

# Public Document Pack



## SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE THURSDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2023

A MEETING of the SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST. BOSWELLS AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2023 at 2.00 pm.

**All Attendees, including members of the public, should note that the public business in this meeting will be livestreamed and video recorded and that recording will be available thereafter for public view for 180 days.**

J. J. WILKINSON,  
Clerk to the Council.

9 October 2023

<b>BUSINESS</b>		
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
2.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
3.	<b>Order of Business</b>	
4.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
5.	<b>Crailing Junction Petition</b>	
	(a) <b>Petition Procedure</b> Copy attached.	(Pages 3 - 6)
	(b) <b>Petition</b> Redacted copy of Petition attached.	(Pages 7 - 16)
	(c) <b>Update from Site Visit</b> Update following site visit on 21 September 2023. (Copy attached.)	(Pages 17 - 20)
6.	<b>Minute</b> (Pages 21 - 24)  Consider the Minute of 17 August 2023 for agreement and signature by the Chair. (Copy attached.)	2 mins
7.	<b>Industrial Estates in the Scottish Borders</b>	20 mins

	A presentation from Director Infrastructure and Environment.	
8.	<b>Any Other Items Previously Circulated</b>	
9.	<b>Any Other Items the Chair Decides are Urgent</b>	
10.	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  The next meeting of the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee was scheduled for 7 December 2023.	

#### NOTES

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

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**Membership of Committee:-** Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), N. Richards (Vice-Chair), J. Anderson, P. Brown, J. Cox, M. Douglas, J. PatonDay, E. Robson, S. Scott and F. Sinclair

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Please direct any enquiries to Lynne Cuerden, Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 01835 826527 Email: [lynne.cuerden@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.cuerden@scotborders.gov.uk)

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**Scottish Borders Council  
Scrutiny & Petitions Committee Petitions Procedure**

Part of the remit of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee is to consider petitions submitted to the Council in accordance with the Council's approved petitions procedure, outlined below, and to determine the appropriate action to be taken within the terms of the procedure.

**Petitions**

1. Petitions should raise issues which relate to matters within the responsibility of Scottish Borders Council or the general well-being of the residents of the Scottish Borders. Petitioners should be able to demonstrate that there is a public interest in the issue that they are raising.
2. A petition should be on a standard form, titled and should include a clear statement (no more than 250 words) which covers the main subject. Any further information, for example, about measures already taken or approaches made to other bodies, should be included but limited to no more than 4 sides of A4 paper.
3. Petitions should be accompanied by at least 10 signatures in total, from persons aged 16 and over, resident in the Scottish Borders. The signatures must be from a minimum of 3 separate addresses. The principal petitioner should be on the Register of Electors for the Scottish Borders Council area.
4. Petitions from local businesses shall be accepted where there is support from at least 5 businesses on the Valuation Roll for Scottish Borders Council.
5. Elected Members may not be a signatory on a petition and no petition will be accepted from a political party.
6. Where there are already regulatory procedures in place or the matter relates to individuals, then it would not be appropriate to accept such petitions, therefore petitions shall not be accepted:
  - (i) about planning, licensing, or other matters where there are already regulatory procedures in place;
  - (ii) about personal or business issues;
  - (iii) about commercially sensitive or confidential material;

- (iv) about individual Councillors, members of Council staff, or other individuals who may easily be identified;
  - (v) about employees' terms and conditions of employment;
  - (vi) about information which is protected by an interdict or court order;
  - (vii) about an allegation that someone has broken the law;
  - (viii) which contain language which is defamatory, offensive, provocative or otherwise inappropriate;
  - (ix) which relate to a complaint or grievance (which should be handled through the Council's complaints procedure);
  - (x) which relate to a decision made by the Council or a committee during the preceding six months; and
  - (xi) which are identical or similar to other petitions made within the preceding twelve months.
7. The Clerk to the Council, or her representative, shall ensure petitions keep to procedures and are admissible. All valid petitions, with accompanying information if any, shall be passed to the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee. Petitions which are the same, or substantially similar, shall be considered together.
  8. A summary report shall be prepared for the Committee by the Clerk to the Council about any petitions received during the period that are considered inadmissible for any of the reasons listed in paragraph 6 above. The Committee will make the final decision as to whether these are valid.

### **Meetings of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee**

9. When hearing a petition the relevant Director(s), Executive Member(s) and Community Planning Partner representative(s) shall be invited to attend the meeting to provide further information, as appropriate.
10. The principal petitioner should indicate on the form whether or not he/she, or a named deputy, wish to have the opportunity to make a statement at the meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee where their petition is being considered. It would be normal practice to allow the principal petitioner or a deputy to speak, but this is at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.
11. No deputation to the Meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee shall exceed 10 in number and, at the discretion of the Chair, only one speaker shall be heard by the Committee. The time allowed to present the petition shall not exceed 10 minutes, except at the discretion of the Chair. The speaker should also be prepared to answer questions.

12. Notice of petitions scheduled to be considered by the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee will be through the usual on-line public access facility to committee papers, with a link from the petitions "page" on the Council website. Those signing petitions should be made aware that the detail of the petition, with their name and address (but not signature), will be published on the Council website as part of the agenda pack for the meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee.
13. For the moment, no "e-petitions" will be facilitated, or comments from the public accepted on petitions scheduled for consideration by the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee.
14. The procedure at the meeting, for each petition considered, shall be as follows:
  - (i) the meeting shall be in public unless the subject matter of the petition would be deemed to be confidential under the terms of Section 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973;
  - (ii) the principal petitioner, or named deputy, shall give a statement in explanation of the petition;
  - (iii) there will be an opportunity for Members of the Committee to ask questions of the petitioner or their named deputy;
  - (iv) there will be an opportunity for any Director(s), Executive Member(s) and Community Planning Partner representative(s) present to ask questions of the petitioner or their named deputy;
  - (v) a response to the petition may be heard from a Director, Executive Member and/or Community Planning Partner representative present at the meeting;
  - (vi) there will be an opportunity for Members of the Committee to ask questions of any Director, Executive Member(s) and Community Planning Partner representative(s) present at the meeting;
  - (vii) there will be an opportunity for the petitioner or their named deputy to ask questions of any Elected Member, Director or Community Planning Partner representative present at the meeting;
  - (viii) Members of the Committee shall then discuss the information available and consider their findings. The Committee may defer a decision should further information be required.

Note: any contribution on behalf of the petition from a second or other speaker(s) shall be at the discretion of the Chair. The public will not be allowed to speak at the meeting unless invited to do so by the Chair.
15. The Scrutiny & Petitions Committee shall agree to one of the following:-

- (i) refer the petition to another Committee or Director, with or without a recommendation or comment. That Committee or Director shall then make the final decision which could include taking no further action;
  - (ii) refer the petition to the relevant Community Planning Partner, with or without a recommendation or comment, if appropriate;
  - (iii) that the issue(s) raised do not merit or do not require further action.
16. The decision of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee, and any reason for that decision, shall be recorded in the Minute of the Meeting and a copy of the Minute shall be sent to the principal petitioner by Democratic Services staff. Where the petition is referred to a Director or another body, the responsibility for communicating the final outcome of the petition is also referred. Updates on these outcomes will be provided to the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee.
17. There will be no right of appeal in response to a final decision made in response to a petition.
18. The usage and effectiveness of the petitions procedure shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

Reference (official use)



### Petitions – submission form

If you wish to submit a petition for consideration by the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee, please complete the form below. You are advised to refer to the Guidance Questions and Answer sheet provided.

<b>Details of Principal Petitioner</b>	
Please enter the name and contact details of the person raising the petition. <i>The Principal Petitioner must be on the Register of Electors for the Scottish Borders Council area.</i>	
<b>Name:</b>	MRS NICOLA COLSE
<b>Address:</b>	[REDACTED]
	JEDBURGH
	ROXBURGHSHIRE
<b>Postcode:</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Telephone no:</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Email:</b>	[REDACTED]

<b>Title of Petition and Petition Statement</b>
Please enter the title of the Petition and a statement to cover the main subject of the Petition or the action you would like the Council to take.
<b>Title:</b> IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY ON THE A698 AT THE CRAILING JUNCTION (DIS3/4)

**Statement (no more than 250 words):** THIS PETITION, FROM EVERY RESIDENT, IS TESTAMENT TO THE FACT THAT WE ARE INCREASINGLY ANNOYED + NOW FRIGHTENED FOR OUR LIVES + THOSE OF OUR PASSENGERS WHEN EXITING + ENTERING THE VILLAGE JUNCTION, DUE TO LACK OF VISIBILITY + SPEED OF VEHICLES ON A698. WE KINDLY REQUEST THAT SBC + POLICE SCOTLAND ADDRESS THESE ISSUES AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BEFORE SOMEONE IS INJURED OR KILLED. WE BELIEVE THESE MEASURES WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE THE SITUATION! - TREES FROM VILLAGE JUNCTION (DISBANK) TO TOLL HOUSE REMOVED / SPEED LIMIT REDUCED TO 40MPH WITH SIGNAGE AT EACH END / FIXED SPEED CAMERA A / TAPERED SLIP ROAD TYPE LANE INTO VILLAGE APPROACHING FROM J60 + EXITING VILLAGE TOWARDS KELSO - PLEASE FIND ATTACHED DETAILED LETTER TO SBC,

**Further information.**

Please enter below any measures already taken, or persons/organisations approached to attempt to resolve the issues. Attach additional sheets to this form if required but please note that this information must be limited to no more than 4 sides of A4 paper.

POLICE SCOTLAND  
+ COUNCILORS  
(AS THERE IS NO JAM OF FITTING IN 250 WORDS HERE)

ON AT LEAST 4 SEPARATE OCCASSIONS THE ISSUE OF ROAD SAFETY HAS BEEN RAISED VIA THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL WITH SBC & POLICE SCOTLAND. (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTS) WITH LITTLE TO NO RESULT.

MEETING WITH JOHN LAMONT + RACHAEL HAMILTON ON 25/07/2023 - WHO ARE IN SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS AND HAVE AGREED TO PURSUE FURTHER WITH SBC / POLICE SCOTLAND.

HAVE SPOKEN TO THE 4 HOUSEHOLDS WHO OWN THE BEECH HEDGE TO THE RIGHT OF THE JUNCTION AND ALL HAVE AGREED THAT THIS CAN BE CUT BACK TO TRY TO IMPROVE SIGHT LINES OF VEHICLES APPROACHING FROM J60 SOUTH DIRECTION; - THERE IS NOTHING ELSE WE CAN DO, AS A COMMUNITY.

**Presentation of petition to the Committee.**

Please indicate below if you would like the opportunity to make a statement at the meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee when your petition is considered. Whether or not you will be invited to do so will be at the discretion of the Chairman.

~~\*I do/do not wish the opportunity to make a brief statement about the petition.~~

\*I would like my deputy named below to make a statement on my behalf.



Name of deputy DINA H FAULDS

Contact details [REDACTED]

Signature of deputy..... [REDACTED]

\* please delete as appropriate

**Signature of Principal Petitioner.**  
 If you are satisfied your petition meets all the requirements as stated in the Guidance Questions and Answers please add your signature and date below.

Signature of Principal Petitioner. [REDACTED]

Date... 28/07/2023

**Accompanying signatures.**  
 Your petition must be accompanied by at least 10 signatures in total, from persons aged 16 and over, resident in the Scottish Borders. The signatures must be from a minimum of 3 separate addresses.  
*Please be aware that if the petition is on the agenda for a meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee the names and addresses, but not signatures, of all signatories will be published on the Council website.*

	Name	Address	Signature
1	ANISON M FRAD	[REDACTED] <u>Clawline</u>	[REDACTED]
2	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] <u>Clawline</u>	[REDACTED]
3	Nicola Lowe	[REDACTED] <u>Tedburgh,</u>	[REDACTED]
4	Sylvia Shiel	[REDACTED] <u>Crailing</u>	[REDACTED]

5	Natasha Stockman	[REDACTED] Crailing [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
6	Darren Foster	[REDACTED] Crailing [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
7	Fanet Hope	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] CRAILING	[REDACTED]
8	Robert Hope	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] CRAILING	[REDACTED]
9	Jennifer Graham	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Godbigh	[REDACTED]
10	RACHAEL KERR	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] CRAILING	[REDACTED]

Attach additional sheets of signatures if you wish.

**Please submit this form and any additional sheets to:-**

Clerk to the Council, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA,  
or email to:  
[committeepapers@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:committeepapers@scotborders.gov.uk)

	Name	Address	Signature
11	MICK WALI	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
12	Araeme Lowe	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
13	N. SALVESEU	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
14	N.A Salvesen	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

15	CAROLINE COOK
16	JOHN COOK
17	Jenni BOLTON
18	CHRISTINE SHAW
19	Margaret LINDAW
18 20	Jack Mackie

Attach additional sheets of signatures if you wish.

**Please submit this form and any additional sheets to:-**

Clerk to the Council, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown  
St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA,  
or email to:  
[committeepapers@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:committeepapers@scotborders.gov.uk)

21. BILL SEATON

22. Marguerite Lindaw

23. JACK LINDAW

24. CR. MACKIE

25. LORNA MACKIE

26. LINDA COLES

27. LYNZAM HOWDEN

28. CHRIS HOWDEN

29. ANNIE HOGG

30. DINAH FAULDS

To whom it may concern,

As a result of a recent residential questionnaire (Nov 2022) circulated by Crailing, Eckford and Nisbet Community Council (CENCC) it was brought to our attention that all residents in the Crailing settlement feel very strongly about the issue of speed and the lack of visibility of the traffic travelling past the village on the A698 between Kelso and Jedburgh and as a result this has been identified as a short term project within the CENCC plan.

This has been an ongoing concern, which has been referred to Scottish Borders Council, many times over the years (most recently in 2019 & 2020) with no result.

Unfortunately, the village is situated in the middle of a 3.5 mile stretch of "racetrack" with vehicles travelling at great speed from the Bonjedward junction adjoining the A68 to the Eckford junction on the A698. Villagers have noted that this has become even worse over the last few years.

The road is dangerous and most residents we spoke to will no longer attempt to cross it, meaning they cannot access the bus stop on the other side of the road or go for walks. They will no longer walk along the pavement on the A698 from the village to the Crailing Bahn junction (D147/4), especially those with pets, children or mobility scooters, due to the close proximity of speeding vehicles.

All residents expressed how they have become increasingly anxious at attempting to exit and enter the junction at the village, as well as other junctions within the same area (D152/4 and D147/4) due to the lack of visibility and the speed of vehicles.

We are intimidated on a daily basis by drivers tailgating us, blasting horns, flashing lights or making hand gestures, due to the fact that they have been unable to slow down as we have exited/entered the village junction (D153/4). At times, these drivers swerve to avoid us and overtake on the blind bends, causing a danger to themselves, us and other road users. It has to be noted that none of us would intentionally put ourselves, our passengers or other road users, in danger and pull out in front of a timber lorry, a motor bike or car, travelling at excessive speed....but unfortunately, this has become the norm and it is extremely frightening. There is no other way for us to enter or exit the village.

There have been a number of collisions over the last few years and EVERY resident has discussed how they must "commit on a daily basis" to pulling out of the junction only to find that a vehicle or vehicles from either or both directions, have appeared, at speed, causing great distress.

Statistically, we are aware that there is little evidence of accidents happening in Crailing but this does not mean that there have not been any. Furthermore, we believe that this should not be the deciding factor and only reason not to look at additional road safety measures-it is a sorry state of affairs if there has to be an individual injured or killed before something will be done.

Due to your recent work in reducing speed limits across the Scottish Borders, we feel that now would be an appropriate time to ask your traffic and road safety section, once again, if we could please have additional measures put in place;-

- The trees from the village junction (D153/4) to the Toll House removed-we feel this would have a very positive impact on the visibility situation (we believe the current sight line to be illegal) as it would allow the traffic at the junction to see approaching traffic from Kelso and vice versa.
- The speed limit reduced to 40mph, with signage at each end of the village (from layby/junction with the D150 south west of Crailing leading to Baittens and Ulston and at the Brownrigg junction with the A698 leading to C62)
- Fixed speed camera installed in Crailing to monitor the above.
- Use of a speed compliance tool to gather additional information on the speed and volume of traffic using this 3.5 mile section of road.
- A tapered, slip road type lane into the village, approaching from Jedburgh and exiting the village towards Kelso.
- A meeting with John Currie and Phillipa Gilhooly of SBC and a representative from Police Scotland to observe the road-John Lamont & Rachael Hamilton have agreed to pursue this on our behalf.

All village residents have signed a petition to reduce speed and improve visibility, which has been submitted on 28/07/2023 for consideration by the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee at SBC.

At a recent summer surgery on 25/07/2023 with MP (John Lamont) and MSP (Rachael Hamilton) the villagers unanimously emphasised their ongoing concerns. Both representatives were in support of our efforts to improving the situation and as noted above, Mr Lamont would approach SBC and Mrs Hamilton would contact Police Scotland.

In conclusion to the above, we very much look forward to discussing the potential measures which could be put in place, to improve the safety of all road users, in a community that is becoming increasingly distraught when trying to negotiate the junction.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nicola Cowe  
(On behalf of all residents of Crailing)

Endorsed by Dinah Faulds  
Chair, Crailing, Eckford and Nisbet Community Council

12 June 2019

Dear Sir or Madam

**Motor Vehicles travelling on the A698 in excess of legal speed limits**

I wish to complain about motor vehicles travelling on the A698 in excess of legal speed limits. This applies to the national speed limit and also to speed limits applicable to specific types of motor vehicle.

The problem exists on the A698 between the junction with the A68 at Bonjedward and the minor road junction leading to Eckford (GR NT704257).

The part of the A698 in question consists of long straight sections which are not subject to enforcement by fixed safety cameras, unlike the A68, or regular mobile camera enforcement checks, or police checks.

Motor vehicles regularly travel at speeds in excess of legal speed limits. Not surprisingly, the problem can be at its worst during those periods when drivers are travelling to and from work. However, the situation exists on a 24hr basis with some motor vehicles travelling at very high speeds during the night and at weekends. A large number of motor cycles travel along the A698 on fine weather weekends, when the road resembles a race track. Local drivers with modified cars can appear in the evening and race against themselves to test their own car's performance or to race against each other.

It would be difficult to prove, but some drivers, when travelling onto the A698 after leaving the A68, appear to relish the freedom from fixed safety cameras and immediately increase speed to take advantage of their ability to travel unfettered along the A698 at much higher speeds.

A consequence of the above situation, for local drivers, is the risk and difficulty in gaining access and egress from minor road junctions along the A698. It is perfectly possible to enter the A698 whilst it is completely clear of traffic in both directions, only to find motor vehicles appearing at high speed in the rear view mirror or, alternatively, ahead, possibly attempting an overtake, therefore moving forwards at speed on the same side of the carriageway. Drivers entering the A698 can have the choice of waiting inordinately long periods to enter the A698 or taking a chance and hoping drivers on the A698 will slow down.

The A698 also has significant movements of agricultural vehicles and LGV's which may be travelling at slow speeds. These induce some drivers to attempt lengthy, unplanned and dangerous overtakes at high speed, which take no account of road junctions or opposing traffic. Such an approach to overtaking of course also prevails with regard to normal vehicular traffic, which may be travelling at normal speeds or, in some cases, at excess speed. Near misses are common.

I would like to request that covert speed monitoring equipment is deployed on the A698 at suitable locations, as outlined above, with the objective of identifying the extent of driving motor vehicles in excess of the national speed limit or specific vehicle type speed limits. I would recommend Mounthooly as an obvious location.

If such a problem is confirmed, I further request that consideration is given to appropriate enforcement action and/or road safety improvements to remove or reduce the problem, including the risk to life.

Ultimately, the installation of fixed road safety cameras on the A698 would ensure synchronisation and uniformity with the A68 in terms of speed enforcement and present an opportunity to change driver behaviour.

In due course, I ask that you update me with regard to any action taken and the outcomes.

Best wishes

Steve Turnbull

On Friday 28th June 2019, I met with John Lamont (MP), Ms Philippa Gilhooly (SBC), Mr Gary Haldane (SBC) and a representative of Police Scotland to discuss issues relating to the dangers presented by the layout of the A698 in the vicinity of Crailing village.

The concerns that I identified were:

- The danger presented to vehicles emerging from, and entering, the village entrance road, due to the excessive speed of many vehicles travelling on the A698 and the poor visibility in either direction. The distance over which approaching vehicles from the west can be seen has been reduced due to the roadside hedge which has grown wider and higher over the past few years. From the east, approaching vehicles are unseen due to a bend in the road.
- The danger presented to pedestrians, livestock movements, equestrians and cyclists crossing the A698, where encouraged to do so by dropped kerbs, again due to the speed of vehicles and poor visibility. It is necessary for potential westbound bus passengers, to cross the road to access the bus stop. Livestock movements are regularly made from the fields on the south side of the A698 to those on the north side and vice versa. Horses are regularly exercised in the area. A section of the National Cycle Network crosses the A698 at Crailing.

Historically, to address concerns expressed by local people, relating to road safety, a camera van has been occasionally located near Crailing Tofts, approximately one mile east of Crailing village. In addition to this, a marked police car has been positioned at the entrance to Crailing House for short periods of time. Neither of these moves address the Crailing problem satisfactorily. Although the camera van has been successful in convicting some errant drivers it does not encourage safer driving at the village entrance and, although the presence of a marked police car encourages drivers to drive slowly while in sight of the car, it is positioned there too rarely to be of any practical help.

My suggested solutions were:

- Carriageway banding, such as used at the A699 junction with the B6359, near Bowden. This was refused by Ms Gilhooly because similar markings have led to complaints of increased vehicle noise from residents living adjacent to such banding.
- Imposition of a 40mph speed limit for all vehicles. This was refused by Ms Gilhooly because the average speed of traffic at Crailing is generally too slow to make a reduced speed limit practical.
- Solar powered signs warning of turning traffic, as used at Bonjedward junction, on the A68. These were refused by Ms Gilhooly as only being permissible on trunk roads.
- Fixed Speed Cameras as a part solution but these were refused by Ms Gilhooly as only being appropriate where a speed limit, lower than the national speed limit, was already in place. The same refusal was received at the suggestion of Traffic Activated Speed Information signs

Previous suggestions have included a filter lane to allow traffic leaving the A698 from the west to slow and enter the village access road without the risk of being hit by a faster vehicle and another filter lane to allow eastbound traffic entering the A698 from the village access road to join the road safely. I have witnessed vehicles emerging from the village access road being overtaken into the blind corner, by approaching vehicles, their drivers unwilling to slow down.

I have personally experienced emerging from the village junction and being tailgated by an articulated timber lorry at speeds approaching 60mph. Their permissible legal maximum on the A698 is 40mph but they regularly travel along this road at speeds far in excess of that. A filter lane would address these situations and would be a relatively inexpensive way of avoiding the inevitable road traffic accident. However, the council have shown themselves unwilling to consider any expense to reduce the risk at Crailing.

The suggestion conveyed to me following our meeting, by Ms Gilhooly, is that the community should fund new signs at the approach to Crailing from both directions on the A698 (Copy attached). These signs have been costed by Mr Gary Haldane at £400 each, plus £100 to erect them on the existing poles. If new poles are required that would cost another £400 each. This, it is suggested, would serve to calm traffic and reduce speeds. Mr Lamont has, in subsequent conversation, stated that he is keen for us as a community to adopt this suggestion. He considers that it would be very effective.

Following a further suggestion by the representative of Police Scotland who was present at the meeting, my wife and I have located tubs with perennial plants at each approach to the village on the A698 and will maintain these for as long as we are able to do so.

I present this issue to the Community Council as I am unable to progress without their co-operation and support.





## CRAILING

### Petitions committee update October 2023

As a follow up to our site visit on 21 September I can confirm that we've been in touch with the community and agreed a number of actions:

- Removal of overgrown foliage and trees to the Kelso (east) side of junction. This work has been completed and feedback positive from the community.
- The community have agreed to discuss the foliage associated with the boundary hedge to the Jedburgh (west) side with the local landowners/residents.
- We will replace the Crailing settlement signing and upgrade to 'Welcome to CRAILING, please drive carefully'.
- We will add pedestrian warning signing and SLOW on the road too.

Many thanks

Philippa Gilhooly

Team Leader, Traffic and Road Safety

9 October 2023

**From:** Nicola Gibb [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 2, 2023 8:26 PM  
**To:** Gilhooly, Philippa <PGilhooly@scotborders.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Speed & lack of visibility of vehicles travelling on the A698 past Crailing. [OFFICIAL]

**CAUTION:** External Email

Dear Philippa,

We are delighted that work has begun on the cutting back of the trees to the Toll House. Hopefully by tomorrow we will notice a marked improvement in the visibility of traffic approaching from Kelso-thank you.

Happy to go ahead with the new Crailing signage in the same position as the old signage please.

And we would very much welcome "pedestrians crossing" signage with accompanying SLOWs on the road in both directions, somewhere between the existing SLOWs and the village junction.

We all look forward to this is due course and thank you once again for your support.

Many thanks

Nicola

Good afternoon all

It was good to meet with Diana, Alison and Chris from Crailing as well as Police Scotland officers this morning to discuss what we can realistically do for Crailing. Elaine, Amber and John thank you for attending too. Nicola, I don't have an email address for Diana, Alison or Chris, so if you could pass this email on that would be appreciated.

I have spoken with our Asset team this afternoon and informed them of the need to clear the visibility splay to the Kelso side of the junction as a priority and also informed them that unusually, SBC are the landowner of this strip of land and that going forward it should be added to our maintenance list. I'm assured they will task a squad in the coming weeks to make a start on cutting back the vegetation and assess if a specialist contractor will be required to carry out more substantial works and if so to make the appropriate arrangements.

To the Jedburgh side of the junction it is for the residents of the properties to carry out hedge trimming and Alison was going to consider this as one of the owners and it would be useful to let me know the outcome before the Scrutiny meeting next month.

Below is a draft of the enhanced settlement signs that we can offer Crailing with the '*please drive carefully*' prescribed permitted variant and are happy to be guided by residents where they would like the settlement signs located on either side of the junction on approach to Crailing. The signs would be just under 2metres wide by 1metre high. We'd remove the existing standard ones that are attached to the junction warning signs.

We can also offer pedestrian crossing warning signs, but we do need to be mindful of sign clutter and overloading drivers to the extent they become 'sign blind' and already there are junction warning signs, SLOW on the road and red textureflex with white hatching.

If you can let me know the thoughts of the community that would be appreciated.

Many thanks

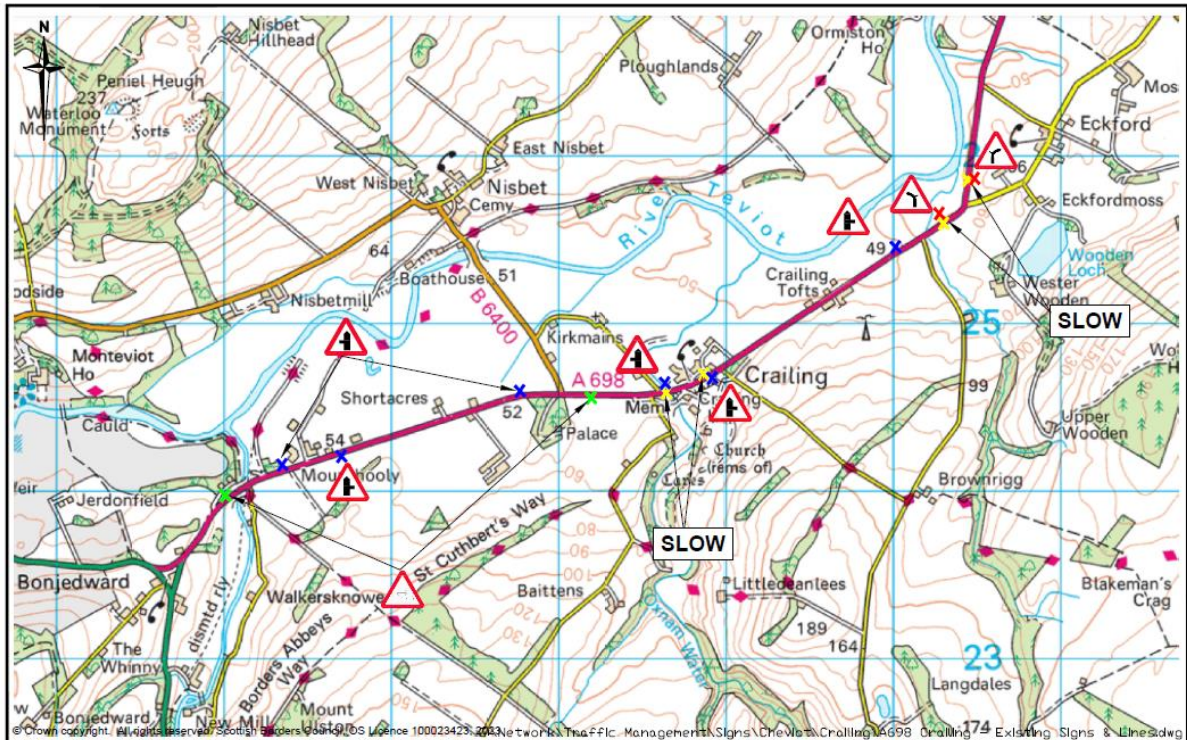
Philippa



Scheme Ref.			
Sign Ref.	2402.1	x-height	150.0
Letter colour	BLACK	SIGN FACE	
Background	WHITE	Width	1855mm
Border	BLACK	Height	995mm
Material	Class R3B Microprismatic	Area	1.84m <sup>2</sup>

Design Wind Loadings:  
1.5kN/m<sup>2</sup>

Environment & Infrastructure		Crailing Village - Entry Signs	Date:	12/07/2019



ROADS		A698 Crailing - Existing Warning Signs and Lines	Project No: Servitor No: Drawing No: Date:	Aug 23
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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCRUTINY &  
PETITIONS COMMITTEE held via Microsoft  
Teams on Thursday, 17 August 2023 at 10.00  
am

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Present:- Councillor E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), J. Anderson, J. Cox, J. PatonDay, N. Richards, S. Scott, F. Sinclair

Apologies:- Councillors P. Brown, M. Douglas and E. Robson

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Director Finance and Procurement, Director Resilient Communities, Clerk to the Council, Finance Analyst (T. Hutchison) and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

**1. MINUTE AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET**

- 1.1 Copies of the Minute of Meeting held on 1 June 2023 had been circulated.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chair.**

- 1.2 Copies of the Action Tracker for Scrutiny decisions had been circulated.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the update to the Action Tracker**

**2. COVID-19 RESERVE/RECOVERY FUND**

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Director Finance and Procurement, the purpose of which was to provide Members with detailed financial information that showed the funding received from Scottish Government and that allocated from within the Council budget to the Covid-19 reserve/ Recovery Fund, the criteria for its spend and the actual spend and outcomes achieved. The 2020/21 budget had been approved by Council at the start of the pandemic and detailed work was undertaken for its review and initial 2020/21 forecasts which included best estimates of the impact of Covid-19 on Council finances. Quarterly monitoring to the Executive Committee continued during 2021/22. The Covid-19 reserve was created at the end of 2020/21 to allow the carry forward of available budget through earmarked balances. In August 2022 the Covid-19 reserve, held to provide one-off funding, was re-designated as a 'Recovery Fund' to support Covid recovery, inflationary pressures and wider operating constraints. The Council's contribution to the Covid-19 reserve over the full period was £11.884m. With the assumption that all Scottish Government funding of £60.821m had been deployed first, there remained £11.215m of Scottish Borders Council funding to be allocated to the Recovery Fund from redirected budgets. During the financial year 2022/23, it had become increasingly challenging to distinguish between pressures that arose from Covid -19 and from those associated with the operating environment. This contributed to the reasoning behind the establishment of the Recovery Fund. At the end of the first quarter of 2023/24, the balance in the Recovery Fund was £1.187m. With reference to the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 August 2023, there was agreed the decision that a number of earmarked balances brought forward

from 2022/23 were to be reduced by 20% to address some service pressures highlighted during the first quarter. The balance of the Recovery Fund was to be reduced to £950k going forward.

- 2.2 Appendix 1 provided a high-level audit trail of movements in the Covid-19 Reserve/Recovery Fund from August 2020 to 15 August 2023. Appendix 1 also provided the same information in a detailed breakdown, tracking funding and expenditure from August 2020 to date. Appendix 2 detailed Scottish Government funding provided to Scottish Local Authorities: the national allocation, SBC's share of this and the funding received shown over the three financial years. Also included was the breakdown of £74.3m Covid-19 business grants which supported 5,770 businesses. There was no financial cost or benefit to the Council from these grants, though funding was received for the significant administrative burden incurred. It was to be noted that the Finance and CAS teams had been under significant pressure, with an increased workload, the adjustment to working from home and recruitment challenges throughout. Notwithstanding, business had continued to be conducted in a timely and professional manner. With reference to paragraph 5.2 of the report, all drawdowns from the Covid-19 reserve and the Recovery Fund had been approved by Elected Members through full Council or the Executive Committee. Audit Scotland had reported favourably on the Council's approach to managing the reserve over 2020/21 and 2023/33 annual audits.
- 2.3 There followed a brief discussion during which gratitude was expressed to the Director Finance and Procurement, the Finance department, the Chief Executive and staff across the Council for their work to bring the Council through the crisis in a secure manner. With reference to the classification of grants awarded from the Recovery Fund, there had been a request for criteria used to assess whether funding was Covid-19 related or due to the new operating environment, so Members could judge their appropriateness. In response, Ms Douglas reported that there were no criteria on the appropriateness in funding other than the Elected Member decisions. A choice had to be made on whether money was spent from allocated reserves and 'topped up' later or spent from the Recovery Fund. On the matter of the £58k expenditure attributed to Elected Members, £38k was associated with Councillors' pay award pressures and a £20k increase in Councillors' travel expenses. This was possibly due to an increase in travel because of the return to in-person. The matter of the travel expenses budget was continually reviewed as part of the ongoing financial planning process. It was highlighted that the annual travel budget pre-Covid was between £60k and £70k. In response to a question on fluctuating percentages of SBC's share of Scottish Government funding, it was reported that while the general allocation was 2.2%, there were other allocations based on different criteria e.g. the number of teachers at the last census; a percentage allocation on top of base level funding; a higher number of SMEs in the Borders resulted in a higher % share of funding. Concern was expressed by some Members at the funding provided for street parties from the Recovery Fund, but this had received approval at full Council. In the main the Recovery Fund had been used in an appropriate way to support communities through an unprecedented time. The Chair thanked all staff and members of the community for their work during Covid to make the Borders safe, secure and protected.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED the financial information provided showing the funding received from Scottish Government and that allocated from within the Council budget to the COVID-19 reserve, the criteria for its spend and the actual spend and outcomes achieved.**

## **4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee was due to be held on 19 October 2023 at 10am. However, there would be a Special meeting held on 26 September 2023 to hear a petition.

***The meeting concluded at 10.45 am***

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