

---

**Meeting:** Delegated Decisions by the Executive Member for Community Services on Traffic Regulation Orders  
**Date:** 13 September 2016  
**Subject:** Eyeworth – Petition to lower the Speed Limit from 40mph to 30mph  
**Report of:** Paul Mason, Assistant Director Highways  
**Summary:** This report is to note the receipt of a petition submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council and suggest a way forward

**RECOMMENDATION(S):-**

**That the contents of the petition be noted and that the lead petitioner be informed of the outcome of the meeting.**

---

**Contact Officer:** Paul Salmon  
[paul.salmon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.salmon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** Potton  
**Function of:** Council

<b>CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS</b>
<p><b>Council Priorities:</b> The petition is in relation to the safe and efficient use of the highway network</p> <p><b>Financial:</b> None from this report</p> <p><b>Legal:</b> None from this report</p> <p><b>Risk Management:</b> None from this report</p> <p><b>Staffing (including Trades Unions):</b> None from this report</p> <p><b>Equalities/Human Rights:</b> None from this report</p>

**Community Safety:**

None from this report

**Sustainability:**

None from this report

<b>Budget and Delivery:</b>	
Estimated cost: n/a	Budget: n/a
Expected delivery: n/a	

**Background and Information**

1. A petition has been received, signed by 41 people, requesting the Council to lower the existing 40mph speed limit to 30mph in Eyeworth in line with Central Government guidance.
2. Speed limit advice issued by the Department for Transport does suggest that local authorities should treat 30mph as the default speed limit for villages. For the most part, Central Bedfordshire Council has adopted that principle, but we have to consider the individual circumstances to determine if a 30mph speed limit is reasonable and there will be a reasonable level of compliance. If drivers see speed limits as unrealistically low, compliance will be poor and regular police enforcement will be required. Eyeworth is a relatively sparsely developed community with significant lengths of road fronted by open fields. This tends to encourage higher speeds and a 40mph limit feels compatible with the overall road environment.
3. Traffic speed data was obtained for the main road through Eyeworth by Bedfordshire Police in September 2014. The average speed of traffic was 39.8mph and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 47.8mph. Approximately 15% of drivers exceeded the existing 40mph limit and were liable to prosecution.
4. These speeds would suggest that compliance with a 30mph speed limit would be low without significant engineering measures to effectively force drivers to proceed at lower speeds. Traffic calming measures of this type, such as road humps, are often not compatible with a rural environment due to the severity of speed reduction and their “urbanising” effect.
5. The police have suggested that they would prefer to see measures implemented that would improve compliance with the existing 40mph speed limit. They have concerns about poor compliance with a 30mph limit and unrealistic expectations of regular enforcement. Regrettably, enforcement of any speed limits is unlikely to be a police priority, exacerbated by Eyeworth’s relatively remote location.
6. There are already some measures in place to moderate traffic speeds, such as gateway treatments and vehicle activated signs.

7. The funding that the Council allocates for safety improvements has to be targeted at locations that have a poor injury collision record, so that we can reduce the number of people killed and injured on our roads. The collision data for the whole of Eyeworth covered by the existing 40mph speed limit from 01/04/2011 to 31/03/2016 shows that there have no injury accidents. Regrettably, on that basis, the implementation of further speed reduction measures in Eyeworth is not currently a priority for this Council.
8. It is recommended that the petition organiser brings this to the attention of Eyeworth Parish Meeting who may wish to consider using Central Bedfordshire Council's Rural Match Funding scheme to promote road safety improvements.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Petition and accompanying correspondence  
Appendix B – Location plan

### **Appendix A**



This is a petition from the residents of Eyeworth asking Central Bedfordshire Council to replace the current 40 mph speed limit on the village roads with a 30 mph speed limit, in line with current Government guidance as contained in circular DfT 01-13.

## Appendix B

