emergency service vehicles are not able to straddle them resulting in an increase to response time and passenger discomfort. Noise and vibration levels may also increase around the area of the hump if there is a significant flow of large vehicles in the traffic flow.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

It is felt that the most appropriate and effective measures in this area will be the use of speed cushions to self-enforce this new 20mph limit improving road safety. Cushions are considered advantageous as they do not affect existing vehicle parking or vehicle accesses but will slow traffic and allow emergency vehicles and large vehicles to straddle them. Speed Cushions work by forcing the motorist to slow down to align their vehicle wheels in order to straddle the cushion safely. Gateway features to the Zone will also be required at the entry and exit points and will take the form of special 20mph Zone signs placed either side of the carriageway, 20mph road markings and raised carriageway areas.

## 6. Corporate Implications

### 6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

Implementation adds to customer satisfaction by addressing road safety issues. Implementation will also support the Council's priority to develop Community Safety through improved road safety.

### 6.2 Financial Implications

Funding to undertake this work will be from Cuckoo Corner Junction Improvement budget.

### 6.3 Legal Implications

Implementation of the scheme will require Notices which follow a statutory legal process.

Any enforcement with respect to the speed reduction is a matter for the Police.

These matters have been discussed and agreed by an officer within the Department of Legal and Democratic Services.

### 6.4 People Implications

Work required to design and implement this scheme will be met by existing staff resources and supported by the Council's term contractor for Highway works.

### 6.5 Property Implications

None

### 6.6 Consultation

If the proposals are supported, a period of formal consultation will follow with any objections to be presented at a future meeting of the Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee.

If none are received, it is proposed that the scheme be implemented as soon as possible.

### 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The proposal will not adversely affect those with limitations on physical mobility. Raised junction areas may be advantageous to persons with restricted mobility wishing to cross the road.

## 6.8 Risk Assessment

The principal risks to the Council from the outcome of this report are a negative impact on Customer Satisfaction and failure to implement the project. Negative effects on customer satisfaction are mitigated through being able to respond to customer concerns in the first instance and subsequently consulting on the proposals.

## 6.9 Value for Money

All work to be designed in-house and implemented by term Highway contractors. All contracts have been tendered in accordance with Procurement Guidelines and demonstrate value for money.

## 7. Background Papers

None

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1 **Appendix 1:** Plan of the Proposals.
- 8.2 **Appendix 2+3:** Speed/volume and destination surveys.
- 8.3 **Appendix 4:** Resident's Questionnaire Responses.