

Agenda Item No. 4(a)

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER - HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**31 January 2019**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**20MPH SPEED LIMITS IN DERBYSHIRE**

- (1) **Purpose of Report** To review the carrying out of 20mph speed limit trial sites in Derbyshire and to establish criteria for their future introduction.
- (2) **Information and Analysis**

**Background**

Under the previous administration, a report was considered by Cabinet on 3 May 2016 regarding a review of how 20mph speed limits are used in Derbyshire (Minute No. 131/16 refers).

Roads with 20mph limits are where the speed limit has been reduced to 20mph but there are no physical measures to reduce vehicle speeds within the areas. Drivers are alerted to the speed limit with boundary signs and repeater signs.

The 20mph zones use traffic calming measures such as road humps or build outs to reduce vehicle speeds, making the area largely self-enforcing.

Following on from the report, a consultation exercise was carried out with all the County's Local Members. This resulted in two trial sites being identified as 20mph limit pilot projects, at a meeting of the Cabinet Member - Highways, Transport and Infrastructure on 6 December 2016 (Minute No. 133/16 refers). These sites were in Brassington and Ilkeston. A decision to also include an extra site at Fritchley was made at this meeting.

Preliminary data collection only has been carried out at these sites, but no physical works or speed limit signs have yet been installed. Extensive data from an existing trial site in Padfield that has been fully implemented has also been collected and analysed.

The purpose of these trial sites was to provide information and guidance for more rural environments relevant to Derbyshire as much of the current national advice and guidance is centred on dense urban environments.

### **Officer Comment**

The data collected at the Padfield trial site tallies with the existing national guidance which suggests a reduction in speed of around 1mph can be expected as a result of the implementation of a signed only 20mph speed limit. In terms of casualty reduction, no personal injury collisions were recorded in the five years prior to the scheme being introduced in Padfield. Since the scheme was implemented in November 2015, three injury related collisions have been recorded within the 20mph speed limited area, all categorised as “slight” in severity. There is no evidence that speed was a factor in any of these collisions.

The County Council has been awaiting updated national guidance following further extensive trials around the country, which was due in 2017. The Department for Transport (DfT) has now published its findings on 22 November 2018.

DfT’s case studies show a reduction to the average speed of under 1mph and no evidence to suggest that there has been any reductions in collisions and casualties. It should be noted that all the sites monitored during the study are urban areas where existing average speeds were typically below 24mph.

Apart from speed and casualty reduction, much is made of the purported wider benefits of a 20mph speed limit. The main non-tangible benefits that are mentioned by supporters are that 20mph limits improve peoples’ perception of where they live and have wider health benefits, such as encouraging walking and cycling. This is not evidenced by the qualitative survey carried out by the County Council in Padfield. The DfT’s study also provides little evidence to suggest that this is the case either. Given that the most important aspects of any road safety engineering measures are speed and casualty reduction, there is little to suggest from the County Council’s trial site and the DfT’s extensive research that the use of 20mph speed limits would be of significant benefit.

Therefore, in terms of “value for money”, it would be difficult to make a case in support of using a signed only 20mph speed limit. For example, the physical works involved in the Padfield scheme cost around £5,000 to implement (although, the overall cost of the scheme in terms of staff costs was much higher). This cost would usually be offset against the savings to society achieved by reducing the number and severity of accidents to calculate a cost/benefit ratio.

In the case of Padfield, it is not possible to do this calculation because collisions have increased, although they do not appear to be as a result of the trial.

In terms of injury related collisions at the suggested trial sites, there have been none recorded within the existing 30mph zone in Brassington and none in Fritchley over the latest three year period for which data is held (1 August 2015 to 31 July 2018). Therefore, from a casualty reduction point of view, there would be no return on any investment made at these sites. There have been eight slight injury collisions recorded within the area that has been identified in Ilkeston, and further investigations are currently underway to determine the cause and possible measures to reduce this number.

The Police are of the opinion that they would only support the introduction of lower speed limits where it can be demonstrated that such a change would be largely self-enforcing. Where a reduction to 20mph is concerned, this could well necessitate the introduction of physical traffic calming measures to achieve this, and the significant costs associated with installing and maintaining the infrastructure.

Bearing in mind the outcome of the DfT's case studies and experience in Padfield, it is recommended that no further work is carried out with the trials at Brassington and Fritchley as there is no collision history and no benefit to be gained. Further investigations at Ilkeston should continue to understand what measures, if any, might address the collision record.

It should be noted that, where there is a collision history and a reduction in speeds, it is necessary to reduce collisions and casualties, 20mph limits, supported by engineering measures if necessary, still have a role to play. However, this will only apply where casualty reduction is the main purpose of the scheme. The Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership's Speed Management Protocol – Engineering Technical Annex gives guidance on where this may be appropriate.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The trial sites were added to the approved Local Transport Plan 2016-17 Capital Programme of works with a budget of £40,000 to cover the three schemes.

(4) **Legal Considerations** Derbyshire County Council, as local traffic authority, has power under Section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, to set local speed limits having regard to the guidance issues by the DfT.

## Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file in the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – James Biddlestone, extension 36892.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:

8.1 The Cabinet Member approves that the trial sites for 20mph limit schemes at Brassington, Ilkeston and Fritchley, as identified at the meeting on 6 December 2016, should not be pursued any further at present.

8.2 The Local Members and relevant Parish/Town Councils be notified accordingly.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**