

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Corporate Director for Place
to

**Traffic and Parking Working Party and
Cabinet Committee**

on

3rd November 2016

Report prepared by: Cheryl Hindle-Terry
Team Leader Parking, Traffic Management and Road Safety

North Avenue, South Avenue and Central Avenue

Executive Councillor: Cllr Tony Cox

A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Traffic and Parking Working Party and the Cabinet Committee to consider the investigation outcome of a Members Request to amend the traffic priority in North Avenue, South Avenue and Central Avenue.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Traffic and Parking Working Party consider the outcome of the investigation and agree to take no further action.**
- 2.2 **That the Cabinet Committee considers the views of the Traffic and Parking Working Party and agrees to take no further action.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Ward Members for St Lukes ward requested that consideration be given to amend the existing traffic priority in North Avenue, South Avenue and Central Avenue to reduce traffic speeds and collisions.
- 3.2 The three roads are parallel to each other in an east/west layout with a number of crossroad intersections. Each road is approximately 1.2km (0.8 miles) in length with widths varying from 6.5 metres to 7 metres.
- 3.3 The roads are primarily residential and feature properties with little or no off-street parking and properties with off street parking for more than one vehicle.
- 3.4 Waiting restrictions prohibiting parking at any time are in place at junctions and sections of the roads, which are too narrow to accommodate parking on either both or one side of the road and partial footway parking is provided at a number of locations in each street.
- 3.5 Visibility at each junction is good with waiting restrictions to prevent parked vehicles impeding visibility and STOP signage to highlight that vehicles should stop prior to manoeuvring across the junction.

- 3.6 North Avenue and Central Avenue are bus routes and are designated as distributor routes within the network hierarchy.
- 3.7 Traffic on the three streets has priority at junctions east of Bournemouth Park Road to Hamstel Road.
- 3.8 An investigation to assess the feasibility of the request has been undertaken utilising the following:
- Speed monitoring data
 - Collision history
 - Monitoring of traffic movements
- 3.9 Speed monitoring data undertaken in 2014 indicates that some vehicles travel at excessive speed, however the numbers of vehicles travelling over 35mph and enforceable by the Police is fairly small. It should also be noted that as distributor routes, it is likely that North and Central Avenue are utilised by the emergency services vehicles and these may be travelling over the posted speed limit when attending emergencies. The results of the monitoring are shown below;

Road	Average Speed	% travelling over 35mph
North Avenue	28	35
South Avenue	21	10
Central Avenue	27	27

- 3.10 Collisions at or near junctions recorded between 2010 and 2015 have been investigated and are detailed below:

Date	Location	Detail	Likely Cause *
13/12/10	Central Avenue/Lonsdale Road	Vehicle on Lonsdale Road failed to give way	Careless/reckless. Failed to look properly
07/05/10	Central Avenue/Lonsdale Road	Cyclist on Lonsdale Road failed to give way	Careless/reckless. Failed to look properly
15/02/11	South Avenue/Westbury Road	Vehicle on Westbury Road initially stopped then proceeded	Careless/reckless. Failed to look properly. Nervous/panic
31/03/13	South Avenue/Westbury Road	Vehicle on Westbury Road failed to give way	Failed to look properly
07/02/13	North Avenue/Lonsdale Road	Vehicle on North Avenue struck pedestrian crossing road	Misleading signal. Pedestrian failed to judge vehicle path
19/09/12	Central Avenue/Bournemouth Park Road	Rear shunt at junction	Driver distracted
18/12/10	North Avenue/Westbury Road	Vehicle on Westbury Road failed to give way	Slippery road due to weather. Disobeyed traffic sign
04/11/10	Westbury Road/North Avenue	Vehicle on Westbury Road failed to give way	Failed to look properly. Distraction inside vehicle
01/10/12	Bournemouth Park Road/Central Avenue	Vehicle on Central Avenue failed to give way	Failed to look properly
15/06/12	Bournemouth Park Road/Central Avenue	Vehicle on Bournemouth Park Road disobeyed	Disobeyed traffic signal

* When attending collisions, the attending Police officer will determine the likely factors contributing to the accident.

- 3.11 Considering the description of recorded accidents, the main cause appears to be drivers failing to look properly for traffic on the priority route. Visibility has been checked on all junctions and no issues which may impede visibility were identified. Members are also requested to note that no personal injury accidents appear to have been recorded since from February 2013 to March 2016 which is the period investigated.
- 3.12 Speed can contribute to accidents of this nature with drivers failing to properly judge the speed of an approaching vehicle and believing they are able to clear a junction before the priority traffic approaches.
- 3.13 In these circumstances, a potential measure to reduce accidents would be to highlight traffic priority at the junctions by installing give way signage rather than rely purely on road markings and where give way signage is in place, seek approval via the Department for Transport for site specific authorisation to install STOP signs. Give way and STOP signs are designed to provide a period for the driver on the minor route to assess whether it is safe to cross the priority route.
- 3.14 The junctions detailed in 3.9 all feature STOP signage highlighting that vehicles should stop to check for traffic on the priority road at the junction before proceeding if it is safe to do so.
- 3.15 Given the findings of the investigation as detailed, vehicles on the minor roads are failing to look properly and give way to the priority traffic which may be travelling at excessive speed.
- 3.16 Amending the traffic priority was requested to reduce speeds and consequently, reduce accidents at the junctions, however it is believed that this will merely result in inappropriate speeds transferring to the minor roads with little reduction on the priority roads due to the distance between junctions.
- 3.17 Vehicles travelling on North Avenue, South Avenue and Central Avenue are able to gain higher speeds approaching junctions, the roads are slightly wider than the minor roads with the majority of parking either prohibited or confined to marked bays along the streets. If the traffic priority was amended, any accidents resulting from failing to give way at the junctions would likely increase in severity due to the higher speeds travelled.
- 3.18 As North Avenue and South Avenue are also bus routes, amending the traffic priority will significantly affect bus timetables as buses will be required to give way at each junction.
- 3.19 As distributor routes, North Avenue and Central Avenue are designed and maintained to manage higher levels of traffic including heavy vehicles. By amending the priority, these vehicles may be encouraged onto other, unsuitable routes in the wider area.

- 3.20 Vehicles responding to emergency calls may also be adversely affected by amending traffic priority to the minor roads.
- 3.21 As a result of the investigations and the points raised above, it is highly unlikely that amending the traffic priority will have any positive benefits in relation to speed or accident reduction and will offer no benefit in relation to the costs or resources involved, as such, it is recommended that no further action be taken.

4. Other Options

- 4.1 Amend the traffic priority of the roads as requested. Traffic schemes are generally considered where the scheme will provide a benefit to road users by reducing speeds or accidents. Where no benefit is likely to be gained, no further action is considered.

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities.

- 5.1.1 Traffic schemes are designed for a range of issue from reducing accidents to ensuring the free flow of traffic. This is consistent with the Council's Vision and Corporate Priorities of Safe, Prosperous and Healthy.

5.2 Financial Implications

- 5.2.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.3 Legal Implications

- 5.3.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.4 People Implications

- 5.4.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.5 Property Implications

- 5.5.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.6 Consultation

- 5.6.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.7.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

5.8 Risk Assessment

- 5.8.1 The investigation has been undertaken to assess if amending the priority of traffic is feasible which includes an assessment of the likely impact the risks of supporting the recommendation are included in the background information.

5.9 Value for Money

5.9.1 The cost benefit analysis of traffic schemes considers the financial and resource cost of the design and implementation of schemes in relation to the benefit to be achieved. As the recommendation is to take no further action as little benefit is likely, value for money has been considered within the investigation.

5.10 Community Safety Implications

5.10.1 No impact if recommendation supported.

5.11 Environmental Impact

5.11.1 None if the recommendation is supported.

6. Background Papers

6.1 Accident data, speed monitoring data, traffic monitoring.

7. Appendices

7.1 **None**