

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

DATE: 17th October 2016

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PART I **KEY DECISION**

HOLLOW HILL LANE EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the experimental order process and the duration that is required for officers in order to make a decision on the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that officers be granted a period of six months for the closure in order to allow them to make a robust case for either opening or closing Hollow Hill Lane.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

- Health: Providing transport facilities that ensure residents can access the health services they need.
- Economy and Skills – Continue to provide residents with access to essential services by improving connections and journey times between work, home, leisure, school and making alternatives to the car more attractive.
- Regeneration and Environment; Improving facilities and access to bus services to increase the use of sustainable forms of transport.
- Housing: Improved public transport links to the area, with quicker journey times for the bus routes serving the area and giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live and access work and facilities.
- Safer Communities: Reduced traffic congestion at the location to improve the environment for residents at the location. This should make a place where people feel safe to live and visit.

Cross-Cutting themes:

Civic responsibility: By ensuring that residents are able to express their views and participate in the identification of mitigating measures that will benefit the transport in Slough for everyone.

Improving the image of the town: By enhancing the sustainable transport links to Heathrow Airport, London and beyond, improving access and reducing journey times of local bus services and general commuter traffic.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The scheme will deliver the following key actions of the Five Year Outcomes that are also represented in the Transport and Highways Service Plan 2016/17.

- 1.2 *Ensure a fit for business transport infrastructure* by ensuring that the impacts of a road closure are understood and considered for future schemes.
- 1.5 *Agree a coordinated plan to maximise the benefits of Cross Rail and Western Rail Link to Heathrow* by ensuring informed remedial and mitigation proposals are put forward.
- 3.1 *Define and establish the Centre of the Town as a destination* by providing a sound and reliable multi modal transport system and managing the road network.
- 4.1 *Build on success in making Slough safer* by incorporating road safety schemes into all engineering schemes delivered across the council.
- 5.4 *Ensure children and young people are emotionally and physically healthy* by improving air quality through delivering schemes that reduce congestion at key locations.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

The council have undertaken the experiment in order to determine the impact on the road network if a permanent closure comes into effect. From the planned major schemes for the area, it has been indicated that a permanent closure could be a real possibility. Closing the road under an experimental order enables the council to determine the effects of the closure, thus opening negotiations for mitigating measures with the major scheme sponsors.

There are currently no quantifiable financial implications from the recommendations or proposed actions of the report

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Road is opened before surveys, consultation and objections are received resulting in no mitigation package.	Ensure six months of data and intelligence gathering is maintained.	Opportunity to get a good mitigation package to help solve some of the long term traffic problems in Langely and Colnbrook.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of EIA relating to this report; an impact assessment will be undertaken by officers when a decision is put to Cabinet.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Following discussions with the DfT, HS2, Network Rail, South Bucks District Council and Bucks County Council in July 2016 it was proposed that Slough would run an experimental order for the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.
- 5.2 Officers met with ward members affected by the closure between 20th and 22nd July 2016 and informing them of the proposed closure and the reasons
- 5.3 Ward members asked for a delay to the closure; in agreement with the lead member the closure was postponed to the 2nd August to allow members sufficient time to inform the affected residents.
- 5.4 Approximately 5500 Information leaflets were dropped in the affected area providing information on the reasons and asking for feedback on the locations where congestion occurs.
- 5.5 Officers were invited to N and CS Scrutiny Panel to answer questions with regard to transport in July 2016 and requested that a report be presented to the next scrutiny meeting on 8th September 2016.
- 5.4 Officers agreed at 8th September meeting that they would review the closure after 3 months but explained that the council needed 6 months (February 2017) to gather data, consult and receive objections before making a decision, however the recommendation to Cabinet from NCS was to terminate the closure after 3 months.
- 5.5 At the Cabinet meeting of 19th September officers suggested in their professional opinion that due to the Christmas/New Year period being included in the 6 months that some extra time be afforded to include the additional neutral month period of March.
- 5.6 Officers were directed by Cabinet to then write to the relevant bodies to seek clarification on the experimental order process and understand if there was flexibility to shorten the decision making process.
- 5.7 Officers have since written to the Minister for Local Roads and discussed the issue with the DfT.
- 5.8 The council is now waiting for a response from the minister.
- 5.9 Officers have now held the first public meeting and a meeting with ward members, parish councillors including those outside of the borough and local community groups. Further meetings are scheduled for October and November.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

- 6.1 The Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel recommended that Cabinet review the experimental scheme as soon as possible, with a view to terminating the closure of Hollow Hill Lane after 3 months (2nd November 2016) provided that Slough Borough Council have compiled sufficient information by this date to make an informed decision on the matter.

7. **Conclusion**

The experimental order at the time of compiling this report has been in place for approximately two months. The officer recommendation is to continue with the closure covering the full six months and to ensure that a decision is made on sound information including surveys, consultation feedback, objections and consideration of the mitigation package. Officers feel that it is important that time is afforded to make this important decision as it will have an impact in the area for many years to come.

8. **Background Papers**

None.