

## Report of Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation

### Report to the Director of City Development

**Date: January 2015**

### **Subject: GROVE LANE RESIDENTS DEPUTATION TO COUNCIL**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### **Summary of main issues**

1. This report addresses the Deputation received at the 12<sup>th</sup> November meeting of the Council from the Grove Lane residents regarding the concerns of local residents over the speeds of traffic on Grove Lane, accidents, the behaviour of drivers, difficulties in crossing the road and dangerous conditions for cyclists. The residents have brought forward a number of suggestions which they wish to see implemented on their street.
2. Specific issues raised by the Deputation were:
  - 2.1. Proportion of drivers exceeding the 30 mph speed limit, which the residents wanted to be brought down to 20mph and enforced effectively
  - 2.2. Dangerous driving witnessed on Grove Lane, including failing to stop at a Zebra crossing and the number and frequency of accidents
  - 2.3. Need for additional signage, crossings and safe facilities for cyclists
3. The Best City ambition is to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place and the reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured is a measure of one of the objectives in the Best City Plan. Steps to improve road safety are a priority for all users and especially those who are more vulnerable such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists and those who are young, older or who have a disability.

4. A range of interventions are in use including speed management, traffic engineering and education, training and publicity all of which are relevant where busy traffic severs communities and where high frequency and volume of collisions is of particular concern. Programmes are in place to progress priority initiatives in this regard and this report addresses the Deputation in this context.

## **Recommendations**

5. The Director of City Development is requested to:
  - i) note the contents of the report, and the impact of the measures already implemented on Grove Lane on its casualty record; and
  - ii) agree the actions set out in section 3.9 in response to the Deputation.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report responds to the Deputation received at the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014 meeting of the Council from residents of Grove Lane. The deputation raised concerns over overall road safety on Grove Lane, mainly due to the speed of traffic, but also in relation to vulnerable road users and journeys to school.
- 1.2 The deputation asked for a review of the current speed limit, wishing to see it brought down to 20mph, additional signage, enforcement and substantial improvements in provision for pedestrians and cyclists to enable safe active journeys to school and encourage the use of the Meanwood Valley Trail.

## **2 Background information**

### Road Safety Context

- 2.1 The reduction of road injuries, especially among children, pedestrians and cyclists, is a key priority and programmes are in place to achieve this. These are built around a robust casualty monitoring process and introducing targeted road safety improvements based on the annual road casualty report and the analysis of casualty trends and locations, together with the annual Sites and Lengths for Concern analysis which identifies local road injury hotspots. The Sites for Concern listing includes any location (usually junctions) which has had more than four collisions in a given year and/or where 15 collisions or more are recorded in a five year period. A Length for Concern is used to define any length of road where the road injury rate exceeds that expected for the class of road and location (i.e. urban or rural). These listings along with the casualty trend analysis form the initial basis for identifying funding priorities for the Local Transport Plan budget provided by the Combined Authority.
- 2.2 In relation to the additional collision information provided by the Deputation, it should be noted that records of non-injury collisions are not collected by the Police or Council so it is not possible to verify the outcome or the circumstances of the incidents described. However, in general the recorded road injury record has been found to provide a good proxy for the targeting of road safety measures and as this report now describes has been used to identify and introduce measures on Grove Lane.

### B6159 Grove Lane

- 2.3 Grove Lane is a 1 km length of the B class single carriageway local distributor road linking Headingley and Meanwood and forming part of the wider cross city route linking inner West and North, East Leeds.
- 2.4 Since 2010 the following road safety and traffic measures have been undertaken:
  - i) The junction of Grove Lane with Meanwood Road was improved in 2010 with a scheme including improved pedestrian facilities, advanced cycle stop lines and a length of bus lane was introduced.

- ii) A Zebra crossing was provided at the Grove Road junction with Grove Lane in 2010.
- iii) A scheme was also introduced at the Grove Lane junction with Shaw Lane where improved parking restrictions, clearer priority junction marking and hatched junction box markings were provided.

- 2.5 In combination these measures have contributed to a 58% reduction in road collisions on Grove Lane including its junctions with Meanwood Road and Shaw Lane, where since January 2010 ten road injury collisions were recorded, of which five of these involved cyclists and one involved a pedestrian. With the exception of one cyclist collision classed as a serious all others involved slight injuries. In comparison during the previous five year period between 2005 and 2009 twenty-four collisions were recorded, of which 4 involved serious injuries.
- 2.6 It should further be noted that, specifically in relation to the Grove Road crossing location, the 5 year record up to the provision of the Zebra in 2010 was 6 collisions, and in the following period to date one collision has been recorded, which did not involve a pedestrian.
- 2.7 At the time of writing, neither the length of Grove Lane nor any of the junctions are featured in the sites or lengths for concern listings.

#### Pedestrians and cyclist facilities

- 2.8 It is recognised that busy roads and complex junctions form a barrier to the easy and convenient movement of pedestrians in communities. Processes are in place for the investigation of all requests for additional pedestrian facilities in addition to the aforementioned road safety analysis. This process is conducted through an annual review of all requests which are assessed in line with the best practice guidance and take account of pedestrian flows, volume of traffic and road injury record. In this process regard is given to the presence of vulnerable pedestrians (older people, children and disabled people), difficulty of crossing posed by traffic flows and presence of any attractors (bus stops, shops, schools, community facilities). Previously, following a positive assessment the Zebra crossing at Grove Road was introduced in 2010.
- 2.9 The Council has a long term programme to develop a Core Cycle Network in the city with both the busy A660 and Meanwood Road route already targeted for investment. At the present time Grove Lane is not an identified priority in the programme. The Council has a well established Cycle Consultation Forum which assist in the process of identifying scheme priorities and the development of proposals. However, whilst no concerns over the safety of cycling on Grove Lane have been raised by cyclists, issue were expressed about Monkbridge Road in relation to poor surfacing causing a hazard, which has been rectified.
- 2.10 Grove Lane is a single carriageway which lacks the consistent width throughout necessary for the introduction of continuous cycle lanes. The extensive verge has numerous mature trees, the loss of which is likely to be detrimental to the character of the area and render the provision of a cycletrack problematical.

### Speed limits

- 2.11 A speed limit review has been conducted of all the classified roads in Leeds which confirmed that the 30 mph national speed limit remains appropriate for Grove Lane. A programme to provide 20mph speed limits including residential areas around schools is currently being progressed at key locations in the city and a total of 136 schemes are in place, planned or under construction covering some 661 km of residential roads in the city. These schemes have had a positive impact on casualties offering up to a 50% in reduction in road injuries. In the immediate area of Grove Lane, two 20 mph speed limit schemes are already in place providing benefits for the local community and the journey to Shire Oak Primary School and the local centres.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 The Deputation states that a significant proportion of drivers exceed the 30mph speed limit on Grove Lane and that the drivers wrongly assume that the speed limit is 40 mph instead of 30.
- 3.2 In response to residents' concerns several speed surveys were undertaken on Grove Lane within the last few years. These indicate average mean traffic speeds of 31mph with around 15% of vehicles travelling above 35mph (the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile). These findings are also borne out by the Police's own speed checks as part of their enforcement activity which showed similar values of 36 mph or more for the top 15% of traffic. It is understood that in the course of this work only 3 out of 20 vehicles stopped by the Police resulted in further action taken in relation to speeding – the majority were stopped for defects or checks. Overall this suggests that the speed limit is generally well understood and respected, when compared to many other roads. However, 15% of vehicles travelling above 35mph is a meaningful proportion and improving compliance remains important. Therefore officers will continue to work with the Police and identify further measures as outlined below to ensure appropriate enforcement and further compliance.
- 3.3 In conjunction with enforcement the provision of stationary speed indicating devices (SID) is being pursued as an initiative with the local ward members and parish councils. The intention is for them to be fixed in place for a period of several months in locations where there are local concerns regarding driver behaviour. The Weetwood Ward members already have a SID, currently located on Weetwood Lane and have committed to purchasing a second one. In preparation for this wider use a lighting column on Grove Lane has already been adapted to have a SID fixed, where it is Ward Members' intention to site the new sign in the new year.
- 3.4 In terms of the existing Zebra crossing at the Grove Road junction, recently additional signs have been provided to advise drivers of the presence of the crossing. Further improvements are also planned to improve conspicuity of the beacons by the provision of upgraded LED lighting early next year. These

improvements will be monitored prior to considering whether further measures at the site are needed.

- 3.5 With respect to the two other locations identified by the Deputation, new surveys will be undertaken on Grove Lane at the junction with Shaw Lane; and similarly a follow-up will be carried out at the location where Meanwood Valley Trail crosses Grove Lane, where a previous survey, although carried out in summer, failed to indicate significant pedestrian demand. These surveys will be carried out as soon as possible after the winter season to maximise obtaining the most representative indication of demand for further consideration in the pedestrian crossing review.
- 3.6 As a B class road forming a key part of the city's secondary road network it is not considered that the introduction of a lower speed limit on this stretch of road would be appropriate. Twenty-miles-per-hour limits are in place in the adjacent areas and this report has advanced further measures to improve the conspicuity of the pedestrian crossing at Grove Road and the visibility of the existing speed limit. It is considered that the measures described for the existing Zebra crossing will be beneficial in improving the visibility of the key crossing Grove Lane and the use of a SID device will exert a significant influence on those drivers currently speeding and driving inappropriately in this area.
- 3.7 The issues raised about cycling are recognised. Grove Lane does not presently have formal facilities for cycling and the introduction of such measures are constrained by the limited width of the road, although in some places the verge area may allow for such provision. At present, however, Grove Lane is not within the priority programme for the cycle network. Whilst no commitment can be made for cycle lanes at the present time, the situation will be kept under review as the programme is progressed and future priorities are considered.
- 3.8 The road safety record of Grove Lane and Shaw Lane will be kept under review and the impacts of the existing measures and the additional proposals described in this report will be monitored. Should the road safety position change significantly in the future this will be identified and further attention will be given.

#### Action plan

- 3.9 In summary and in response to the concerns raised in the deputation the following actions are proposed:
- i) Undertake further surveys and site investigations in Spring 2015 to determine the feasibility for the provision of pedestrian facilities on Grove Lane at the junctions with Shaw Lane and the crossing of the Meanwood Valley Trail.
  - ii) Implement measures to improve the conspicuity of the existing Zebra crossing at Grove Road this year 2014-15; and investigate the feasibility of other improvement measures as appropriate for consideration in the year 2015-16.

- iii) Implement the use of speed indication device (SID) on Grove Lane as agreed and supported by the Ward Members in early 2015, as a means of achieving greater compliance of the 30mph limit.
- iv) Review local road safety promotion programmes having regard for measures and initiatives which may be of benefit in the areas of Grove Lane and Shaw Lane.
- v) Identify the issues raised in terms of cycling and have regard to the cycling injuries recorded on Grove Lane when preparing promotional initiatives and planning the next phase of the cycling network programme from year 2015-16 onwards.
- vi) Continue to work with the Police on an ongoing basis to highlight driver and road safety issues and target enforcement as necessary.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Residents and Ward Member consultations will be carried out for every scheme proposal that involves; speed reduction and provision of safe crossing facilities.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.2 An EDCI screening has been conducted for this report. The screening identified equality characteristics where the negative impact of traffic, especially fast moving traffic, would be differential – these included children, older people and people with disabilities. None of the above equality characteristics are present in numbers higher than the city average in the affected area – the number of children, older people and people with disabilities is below the city average.

- 4.2.3 However, the actions proposed in the report will have a positive impact on the above equality characteristics and help alleviate some of the negative impacts. In particular:

- Improving the conspicuity of the Zebra crossing will have a positive impact on blind and partially sighted people, people with a mobility impairment and other vulnerable pedestrians, including older people and children, by making drivers more aware of the crossing.
- Road safety programmes will benefit children in improving their knowledge of risks and safety skills.
- Greater speed awareness through the provision of SID will reduce road safety risk for all, but in particular to older people, children and people with disabilities
- Provision of additional crossing facilities on Grove Lane, especially where this is traversed by the Meanwood Valley Trail, could improve access to a safe, segregated walking route and to greenspace, in particular for children, and

improve access to bus stops/ centre of Headingley – important for blind and partially sighted people.

#### **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The Best City ambition is to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place. Measures to improve road safety make a specific contribution to the Best City for Communities and Child Friendly Leeds ambitions. Reducing the number of casualties involving loss of life or severe injury (Killed or Seriously Injured – KSIs) is one of the measures for the delivery of the objectives for the Best Council Plan.

4.3.2 This aim is supported by the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (WYLTP) objective “To enhance the quality of life of people living in, working in and visiting West Yorkshire”; where the above road safety measures support sustainable and active journeys, and help reduce inequalities. The Council receives funding from the WYLTP for its programme of road casualty reduction schemes and 20 mph speed limits at priority sites.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 The delivery of appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities and 20 mph speed limits forms part of the programmes for improving road safety contained in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (WYLTP). Such schemes generally show high value for money both for the direct benefits to road safety and their indirect benefits for active travel and health.

4.5 Whilst this report has no specific implication for resources, the overall approach to casualty reductions is being reviewed as part of the next three year WYLTP implementation plan, which will reflect both the importance of road safety and the role of provision of pedestrian crossings in its allocation of resources for 2014-17.

#### **4.6 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.6.1 There are no legal implications. The report is not eligible for Call-In.

#### **4.7 Risk Management**

4.7.1 The measures currently in place have been developed as part of established road safety programmes and have included appropriate safety reviews and audit. Any future traffic measures will be similarly reviewed to ensure they are effective and appropriate. The city’s road casualty record is continuously monitored and regularly reviewed with annual reporting of both the high level road safety picture and local analysis of site, lengths of road and areas for concern.

### **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The Best City ambition to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place will be fully realised when residents feel safe engaging in active travel modes on all roads in Leeds. However, to achieve this ambition, areas of greatest road safety concerns, or greatest demand, must be prioritised as part of



improvement programmes, with the benefits gradually permeating the fabric of the city.

- 5.2 The most urgent concerns over the safety of crossing of Grove Lane have been previously addressed by the provision of crossing facilities enabling crossing close to local schools and junctions with roads forming links between communities and facilities. The additional locations specified by the deputation will be (re)assessed through the pedestrian crossing review. Junction markings and parking restrictions have improved the road safety record of the junction of Grove Lane and Shaw Lane.
- 5.3 In response to the Deputation the situation on Grove Lane has been reviewed and an Action Plan is set out in this report for further measures and the continued monitoring of the site. Officers will also continue to work with the Police to support the appropriate enforcement and further compliance of the existing speed limit.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director of City Development is requested to:
- i) note the contents of the report, and the impact of the measures already implemented on Grove Lane on its casualty record; and
  - ii) agree the actions set out in section 3.9 in response to the Deputation.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 There are no background documents to this report.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.