

Date 31 December 2019

Department: Chief Executive

Contact

Name:

Contact No:

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Our Ref:

Your Ref:

By Email

Ms Alison McCormick
Assistant Coroner for Berkshire

Dear Ms McCormick,

Re: Fatal Road Traffic Collision, Dover Road, 9 November 2018

I am writing to you to respond to the matters of concern raised in your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths following the Inquest into the death of Mr Edward McGivern on 14th November 2018.

The following response has been compiled and based on a full review of the Coroner's concerns, the details of the circumstances, analysis of the specific junction on Dover Road in the SEGRO estate and reference to the post collision report prepared by the Thames Valley Police Traffic Management Officer, dated 9 November 2019.

The following points raised in the Coroner's report have been individually addressed as set out below:

1. There have been two collisions between bicycles and motor vehicles at the junction of Dover Road and Buckingham Avenue.

The Council analyse contributory factors in past collisions to evaluate and prioritise resource to address issues on the road network. The AccsMap collision history for the junction of Dover Road and Buckingham Avenue indicate one previous cycle incident, recorded in January 2018 with no contributory factors recorded.

While the Council takes the safety of users of its highway network seriously, for the purposes of prioritising limited resource, two cycling incidents, between July 1st 2013 and July 30th 2018 would not be regarded as constituting a 'cluster' and does not, in our evaluation, demonstrate evidence of a systemic problem. The Council would therefore not consider this junction as a cause for concern with regard to cyclist collisions.

This is the first recorded cyclist fatality in Slough in the last ten years (2009 - 2018), during which time there have been a further 66 cyclists seriously injured. Six of the 67 cyclist casualties were involved in a collision with a goods vehicle of any weight.

2. There are many commercial vehicles using the roads around Slough Trading Estate but also cyclists and pedestrians.

Dover Road is located within the borough's largest employment district, SEGRO which employs approximately 17,000 employees working for 400 companies on the 156 hectare Estate. It is recognised that the Slough Trading Estate experiences high volumes of traffic and

congestion particularly during peak travel periods. Commercial vehicle activity contributes to congestion levels.

The Council do not hold data on pedestrian and cyclist movements at this junction. However, the Department for Transport do undertake traffic surveys on many roads in Slough, some of which are close to the location of this incident. A survey on Bedford road within the estate showed daily traffic of 4530 motor vehicles, of which 130 were HGVs, plus 60 pedal cycles. A survey on Henley Road showed daily traffic of 1228 motor vehicles, of which 23 were HGVs, plus 11 pedal cycles. If these historical surveys are typical of traffic on the estate then it is clear that HGVs and cycles make up a very small proportion of the traffic.

3. The cycle lanes as they are marked on Dover Road may encourage cyclists to ride up the inside of vehicles waiting to turn left at the traffic lights, and they may not be seen by the drivers of those vehicles as they pull away from the lights and turn left, especially during the hours of darkness

Of the 67 aforementioned killed or seriously injured cyclist casualties in Slough between 2009 and 2018, 29 were injured at a junction. While it is recognised that some collisions involving cyclists arise from motor vehicles turning across cyclists, either through failing to see a cyclist or failing to observe good practice on road user behaviour and priority as set out in the Highway Code (rule 183), the numbers are very small. The number of incidents resulting in a seriously injured casualty of similar nature in Slough over the ten year period analysis was two. Heavy Goods Vehicles do however present a significant danger for cyclists, particularly when turning left at a junction.

The advisory cycle lanes that are marked along this route were introduced previously with correct adherence to Traffic Signs and General Directions (TSRGD) guidance. Updated guidance now advises that alternate markings should be introduced where road widths are narrow and do not permit cyclists to take an optimum riding position, approximately 1m from the kerb edge. Furthermore, Transport for London's Cycling Design Standard, which is recognised as a gold standard, advises that where a combined width of the cycle lane and adjacent lane of 4.5 metres or more cannot be achieved, then cycle symbols should be used rather than advisory cycle lanes to allow cyclists to take a more appropriate position on the road. (London Cycling Design Standards, TfL). The issue of the narrow cycle lane has been identified in Mr David Edmond's report (Traffic Management Officer).

The Council will undertake a review of all cycle lanes as part of the borough's cycling strategy update. A comprehensive set of design standards for cycling, established on proven best practice, will be prepared. It is anticipated at this stage, that any resource prioritisation to cycle lane improvements will be assigned according to (a) locations where accidents have occurred and (b) where higher cycling levels exist and (c) to include a wider scheme of cycling improvements programmed to update cycle lanes and aligned to the regular cycle of maintenance, roadworks and improvement. The exact prioritisation criteria will be confirmed once the cycling strategy has been set out.

Dependent on the findings of the cycle paths review as detailed above, it is also expected that a recommendation will be made to replace existing narrow cycle lanes (less than 1,2m) with more appropriate markings as recommended in guidance and good practice in TSRGD, 2016 and Cycle Infrastructure Design, Local Transport Note 02/08.

Specifically in relation to the SEGRO estate, the Council will continue to work with representatives from the estate to promote the need for vehicles to give way to a nearside cycle lane and to reinforce the message that cyclists should not undertake at junctions at any

time. This messaging has been presented nationally for many years, but will be reinforced through another local campaign to reach new cyclists. The Council will work with its road safety partners to design separate campaigns for these different audiences.

4. Sharing of carriageway of Dover Road between bicycles and motor vehicles by means of cycle lanes may put cyclists at risk.

A review of the road layout of Dover Road, including the question of whether there should be dedicated marked cycle lanes, and if so, whether these should be positioned in the carriageway or on the pavement (so that the carriageway is reserved for motor vehicles and the pavement is shared between cyclists and pedestrians, with dedicated cycle paths) may produce a road system which is safer for cyclists.

A response to this point has partially been picked up in part in point (2) above.

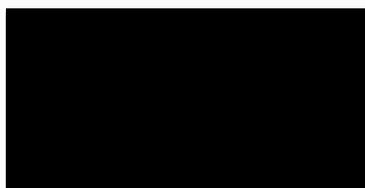
The Council is unable to recommend shared cycling and walking paths on narrow footways. The roads around Slough Trading Estate must accommodate all users. Reassigning road space or segregating cyclists and pedestrians cannot be achieved to a sufficient degree without considerable and significant financial investment which the Council consider to be disproportionate to the presenting problem and competing priorities. There is also the need to consider the needs of pedestrians and to ensure footways remain safe and accessible for all.

While leading guidance emphasises that cyclists are safer when completely segregated from vehicles, there is also the recognition that risk may increase where segregated paths intersect with roads. Given that within Slough it is not possible to segregate a sufficient number of cycle lanes away from motorised vehicles to produce a cohesive and attractive network for cyclists, it is important to reiterate to motorists that the carriageway must be shared with consideration of vulnerable road users.

The Council has an ongoing requirement to continue to promote sustainable modes. Modal shift away from the car is a key target within the Council's carbon reduction strategies. Reducing congestion levels also contributes to the setting of the Council's core principles set out in the borough's transport strategy and we also recognise the need to balance the use of carriageways and footways to meet the needs of all users.

The Council takes the safety of all users on its highway network seriously and consider that the course of action proposed for the cycle network addresses the concerns raised.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

