
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 14 December 2010
Subject: Petition – To provide Traffic Calming Measures - The Ridgeway Flitwick
Report of: Basil Jackson
Summary: The purpose of this report is to present a petition received from residents of The Ridgeway - Flitwick requesting traffic calming and to recommend that no further action be taken at the present time.

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman
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Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Flitwick East
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Financial:

None from this report

Legal:

None as a result of this report.

Risk Management:

None as a result of this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as a result of this report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

None as a result of this report.

Community Safety:

None as a result of this report

Sustainability:

None as a result of this report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. The Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles is requested to note the contents of the report, approve that no further action be taken at present and that the lead petitioner be informed of the outcome.**

Background and Information.

1. A petition of 55 signatures has been received from the residents of The Ridgeway Flitwick requesting traffic calming measures for The Ridgeway. (Appendix A)
2. There have been two recorded injury accidents in The Ridgeway in the last 14 years. The first in 2008 involved the rider of a moped/small motorcycle driving into the rear of another vehicle and more recently in March 2010 a 14 year old female pedestrian was injured by a vehicle whilst crossing the road on her way to school.
3. Both incidents were classified as slight injury collisions.
4. Inappropriate use of speed can be a contributory factor in road collisions but there is no specific indication that this was a factor in either of these recorded collisions.
5. The police have undertaken speed measurements in the area and there are undoubtedly some vehicles that travel along The Ridgeway above the posted speed limit although average speeds are low. Some of these vehicles exceed the prosecutable limit of 35mph. In a full week of measurements however (20th to 26th April 2010) less than one percent of vehicles (88) were recorded travelling at 35mph or greater in both directions.
6. As may be expected traffic flows are fairly light and reasonably balanced in numbers in either direction.
7. Whilst any vehicles travelling at this speed in a residential area should clearly not be doing so this is a relatively low number compared with other areas where the police have been requested to undertake such measurements. The police do not consider average speeds in the area sufficiently high to include The Ridgeway for enforcement visits.
8. Under the current criteria against which safety schemes are allocated intervention in the form of traffic calming would only be considered where there would be a demonstrable saving in casualties or where other works were being carried out for example a Safer Route to School scheme.
9. In the case of The Ridgeway no real casualty reduction opportunity exists. The pedestrian accident was a crossing accident. Such accidents are generally attributable to misjudgement and failure of observation by one or both parties and even within a traffic calmed area slight injuries may well result from a similar accident. No other schemes are planned.

10. Given the relatively low traffic flows and speeds in this road traffic calming would be considered disproportionately invasive. Road humps are intrusive for residents and tend to lead to associated problems with noise. Additionally The Ridgeway has many vehicle accesses and to position traffic calming features would be difficult and disruptive to residents.
11. It is apparent from some of the correspondence received that it is certain vehicles or types of vehicles that seem to be regularly driven at speed through the area. It is understood that if these are reported to the Safer Neighbourhood Team they will target these specific vehicles and their drivers in order to reduce this.

Conclusion and The Way Forward

12. Currently Central Bedfordshire Council is preparing a new Local Transport Policy document outlining it's priorities for the highway network for the next three years. The plan shows that in the next three years the majority of the scheme budget will be targeted through that plan at four priority areas. Those will be Dunstable/Houghton Regis, Biggleswade/Sandy, Leighton Linlade and Arlesey/Stotfold. As a result of this there will be no funding to implement schemes in other areas of Central Bedfordshire in 2011/12 and only a limited amount in the following 2 years.
13. Schemes identified purely on casualty reduction grounds will be considered on a need basis and will not be constrained by the Local Transport Plan but will be constrained by the limited funds available. The Ridgeway would not qualify for a scheme on casualty reduction grounds
14. The situation is therefore that The Ridgeway, and many other roads in a similar situation, will not meet the criteria to be considered for engineering measures. The response sent to the lead petitioner on 10th May 2010 showed an assessment ranking of 0 stars for this request. (Appendix B)
15. If there were to be a sufficiently strong local feeling that The Ridgeway should be traffic calmed and that this could be justified from local funds then Flitwick Town Council may wish to consider funding it.