

# Petitions Panel

**Dorset County Council**



Date of Meeting	Wednesday 21 February 2018
Officer	Andrew Martin – Head of Highways.
Subject of Report	<b>Procedure for Petitions – Petition requesting a reduction on the speed limit on the Portland Beach Road.</b>
Executive Summary	A petition has been received (in accordance with the County Council's published petitions scheme) in relation to requesting a reduction on the speed limit on the Portland Beach Road.
Impact Assessment:	Equalities Impact Assessment: Not applicable
	Use of Evidence:  Site investigations and latest available five years worth of road traffic collision data (September 2012 to August 2017) Latest speed and traffic data survey (May 2017)
	Budget:  The cost of introducing a Traffic Regulation Order would likely to be between £6500 and £7500 – costs are for context only and do not represent actual costs, they include officer time and costs of the signing and lining as well as costs associated with the legal process.
	Risk Assessment:  Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW
	Other Implications:  None

**Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled Reducing the speed limit on the Portland Beach Road**

Recommendation	The Panel is invited to note the receipt of this petition and decide how to respond to it.
Reason for Recommendation	In order to comply with the County Council's published scheme for responding to petitions and so as to enable local people to connect with local elected decision makers.
Appendices	Appendix A - Copy of petition Appendix B - Plan of Portland Beach Road Appendix C – Overview of speed survey data
Background Papers	Dorset County Council Petitions Scheme
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## **1. Background to the Petition Scheme**

- 1.1 The County Council's Petitions Scheme was adopted on 29 April 2010 and came into effect on 15 June 2010. The Scheme was subsequently updated by the County Council on 21 July 2016.
- 1.2 If a petition is supported by 50 or more signatories then it will be dealt with by a small customer focussed panel. If a petition is supported by 1,000 or more signatories it will be scheduled for a debate at the next meeting of the full County Council.

## **2. Petition – Request for a speed reduction on Portland Beach Road.**

- 2.1 The County Council received a petition organised by Ms Tracy Ballentine in early November 2017. This reads as follows:

*“We the undersigned are concerned residents who urge Dorset County Council to act now to lower the speed limit on the Portland Beach Road making it a safe place for all”.*

- 2.2 As this petition contains more than 50 signatures, the Panel are invited to note and discuss. A copy of the petition can be found at Appendix A and the petition contains 282 signatures.
- 2.3 This discussion should conclude with a decision as to how to respond to the petition. This may include one or more of the following:
  - taking the action requested in the petition
  - considering the petition at a council meeting
  - holding an inquiry into the matter
  - undertaking research into the matter
  - holding a public meeting
  - holding a consultation
  - referring the petition for consideration by the council's Audit and Governance Committee
  - calling a referendum
  - writing to the petition organiser setting out the Panel's views about the request in the petition.
- 2.4 Alternatively, the Panel may determine a combination of the options above, or decide on another course of action as appropriate.

## **3. Context**

- 3.1 A map can be found at Appendix B showing the extent of the existing speed limits on Portland Beach Road. The County Council adopts Department for Transport guidelines for setting speed limits as policy. There are various criteria that need to be satisfied in order for a speed limit to be reduced. In short, speed limits should be set at a level that is “self enforcing” and where there is an evidenced need for a reduced risk or if a discernible difference in driver behaviour could/would be achieved. The speed of traffic is an important consideration when reviewing speed limits. Speeds should be close to the requested/proposed lower limit in order for it to be “self enforcing”.

- 3.2 The latest available traffic survey to be completed on Portland Beach Road was in May 2017. Table 1 shows a summary of the traffic flows and Table 2 speed.

**Table 1 – Average daily traffic flows, A354 - Portland Beach Road**

<b>A354 - Portland Beach Road - Average daily traffic flows</b> 8 May to 14 May 2017		
	7 day average	Weekday average
All directions	19157	18055
Northbound	9594	9057
Southbound	9563	8998

**Table 2 – Traffic speed, A354 – Portland Beach Road**

<b>A354 - Portland Beach Road - traffic speed</b> 8 May to 14 May 2017		
	85th%ile	Mean average
All directions	52.2mph	44.5mph
Northbound	51.5mph	44mph
Southbound	52.8mph	45mph

- 3.3 A series of tables and charts providing an overview of traffic flows and speeds recorded during the May 2017 survey can be found at Appendix C
- 3.4 Collision data available to the County Council is provided and validated by Dorset Police. It includes collisions that occurred on public highway reported to the police that resulted in personal injury to any person(s) involved.
- 3.5 It is accepted that this data is not the complete picture of collisions that have occurred however, it is the most robust and reliable data available to the County Council.
- 3.6 It is standard practice to assess the most recent five-year period of collisions when considering/identifying safety schemes.
- 3.7 Between September 2012 and August 2017 there has been 20 collisions along the Portland Beach Road, 1 fatal, 8 serious and 11 slight.
- 3.8 If a speed limit reduction were to be supported it is important to consider that this request is one of close to 120 other requests for a new Traffic Regulation Order across the Dorset County area.
- 3.9 The 2018/19 Traffic Regulation Order Programme has been set. However, if the speed limit on Portland Beach Road is to be reduced there is a degree of flexibility and it is likely that it could be included within the programme.

**4. Next Steps**

- 4.1 The Panel is invited to note the receipt of this petition and decide how to respond to it, possible options are available in paragraph 2.3.

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**Andrew Martin**

**Service Director for Highways and Emergency Planning**

**February 2018**