

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Universal Services – Transport and Environment Select Committee
Date:	23 January 2023
Title:	20mph Task & Finish Group: Outcomes
Report From:	20mph Task & Finish Working Group

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Recommendation

1. The Universal Services - Transport and Environment Select Committee is invited to endorse the recommendations below, and to submit them to the Director of Universal Services for further consideration.
 - a) The County Council to encourage wider use of 20mph restrictions and ease back on the current casualty focused criteria for 20mph speed limits. Casualty data to be an important factor in the prioritisation of requests.
 - b) A hierarchy of road function to be used to identify and evaluate requirements for a 20mph speed limit to be established. Routes serving a strategic function to have more stringent criterion whereas minor and local roads would have less conditions. This would link directly to and reflect the 'Movement and Place' Framework set out in the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4).
 - c) Relax the current 24mph mean average speed threshold to 26mph for non-strategic roads, subject to Police views.
 - d) Enable 20mph speed limit schemes to be introduced in new and existing modern developments in slow speed environments built in accordance with Manual for Streets, subject to developers funding contributions.
 - e) Enable 20 mph speed limits as part of significant area wide regeneration projects.
 - f) Relax the current requirement to move Speed Limit Reminder (SLR) and Speed Indicator Device (SID) signs every 2-3 weeks and allow devices to be re-deployed at locations giving more flexibility to address key locations.

Speed data from such devices to be used for assessing/supporting 20mph limits where appropriate.

- g) Wider use of Advisory '20 mph When Lights Show' signs. Prioritisation to be given to schools with active travel plans and those who participate in the County Council's Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity programmes.
- h) Applicants must demonstrate that a 20mph speed limit is supported by the majority of the community and commit to the setting up and operation of a Community Speedwatch group.
- i) Requests for 20mph limits to be assessed and scored subject to prioritisation using assessment criterion for requests.

Purpose of Report

- 2. This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the 20 mph Task and Finish Working Group based on comprehensive evidence and data, together with findings from the 20mph public consultation.
- 3. As part of a review of the Council's policy for 20mph speed limits, which was agreed back in November 2021, the former Economy Transport & Environment Select Committee initiated a Task & Finish Working Group of eight Councillors. Current policy restricts new 20mph zones and limits to address casualty reduction.
- 4. This report feeds back to the Universal Services - Transport and Environment Select Committee on the work and findings of the Task & Finish Working Group, including its conclusions and recommendations.

Contextual Information

- 5. The Task & Finish Working Group was cross-party and Members were selected in order to achieve representation from across the County. It comprised of Councillors Mellor (Chair), Lumby, Drew, Dunning, Groves, Parker-Jones, Tod and Withers (first session only).
- 6. Working alongside officers conducting the review, the Group's purpose was to consider evidence from various sources, including a number of presentations from expert external speakers. Sessions also reviewed both national and Hampshire specific data along with information related to highway usage, speed enforcement, road safety, previous 20mph speed limit implementation and environmental impacts, and to inform the Select Committee. In turn this will feed into consideration of the review findings and decisions on future policy by the Director of Universal Services who will report to Cabinet in due course. The Task & Finish Group held an initial meeting on 17 March 2022, and subsequent meetings took place on 29 April 2022, 20th May 2022, 24th June 2022, 20th July 2022 15th September 2022, 24 November 2022 and 10 January 2023.

7. The Task and Finish Working Group has agreed its recommendations to report back to the Select Committee.
8. The terms of reference for the Task and Finish Working Group listed the following elements to be considered as part of the review:
 - the findings of the Department for Transport's national 20mph research study of 2018;
 - other Authorities' approach to 20mph limits and zones;
 - evidence relating to the relationship between 20mph speed limits, 'place making' considerations and increased take up of walking and cycling;
 - revisiting the findings of the County Council's Residential 20 pilot programme, including reviewing updated speed and casualty data;
 - evidence of any relationship between the introduction of 20mph speed limits and changes in air quality and carbon emissions;
 - national guidance on setting 20mph speed limits;
 - Local Transport Plan 4 policy aims and the role of 20mph speed limits;
 - evidence related to the compliance and effectiveness of 20mph speed limits;
 - complementary measures to improve the compliance/effectiveness of 20mph speed limits;
 - Hampshire Constabulary view including Police enforcement and community speed watch;
 - the County Council's Community Funded Initiative for Traffic Measures;
 - the County Council 20's Plenty and advisory school 20mph speed limit signs; and
 - Resource and Asset Management implications.

Overview of Sessions and External Speakers

9. A total of eight Task and Finish Working Group sessions took place between 17 March 2022 and 10 January 2023. Key points from the sessions are listed below:

Residential 20 Pilot Schemes

10. The Working Group was presented with updated speed survey and injury accident data of the 14 'Residential 20' pilot schemes, together with updated speed data for the supplementary Winchester City Centre scheme. The following outcomes were noted:
 - overall, the change in the average speed of traffic throughout all the pilot schemes, following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit, ranged between +2.3 mph and -2.8 mph with a calculated average speed reduction across all schemes, of 0.7 mph. The updated figures were broadly consistent with the 2018 survey data;
 - there was no change in traffic speeds for the Winchester City centre scheme in comparison to the original 'after scheme' speeds. The 0.5mph

average reduction, observed shortly after the 20mph speed limit was introduced, has been maintained;

- there has been no change in the number of serious severity accidents within the 20mph schemes – in both the ‘before’ and ‘after’ study periods, the total number remains the same at 17 collisions;
- in the ‘after’ period following the introduction of the 20mph speed limits the number of serious severity accidents represents a larger percentage (+2%);
- whilst the number of slight severity accidents has reduced, following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit, (reducing from 78 to 67, a difference of -11 collisions (12%)). This figure is not statistically significant given that it follows a countywide reduction in the number of collisions over the wider County Council maintained highway network; and
- therefore, there is still no evidence of enhanced road safety benefits from the 20mph pilot schemes compared with that noticed for the entire road network maintained by the County Council. The larger percentage of serious severity accidents observed in the after period also reflects the situation on the entire road network maintained by the County Council during the two study periods as shown in the tables below. The 3 and 5-year study periods show a reduction of all slight and serious severity accidents by -11% and 12% respectively.

11. The 3 and 5-year study periods of slight and serious severity accidents for the entire road network.

Study 1: 3-year review periods

Period 1	Average Number of accidents & (% severity)	Period 2	Average Number of accidents & (% severity)	Change (%)
3 years 2014-2016	2467 (76% slight, 24% serious)	3 years 2017-2019	2187 (75% slight, 25% serious)	-11%

Study 2: 5-year review periods

Period 1	Average Number of accidents & (% severity)	Period 2	Average Number of accidents & (% severity)	Change (%)
5 years 2010-2014	2613 (79% slight 21% serious)	5 years 2015-2019	2292 (76% slight, 24% serious)	-12%

12. 2020 data was not used, as there is an artificial reduction in accidents due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and national lockdowns. The study of the ‘after’ accidents for the majority of the 14 ‘Residential 20’ pilot schemes also did not include 2020 data.

13. The Group received presentations from the following external speakers:

- Chief Inspector Mike Bettington - Hampshire & Thames Valley Police. The Thames Valley Police and Hampshire Constabulary Joint Operations Roads Policing Unit delivers targeted enforcement and education providing a deterrent designed to make the roads safer and reduce the numbers of persons killed or seriously injured. Chief Inspector Mike Bettington oversees the Joint Operations Roads Policing Unit covering 12 different local authorities (Buckinghamshire County Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council, West Berkshire Council, Slough Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell Forest Council, Milton Keynes Unitary Authority, Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council and the Isle of Wight Council). Mike advised the group that the Police can and do enforce 20 mph limits, but they are generally a low priority. In terms of resource, their focus is on casualty-led enforcement with particular emphasis on the Fatal Four (Speed, Impairment, Seatbelts & Mobile Phones). Mike advised that Hampshire Police is supportive of well-designed and appropriate 20mph restrictions where there is a justifiable need for a lower speed limit, as evidenced by data. Mike also emphasised the importance of schemes needing to be self-enforcing (e.g., where mean average speeds are at or below 24mph, the DfT Threshold for self-enforcing 20mph schemes), rather than being reliant on ongoing police enforcement. Mike also spoke about the Community SpeedWatch initiative and the important role that such schemes can have in support of formal police enforcement;
- Phil Jones - Chair of the Welsh 20mph Taskforce. Phil gave a detailed presentation to the group on the radical approach to 20mph in Wales, based on changes in legislation made by the Welsh Government using devolved powers. Changes will mean that the default speed limit on Restricted Roads (generally street-lit roads in built up areas) would change from 30mph, as is the case in the UK, to 20mph. Those roads where existing traffic speeds are too high for 20mph, would be changed through a Traffic Order, with 20mph being the default limit. Phil outlined some of the key challenges with the approach taken in Wales, particularly where areas are currently covered by existing 20mph limits and zones as these will see any 20mph signs and markings removed, when they are absorbed within wider 20mph areas. The Group noted that public resistance to some 20mph limits, generally on main roads and arterial routes, had been widely reported in the media. Phil was unable to provide details of the budget allocated to make the speed limit changes in Wales, but a subsequent Welsh Government report has estimated the direct costs of introducing the 20mph default to be £32.3million;
- David Davies, Executive Director of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (PACTS). PACTS is a registered charity that supports the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Transport Safety. Its charitable objective is "To protect human life through the promotion of transport safety for the public benefit". Its aim is to advise and inform members of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords on air, rail and road safety issues. It brings together safety professionals and legislators to

identify research-based solutions to transport safety problems having regard to cost, effectiveness, achievability and acceptability. In recent years it has paid increasing attention to the links between transport safety, sustainability and public health. Membership of PACTS includes a broad spectrum of 120 different organisations ranging from local authorities, road safety and motoring organisations, policing authorities and specialist companies related to transport safety. David informed that PACTS are keen on an evidence-led approach to highway changes, including lower speed restrictions. PACTS view is that 20mph limits alone are not enough and need to be backed by education, physical measures, enforcement, community support etc. David's advice to the group was "eyes open", don't be swayed by 20mph alone as the perfect solution; and

- 20's Plenty for us campaign group. At the September meeting Adrian Berendt & Dr Hannan Greenberg representing the 20's Plenty campaign group presented to the Task and Finish Working Group a summary of other authorities' approaches to 20mph limits, with particular focus on Wales and Oxfordshire. They spoke about the economic, social and environmental benefits of 20mph limits and referred to the safety benefits of lower speed environments along with emissions and air quality. They also referred to the County Council's LTP4 aims and objectives.

14. An early session involved County Council officers updating the working group on LTP4 policy aims and the role of 20mph speed limits and evidence relating to the relationship between 20mph speed limits, 'place making' considerations and increased take up of walking and cycling. The working group were advised how the LTP4 links to 20mph, with most impact marginal in isolation and the greatest impact is achieved where complimentary measures are introduced or would be part of a wider area approach. The targeted introduction of 20mph measures to directly support some other interventions could be particularly beneficial – for example, a 20mph limit in support of an area based 'healthy streets' approach to improve the walking environment, and that also included physical measures such as planting and pavement widening, would be beneficial. Generally, such schemes would be in urban locations.
15. The findings of the Department for Transport's national 20mph research study of 2018 were also covered along with other Local Authorities' approaches to 20mph limits and zones. County Council officers also gave presentations to the working group on the National guidance on setting speed limits including 20mph speed limits and the compliance and effectiveness of speed limits.
16. The Working Group was also advised that traffic management and other complementary measures can improve the compliance and effectiveness of 20mph speed limits. The County Council's Community Funded Initiative for Traffic Measures enables Parish Councils to fund appropriate measures such as village gateways, electronic Speed Limit Reminder signs and minor signs and carriageway lining alterations.

Outcomes of the Public Consultation

17. A consultation to help inform both the Working Group and assist with the overall review of 20mph speed limit policy was held during the Summer of 2022. The views of residents, elected representatives, Parish and Town Councils, organisations and business were sought about 20mph limits in the context of other highway priorities, the County Council's statutory duties to maintain the highway in a safe condition, and a limited budget. The consultation also sought feedback on existing 20mph limits within Hampshire. The consultation was open between 12 July 2022 and 12 September 2022.

18. Approximately 9,500 responses were received from the public consultation from people living across Hampshire, both in urban and rural areas. Additionally, following the announcement of the policy review and prior to the consultation/questionnaire being open 53 enquires were received from Parish Councils (24), organisations (10), Elected Representatives (3) and residents (16) many of whom supported the introduction of 20 mph speed limits. A summary of the key outcomes and findings from the analyses of the consultation responses are provided in Appendix 1 and summarised as follows:
 - significant interest in 20mph schemes but huge variation in public opinion;
 - overall, respondents felt that highway maintenance should be the main priority for the Highways Team. Views on the introduction of 20mph speed limits were polarised, with a fifth of respondents citing this as their highest priority and a third as their lowest priority – making it the activity most frequently chosen as least important;
 - most who completed the survey expressed very strong views, both for and against 20mph speed limits;
 - respondents who ranked 20mph speed limits as their highest priority sought a reduction in speed and improvement in road safety. Many spoke of specific locations where 20mph could make a fundamental difference to how people travel, the local environment, and safety – particularly in villages and residential areas;
 - respondents who ranked 20mph speed limits as their lowest priority were unconvinced as to their benefit – particularly if unenforced – and objected to a blanket approach. They expressed concern about the effect on driver focus and the environmental impact of low speeds and increased congestion;
 - useful responses from 'real world' experience of those currently living in 20mph limits and zones. 6% of respondents currently lived in, worked in or represented an area with a 20mph limit. Around half felt they had no or limited impact due to low compliance and no enforcement. Only 14% noted a speed reduction; and
 - safety outside of schools received high support, even from those who don't support wider use of 20 mph speed limits.

Air Quality and Climate Change

19. Throughout the working group meetings and presentations, references to links between the introduction of 20mph speed limits and improvements in air quality and reductions in carbon emissions were discussed. There is limited evidence around the environmental impacts of 20mph speed schemes and some of it is contradictory. The key messages seem to be that the impact on carbon generation is extremely marginal and usually as a result of associated or linked measures. There is a majority view that the overall impact on air quality at the local level is beneficial. There is evidence to suggest that the main benefits arise from a reduction in particulates associated with brake dust and tyre wear.
20. For air quality the limited literature is consistent with small improvements in air quality. However, the volume and methodological strength of studies means that it is only possible to state that: air quality is likely to be improved as a result of 20mph speed limits, but the evidence is weak¹.
21. Potentially the best improvements in air quality and reduced emissions would be made where 20mph speed limits are introduced holistically in conjunction with other initiatives and measures through LTP4 schemes which encourage greater walking and cycling.
22. Research and experience show that a small reduction in traffic speeds of around 1mph has resulted from the introduction of signed only 20mph speed limits. Therefore, with very limited expected impact on traffic speeds the impact on vehicle emissions is also thought to be marginal.

Conclusions

23. During the course of the Task and Finish Working Group sessions, members of the group have been presented with extensive detailed evidence related to 20mph restrictions. Information shared with the group included case studies from other parts of the UK as well as data and evidence specific to Hampshire. A range of expert external speakers also gave presentations to the group.
24. The Task and Finish Working Group has also been able to draw on information provided by County Council officers, together with recent national studies to develop a set of recommendations to be considered in the development of a future 20mph policy review. The key findings of the Task and Finish Group which determined the recommendations, identified in Section 1 of this report, are as set out below:

¹ The state of the evidence on 20mph speed limits with regards to road safety, active travel and air pollution impacts A Literature Review of the Evidence Dr Adrian L Davis FFPH Adrian Davis Associates Consultant on Transport & Health Bristol, UK:

- the current 20mph policy needs revisiting following the changing landscape for travel behaviour related to the global pandemic, as well as advances in highway technology and recent changes made to the Highway Code which introduced a new 'hierarchy of road users' which placed those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. The review also links to the County Council's LTP4 document which sets out the County Council's vision for future transport and travel infrastructure and assist in the national drive for increased levels of active travel and casualty reduction;
- recognition that Police support of 20mph speed limits is vital and any policy changes should aim to achieve self-enforcing schemes. Where existing mean speeds are inappropriate (i.e., too high) consideration should be given to traffic management measures to control and reduce traffic speeds thus supporting a lower speed limit;
- community support and involvement is important to the delivery of successful schemes. Consensus for 20mph speed limits by the local community is essential. The 20mph consultation showed polarised opinions. There was a high proportion of resistance to 20mph speed limits on main arterial routes and therefore the group agreed that a 'blanket' approach to the introduction of 20mph limits was not appropriate;
- members of the group noted general public support from the public consultation responses with regard to safety outside of schools with 20mph speed limits at arrival and departure times;
- members also recognised the importance of Community Speedwatch and SLR/SID deployment programmes should play an integral role in achieving lower speed;
- updated speed data for the Residential 20mph pilot schemes and the Winchester City Centre scheme showed only a small decrease in traffic speeds compared to before the 20mph speed limits were introduced had been maintained;
- managing public expectations in terms of the recommendations of the Task and Finish Working Group will feed into the wider 20mph policy review by the Director of Universal Services and no policy changes have been made at this stage and the limitations to traffic speeds that have been recorded in real world scenarios within 20mph speed limits.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Review of Residential 20 Pilot Programme https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s19304/Report.pdf	5 June 2018
Future Traffic Management Policy https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transport/Futuretrafficmanagementpolicy.pdf	19 May 2016
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Setting local speed limits DfT Circular 01/2013 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits	18 January 2013

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

It is considered the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group would have a neutral impact on protected groups. Any future changes to 20mph speed limit Policy will be subject to a separate Equalities Impact Assessment.