

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Corporate Director for Place
To
**Traffic & Parking Working Party & Cabinet
Committee**
On
12th March 2015

Report prepared by:
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Management and Road Safety Team

Verge Hardening Consultation
Executive Councillor: Councillor Terry
A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For Members to consider the outcome of verge hardening consultation and decide on the way forward.

2. Recommendation

That the Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee:-

- (i) **Note the outcome of the consultation as shown in paragraph 4 of this report**
- (ii) **Note Officers comments and agree implementation of the verge hardening measures as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of this report in Woodfield Road and Rockleigh Avenue where there has been substantial support for this and the policy criterion has been met.**

3. Background

- 3.1 While there has been an active programme of sign installation and enforcement action in many roads subject to verge parking, there are some streets where parking fully on the carriageway is impractical and could adversely affect traffic flow.
- 3.2 As such, Members have been considering roads which may be suitable for verge hardening measures and requesting the works via the Members Request List. As part of the work programme prioritisation process, the Traffic and Parking Working Party in September 2014 that residents of these streets were to be consulted to ensure there was adequate support for the proposal.
- 3.3 At the meetings Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee held on 4th March 2014, it was agreed to use the same policy criterion as the Parking Management Scheme. This being at least 40% response to consultation and agreement of 70% of those responded.

4. Outcome of consultation

4.1 The consultation was undertaken during February and early March this year outcome of which is summarised in table below:-

Location	No of letters	No of letters returned	Nos supporting Verge Hardening	Nos against Verge Hardening	Comments/Recommendations
Brunswick Road	109	34	16	18	
% response		31%	47%	53%	There is no overall majority support and the criterion is unmet. Its almost 50/50?
Woodfield Road	94	61	57	4	There is overwhelming support for verge hardening proposals
% response		65%	93%	7%	
Rockleigh Avenue	43	17	17	0	There is 100% support for verge hardening
% response		40%	100%	0%	
Dundonald Drive	97	22	18	4	
% response		23%	82%	18%	Low initial response (below 40%)-criterion is unmet but meets the second part of the criterion with 82% support from those responding.
Bridgewater Drive	64	19	6	13	
% response		30%	32%	68%	There is no majority support and the criterion is unmet. In fact a vast majority area against it.

4.2 On the basis of the results of the consultation, there are only two locations, namely Woodfield Road and Rockleigh Avenue where the necessary criterion for level of support has been met. In fact in Rockleigh Avenue, there is 100% support shown by those responding. As such it is recommended that we only harden verges along these two roads. Members are aware that any changes to

highway, traffic and parking infrastructure in areas where there is limited support often lead to post implementation queries resulting in substantial officer and Member time being spent on responding to these after the event. This is despite the fact that every effort is made by officers and Members to encourage as many stakeholders as possible to respond to initial consultations. It was for these very reasons that Members introduced a policy for Parking Management Scheme(PMS). This was to receive at least 40% response from the affected area and at least 70% of those responding must support the schemes. Members had a lead role in assessing this initial support before any scheme moved to formal stages. This not only justifies the need for action, enables better use of limited resources but also leads to residents' satisfaction as they see Council acting on the majority support. It was the success of the PMS policy that led to Members at their meeting on 4th March 2014, agreed to extend the use of the same criterion to cover verge hardening proposals too.

- 4.3 If agreed, it is proposed to use a flexible surface such as asphalt or tarmacadam. Investigations as to the use of Grasscrete have been undertaken however without fully excavating verges to ensure a flat surface, this material is likely to crack. There will remain areas of grass verge to ensure drainage is not adversely affected by the increase in hard surfaces.

5. Other Options

- 5.1 Other options are to continue to enforce verge enforcement through Essex Act and where needed introduction of the specific Traffic Regulation Orders as appropriate pending any forthcoming changes in the legislation.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 To reflect the outcome of the consultation and ensuring best use of limited resources on justifiable projects that meet the criterion.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 7.1.1 Local Transport and Implementation Plan, Safe and Prosperous.

7.2 Financial Implications

- 7.2.1 If approved any works to propose loading restrictions will be met through existing budgets and added to the existing workload unless an agreed priority is allocated at the time of its approval.

7.3 Legal Implications

- 7.3.1 All changes are to comply with the relevant legal requirements as appropriate

7.4 People Implications

- 7.4.1 All necessary works will be undertaken by existing staff.

7.5 Property Implications

- 7.5.1 None.

7.6 Consultation

- 7.6.1 The report presented the outcome of the consultation in this regard.

7.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

7.7.1 The prioritisation of the Traffic & Parking Working Party's programme is on the basis of improving safety, reducing accidents or improving pedestrian/traffic flows. The objectives of improving safety takes account of all users of the public highway including those with disabilities.

7.8 *Risk Assessment*

7.8.1 None.

7.9 *Value for Money*

7.9.1 All works are undertaken by the Council's term contractors which have been through competitive tendering process.

7.10 *Community Safety Implications*

7.10.1 The prioritisation of the Councils' Working Party's programme is on the basis of reducing accidents or improving traffic flows and takes into account the implications for community safety.

7.11 *Environmental Impact*

7.11.1 All schemes are designed to improve quality of local environment

8. Background Papers

8.1 Consultation responses file

9. Appendices

9.1 None