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| Report to: | Lead Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety |
| Date of meeting: | 28 June 2017 |
| By: | Director of Communities, Economy and Transport |
| Title: | Petition to support traffic calming measures in Etchingham |
| Purpose: | To consider whether traffic calming measures in Etchingham would be a priority for the County Council. |

RECOMMENDATION: The Lead Member is recommended to advise the petitioners that:

- (1) Traffic calming measures incorporating a 20mph speed limit and a pedestrian crossing in Etchingham are not a priority for the County Council at the present time;
 - (2) Step down markers are not permitted in advance of a speed limit and it has been determined that the Vehicle Activated Sign outside of the school is in the correct position;
 - (3) The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership's criteria requirements are not met for a speed camera to be installed in Etchingham due to its good safety record; and
 - (4) Etchingham Parish Council may wish to consider funding traffic calming measures incorporating an advisory 20mph speed limit and pedestrian crossing facilities in Etchingham through the Community Match Fund scheme.
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1. Background Information.

1.1 At the County Council meeting on 7 February 2017 Councillor Barnes presented a petition to the Chairman from a group of parents whose children attend Etchingham Primary School. The group believe that the safety of Etchingham's more vulnerable residents, particularly school children, is at risk due to the high speed and volume of traffic that travels through the village. They wish for the measures below to be considered in Etchingham.

- The introduction of a 20mph speed limit during school pick-up and drop-off times.
- The re-introduction of step down signs on the straight mile from Burwash, so that the speed limit is reduced gradually as nearing Etchingham from Burwash.
- Flashing 30mph sign to be moved closer up to the school and to be replaced with signs that indicate what speed the passing car is driving.
- The installation of a pedestrian crossing at the most suitable point on the High Street.
- The installation of a speed camera.

1.2 A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Communities and Safety.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Etchingham Primary School was relocated to a new residential development at Parsonage Croft in 2015. This development is on the north side of the A265 High Street at the western end of the village and is within the 30mph speed limit. As part of the development, funding was secured for a number of speed reducing features to be installed which included two traffic islands, red coloured surface treatments, 30mph road roundels, a vehicle activated sign (VAS) for eastbound vehicles, school warning signs and white hatching road markings. An additional VAS has been in place to the east of the new school site (opposite the Etchingham Club for eastbound vehicles) since 2007.

2.2 Crash data supplied by Sussex Police (shown in Appendix 1) shows that there have been two slight injury crashes recorded in the latest three year period on the most built up section of the A265 (between the start of the 30mph speed limit to the west of Parsonage Croft and the village store to the east of Church Lane a distance of approximately 1 km).

2.3 The causation factors recorded were unlikely to have been influenced by engineering or traffic management measures.

2.4 Whilst further collisions have been recorded between the village shop and the end of the 30 mph speed limit this area is not built up. One slight injury collision occurred due to factors relating to the railway level crossing and one fatal injury due to an unsecured load. Engineering or traffic management measures would also not be permitted in the vicinity of the level crossing.

2.5 A 20/30 mph speed limit would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and variable signs to indicate the speed limit that applies at that time. This type of scheme is very expensive and a report by the Transport Research Laboratory has indicated that variable speed limits have little effect on the speed of traffic measured at sites where they had been introduced.

2.6 An alternative option would be an advisory 20mph speed limit. This would not be as expensive to introduce as a TRO is not required and its time of operation is indicated by conventional school flashing lights on all approaches. The speed limit is however advisory, so could not be enforced by the Police.

2.7 Research into 20mph speed limits shows that signed alone limits will only lead to small reductions in speeds. As a result they are only appropriate in areas where speeds are already low. If average speeds are at or below 24mph, introducing a 20mph speed limit with signs alone should generally lead to compliance. If signed alone 20mph speed limits are introduced on roads where average speeds are higher than 24mph it is unlikely that drivers will respect or observe the lower speed limit.

2.8 A survey carried out to the east of the new school (by Borders Lane) between 13 and 20 April 2015 recorded the average speed to be 30mph eastbound and 34mph westbound. A new survey between 27 February and 8 March 2017 at the same location indicated the average speed as 28mph eastbound and 34mph westbound. These results indicate that a 20mph speed limit could not be introduced with signs alone. We would not object to the principle of an advisory 20mph speed limit on the A265 outside of the school; however, due to the good safety record in this part of the village, the request does not meet the benchmark score to be taken forward for further consideration for funding through the Council's Capital Programme.

2.9 It is fully appreciated that there are local transport improvements that are of importance to local communities which may not be an immediate priority for the County Council. In partnership with our highway contractors we run an initiative called Community Match which gives local communities the opportunity to take forward schemes funded, in part or in full, by the community. We would therefore suggest the community group liaise with Etchingham Parish Council to see if this is something they feel is a priority and would like to progress through Community Match

2.10 The Community Match initiative provides guidance so that local communities are aware of the service they will receive, as well as being clear on the level of funding, commitment, ownership and public consultation required from them. An advisory speed limit outside of the school is likely to cost in the region of £10,000 to £20,000. To help advise the initial stages of scheme development a feasibility study can be commissioned through an independent consultant or our Highways Maintenance Contractor Costain/CH2M, who have agreed to provide a subsidised service for a cost in the region of £500. This will allow basic design work to be completed to determine firstly if the scheme is feasible and if so, what it may look like and what the likely costs and risk will be.

2.11 Step down markers were installed as a trial measure many years ago on the approach to the 30mph speed limit on the A265 at Straight Mile. They were removed as part of the recent safety improvement works. The Department for Transport has confirmed that these signs will not be approved for use as they are not prescribed by legislation so we cannot agree to use them at this site anymore.

2.12 A Vehicle Activated Sign was provided from funds secured for the development. To move it closer to the school would require it to be moved to the verge to the west of Parsonage Croft. This location was looked at originally; however there were concerns about the restricted visibility caused by the neighbouring hedgerow and the proximity to the junction. Following a meeting with the local member, the parish council and the school governors it was agreed to install the VAS in the verge directly outside the school itself as it was felt that this achieved the best compromise in terms of visibility, access for maintenance and reminding drivers of the speed limit.

2.13 The provision of a pedestrian crossing in the High Street was assessed in October 2016 following a request from the Local Member. Due to the good safety record in the village, the request did not meet the benchmark score to be taken forward for further consideration for funding through the Council's Capital Programme. Again this is something that could be considered as part of the Community Match scheme. A pedestrian crossing facility can cost in the region of £10,000 to £15,000 for a pedestrian

centre island; £15,000 to £25,000 for a zebra crossing and up to £100,000 for a signalised Puffin Crossing.

2.14 Speed cameras are managed by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and are only considered at sites where there is a high concentration of crashes where excessive speed was a contributory factor. Etchingham has a good safety record so the criteria requirements are not met for a speed camera to be installed. The criteria are set out in Appendix 2.

2.15 Photographs of the various sites under consideration are provided at Appendix 3.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 It is therefore recommended that the Lead Member for Communities and Safety agrees that additional traffic calming measures incorporating an advisory 20mph speed limit on the A265 near Etchingham Primary School and a pedestrian crossing in the High Street are not presently a priority for funding from the County Council's budget. However, they could be supported if an alternative source of funding becomes available or if an application through the Community Match Scheme was successful. It is also recommended that the Lead Member for Communities and Safety agrees that countdown markers are not permitted in advance of the speed limit, the existing Vehicle Activated Sign outside of the school is in the correct position and the criteria requirements are not met for a speed camera to be installed in Etchingham.

RUPERT CLUBB

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LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor John Barnes

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None