

CABINET
30th JANUARY 2023

PETITION FOR NEWCASTLE EMLYN ROAD AND PAVEMENT SAFETY

Purpose:

To respond to petition received by Council on the 12th October 2022.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. That the contents of the report are noted.
2. That the petitioners are notified of the report
3. Traffic surveys and pedestrian crossing assessments are undertaken at key locations within Newcastle Emlyn in the Spring 2023 and the petitioners advised of the findings.

Reasons:

To provide petitioners with the Council's response to the issue raised.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder: Councillor Edward Thomas

Directorate:

Head of Service:

Steve Pilliner

Report Authors:

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Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CABINET
30th JANUARY 2023

PETITION FOR NEWCASTLE EMLYN ROAD AND PAVEMENT SAFETY

Introduction

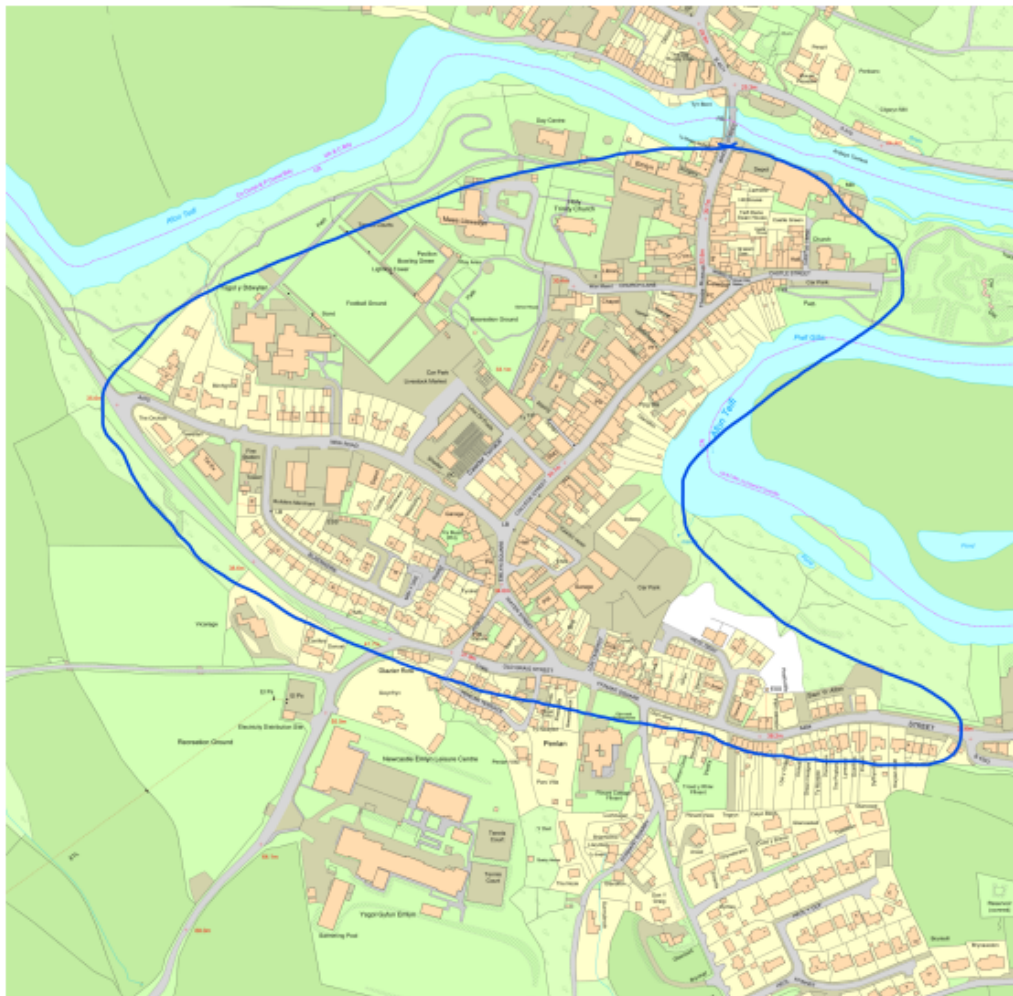
A petition was presented to Council on the 12th October 2022 by Newcastle Emlyn Town Councillor David Thomas relating to Road and Pavement Safety in Newcastle Emlyn. Council unanimously resolved that in accordance with Corporate Procedure the petition be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

The petition included 370 signatories who requested the County Council:

- a. Carry out, or procure, a thorough road and pavement safety review into all factors affecting the safe use of public roads and pavements in Newcastle Emlyn (Bridge Street, Castle Street, Church Lane, College Street, Ebenezer Street, Emlyn Square, Market Place, Market Square, New Road, Old Graig Street, Porth Street, Sycamore Street, Water Street, the area leading from the Tanyard Lane carpark out to College Street (by NFU) and all three public carparks)
- b. Highway designers should seek safety opportunities specific to the needs of Newcastle Emlyn and apply sound safety and traffic engineering principles and solutions to achieve a safer road and pavement infrastructure for Newcastle Emlyn. For example, improve the existing zebra crossing near the police station (or improve and convert it to a puffin crossing), install a second zebra or puffin crossing near Cawdor Hall (clock tower), remove all unnecessary sections of 'dropped kerb', install speed indicator devices and/or speed cameras, install safety barriers, increase safety signage.
- c. Promote and encourage the safe use of public roads and pavements by all classes of road and footpath users through the circulation of advice, information and knowledge gained from the review".

These requests are discussed further within this report.

The streets referred in in the petition cover the core area of Newcastle Emlyn as shown on the plan below.



Background Information

The Council works with partner agencies in accordance with our statutory duties in a number of areas to improve road safety and prevent road traffic collisions. This work falls within three main areas:

- Education – road safety education and training including working with schools.
- Engineering – including highway improvements, traffic calming and traffic management schemes.
- Enforcement – supporting Dyfed Powys Police and Go Safe on tackling inappropriate driver behaviour and through the Council's own on-street parking enforcement.

These areas are explained in more detail below.

Education

The County Council's Road Safety Team work with partner agencies on a range of educational initiatives which are predominantly funded by Welsh Government. These initiatives have been developed nationally and locally based on evidence of the key higher risk road-user groups to improve road safety and encourage sustainable travel choices.

The Council also works closely with partners to focus on higher risk groups. This includes the following:

- **Kerbcraft** which is aimed at reducing child pedestrian casualties by delivering practical pedestrian training for 5 to 7 year olds in primary schools. This is also linked where possible to Safe Routes to Schools initiatives.
- **National Cycle Training** to encourage more people to cycle, more often and with less risk. This is aimed at Primary School children in year 6.
- **Mega Drive** programme which targets 16-18 year olds and provides key road safety messages to reduce the number of car occupant casualties in this age range and includes challenges the attitudes to risk, increasing the knowledge of in-car safety and reinforces the driver and passenger's responsibilities.
- **Pass Plus Cymru** which is an initiative aimed at new drivers between the ages of 17 and 25 who have less than one year's driving experience. The initiative provides young drivers with additional knowledge and it provides advice on driving techniques.
- **Mature Driver** course which provides refresher training to drivers aged 65 and over including changes to the Highway Code, a discussion of age-related physical changes such as changes to sight and hearing and includes a refresher lesson from an Advanced Driving Instructor.
- **Dragon Rider Cymru** which provides motorcycle training to a variety of user groups who evidence indicates are at a higher risk. The training package encourages post-test motorcyclists training on how to improve their riding skills and is available to those who may be returning to motorcycling after a period of absence, recent motorcyclists and those upgrading their motorcycles to more powerful machines.
- **Biker Down Cymru** provides focused training for motorcyclists who wish to enhance their knowledge in dealing with road related incidents or collisions at may require basic first aid interventions at roadside.
- **Targeted Active Travel & Road Safety** at selected schools to encourage safe walking, cycling and scooting. This includes reception walks with parents for 4-5 year olds, Kerbcraft training for 5-7 year olds, Balanceability for 3-7 year olds, GoRide for 7-11 year olds, Scooter training for 7-11 year olds, National Cycle Training for 9-11 year olds, Sustrans Active Journeys, Walking buses and Accompanied walks.

Engineering

Engineering interventions are a popular request and the County Council receives frequent calls for highway improvements which far outstrip the budget available. The majority of these requests are related to road safety concerns and include calls for engineering measures such as traffic calming, junction improvements and specific pedestrian facilities such as new footways and pedestrian crossings.

The budget available to bring forward engineering schemes is limited and the Council's Executive Board adopted in February 2017 a two-stage model for assessing and prioritising requests for Highway Infrastructure and Road Safety Improvements. The model enables an evidence-based approach to be taken so that all requests are considered objectively and fairly to ensure that the funding available is directed to the areas of greatest need. Candidate schemes do not progress through Stage 1 of the assessment unless there is evidence of recorded personal injury accidents to justify further consideration.

Stage 2 then involves a more in-depth analysis of accident details, including accidents involving vulnerable road users, the concentration of accidents together with a study of traffic, pedestrian and cycle flows to provide a prioritisation model to identify the most urgent projects.

Recorded Personal Injury Accidents In Newcastle Emlyn

The Council maintains an accident database which is based on information collated by Dyfed Powys Police regarding road traffic collisions which have resulted in personal injuries being sustained. This provides a reliable source of information which can be used to analyse accident trends and identify accident cluster sites.

The database also enables the comparative assessment of requests for highway improvement and the analysis of how an intervention might be reasonably expected to bring about a reduction in road casualties.

An analysis of the Newcastle Emlyn area has been undertaken to identify recorded personal injury accidents recorded in the last five years by Dyfed Powys Police. A report of the recorded personal injury accidents is included as Appendix A.

The report indicates that there have been five personal injury accidents recorded in the five-year period 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2021. These are summarised below:

Reference	Date	Location	Detail
A014519	Mon 18/02/19	Sycamore Street.	Passing vehicle's wing mirror clipped pedestrian's arm causing bruising. Slight injury.
A041517	Tue 09/05/17	Sycamore Street	V1 stationary on footway, passenger door opened into pedestrian walking on footway. Slight injury.
A045817	Fri 19/05/17	Lane to Mart Car Park	Passenger emerging from V2 struck by passing V1 which failed to stop. Slight injury.
AC07217	Sat 07/01/17	High Street	Pedestrian's arm clipped by wing mirror of passing vehicle. Slight injury.
A093119	Wed 02/10/19	High St to Aber Arad	V1 turned into path of V2. Two Casualties, slight injuries.

There is a time lag between collisions occurring and the details being available within the database while Police investigations are undertaken, data is checked and verified by the Police, and then transferred to the County Council.

It is noted that an incident occurred in June 2022 which involved two pedestrians being struck by a vehicle whilst using a pedestrian crossing on College Street. The details of this incident are not yet available within the County Council's database.

From the information that is currently available to the Council, it is noted that four of the five recorded accidents involved pedestrians. Two of these accidents occurred on Sycamore Street but in different locations and with different circumstances. Two of the accidents also involved pedestrians' arms being clipped by passing vehicles, but again in different locations.

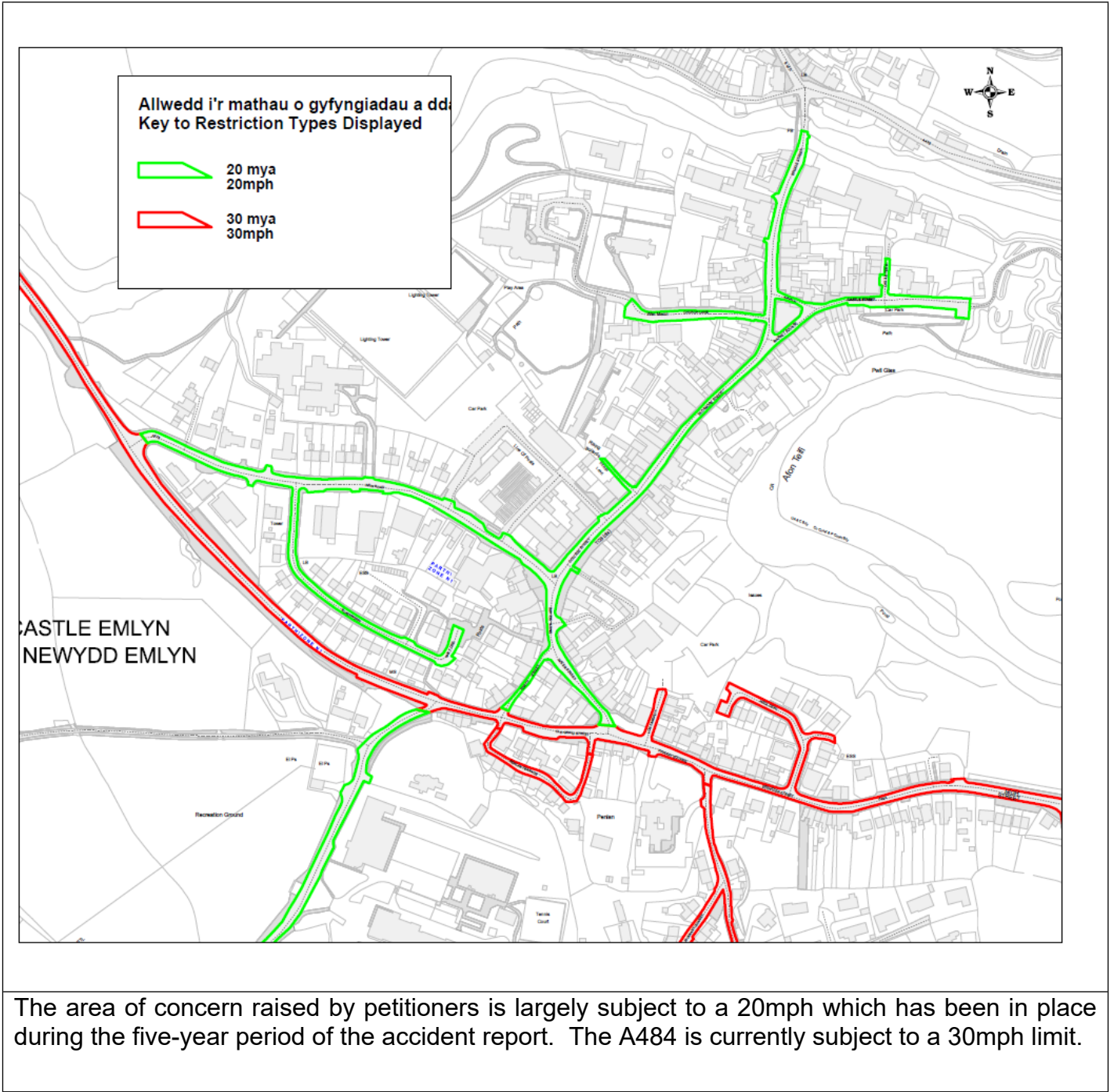
Newcastle Emlyn has a historic streetscape which adds to the attractiveness of the town. In common with many other historic towns this does often mean that the streets are of limited width with narrower footways. This can create a tension with the demands of a modern vehicular-based society. The limited geometry of the streets does restrict the opportunities to widen footways, as is the case in many of the streets in Newcastle Emlyn's Town Centre.

Where a widening of footways is viable, and justified, localised improvements can be considered but the wholesale widening of footways and the removal of drop kerbs would not be practical or affordable.

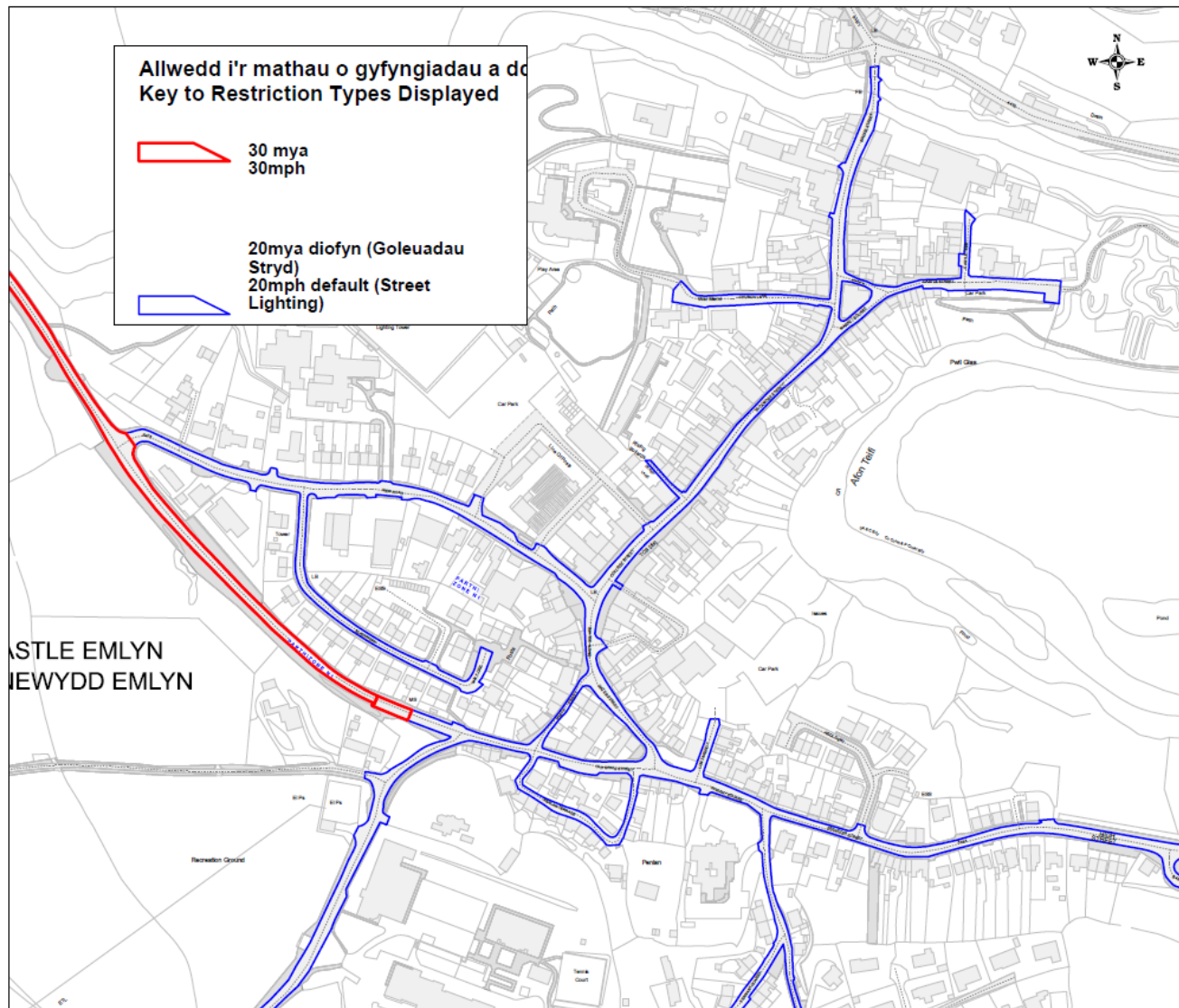
To put the rate of accidents in context, the main A475 through Newcastle Emlyn will typically carry in the order of 5,000 vehicles each day. This equates to around 9 million traffic movements over the 5 year study period through a busy town centre.

Speed limits

Existing Limits



Proposed Limits



Legislation regarding speed limits in residential urban areas is set to change on the 17th September 2023 which will reduce the current default 30mph limit on restricted roads down to 20mph.

Consultation regarding the implementation of this new legislation is underway but it is currently proposed that this will reduce a section of the A484 from 30mph down to 20mph.

This legislative change will require a fundamental change in driver behaviour and national campaigns supported by local initiatives will be put in place ahead of the September 2023 change. This change in speed limit regime and the public messaging which will support it will have a wider impact on driver behaviour to improve road safety and create safer environments for more walking and cycling.

Pedestrian Crossings

The introduction of pedestrian crossing facilities are a popular request to the Council and each case is looked at on its merits. Local Authorities are assisted in assessing the case for introducing pedestrian crossing facilities by the Department for Transport's *Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 6 Traffic Control 2019*.

The Manual explains that pedestrians are free to cross the road where they like and, where there are sufficient gaps in traffic and traffic speed is reasonably low, many people cross without needing a specific crossing point. However, as vehicle flow and traffic speed increase pedestrians, particularly more vulnerable people, may find crossing harder and a dedicated facility may be appropriate.

There are three main types of crossing facility:

- a) Uncontrolled or informal crossings which may have just dropped kerbs or a central refuge.
- b) Zebra crossings which give pedestrians the right of way and requires drivers to stop.
- c) Signalised crossings such as a Puffin crossing.

The Manual explains that each type of crossing has advantages and disadvantages and the type chosen should be appropriate for the circumstances but also points out that the provision of a crossing alone will not necessarily lead to an improvement in safety.

The Manual provides a framework for assessing whether a pedestrian crossing facility would provide benefit to road users for their ease of movement and to reduce danger, and if so, what type of crossing might be most suitable.

In Newcastle Emlyn the crossing points in the town are largely informal and pedestrians will normally exercise appropriate care when crossing the road. Formal crossing facilities are then provided at the following locations:

Road	Location	Facility
A475 Emlyn Street	By Plough Hotel	Zebra Crossing
A475 College Street	By Police Station	Zebra Crossing
A484 Old Graig Street	Route to School	Puffin Crossing

Evidence required for an assessment will include existing crossing facilities, vehicle flows, composition and speeds, pedestrian flows and composition, site characteristics and road accident data.

It is noted that Newcastle Emlyn is an attractive and popular town for visitors, particularly during the summer months, but will be quieter during the winter months.

It is therefore proposed that site assessments regarding pedestrian crossing points are further considered during the Spring when traffic and pedestrian numbers more neutral, ie, between the main peaks and troughs in numbers.

It is also proposed that traffic surveys are undertaken to aid this assessment.

Enforcement

The enforcement of speed limits and inappropriate driving is a power only available to the Dyfed Powys Police. The Council does work to support the Police and their Go Safe partnership regarding road safety campaigns and initiative such as Community Speed Watch.

The Council does have some powers to enforce moving traffic offences such as driving in bus lanes, driving in pedestrian zones and certain restricted turning manoeuvres but such enforcement must be with an approved device. The Council undertakes this enforcement through its camera car and through static traffic cameras.

Recommendations

- 1) That the contents of the report are noted.
- 2) That the petitioners are notified of the report.
- 3) Traffic surveys and pedestrian crossing assessments are undertaken at key locations within Newcastle Emlyn in the Spring 2023 and the petitioners advised of the findings.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes
Accident Report

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Highways and Transportation Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

Risk Management Issues

Ensuring safety of road users as far as is reasonably practicable is a key objective and discussed throughout this report.

Physical Assets

The report recommends undertaking an assessment of pedestrian crossing facilities within Newcastle Emlyn. This may lead to a bid for new crossing facilities which would be assessed and prioritised in accordance with adopted policy.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Highways and Transportation

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	NO
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

2. Local Member(s) - N/A

3. Community / Town Council – N/A

4. Relevant Partners - N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

Include any observations here

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: NONE**

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
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