

Bolton Council

Report to: Executive Cabinet Member -
Environmental Services

Date: 15th August 2016

Report of: Director of Place

Report No: ECMES/23/16b

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Report Title: **Petition Requesting the Council to investigate alternative highway/traffic solutions to keep the free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road.**

Non Confidential: This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose: To advise the Executive Cabinet Member on a petition that has been received requesting the Council to investigate alternative highway/traffic solutions to keep the free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road.

Recommendations: The Executive Cabinet Member Environmental Services is recommended to approve the following:

a) That the Highways and Engineering Division continue to investigate highway/traffic solutions to keep the free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road.

Decision:

Signed:

Leader / Executive
Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Summary:

A petition has been received requesting that the Council to investigate alternative highway/traffic solutions to keep the free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road. The Executive Cabinet Member Environmental Services is requested to approve the recommendation contained in this report.

Background Information

1. An on-line petition, containing 495 signatures of persons has been received. The petitioners request that Bolton Council investigate alternative highway/traffic solutions to keep free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road to stop the endless queues that build up especially at peak times. Additionally, we call on Bolton Council's forward thinking, to create a plan to combat any potential traffic congestion increases that may occur.

Current Situation

2. Blackburn Road, Bolton has one of the highest traffic flows across Bolton with some 25,000 vehicle per day using this route. Traffic levels are particularly high in the morning peak time 7.30am – 9.30am in the southbound direction and the evening peak time of 4.00pm – 6.30pm in the northbound direction. At other times traffic levels are high but in general traffic does flow freely along the route.
3. The route is approximately 7km long between the A666 St Peters Way and the boundary with Blackburn with Darwen. There are 9 signal controlled junctions and 4 additional stand-alone pedestrian crossings. The main junctions are at Blackburn Road/Halliwel Road, Blackburn Rd/Ulleswater Street, Blackburn Road/Waters Meeting Road, Blackburn Road/Crompton Way and Blackburn Road/Darwen Road.
4. There are waiting restrictions along most of the route particularly between Halliwel Road and Crompton Way with a minimum being peak time waiting and loading restrictions. This is in an effort to keep the route free from parked vehicles and allow free flowing traffic.
5. The route has been identified by the Safety Camera Partnership for speed enforcement and this is undertaken using both a static camera at the north end of the route and mobile enforcement just to the north of Hill Cot Road.
6. In the past improvements have been made to the traffic signal installations with the introduction of SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) between Waters Meeting Road and Lawson Street in an effort to maximise the amount of traffic along the route. The system works through a series of on-street detectors in the highway which continually monitor traffic flows and adapt accordingly. This then takes into account fluctuations in traffic flows.

Officer Observations

7. It is accepted that during the peak traffic times that congestion on Blackburn Road does occur on a regular basis and this can be a cause of frustration for motorists. Local Council officers with the help of traffic signal engineers from Transport for Greater Manchester continually work to both monitor and when possible intervene to maximise traffic flow on this route.
8. There are preliminary proposals to implement moderate improvements at the junction of Moss Bank Way and Blackburn Road which is in an effort to improve traffic flow through the junction. This is subject to the funding being identified and is likely to be implemented within the next 5 years.

Recommendations

9. The Executive Cabinet Member Environmental Services is recommended to approve the following:

That the Highways and Engineering Division continue to investigate highway/traffic solutions to keep the free flow of traffic on Blackburn Road.