

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
15 MARCH 2010**

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW 2009/10 – EVIDENCE GATHERING**

**Report of the Traffic Issues Task and Finish Group**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP5: Attractive and Inclusive City**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To receive an update report on the work of the Committee's Task and Finish Group.
- 1.2 To consider proposals for piloting the introduction of 20mph Zones in Sunderland.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 Sunderland City Council, as the Highway Authority, subject to satisfactory consultations and the enactment of appropriate traffic regulation orders, may introduce 20 mph speed limits and zones on local roads within its administrative area. These measures need to be considered in the context of wider Network Management Planning for the local authority road network, but in this context, can provide benefits to the authority, such as:

- Improved Road Safety
- Enhanced environmental quality and liveability in residential areas
- More sustainable travel behaviours through encouragement of walking cycling and public transport.
- Efficiency gains in operations, for instance, making it easier to recruit and retain School Crossing Patrols
- Opportunities to capture private sector funding contributions as part of the development planning process.

- 2.2 20mph speed limits have to be self enforcing to be successful, as neither the Police or the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative have the resources to ensure that low speeds are constantly maintained. Equally the Department of Transport and Home Office guidance is fairly emphatic on the need for them to be self enforcing.
- 2.3 On most estate roads the average vehicular speeds will be 20mph or just above. However a number of roads will have average speeds above 20mph, which would benefit the community from the speeds being lowered from 30mph to 20mph. Signing alone cannot achieve this. This will inevitably lead to continued problems for residents in those roads as large numbers of drivers continue to drive at higher speeds. Therefore in those instances physical measures to slow the traffic are essential. If the Council determines to roll out a pilot programme of 20 mph zones the measures necessary will therefore vary dependant on local road speeds and public consultations.
- 2.4 The Council has received a significant number of requests for measures to reduce road speeds to 20mph. In an endeavour to address this demand as part of the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group, assisted by Jacobs, it has explored potential methodologies to prioritise the introduction of 20mph speed limits across Sunderland's residential areas. The prioritisation criteria takes into account:
- Recorded injury accident history.
  - Exposure of vulnerable road users.
  - Existing road speeds in area and likely hood of compliance to 20mph without physical measures.
  - Proximity to schools.
  - Cost of implementation.
  - Integration with existing traffic calming.
  - Perceived public acceptability.

The Criteria is more fully detailed in the Jacob's report appended.

- 2.5 In the Jacobs report they have endeavoured to identify the time to implement such schemes. Jacobs suggest that a minimum period would be 14 weeks and a maximum period would be 68 weeks, to allow for all the necessary processes to be completed. From Officers experience it is possible to undertake a scheme in 14 weeks where 100% of residents have been in favour of the scheme prior to the commencement of work to introduce the scheme. In reality this is very rarely the case on area wide schemes with objections being inevitable

particularly where physical measures are required to slow traffic. Equally the 68 weeks period could be optimistic where there are strong objections.

### **3.0 PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 3.1 On 14 December 2009 the Committee received an update report on the work of the Committee's Traffic Issues Task and Finish Group.
- 3.2 Also at the Committee Mr Richard Hibbert of Jacobs presented a report entitled: Review of National Implementation of 20mph Zones in Residential Areas.
- 3.3 On 19 January 2010 the Task and Finish Group visited North Tyneside Council, where they were given the opportunity to discuss with officers the background to 20mph Zones that have been recently introduced. The Group was then conducted on a tour of different types of 20mph Zones in North Tyneside.
- 3.4 Following the visit to North Tyneside, it was agreed that Jacobs would carry out further work to identify potential 20mph Zones in Sunderland, and provide a rationale for their selection. Jacobs were asked to recommend five potential pilot 20mph Zones, one in each Regeneration Area, setting out the basis for the selection of each zone.
- 3.5 On 18 February 2010, Mr Hibbert presented a further draft of the report to the Task and Finish Group.

### **4.0 PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 That the Council should consider adopting an enabling policy as part of its corporate policy framework to signal that 20mph and traffic calming measures are an integral part of its strategic approach to road safety and traffic management. Development of the Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy provides a good opportunity to adopt such a policy.
- 4.2 That the Council adopts the criteria for assessing 20mph speed limits set out in Section 2.3 of this report and more fully described in the Jacobs report of 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010.
- 4.3 That as part of the 2010/11 Local Transport Plan Capital Programme the Executive Director of City Services, following consultation with the Attractive and Inclusive City Portfolio Holder, be requested to include a pilot programme of 20mph speed limits in Sunderland. That the work to be undertaken in the 2010/11 financial year would be predominately consultation and design with implementation occurring in the summer of 2011, to enable adequate public consultations and the proper statutory procedures to be completed.

4.4 That the Executive Director of City Services be asked to undertake a programme of monitoring of the implementation of such a 20mph speed limit pilot programme and report back to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee on:

- The prioritisation list.
- New requests for inclusion in the prioritisation list.
- Future and current implementation programme
- Post implementation reports on vehicle speeds and recorded injury accidents in the areas implemented.
- Speed enforcement by the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative in 20 mph speed limits.

4.5 The Council should seek to deliver 20pmh treatment through the development planning process by encouraging developers to build these treatments into development plans. The adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Urban Design provides a basis for these discussions. This would include an effective hierarchy of approaches that can be discussed with developers of Home Zones, and 20mph Zones and these work extend beyond the new development on to the existing highway network. Commitment to any of these will be determined by the overall value of the development and any other requirement the Council may place on developers. Each development will need to be handled on a case-by-case basis but the Council has some discretion to increase the priority speed management treatments within these processes.

4.6 That the Executive Director of City Services be requested to undertake further dialogue with the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative to confirm their policies relating to enforcement of 20mph limits and that the first monitoring report will report more fully on this.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 The Committee is therefore recommended to adopt the proposals in Section 4.