



Mr R T Middleton
H M Assistant Coroner for Dorset
The Coroner's Officer
Town Hall, Bournemouth
BH2 6DY

Date: 8 May 2019

Ref: RTM/02866-2017/LJ

Officer: [REDACTED]



Dear Mr Middleton

RE: Regulation 28 Report – Inquest touching the death of Christopher Williams Gibbs

I have been asked to respond to your letter addressed to the Head of Highway Department dated 26 March 2019 which included a Regulation 28 Report raising concerns with regards to cyclist safety on the A338.

The request to install cycling warning signing on the A338, whilst understandable is not something that we are able or willing to support as it is not the prescribed use of such signs as per the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) 2016. TSRGD 2016 states that cycle warning signs '*... may be used to warn traffic of a place where a cycle route crosses or joins a road and is not controlled by traffic signals.*' Such signs are therefore not to be used to warning of the possible presence of cyclists.

An additional reason for not being supportive of the request to install cycle warning signs on the A338 is that it could generate a false sense of security and encourage more people to choose to cycle on the A338.

The A338 is not part of a recognised cycle network and is not promoted as such. Whilst there are no regulations that prevent a cyclist from using dual carriageways such as the A338 it is not something that Dorset Council actively encourage.

The A338 route is not identified as a key cycle route and facilities for cyclists on or alongside the A338 route are not being considered at this time.

Cycling infrastructure schemes are prioritised to areas where there is already notable levels of cycling for leisure and/or commuting or where there is real potential to increase the level of cycling as a preferred choice of transport to/from work – many cycle infrastructure schemes provide links to/from residential and commercial hubs.

I hope that it is recognised that we have considered your concerns and recommendations having provided reasonable reasons for why we have not agreed on this occasion.

Should you want more information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Michael Potter
Road Safety Manager

Growth and Infrastructure
Town Hall Annexe
St Stephen's Road
Bournemouth/ BH2 6EA



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Date: 8th May 2019

Our Ref: 30255

Contact: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Middleton

Re: Inquest into the Death of Christopher William Gibbs (Cyclist) - 3rd Oct 2017

Thank you for your letter dated 26th March 2019, including a Regulation 28 Report, raising concerns in regard to cycle safety on the A338, following a fatal road traffic incident.

I thought it would be helpful to clarify the location of the incident in respect to the boundaries of the jurisdictions at the time of the incident and also at the present time. At the time of the incident the location was approximately 6.4km beyond the boundary of Bournemouth Borough Council's jurisdiction. It occurred within the section of the A338 that Dorset County Council then had responsibility for.

As you may be aware, effective from 1st April 2019, there has been a re-organisation of local government in Dorset and under this re-organisation, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole have been amalgamated to form a unitary council called BCP Council and Dorset County Council has also become a unitary council called Dorset Council. Under this new arrangement the boundary has moved relative to this incident, which still occurred beyond the new BCP Council boundary, but by a reduced distance of approximately 1.6km. Whilst the incident occurred outside our jurisdiction, we do recognise the part this authority has to play in reducing the future risk to cyclist and to improve road safety.

Generally speaking, in regard to modifications to the layout of roads to improve safety, such as signing and lighting or measures to reduce speed, BCP Council receive large numbers of requests and far more than we can afford to implement. In order to reduce the maximum number of casualties with the finite funding available we prioritise road safety requests on the basis of actual casualty evidence.

To put this into context it may help to explain that there are more than 100 locations around the BCP area where there is a significant casualty accident record over the last 5 years (7 or more casualty accidents within 50m radius = cluster site) and current levels of funding will only allow us to treat a small number of these locations each year. The work we do in relation to Bournemouth is explained in more detail in our road safety report that can be found here:

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/travelandtransport/RoadSafety/RoadSafetyInBournemouth.aspx>

We have investigated the casualty accident history in the section of road over a length of 2km before BCP Council's boundary. There have been 7 collisions here over the last 5 years that resulted in casualties. These included 9 minor injuries and 1 serious injury. These incidents do not form a cluster site and none of these incidents involved cyclists. Therefore, unfortunately, this location is not sufficiently highly ranking to justify any engineering intervention, purely on the grounds of road safety.

Although the incident occurred outside our new boundary, in terms of the rest of the A338 within BCP Council's area, it is worth noting that significant sections have 'hard strips' that can be used by cyclists to keep them out of the main traffic flow. In addition, the Council has previously introduced reduced speed limits of 50mph and 40mph along the more urban sections of the A338 and it has installed facilities to allow cyclists to safely negotiate slip roads. We do not currently have plans to introduce additional cycle facilities, signing or additional lighting on this route as the casualty record does not warrant such action and the route is not one we plan to actively promote for cyclists.

As part of a major highway programme and the development at Wessex Fields, the Council has taken the opportunity to install average speed cameras between Cooper Dean Roundabout and Blackwater junction and it is anticipated that once active, along with existing speed camera sites, these will help moderate traffic flows and speeds and improve safety along the route. In addition, once both phases of the Wessex Fields highway development have been introduced, this will offer an improved alternative route for cyclist travelling from Bournemouth up to Holdenhurst Village and towards the Airport.

As noted in your report cyclists are permitted to use dual carriageways. However, the speed differential between cyclists and other vehicles can be high and it may be prudent for cyclists to consider alternative routes. For this reason, the Council has taken steps to introduce parallel safer routes along some sections of the A338 and does not propose to promote or encourage cycling on the A338 itself.

BCP Council is currently working on plans to install cycle facilities along sections of Wallisdown Rd that are well used by cyclists and it is also working to secure substantial additional funding through the Transforming Cities Fund to allow more cycle schemes to be brought forward along key cycling routes. These will hopefully link the outer areas of the conurbation, such as Ferndown and Ringwood, providing an alternative safe route for cyclist to commute into Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

In regard to wider transport policy, BCP Council is promoting the use of cycling and other sustainable travel modes in general, as these help alleviate congestion and bring wider health and environmental benefits. To support and encourage this growth, the Council has introduced a significant number of facilities designed to make cycling easier, safer and more direct. For example, in Bournemouth, these include investment of more than £7.5m over the last 10 yrs to fund the delivery of over 100 schemes. It also regularly undertakes media campaigns advising drivers to look out for cyclists and give them space, and for cyclists to use helmets, lights, bright or hi viz clothing to make themselves as conspicuous and safe as possible.

Whilst this response is not supportive of remedial action in relation to the sad and tragic death of this cyclist, I hope I have adequately set out how the Council priorities it's road safety interventions as well as outlining some of our previous, current and future plans to improve safety.

Yours sincerely




Head of Highways and Transportation (Bournemouth)