

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

## LOCAL COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)



**DATE:** 9 JUNE 2014

**LEAD OFFICER:** Andrew Milne, Area Team Manager

**SUBJECT:** STONEHILL ROAD – UPDATE ON HIGHWAY SAFETY MEASURES

**DIVISION:** Foxhills, Virginia Water and Thorpe

<b><u>SUMMARY OF ISSUE:</u></b>
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<p>This report outlines a review of the safety measures previously installed in Stonehill Road, in response to the issue being highlighted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Runnymede Borough Council. The Committee is asked to note that the multi-agency Runnymede Road Safety Working Group will undertake a further site visit in the summer to consider whether additional measures can be recommended.</p>
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<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></b>
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<p><b>The Local Committee (Runnymede) is asked:</b> to note and comment on the review of safety measures already installed in Stonehill Road;</p>
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<b><u>1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:</u></b>
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1. 1 In December 2013 the following resolution was agreed by Runnymede Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny committee and details were passed subsequently to the Local Committee chairman:

"The Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee recommends that the speed limit in Stonehill Road, Ottershaw be reduced to 40mph and that double white lines be introduced in that road in line with the wishes of local residents. If the Local Committee is not prepared to implement these measures, then it is requested to consider introducing vehicle actuated radar or vehicle actuated signs and other appropriate safety measures in the road."

- 1.2 In response to concerns previously raised about road safety in Stonehill Road, officers had identified that there was a history of personal injury accidents in the road. An analysis of the accidents indicates that a significant proportion occur at the side road junctions. Based on this information, the Runnymede Local Committee agreed previously that the measures detailed below (which were introduced in

March 2012) should be installed to try and specifically improve safety at these locations.

- Enhanced junction warning signs were installed. These signs are on yellow backing boards to maximise their conspicuousness.
- New road markings and coloured road surfacing were installed. These are located next to warning signs to gain maximum impact by creating a gateway type effect.
- Marker posts were installed to help highlight side road junctions.
- Areas of vegetation were removed to improve visibility for drivers emerging onto Stonehill Road from side road junctions.

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

2.1 Following the introduction of these measures, the issue of road safety in Stonehill Road was reviewed by the Runnymede Road Safety Working Group (RSWG) at its meeting on 24 April 2014. This working group consists of specialist road safety officers from both Surrey Police and Surrey County Council and meets to examine locations with a history of personal injury accidents.

2.2 The RSWG examined the accident data for the 3 year period from November 2010 to October 2013 (latest available data) for the Runnymede section of Stonehill Road and the following points were noted:

- 7 personal injury accidents occurred during this period with one resulting in serious injuries and the remainder resulting in slight injuries.
- Only one of the accidents recorded “Too fast for prevailing conditions” or “Exceeding the speed limit” as a contributory factor.
- 5 of these accidents occurred at the junction with Foxhills Road (4 since the measures were installed in March 2010).
- One accident involved a cyclist (not recorded as taking part in a cycle race/event).

2.3 The RSWG discussed the measures suggested by the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee and the following points were discussed and noted:

### **Reduction In Speed Limit**

2.4 Reducing a speed limit alone will not necessarily result in a reduction in actual vehicle speeds since motorists determine their speed based on the character of the road and the prevailing conditions. As such, unless you also introduce additional measures that change the character of the road or influence driver behaviour then reducing a speed limit in isolation may have limited benefit in improving road safety.

- 2.5 A speed limit assessment would have to be undertaken in accordance with SCC's Speed Management Policy (and Surrey Police consulted) to determine whether a reduction in speed limit is appropriate. The Runnymede Local Committee would have to agree the inclusion of the speed limit assessment as part of its programme of works and allocate funding.

#### **Double White Line System**

- 2.6 Double white line systems may only be introduced at locations where forward visibility is less than a certain distance. However, even where visibility falls below this distance it does not automatically follow that double white lines should always be installed. Other factors such as the accident history, traffic characteristics and the road layout also need to be considered in judging whether a double white system is appropriate.
- 2.7 Only one of the personal injury accidents over the 3 year period November 2010 to October 2012 involved an overtaking manoeuvre. However, this accident occurred on a straight section of road where a double white line system could not be introduced.
- 2.8 The introduction of a double white system requires the removal of the existing centre line markings prior to the installation of the double white line markings and reflective road studs at a specific spacing. The cost of such works is therefore significant (for example, the last double white line system installed in Runnymede cost £7,000 and was over a relatively short length).

#### **Vehicle Activated Sign**

- 2.9 There are only two vehicle activated signs in the Runnymede section of Stonehill Road (one opposite the junction with Foxhills Road and one opposite the junction with Accommodation Road). At other locations it is therefore likely to be costly to connect a power supply to a vehicle activated sign (and the amount of tree cover means solar powered signs are unlikely to be a viable option).
- 2.10 Further to the above comments the RSWG was concerned to note the number of personal injury accidents that have occurred following the introduction of the measures in March 2012. It was therefore agreed that it would be helpful to meet on site (June 2014) to evaluate the likely impact of further road safety measures that could be considered. Any identified measures would then be added to a programme of road safety schemes to be assessed (on the basis of cost and accident saving potential) for possible implementation during 2015/16.

### **3. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee, and the Local Committee, will be provided with an update following the RSWG site meeting.

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**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

Surrey Police.

**Annexes:**

None

**Sources/background papers:**

None

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