

# 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, Midhurst Avenue & Henley Crescent, Westcliff on Sea:  
Proposed Installation of 20mph Zone with Flat Top Speed Tables 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 in Henley Crescent and Midhurst Avenue. Also to install Flat Top speed tables and junction entry treatments in the Midhurst Avenue 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 Flat Top tables 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. 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 local residents.

Cllr Flewitt the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport has received correspondence from local residents concerning high vehicle speeds and Midhurst Avenue being used as a rat-run to avoid the traffic signals at the Bell junction.

Area plan with proposed locations of new Flat Top tables 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 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 shows of the 117 vehicles that entered the area via Hobleythick Lane/ Midhurst Avenue, 110 of these vehicles (94%) exited the area via Midhurst Avenue/Prince Avenue within 3 minutes. Another survey taken at the same locations later in the day (4.30pm to 6.30pm) shows of the 145 vehicles that entered 86 exited (60%) within the 3 min time period.

Speed survey results were taken over 24 hour periods in Midhurst Avenue. These results show 85 percentile vehicle speeds of between 20 mph to 30.

- 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 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 127 addresses consulted 57% 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 =50 No =22 Unsure =0**

Q5. Would you agree that through traffic is a problem on your street (rat running)?

**Yes =54 No =17 Unsure =1**

Q6. Are you in favour of making the area shown on the enclosed map a 20mph Zone?

**Yes =61 No =6 Unsure =4**

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

**Yes =50 No =7 Unsure =8**

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

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

- Making Midhurst Avenue 'Exit Only' onto Hobleythick Lane, so vehicles would not be able to enter Midhurst Ave from Hobleythick Lane.

This will cause long detour routes for residents living near the Hobleythick Lane

junction of Midhurst Avenue and increase traffic at the entry point at the junction of Prince Ave / Midhurst Avenue.

- Installing 'Chicanes' in Midhurst Avenue.

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 Midhurst Avenue

Road humps (Round Top 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.

- Installing 'Speed Cushions' in Midhurst Avenue

Speed cushions are an effective measure and are used with great success in reducing vehicle speeds in larger 20mph Zones. Unfortunately Midhurst Avenue is a relatively short stretch of road and it is felt that the small number of cushions that could be installed would not deter the 'Rat Running' traffic.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

The preferred method to physically reduce the speed limit in Midhurst Avenue would be with the use of raised entry treatments at either end of Midhurst Avenue and two raised Flat Top tables as shown on the enclosed plan. The benefit of using flat top tables is that they could not be straddled by large vehicles or motorcycles so would slow all vehicles and would provide a safe crossing point for pedestrians outside the school entrance.

Flat Top humps are constructed 75 mm high with 1 in 15 ramps at either end creating a gently ramp and therefore much reduced noise and vibration levels in comparison to Round Top humps. The disadvantage is that emergency vehicles will also be delayed, but with just two tables any delay to response time will be minimal.

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 and 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