

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

VEHICLE ACTUATED SIGNS

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny panel a summary of the rationale behind the decision to use and deploy Vehicle Actuated Signs.

2 Recommendations/ Proposed Action

The Panel is requested to note the results from the deployment of Vehicle Actuated Speed Signs (VAS) on Langley Rd and Mercian Wy to-date.

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

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) 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 form 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.

The deployment of the VAS are not affected by the SJWS priorities, but there is a cross-cutting theme within Safer Communities with passing on data to Thames Valley Police regarding speeding issues.

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.

Outcome 5: Deliver infrastructure improvements to attract and support business – providing traffic improvements to help ease congestion

Outcome 3: Work to promote Slough as an attractive, safe and vibrant place with opportunities for all – Improve safety within neighbourhoods and reducing casualties.

4 **Other Implications**

a) Financial

None.

b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
None	None	There are no risks, threats or opportunities arising from the report.

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.

5 **Supporting Information**

Background

5.1 Over the last 8-9 years Slough has used Vehicle Actuated Speed signs to complement its Road Safety strategy. Initially these signs were deployed by a sub-contractor but the costs were felt to be too high and too much of a drain on the available budgets. During 2011/2012 the Transport department then experimented with using in-house resources to manage the whole process, this worked until staff numbers were reduced due to service cuts. The process was labour and time intensive and relied on staff members having the required driving skills, being available when a suitable vehicle was hired, able to operate the mobile elevated working platform (MEWP) and setup the lead acid batteries for charging. With the reduction in staffing levels the deployment of the VAS stopped as the existing staff could not absorb all those functions within their current workloads.

- 5.2 A review was conducted during 2016 after monies were made available through the CIF budget circa £10K after it was found that the original signs were no longer operational. Following this, newer signs were purchased using the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Framework contract in June 2016. The new specification signs were lighter, gathered better statistics and used more modern battery technology. The Signal Maintenance Supplier and the Sign Manufacturer were both approached to see if they could manage the deployment and battery changes which both providers have agreed to undertake.
- 5.3 The VAS are just one of a range of measures that will be considered as part of the Road Safety strategy to tackle speeding and have no particular priority. It will be appreciated that mounting removable signs are more of a soft, less intrusive measure when compared to Road Humps, Chicanes, One Way systems, 20mph zones etc., can be deployed reasonably quickly and without the need to follow a formal legal process. Factors that will be considered before deploying the signs include: the accident history - where speed has been an associated factor, environmental factors such as the presence of schools, community centres or vulnerable road users, suitable mounting locations e.g. lamp columns, visibility of the sign to road users (to ensure drivers can react safely) and consideration to nearby homes in case of light intrusion. Highways Inspectors will conduct ad-hoc speed checks using a Radar speed gun and if the results indicate sufficient numbers of vehicles are exceeding the 85th percentile speeds and taking into account the above factors a sign could be deployed. Priority is given to roads by date received but consideration will be given to sites where circumstances dictate a clear and present danger exists. These sites will be considered on a site by site basis and will be at the discretion of the Transport Strategy team. It must be stressed that roads on the current list have not been through a full assessment and it is likely that many will not meet the necessary requirements. Prior to a full assessment being made it was agreed with the Commissioner that the original "Deployment list" would be used as the starting point for deciding where to deploy the new signs.
- 5.4 The batteries from the original signs were sent to a third party for testing, many were found to be faulty and beyond economical repair but after communication with the manufacturer it was found that these signs could be converted to mains use and then re-used in suitable fixed locations that could provide mains power.

Initial Results

- 5.5 Data has now been captured from both locations and preliminary analysis e.g. eastbound on Langley Rd - shows that outside of peak times around 10% of drivers are speeding. The data obtained will be a useful comparison for when the Spencer Rd roundabout opens in July.

6 Comments of Other Committees

No other committees have received this report.

7 **Conclusion**

Highways Inspectors, using the Radar speed gun, will begin conducting ad-hoc speed checks as part of the full VAS process this will naturally whittle down the original list enabling future deployments to be more targeted.

8 **Appendices Attached**

None.

9 **Background Papers**

None.