

Agenda Item:

Regulatory Committee

4b
(i)

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	11 June 2015
Officer	Andrew Martin – Head of Highways
Subject of Report	Procedure for Petitions - Petition requesting a 20mph Speed Limit on the A337 in Highcliffe, Christchurch
Executive Summary	<p>A petition has been received (in accordance with the County Council's published petitions scheme) requesting the imposition of a 20 mph speed limit on the A337 in Christchurch</p> <p>The Scheme states that if a petition is supported by 50 or more signatories then it will be reported by the Chairman to the relevant Council committee.</p> <p>It is for the Committee to decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.</p>
Impact Assessment:	Equalities Impact Assessment: Not required
	Use of Evidence: Not required
	Budget/ Risk Assessment: If taken forward in the traffic management programme to implement the new speed limit would cost in the region of £6000, which includes signs, adverts and staff time.
Recommendation	The Committee 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Location Plan A• Location Plan B
Background Papers	Dorset County Council Petitions Scheme Dorset County Council Speed Limit Policy Document Copy of petition and supporting papers
Report Originator and Contact	Name: Andrew Brown Tel: 01305 225142 Email: a.brown@dorsetcc.gov.uk

1. **Background to the Petition Scheme**

- 1.1 The County Council's Petitions Scheme (based on the national model) was adopted on 29 April 2010 and came into effect on 15 June 2010.
- 1.2 If a petition is supported by 50 or more signatories then it will be reported by the Chairman to the relevant Council committee. 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 – Petition requesting the imposition of a 20 mph speed limit on the A337 in Highcliffe Shopping Centre**

- 2.1 The County Council received a petition on 27 March 2015 organised by the Highcliffe Centre Partnership with lead petitioner, Mr Malcolm Mawbey. The petition was originally sent to Christchurch Borough council, but passed on to Dorset County Council in our role as Highways Authority. This reads as follows:-

“The signatories request that the council supports the reduction in the speed limit through Highcliffe Shopping Centre from 30mph to 20mph.

The A337 is a busy road which passes through the Highcliffe Shopping Centre. The majority of the shoppers are elderly and are concerned about the traffic. Cyclists also find traffic a problem and some tend illegally to use the pavement.

In the rush hours there can be significant congestion. In the adopted Core Strategy the Council proposed to introduce calming measures. The reduction in speed limit would be consistent with stated policy and with government guidance to councils on setting local speed limits in shopping areas where there are vulnerable people. The reduction would improve the flow of traffic by giving more time for congestion to clear before the jam is increased by the arrival of more vehicles.

I submit this petition to you together with a supporting paper for the council to consider.’

- 2.2 As this petition now contains more than 50 signatures, the Committee are invited to note and discuss this.
- 2.3 This discussion should conclude with a decision as to how to respond to the petition. This may include:
- taking the action requested in the petition
 - holding an inquiry into the matter
 - undertaking research into the matter
 - holding a public meeting
 - holding a consultation
 - holding a meeting with petitioners
 - referring the petition for consideration by the council's audit and scrutiny committee
 - calling a referendum

- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

3. **Context**

- 3.1 The petition contains 334 signatures. As stated on the petition, all signatories live, work or study in the Christchurch Borough Council area.
- 3.2 The A337 through Highcliffe is the primary route between Christchurch and Lymington with a traffic flow in the region of 14500 to 15200 vehicles per day.
- 3.3 There have been 8 reported personal injury accidents in the latest available 5 year period (01/12/2009 to 30/11/2014) between Wharncliffe Road and Gordon Road (including both junctions). 2 of these were serious, 6 were slight.

Dorset County Council have no speed survey data for this section of road.

- 3.4 The requested location is a 620 metre length of road between Wharncliffe Road and Gordon Road. This distance meets the minimum requirement of 600 metres.

This section has a number of well used local shops, 2 convenience local supermarkets (Tesco and Co-op), cafes, pubs, bank, building society, Premier Inn amongst other community facilities.

There are 2 signal controlled crossings and a signalised junction at Sea Corner (junction with Gordon Road). This is also a busy bus route with bus stops serving the local shops and community.

- 3.5 The Dorset 20mph Speed Limit Policy was approved by the Environment Overview Committee on 23 January 2014. This allows local Councils to fund such speed limits and zones subject to meeting the criteria laid out in the policy.

If a scheme request is not taken forward under the 20mph policy as above, a request would usually be assessed, prioritised against criteria and future funds. However it must be borne in mind that currently there are in the region of 40 requests, with only 2 or 3 being taken forward in each financial year due to reduced budgets.

- 3.6 If the Committee is minded to resolve that this petition request be taken forward, the site and suitability of the request should be assessed and prioritised against other proposals to establish if it is appropriate and meets criteria.

Andrew Martin
Head of Highways
June 2015

Highcliffe – Location Plan A



A337, Lymington Road, Highcliffe – Location Plan B

