

Report to Cabinet Petitions Committee

14 September 2022

Subject:	Petitions Progress Report
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1 Recommendations

That the Cabinet Petitions Committee approve the action taken or proposed as details in the third column below.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

To receive petitions and approve action taken/proposed in response.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

		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.
		
		



4 Context and Key Issues

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 Petitions received since last reporting period

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
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5.2 Progress on outstanding petitions

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
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5.2.1 39 - Farmer Way Road, Tipton	Requesting Traffic Calming Signage	Following representation at the committee by Cllr Williams requesting traffic calming signage slow down road marker, the Committee agreed for highways to investigate the matter.
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Highways response: The funding available for traffic calming schemes is targeted in areas where injury collisions are occurring in accordance with Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan. A three year injury collision analysis for Farmer Way and the surrounding estate shows there hasn't been any recorded injury collisions during this period. Funding cannot



therefore be prioritised in this particular area.

A seven day traffic survey was undertaken along Farmer Way in August 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The traffic survey was conducted between Jackson Close and Stead Close and the results show 85% of motorists were travelling at 27.4mph or less.

There are currently no plans to recommend traffic calming measures along Farmer Way as the funding must be prioritised where injury collisions are occurring.

5.2.2 92 – Various local residents (Friar Park)

Request for the installation of a crossing on Oxford Street near No.93

Officers have reported that a number of attempts have been made to appoint a new School Crossing Patrol at Oxford Street in the vicinity of Mesty Croft School, however, so far there had not been any applicants.

Traffic Surveys and pedestrian surveys had been undertaken along Oxford Street. The results from the surveys have now been received and are currently being analysed by Highways.

The crossing facility analysis is currently being undertaken to determine the areas to benefit from new crossing sites.



5.2.3 128 – Residents of Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick (Abbey) Request for traffic calming measures

Officers confirmed that the consultation has been undertaken with local residents regarding the implementation of a road safety scheme along Lightwoods Hill. A number of objections have been raised regarding the proposed scheme, which is now currently being reviewed. Suggestions and comments from the consultation process are being considered to see if any adjustments can be made to the scheme proposal within the available budget.

Officers submitted an update noting that a number of objections had been received from residents regarding the original proposed road safety scheme for Lightwoods Hill.

The proposed road safety scheme for Lightwoods Hill had been altered in accordance with objections that were received to the initial proposal. The new proposal would be taken to the Cabinet Member for Highways in the next two weeks.

A meeting was held with Cllr Hinchliff and residents on Friday 2nd September to discuss the traffic calming scheme



proposed for Lightwoods Hill. A number of suggestions and ideas have been made by residents and these will be taken into consideration when re-designing the traffic calming scheme. The new proposal will be discussed further with residents once it has been completed.

A further meeting will be held with ward members and residents in October when the new proposal has been designed.

5.2.4 63 – Residents of West Park Road (St Paul’s)

Concerns regarding the new entrance and exit for West Smethwick Park

Officers confirmed that a significant consultation had been undertaken prior to the project commencing. Furthermore, while officers from Highways were consulted and no concerns were raised, discussions are now in place to address the concerns highlighted by the residents. Officers continue to work alongside partners in the local community to address the issues raised. The issues highlighted were addressed as part of the local town forum in order to identify what measures can be adopted to mitigate any concerns. All existing entrances into the Park would be improved as part of the restoration project, with an



exception of the existing car park entrance which was proposed to be relocated.

Properties on West Park Road received letters notifying residents of the Planning Application on the 10th April 2017. New litter bins would be installed as part of the restoration project and Officers continue to deal with any flytipping and littering as it arises.

Officers intend to commence work on the new entrance way with immediate effect. Assessments on impact of traffic calming from other roads will be undertaken as soon as the work has been completed. An update will be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet Petitions Committee.

The Car Park was now open and an inspection was scheduled for August or September 2022, dependent on staff availability.

5.2.5 16 - Grafton Road Residents Establishing residential permit parking on both sides of the road

Officers in response to the petition had distributed questionnaires to residents in Grafton Road to ask if they would be in favour of a residents permit parking scheme.



Graham Road and Sandwell Road North have also been included in this process to prevent any displacement of parking in these roads should a scheme be implemented. The majority of residents in all roads would need to be in favour for a residents parking permit scheme to be considered.

The deadline date for questionnaires to be returned was the 10 June 2022.

Questionnaires had been sent out to residents along Grafton Road, Graham Road and Sandwell Road North in response to the petition requesting a residents parking scheme along Grafton Road. This was to address any parking that was likely to be displaced to adjacent roads if a residents parking permit scheme was considered solely for Grafton Road.

The results from the questionnaires had shown that:-

Grafton Road
50 questionnaires delivered and 30 completed and returned
25 residents in favour of a residents parking scheme and 5 against

Graham Road



28 questionnaires delivered and 11 completed and returned
5 residents in favour of a residents parking scheme and 6 against

Sandwell Road North
17 questionnaires delivered and 13 completed and returned
8 residents in favour of a residents parking scheme and 5 against

The majority of returned questionnaires for Grafton Road and Sandwell Road North are in favour of a residents parking scheme, however, the majority of returned questionnaires for Graham Road are against the scheme.

Highways recommend that if a residents parking scheme is to be introduced in this area then all three roads should be included to prevent displacement of parking.

5.2.6 413 – 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 were 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. A seven day traffic survey had been undertaken around the junction of Park Lane / Manor House Road. It showed that 85% of motorists are travelling at 29.7mph or less (figure includes both directions).

Officers reported that Council Policy required funding for road safety improvements to be



prioritised in areas where treatable injury collisions are occurring. The funding for road safety improvements such as traffic signals must be prioritised in areas where treatable injury collisions had occurred. The junction of Park Lane and Manor House Road did not meet the criteria for a road safety improvement scheme, this was because there were other areas in Sandwell with higher numbers of injury collisions which must be prioritised first in accordance with Sandwell's Strategic Road Safety Plan.

Following representations from a ward councillor on behalf of the head petitioner, the Committee decided that a visit with the Cabinet Member and officers would take place to determine if any low-cost alternatives could be identified. These might be afforded from local community budgets.

Officers confirmed that a meeting with local ward members, Cabinet Member for Highways and Highways officers was scheduled for 14th February at 3pm.

An online meeting was attended by Local Ward Members and the Highways Service Manager,



however, the Cabinet Member was unable to attend.

The injury collision data for the junction of Park Lane / Manor House Road and Hobs Road was currently showing 1 injury collision had occurred in the past 3 years. The number of injury collisions recorded on this junction has not increased since the petition was submitted.

There were currently no recommendations being made by highways to prioritise major funding for traffic signals at this particular location where injury collisions appear to be quite low.

5.2.7 54 – Residents of Batmans Hill Road, Princes End, Tipton

Requesting average speed cameras.

Referred to West Midlands Police for response.

A traffic survey was conducted along Batmans Hill Road for a seven day period starting 23rd April 2022.

The traffic survey showed 85% of motorists are travelling along Batmans Hill Road at 35mph or less (figure includes both directions). It also showed that 44% of motorists were travelling in excess of the current 30mph speed limit.



The details of the traffic survey had been shared with the Police who hold the powers to enforce the speed limit. The traffic survey data would help the Police to identify the times of day when speed enforcement should be most effective.



5.3 Petitions requiring final approval

Signatories	Subject	Action Taken/Proposed
5.3.1 38 - Residents of John Guest Close/Argyll Way/William Avery Way/Arthur Kee Drive/Soap Works Drive	Blocked sewage drains causing draining issues at a number of properties	<p>Officers updated that the blocked sewage system on the Cranford Estate has been investigated by highways on behalf of Environmental Health. A blockage in the pipework was identified and the problem has now been rectified. The development remains in private ownership and has not been adopted by the council.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended to close this petition.</p>
5.3.2 36- Residents of Dartmouth Street	Request for parking permits for residents	<p>Officers considered the request for a residents parking permit scheme for Dartmouth Street, West Bromwich. The on street space available along Dartmouth Street, allowing the recommended 6 metres per vehicle for pulling in and out of the parking space, equates to 26 parking spaces. There are 38 properties along the south-east side of Dartmouth Street and 13 along the north-west side.</p> <p>There is not enough space to allow each property at least one parking permit and therefore a residents permit parking scheme would not be recommended for this location.</p>



This is because site constraints mean additional parking spaces cannot be created to accommodate all cars belonging to residents.

Given the above response, it is recommended to **close** this petition.

5.3.3 12 - Residents of Sandgate Rd / Woodhall Close

Requesting closure of the access road to 7-11 Waring Road due to crime/ASB

The access road to Waring Close, Tipton, forms part of the adopted highway and under legislation has to remain open and free from obstructions for all highway users.

Th problems that are occurring relate to anti-social behaviour and the only authority with the powers to deal with this matter is the Police. The closing of a highway would not resolve anti-social behaviour problems it would only move the problem to another street or area.

Given the above response, it is recommended to **close** this petition.

5.3.4 19 – Residents of Pitfields Road, Oldbury

Request for a car parking space and CCTV installation in Pitfields Road, Oldbury, B68 0RQ

The head petitioner had been provided with a response, advising as follow:

Any consideration of increasing car parking space and the installation of CCTV had to be



driven by reports received from residents.

The Anti Social Behaviour Team had advised there were only 5 ASB incidents recorded on Pitfields Road and Pitfields Close between April 2021 and the present day. Of those 5 reported incidents, only 2 of the reports related to the car park with 1 of which being a duplicate report as it was the same resident reporting the same issue twice on the same day. The current lack of reports received would therefore not warrant an increase in car parking space or CCTV at the location.

Furthermore, reports provided by the Police recorded on or around Pitfields Road show that there were:

4 offences recorded in May 2022

2 offences in April 2022

3 offences in March 2022

3 offences in February 2022.

Again, whilst it was concerning that offences are occurring, these numbers were not particularly high in comparison to other areas of Oldbury, (and much lower than other areas across the Borough).



With regards to the area of grass which the petitioner identified as suitable for removal and replacement with tarmac to increase the car parking space, whilst, the officer advised that while the Council was committed to maintaining green amenity spaces, again consideration of such requests was driven by reporting received from residents, and the current number of reports which have been received would not warrant the requirement for this green area to be replaced with tarmac to increase the car parking space.

In relation to the two trees, one of which the petitioner advised is very large in size and causing an obstruction, the officer agreed to arrange for an inspection of these trees to be carried out, with any necessary works required to ensure that the trees were not causing any further damage.

The officer advised that residents of Pitfields Close should continue to report incidents of anti social behaviour both to the Council and the Police so that a partnership approach when tackling any issues raised could be maintained.



6 Source Documents

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

