

Public Document Pack

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Director: John Williams

📍 Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6ER

☎ 01702 215000

🌐 www.southend.gov.uk

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21 February 2022

Dear Councillor

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2022

Please find enclosed a copy of the questions from members of the public and the relevant responses, at meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 7th February, 2022.

Tim Row

Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Questions from Members of the Public
Place Scrutiny Committee - 7th February 2022

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Question 1 from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Asset Management & Inward Investment:

A team was set up to fine drivers who park and destroy grass verges and kerbs. The council spend 2 million pounds each year repairing damages from parking on grass verges and payments.

In Westborough Hildaville Drive in bottom half on the left-hand side the grass verges are badly damaged. How and when will the Southend Council repairs the grass verges and stop vehicles parking on them?

Response:

The new Highways Enforcement team is working hard on developing the processes and systems to enable a better approach and actions going forward. They have engaged with many businesses and issued a high number of notices to home/business owners, who have been illegally crossing the footway or verges within the Borough. In addition, as part of the new Highways Improvement Policy, we are looking to improve the overall street scene as part of the resurfacing programme and issues like this will be addressed where possible.

With regard to the specific area on Hildaville Drive, we have previously received 3 reports regarding the verge damage (all for outside number 147). It is a narrow road with vehicles parked on both sides. Numerous vehicles park with two wheels up on the kerb/verge to maintain clear access along the carriageway. We currently have no powers in terms of footway parking, so this cannot be enforced. The installation of physical barriers such as bollards is prohibitive in terms of cost and also goes against the "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – a code of practice" guidance for decluttering the street scene.

Therefore, as part of the recently completed footway works, we have consulted with the Parks Team, and as Westborough Ward has some of the lowest numbers of street trees in the Borough, this area has been highlighted for some additional tree planting to act as a natural barrier to parking and increase the number of trees in the Ward. Although we are still awaiting local powers to enforce footway parking where possible we will be erecting "No Parking" signage in-between trees and various infrastructure to project our grass verges as much as possible. This will look to be actioned as soon as possible subject to the required utility searches in that area.

Question 2 from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Asset Management & Inward Investment:

In Westborough, what pavements and roads have been repaired in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and how much did they cost each?

Response:

With regard to the footways and carriageways resurfaced in Westborough ward, the following were resurfaced (by financial year):

2020/21

- Carriageway - Genesta Road - £61,588.49
- Carriageway - Fairfax Drive – including Cavendish Gardens - £243,445.57

2021/22

- Footway - Ronald Park Avenue £180,597
- Footway - Hildaville Drive £171,451
- Footway - Tintern Avenue £171,201
- Footway - Southview Drive £162,009

2 further footway schemes have been carried over into 2022/23

- Fleetwood Avenue £149,081
- Silverdale Ave £144,746

2022/23

It is proposed to undertake the 2 footway schemes detailed above and in addition 3 carriageway schemes:

- Carriageway – Glenwood Avenue – costs TBC
- Carriageway – Inverness Avenue - costs TBC
- Carriageway – West Road (part of which falls in Westborough Ward) - costs TBC

In addition, the following minor repair work totals have been undertaken (total for year, not by road):

- 2020 - £12,456
- 2021 - £7,498
- 2022 are not available yet

Therefore, total costs for each year were:

- £317,490.06 in 2020
- £692,756.00 in 2021
- £293,827.00 in 2022 with further costs to be confirmed.

Question 3 from Lydia Hyde to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Asset Management & Inward Investment:

Several roads in St Laurence ward, and Southend generally, appear to have abandoned vehicles left on roads and car parking areas. Often these are untaxed and are in poor condition, are being 'broken down' for parts, or are one of many cars parked in an area from a few individuals who are listing them for sale as part of a business. This causes distress to residents where they exacerbate parking problems, and can encourage acts of vandalism and in general can reduce the feeling of care in the area. Councils have obligations to remove abandoned vehicles under law, and restrict the selling vehicles on public land (no two vehicles being sold within 500m of each other).

In 2016 the council introduced a 'Vehicle Removal Policy' to deal with these issues and my question is in three parts: 1. Do you think this policy has been effective in monitoring for abandoned vehicles or vehicles being broken or sold, and taking necessary action to remove them? 2. How many vehicles have been removed since January 2016? 3. Do you feel it is time this policy is renewed or replaced with something that will take a firmer approach to enforcement against this issue which is blighting pockets of our communities?

Response:

As long as a private individual isn't running a business, they are perfectly free to advertise vehicles for sale. Of course, the vehicle must be taxed and insured, and have an MOT if it needs one.

It is an offence for a business to sell vehicles on the highway.

If anyone wishes to report suspicious activity then they should do so via My Southend which will be picked up by highways enforcement officers, who will investigate, engage, educate and, if necessary, enforce.

1) Most vehicles reported to the Council are not abandoned. When inspected, no reason for the vehicle to be removed.

2) Since September 2016; 164 vehicles removed.

3) The service acknowledge that the 2016 policy requires a review. This has very recently commenced with an in-depth review, and which is envisaged will provide the Council with a much more robust and effective tool and which will be in accordance with legislative guidelines and best practices.

Question 4 from Lydia Hyde to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Asset Management & Inward Investment:

Western Approaches is a busy road in the heart of Eastwood, and one which council officers have measured as one of the ten worst roads for speeding in the borough. Nestling in the heart of a thriving community, the road is not only busy for vehicles, but also has many pedestrians who use this road to attend schools or visit the supermarket and local parade of shops. However, these pedestrians are forced to

risk their lives on a daily basis, as the road lacks a suitable pedestrian crossing for these users. The need for a crossing near Scott Park on Western approaches has been the subject of a community campaign for many years, noting vocal support from Councillors Cowan and Collins. Previous questions to this council have suggested that a crossing will be considered for Western Approaches, but as yet we do not have plans released for this.

Response

The service fully appreciates the issue here, however, as agreed as part of the recent Highways Improvement Policy (Nov 2021), we will continue to review and add new implementation plans as part of the overriding policy to ensure we have the correct process and criteria in place to cover issues like this.

With that in mind, we are now developing the required plan to investigate any new crossing requests and ensure we undertake the correct procedure and criteria to assess them and then implement if they meet the required criteria or request funding if none is available.

It is envisaged that this plan will be completed in May 2022 and then we can start reviewing any outstanding requests, including this one for Western Approaches.

All the following questions relate to the Burgess Estate Speed Restriction pilot that will be answered with a single comprehensive response, covering all the points raised.

Question 5 from Alison Scott:

Can the Council explain, why, if speed issues have been thought to be an issue on the Burges estate, the existing road safety signage and road safety markings, particularly at junctions, have been allowed to deteriorate to such a level where some are so illegible so as to significantly reduce their effectiveness and therefore possibly contribute to an increased chance of accidents ? Thank you.

Question 6 from Alison Scott:

Please can the Council explain the rationale for why, when there have been recent speeding issues along Thorpe Bay Gardens which have been addressed by the removal of memorial benches and the installation of speed humps, why Thorpe Bay Gardens has not been included in these 20mph proposals and remains at a higher speed limit ? Thank you.

Question 7 from Paul Scott:

Please can the Council advise who is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the road safety signage and road markings within the Borough and particularly on the Burges estate? Thank you.

Question 8 from Paul Scott:

Can the Council advise the financial costs associated with removing all the various traffic calming measures if the pilot scheme fails?

Question 9 from Sally Carr:

Could the Chairman give assurance that a proper consultation will be undertaken before any of this government money is spent on the Burges Estate with all those in the roads where some of the 241 pillows, cushions humps etc are planned?

The report says a consultation was carried out but seemingly that was with some residents who belong to the Burges Estate Residents Association a private Association that you have to pay to belong to, being used for political purposes. The consultation allegedly described as a reduction in the speed limit to 20 mph?

Question 10 from Sally Carr:

Could the Council's Chief Highways Officer please state why he thinks there is justification in spending this government money on quiet roads with very few accidents etc... in the area known as the Burges Estate?

Question 11 from Mark Klein:

Regarding Thorpe traffic proposals, what data was used to refute the findings of the previous reports rather than why are we not using more relevant data?

Question 12 from Mark Klein:

Regarding the Thorpe traffic proposals, given the limit resources that the council has at its disposal and the atrocious conditions of roads in the less affluent areas of town, why is there a need to calm traffic in an area that compares to other areas in the town has a very low amount of traffic?

Question 13 from Linda Ford:

Can the Committee please explain why they are not introducing temporary Speed Cameras along all the roads to monitor the 20 MPH speed limit instead of the blanket proposed scheme of speed tables, humps and pillows? Surely this would be a better way of spending rate payers money and the Grant money which would also avoid the unnecessary disruption of digging up all of the roads. The Policing of the new speed limit would also be easier until the Scheme was later adopted or abandoned.

Question 14 from Linda Ford:

Can the Committee please explain why it has used old data of the roads on Burgess Estate i.e. 2014 (only Burgess Road was 2020) to implement the proposed blanket road calming Pilot Scheme in the Thorpe Ward? The long term disruption to all Residents and their properties in these mainly quiet roads does not warrant this blanket scheme implementation.

Question 15 from Melvyn Ford:

Regarding the proposed Pilot scheme in the Thorpe Ward relating to an area on the Burges Estate, why is this proposal showing a blanket approach and not taking into account any current accident statistics and tailoring each road individually for its needs or not needs?

Question 16 from Melvyn Ford:

Why has this Pilot focussed on blanket intrusive and disruptive civil engineering roadworks when huge improvements could be made with less cost and less major works such as refurbishing existing worn out and unmaintained road markings, clearer point signage and better street lighting?

Question 17 from Sam Sargent:

Relating Burges Estate proposed speed restrictions, how does calling the scheme 'a pilot' absolve the Council of carrying out any consultative process with the residents?

Question 18 from Sam Sargent:

If the Council is genuinely concerned about safety (in an area where its own survey deems traffic calming unnecessary) how does it justify failing to maintain the road markings and signage over many years?

Question 19 from Hannah Tomkinson:

Has the council informed the police, ambulance and fire emergency services, vital to all residents' safety, regarding the Burges Estate Road scheme, irrespective of its status as a pilot, or have they been disregarded?

Question 20 from Hannah Tomkinson:

On what basis did the council calculate that £500,000 is sufficient to cover the installation of over 200 various pillows, build outs etc? When seven speed pillows on Thorpe Bay Gardens cost approximately £30,000, or what is the true cost of the 18 month trial?

Question 21 from Adam Conway-Howe:

In the Cabinet Paper dated 23 November 2021 relating to 20mph Neighbourhoods, it says in 3.14.1 - that 'a meeting was held with Ward Members on 30th June 2021'. Please can you provide the data on how many people attended this meeting and a full list (and if possible the exact wording) of all the ways in which this meeting communicated to local residents?

Question 22 from Adam Conway-Howe:

In a report to the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee on 02 November 2020 relating to Burgees Road, it states that "The introduction of traffic calming measures does not meet the Councils intervention criteria."

Please can you provide the Council's intervention criteria and the most recent data which is being used to support the proposed traffic calming / speed restriction measures - and explain how it now meets the intervention criteria?

Question 23 from Jan Britton:

Whilst we are in agreement with SOME of the safety measures proposed, over 200 speed humps seems an extreme measure to implement without the support of the residents. In that vein What evidence do you have that ALL residents of the Burges Estate have been consulted on the implementation of these safety plans?

Can you confirm that the proposed £500,000 is being spent in the area of the Borough that is proven to exceed speed limits the most?

Question 24 from Danielle Jansen:

I have two questions I would like to ask the portfolio officer who has proposed the Burgess Estate Speed Restriction scheme:

1. What have the emergency services advised regarding the increase in time it will take to reach accidents/injuries/fires/unwell residents, such as my son who is epileptic and when having a seizure doesn't breathe, so time is crucial?
2. If there are funds available to use for safety measures, why aren't they being used to maintain the existing worn away road markings, signage that is in disrepair or placed in bad positions where they are blocked from view and better marking of junctions?

Question 25 from Sarah Lark:

With reference to: Cabinet paper for proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate:

1. Can the Borough Solicitor explain why the Portfolio Holder for Leigh and the Chair of Place Scrutiny have declared pecuniary interest and withdrawn from the debate, but the Portfolio Holder who lives in one of the roads affected has not similarly declared interest and withdrawn.
2. The Cabinet paper for proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate, paragraph 4.1.6 states; "The success of the pilot will be assessed by comparing the '85th percentile speeds' prior to the installation of these measures with post scheme speed data".

In recent correspondence from BERA it has been stated that air quality and accident data will also form part of the analysis. These metrics are additional to those outlined in the paper. Can the portfolio holder confirm the baseline data for all comparisons exists and will be referenced and published?

Question 26 from Nathan Lark:

With reference to: Cabinet paper for proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate:

1. Can the Portfolio Holder state how many emails/letters he has received against these proposals?
2. Can the portfolio holder confirm if the Cabinet paper for proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate has been peer reviewed by a professional Suitably Qualified and Experienced Person (SQEP) in accordance with good design and engineering governance, and if so when did this taken place?

Question 27 from Frank Smith:

Will the Portfolio Holder advise the Committee and Chamber why there has been no public consultation on the speed reduction measures proposed for the entire Thorpe Ward, when this is a legal requirement before any action is taken?

Why has false information been allowed to be circulated regarding serious accidents in Thorpe Ward, when in fact no serious accidents have been caused by speeding vehicles. Speed in Thorpe Ward is not an issue and the Councils own speed data demonstrates the only accidents have been at junctions where road markings have been allowed to fade out and in fact totally disappear?

Question 28 from David Hancock:

I intend to go to the council meeting on 7/2/2022 and have the following questions -

1. Can the portfolio holder and officers explain how the council will fund any shortfall between the £500,000 government grant for this project and the final cost, given that the £30,000 cost of the small amount of work already undertaken in Thorpe Bay Gardens implies a potentially large overspend on a project of the size proposed.
2. Can the portfolio holder and officers explain how the council can classify this project as a "pilot scheme" when there are already a number of other traffic

calming schemes in operation in the borough which must have already fulfilled this pilot function.

Question 29 from Chris & Marilyn Fardell:

We would like to raise our objection to the traffic calming measures that are being proposed on the Burges Estate.

With the amount of speed humps (bumps-pillows-cushions-tables) or whatever terminology you want to use, they are speed humps. To have the amount proposed is ludicrous. We are not objecting to the 20 mph speed limit on the estate or to have some sort of calming measures at the vulnerable junctions but to flood the estate with the 241 humps-bumps-cushions-pillows etc. is absolutely crazy.

Have you thought about the emergency vehicles? for EVERY hump it delays the vehicles approximately 8 seconds. In the case of fire engines or ambulances this could really be the difference between life and death where every second counts.

I'm sure that a lot of the money this would cost could be better spent on repairing the roads especially potholes and getting the road markings painted some are barely visible, it would certainly make them stand out more.

Finally, why was the proper consultation processes not adhered to?

Question 30 from Lucy Walton:

1. Can the portfolio holder confirm why this proposal has gone straight to a hard solution when other options have not been explored? As current road markings and signage could be improved before spending £500,000.
2. Can the policy holder confirm why the council are not following the evidence and taking remedial action where collisions and injuries are taking place which they can prevent rather than in places where they are not taking place ie Thorpe Ward which does not even meet the Councils criteria for action?

Question 31 from Alan and Sue Gotch:

Given the lack of a detailed survey prior to the planned implementation of this pilot; would Cllr Woodley please explain how he will seek to separate the benefits of each individual part of the plan and use this to ensure the final implementation of the scheme is proportionate to the problem?

If the pilot proceeds as currently proposed, what are Cllr Woodley's plans to ensure that residents are able to provide full feedback on its success or otherwise?

Question 32 from Andrew Hall:

With regard to the Thorpe Bay speed bump proposal:

1. The Portfolio Holder has stated that it does not need to consult its electorate and residents for this scheme ahead of implementation. This flies in both the face of the Council's core values and the guidelines set out by the DFT. A very dangerous precedence that future unpopular schemes can be forced through. Do the Officers not agree?
2. Portfolio Holder, Given the lack of consultation and the fact this does not appear to have been costed thoroughly, why have you not considered any "Soft Engineering Works" first?

Question 33 from Roger Slocombe:

As a local resident of over seventy years I feel compelled to ask the following questions in regard to these proposals.

1. What data is being used to justify the proposals as requests for other traffic calming measures have been refused in the past due to inadequate or out of date data?
2. Have surveys been carried out to check underground services in areas where construction takes place as the effects of vehicles mounting obstacles and dismounting from them will cause shock waves that have disturbed pipe works and foundations in other areas?

Question 34 from Kim Abbott:

1. Would the officers please explain how the build outs would be designed and maintained as well as remain safe should a motorist accidentally drive over it or park on them? I note even the pro scheme photos circulated by the portfolio holder via BERA on 17/01/22 showed pictures of build outs which were muddy and not maintained. (photo attached of the BERA picture and another buildout in the borough)
2. Would the officers please provide the cost for the initial installation and then maintenance thereafter p.a. per traffic calming measure listed in the proposal, i.e. the cost per round topped speed hump, speed table and build out?

Question 35 from Paul Walton:

1. It has been noted that due to lighting issues, that the build outs may not be visible at night. How will the Portfolio holder ensure that these are visible?
2. Can the Portfolio holder confirm how these proposals will be maintained and what the likely additional cost of maintenance of these roads is, given the existing state of the roads?

Question 36 from Tracey White:

Could the portfolio holder confirm what data the council will use to measure the success of the pilot scheme. Has every road been surveyed for recordings of speed,

accidents, emissions and air quality prior to the installation of the scheme so that it's success or failure can be properly assessed?

In the cabinet meeting on 13 January 2022. Councillor Woodley stated that these measures were already in place in the following wards: Southchurch Ward, West Shoebury Ward, The Garrison, Shoeburyness, St Lukes Ward, Westborough Ward, Victoria Ward and St Lawrence Ward. Presumably data has already been collected before and after implementation to measure the success of the scheme in these seven wards. Why does the portfolio holder feel it is appropriate to implement another scheme and label it a pilot in additional wards before publishing these findings and consulting with residents?

Question 37 from Andrew White:

1. Could the Portfolio Holder please confirm, when did the Council last review collision data and investigate high risk accident sites and how many locations in Thorpe Ward met the Council's intervention criteria of 4 personal injury accidents in a 3 year period?
2. In a report prepared by Sharon Harrington as Head of Traffic Management & Highways Network which was published on 2nd November 2020 and presented to the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee, the Council investigated the need for the implementation of speed calming measures in Burges Road.

The conclusion of this report was that Burges Road ranked 152 in the list of the boroughs roads which have been monitored for traffic speed. The accident/collision data does not meet the Council's intervention criteria and that it would be an inappropriate use of the Council's resources and funds to intervene.

It was recommended that further road surveys were conducted.

Given that no further road surveys have been conducted and that the same data is being used to support the current proposal, could the Officer please confirm whether he/she considers it appropriate for the current proposal to be implemented, disregarding the previous report, simply by adding the word PILOT to avoid further scrutiny and consultation of residents ahead of it's implementation?

Question 38 from Oliver White:

1. Can the portfolio holder please explain why the Burges Estate has been chosen for this scheme when none of its roads feature in a recent report of the Borough's Top 50 Roads for Speeding and there are other roads in the Borough which are in far more need of traffic calming measures?
2. The Cabinet paper for proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate, paragraph 7.3 states, "A majority of residents are already aware of the plans to implement a 20 mph zone scheme in Thorpe Ward." Can for the portfolio holder provide the evidence for this statement? If no evidence is available, this statement must be removed from the report as it may be untrue. Please

note BERA newsletters only ever mentioned potential 20 mph zones and never mentioned the installation of any physical speed calming measures, nor did it ask for residents opinions.

Question 39 from Jemma Wood:

I am not against traffic calming and speed restriction measures but they clearly have to be proportionate and target those areas where there is need and not a blanket approach to one area, pilot or not. We cannot be accused of being NIMBY's as I live on Burges Road and the road definitely needs traffic calming measures, (including 20mph restrictions if shown to be necessary), just appropriate ones.

There appears to be no logic to the proposed scheme and there are many examples but we will pick just a few – why are 6 calming measures required in the horseshoe crescent that is Dungannon Chase which only residents or visitors use, why are any measures required between the table tops planned for Fermoy Road and Johnstone Road when your own survey data shows that the average speed is 20 mph already, why is a measure required on Tyrone Road on the very short stretch between Burges Road and Thorpe Bay Gardens – on what basis are such measures deemed necessary?

Please confirm that you have received written approval from each of the emergency services that these measures will not affect their response times and their efforts to save lives.

Question 40 from Howard Middleton:

These are in respect of the proposal to implement speed restriction measures in Thorpe Bay (Burgess Estate):

1. Section 3.14.4 of the Cabinet Paper of 13th January 2022 states that residents were informed of the proposed changes by way of a “newsletter” and that the “idea was positively received”.

I understand that the newsletter concerned was sent to members of the Burgess Estate Residents Association (BERA) group. Notwithstanding that BERA is a closed group* and as such cannot be considered as sufficiently representative of the local resident population, would the Portfolio holder share the relevant information provided in the above-mentioned newsletter and any supporting artefacts to quantify the information shared and the degree of support (including but not limited to newsletters, petitions, surveys, meeting minutes and the scope and results of any votes) with BERA members and the wider population of Thorpe Bay residents?

* A group only open to those who pay an annual fee. A group who has now excluded a subset of existing fully paid up members. And a group who is not admitting new members at this time.

- 2 In a report from 2nd November 2020 the Council concluded that surveys of Burges Road showed that the data collected did not meet the councils

intervention criteria and it would be an inappropriate use of the Council's resources and funds to intervene. If this data was not sufficient to intervene in Burges Road in November 2020, can the Portfolio Holder please confirm why it is appropriate to use the same data now to implement this scheme across the whole estate?

Question 41 from Clare Middleton:

1. The cabinet report insists that this scheme is to improve safety but the proposals do not include any additional crossings when residents have previously asked for these and were refused. Please can the Portfolio Holder provide an explanation for this?
2. Would the Portfolio Holder consider any other forms of measures like 'Stop' signs before adopting such a drastic scheme?

Question 42 from David Wood:

Regarding the 20 mph Neighbourhoods Scheme proposal for Thorpe Ward, we are not against traffic calming and speed restriction measures but they clearly have to be proportionate and target those areas where there is need and not a blanket approach across one area, pilot or not. We cannot be accused of being NIMBYs as we live on Burges Road and our road definitely needs traffic calming measures (including 20 mph limits if shown to be necessary), just appropriate ones.

1. All the people we have spoken to are against the measures of the scheme in whole or in part and given the level of dispute and allegations of mis-truths on both sides, the only way democracy works is for the whole picture to be published and the proposed scheme to be put up for public consultation BEFORE being imposed - when will that happen?
2. If the traffic calming measures in Thorpe Bay Gardens have been such a success, what evidence dictates that double that density of measures is required across every single road in Thorpe regardless of normal traffic flow, speed and accident data?

Question 43 from Francine Johnson:

1. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm the amount forecast in the Council's budget for the potential removal of the speed restriction measures after the 12 month pilot of the proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate has elapsed, item 4.1.5 in the cabinet paper?
2. Can the Portfolio Holder please explain fully the process described as 'consultation with residents will take place and also be collated and considered' with reference to the proposed speed restrictions on the Burges Estate (Cabinet paper item 4.1.6) and how this feedback will influence the Council's actions?

Question 44 from Ian Sivyer:

As a resident of Thorpe Bay, living in St James Avenue, I am concerned about the speed calming measures proposed for the Burges estate. They appear to be far more extensive and overwhelming than one would expect is necessary to solve a problem that your own recent report concedes is minor and falls below your own threshold for action. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

1. Would you please explain why the proposals are being described as a 'pilot' scheme, thus avoiding public consultation requirements, when seven other wards have already been subjected to the same measures?
2. Why has the Council failed to consider alternative, less obstructive traffic calming measures – such as maintaining the road markings to a visible standard, repairing potholes to avoid traffic swerving or introducing road signage – and instead defaulted to what may be described as a 'nuclear' option?

I ask these questions in the spirit of cooperation and seek to understand why, when roads within the estate are so quiet they are overrun by learner drivers, such overwhelming action is considered necessary. On the face of it, it smacks of a negligent of public funds at a minimum.

Question 45 from Katherine Holland:

Can the portfolio holder confirm if there is a firm and current valid quote which demonstrates works can be completed for Thorpe and Leigh Wards within the £500,000 budget, at paragraph 2.3 of the Cabinet paper? The budget appear significantly low for the number of speed restrictions and if no quote is in place, what confidence is there that the budget is sufficient?

As it has been implied in the cabinet paper that the funding is solely for this scheme, can the portfolio holder clarify the origin of the funding along with the funding criteria and any deadlines for expenditure?

Question 46 from Lester Thomson:

Can the portfolio holder and officers advise where the roads in Thorpe Ward, included within the Cabinet paper for speed restrictions, rank in terms of safety against other roads within Southend borough?

Can the portfolio holder advise if affected residents, residing on roads included within the Cabinet paper for speed restrictions, can be consulted prior to implementation?

Question 47 from Maureen Metcalf:

Can the portfolio holder provide a copy of the Newsletter distributed to residents that is referred to in the Cabinet Report point 3.14.4 and confirm if every single household within the Burges Estate and affected areas received a copy of this newsletter and were invited to give an opinion?

Question 48 from David Lee:

Can the Portfolio Holder explain how this proposed trial/pilot scheme, will not increase the risk to residents' lives, when no emergency service risk assessments have been conducted, to assess the impact of delays to these services?

As we have received a number of very similar questions regarding the proposed 20mph speed schemes in Thorpe Bay and Leigh-on-Sea, we have prepared a response that covers the majority of the points raised. Those who have submitted a question will receive this response in writing.

Response

The Authority is looking to trial differing approaches to test the effectiveness of 20mph speed limits within residential areas in Southend. This is in consideration to the Local Transport Plan's aims to create safer more pleasant neighbourhoods and encourage greater use of active travel options. These schemes will be carried out under an experimental order and in order to comply with these requirements, the Authority will be consulting with local residents throughout the duration of the trial. This consultation will differ from the standard traffic order approach by gauging an initial view immediately after installation and continuing the engagement to ascertain how opinions differ throughout the trial period. Two locations have been selected for the trial. The Leigh residential area has a narrow effective width of carriageway due to considerable parking stress and is bounded by a school and a shopping parade. In contrast the Thorpe area has wide effective widths, due to the predominance of off-street parking and whilst a school is present in this area, the general public realm is in complete contrast to Leigh. These sites have been chosen over an area with higher speeds and or accidents because we are looking to test the concepts in a way that will have minimal impact on the area if the trial is unsuccessful.

As the initial recorded speeds in Thorpe are greater than 24mph compliance to the 20mph limit will need to be via physical control measures. This will be to ensure a consistent speed across the entire zone rather than a camera that would reduce the speed at a single point. These will be placed at locations that maximise the distance between measures whilst maintaining the desired impact. In conjunction with the introduction of physical measures, we will continue the programme of refreshing the road markings in the Borough (currently we have remarked over 1/3 of the Borough's markings). There is an additional £100k in next year's budget to do this and the trial roads will be re-marked from this budget. Continuing the holistic approach to highway interventions, we will ensure the conspicuity of existing as well as proposed signs.

As these are trial schemes, extensive, traffic speed and volume and air quality data will be gathered before and during the trial period with a thorough consultation of local residents before a report is written and brought back to Council

to determine whether the measures are to remain. The success, or otherwise, of the schemes will be judged against a sustained reduction in mean traffic speeds, an improvement in air quality and residential opinion that says the perception is of a safer more pleasant neighbourhood. The potential need to remove or alter the measures has been factored into the design by ensuring, where possible that equipment can be put into storage and reused at a later date. If successful the report will also consider where within the City, future similar measures might be considered. Finally, the Authority has undergone a detailed design process and will ensure the implemented scheme meets the approval of the blue light services prior to construction.