

Cabinet Petitions Committee

21 October 2020

Subject:	Petitions Progress Report
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Trisha Newton Trisha_newton@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Petitions Committee:-

- (1) approve the action taken or proposed as detailed in the third column below.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Cabinet Committee of petitions received and of the action which has been taken or proposed.

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR SANDWELL'S VISION

- 2.1 Petitions are one of the many ways in which people who live and work in the Borough can influence the decision making process. Many of the issues typically raised by petitions underpin the Council's Vision. Petitions alert members and officers to current local issues and ensure that services are being targeted appropriately in delivering the Council's priorities.

3 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct strategic resource implications arising from this report.

4 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Section 46 of the Localism Act 2011 removes the requirements for principal local authorities in England and Wales to make, publish and comply with a scheme for the handling of petitions made to the authority, with effect from 1 April 2012. At its meeting on 22 May 2012, the Council decided to retain a petitions scheme, although there was no longer a statutory requirement to have such a scheme.

5. Background Details

5.1 Progress on outstanding petitions

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
5.1.1 65 – residents of the Hateley Heath area (Hateley Heath)	Request for the SAPA building on Hateley Heath estate to be brought back into use for the community.	Following an advertisement process in March, an expression of interest was received from a community organisation to re-open the building. The pandemic has delayed progress, however, officers are working to see if a sensible plan for the building is possible. Detailed discussions have taken place with the head petitioner and the CEO of the community organisation that has formally bid for a voluntary body lease. The business plan was nearing completion and the organisation had confirmed they were happy to support a community offer from the building. It is proposed that the matter should be resolved by calendar year end, with details of the community offer and the business plan to be agreed and Cabinet approval sought for a voluntary body lease. A further update will be provided to the Cabinet Petitions Committee. (Received 26/4/2019)

5.1.2 413 – various road users/ residents (Wednesbury North)

Request for traffic light system at the junction of Park Lane/Manor House Road and Hobs Road/ Hawthorn Road, Wednesbury

The funding for road safety schemes such as traffic signals is prioritised where injury accidents are occurring. A five year injury accident analysis shows there have been 3 recorded injury accidents during this period. This is low when compared to other locations that are being considered for major traffic calming schemes. Although this junction does not meet the criteria for the installation of traffic signals a road safety scheme to implement additional carriageway markings and vehicle activated speed signs either side of the junction will be undertaken. This will help to warn drivers and reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to the junction. The Committee requested the junction be monitored to ensure that the traffic calming measures made a difference. Arrangements have been made for a further traffic survey to be undertaken along Park Lane. The data will then be compared to the traffic survey which was undertaken prior to the installation of the vehicle activated speed sign. The traffic surveys had to be rearranged due to the pandemic which resulted in reduced traffic levels. This survey will be undertaken as soon as vehicle numbers return to normal levels. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.
(Received 17/4/2019)

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| 5.1.3 33 – residents of View Point, Tividale (Tividale) | Request for installation of night and day gates in the gulley located at View Point. | Greenbelt Group wish to assist in reducing anti-social behaviour and would not oppose the installation of gates in principle, if this represented the wishes of the 299 households which are currently billed in respect of the areas. However, Greenbelt Group have specified that the Council would need to be responsible for the maintenance thereafter, agree to indemnify Greenbelt Group in respect of the gates (e.g. to cover any injury) and agree to fund the removal of the gates, if and when required. The head petitioner has advised that residents are not prepared to contribute. As the land is not in Council ownership the Council cannot take on the liability or maintenance of the gates. No further action is proposed by the Council. Following representations, further investigation would be taken and a further report would be submitted to the Cabinet Petitions Committee at a future date. (Received 5/3/2019) |
| 5.1.4 79 – residents of Queens Road, Smethwick (Smethwick) | Concern regarding speeding and traffic accidents on Queens Road, Smethwick. | A seven day traffic survey has been undertaken for Queens Road between Basons Lane and the traffic island at the junction with Warley Road. It shows that 85% of vehicles are travelling at 32.8mph or less (includes both directions). A three year injury collision analysis has also been undertaken and it shows there has been 1 recorded injury collision. |

When Queens Road is compared to other roads in Sandwell it has a very low number of injury collisions and does not therefore meet the criteria for the implementation of a traffic calming scheme. Although the vehicle speeds are slightly higher than the 30mph speed limit, this is still within the parameters of 35mph set by the Police for enforcement purposes. However, a carriageway lining scheme was implemented in October last year in response to enquiries received from residents at Queens Road. Following representations submitted to the Committee, a further traffic survey will be undertaken in spring/summer and compared to the survey results from the winter. Arrangements will be made for a traffic survey to be undertaken as soon as traffic levels return to normal. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

(Received 24/8/2019)

5.2 Petitions requiring final approval

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
5.2.1 16 – residents in the vicinity of Oakham Road doctor’s surgery, Tividale (Tividale)	Request for visibility/safety improvements on Oakham Road in the vicinity of the doctor’s surgery.	The piece of land fronting nos. 139/141 Oakham Road is not in Council ownership. Land registry records show the land is unregistered. The Council does not hold any maintenance responsibility for this area and cannot undertake work on the land. In addition, the land has a level difference, a mature tree, foliage and an embankment.

The area would need to be reduced in height in order to create a footpath. This would then require a retaining wall at the rear of any constructed footpath to retain the gardens to property nos. 139/141 as they are in an elevated position. The request for traffic calming measures along Oakham Road has previously been considered. Oakham Road is a heavily trafficked local distributor route, particularly during peak times. Due to the high numbers of vehicles using Oakham Road it would not be suitable for the implementation of vertical traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, as this would create noise for residents. The implementation of give and take traffic calming measures (similar to the type used at Throne Road) would create delays and congestion in the area as high numbers of vehicles would be forced to stop and give way. Further problems can be created when motorists are reluctant to wait and give way which results in conflict. It is for this reason vehicle activated speed signs were considered a more suitable option and subsequently were installed either side of the junction with Regent Road. Injury collision data for Oakham Road, between Hoylake Drive and the borough boundary with Dudley, shows there have been two recorded injury accidents in the last 5 years.

Compared with other roads in Sandwell the figure is low and those areas with higher numbers of recorded treatable injury collisions must be prioritised at this current time. The installation of cameras to tackle speeding cannot be considered by the Council. Local authorities hold no power to deal with speeding motorists - it is a criminal offence and only the Police have authority to enforce the speed limit. The head petitioner has been informed.
(Received 27/3/2020)

6 Source Documents

Copies of petitions from various groups of residents (exempt information).