



# Committee report

Committee	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGENERATION</b>
Date	<b>7 JANUARY 2021</b>
Title	<b>20MPH SPEED LIMIT TASK AND FINISH GROUP</b>
Report of	<b>CHAIRMAN OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP</b>

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## SUMMARY

This is the report arising from meetings of the task and finish group looking at 20mph speed limits.

## BACKGROUND

The Task and Finish Group wished to review the Council's existing approach to a 20mph speed limit policy. This would also explore the ways in which vehicle speeds can be managed in conjunction with enforcement and education, for the benefit of people's health.

A further aspect was to consider how the council could further involve local communities and partners in decisions surrounding speed limits and to examine the approach of other local authorities to this.

Members noted that the relevant corporate priorities were :

- The community feels safe and the Island is resilient.
- The environment and unique Island characteristics are celebrated.

Additionally the core values were :-

- Be sensitive to local needs and concerns in everything we do;
- Protect and nurture the environment and heritage;

The Committee on 2 May 2019 considered a report by the Strategic Manager for Highways and Transportation on the Council's speed limit policy and proposals to undertake a review. Representatives from the Police gave an overview of enforcement. Members also had input from Public Health on the environmental impact of speed limits. The Committee decided that a task and finish group should be established to look at the advantages and disadvantages of 20mph speed limits.

The task and finish group had to be delayed whilst work was being undertaken to develop the Council's Environmental Strategy on Climate Change. At its meeting on 1 October 2020 the Committee agreed to commence work on the review. As the result of this Councillors Chris Quirk, Julie Jones-Evans and I indicated that we would meet to discuss the key issues involved in 20mph speed limits.

A virtual meeting was held on 2 December 2020. The meeting was also attended by Rod King MBE, Founder and Campaign Manager, Adrian Berendt, Co-ordinator South East Region both of 20's Plenty for Us, Malcolm Smith - [Road Traffic Enforcement Advisor/Traffic Management Officer, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary & Thames Valley Police Joint Operations Unit](#) and Jayne Dando the Council's Strategic Highways and Transportation Manager. The Cabinet member for Transport and Infrastructure was also in attendance. Tracey Webb of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, who is the chair of the IW Road Safety Forum, was unable to attend. In addition although a representative from Public Health was unable to attend some relevant information was supplied to the task and finish group.

The meeting provided an opportunity for each stakeholder to comment on the application of 20mph speed limits from an education, engineering, enforcement and environmental perspective. A meeting of the Task group members was then held on 3 December 2020 to discuss the key issues highlighted the previous day and consider what outcomes could be reported to the Committee when it met on 6 January 2021.

The following points were made at the meeting with stakeholders :-

#### 20's Plenty

- Differing perspectives of speed
- Strategic road may be the road a child uses to go from home to school or an elderly person has to cross to access shops
- Speed humps not a good form of speed reduction and costly.
- Wales was to adopt a national 20mph restriction by default.
- Lower speeds can assist with feeling of wellbeing in a community.
- Impact of regulations about fitting of speed limiters in new vehicles from 2022.
- Problem with studies is that they can look for evidence of success.
- Costly if piecemeal approach to speed limits as much of the costs go on administrative matters.
- Should take into account needs of all vulnerable road users.

#### Police

- Enforcement in 20mph zones very low priority due to resources and higher policing priorities
- No evidence to suggest that 20mph speed limits have reduced casualty rates and these were very low in the first place.

- Traffic policing merged with armed response so capability very limited for enforcement.
- Only one speed camera van on island.
- Average speed cameras cannot necessarily demonstrate adherence by all vehicles to a speed limit. One single slow moving vehicle holding up a queue of traffic can distort figures.
- Speed limits should form part of a wider travel and transport strategy.
- Speed limits must be seen to be realistic by the public.
- Repeater signs at the discretion of the local authority but police need to ensure that limit is enforceable.
- Representations have been made nationally to Government to have a separate road policing force.
- Speed limit in Apse Heath reduced despite objections from police and highway officers and there has been an increase in accidents at this location and now being reviewed as to why.

#### Highways

- Physical changes to street scene and environment can reduce traffic speed.
- Place making not black and white and down to public perception.
- Covid has highlighted the strengths of personal wellbeing and activities such as walking and cycling.
- Education and publicity essential in reducing traffic speed and must involve the wider community and not just those within the location of any limit.
- Country lane schemes had most impact when normal road marking removed as drivers had to drive more responsibly.
- Traffic calming expensive and need to think out of the box to find more cost effective solutions was necessary.
- Signage can damage the visual aesthetics of the street scene.
- Speed limit review, as part of the formulation of a new Local Transport Plan, proposed but this would be subject to funding being available.

The Task Group also identified the following factors that should be taken into account in any review of speed limits: -

- Effectiveness of community speed watch.
- Were speed indicator signs effective.
- Will always be persistent offenders.
- Difference in a 20mph speed limit and a 20mph zone.

- Funding of environmental measures by town and parish councils to enhance street scene aimed at speed reduction.

The Task Group was reminded that at Full council on 19 October 2016 the following motion by Councillor Julie Jones-Evans was agreed :-

“THAT 20mph areas are proven to contribute to reducing road traffic accidents, increased active travel and other public health benefits. This Council therefore asks the Executive to consider introducing a policy for a 20mph speed limit in areas agreed with Town and Parish Councils across the Island in residential streets, town and village centres and where people work and learn.”

Members noted that 20mph zones used traffic calming measures such as road humps or build-outs which make the speed restrictions effectively self-enforcing, as these features force drivers to slow down. 20mph limits did not normally have physical measures to reduce vehicle speed. Drivers are alerted to the 20mph speed limit by boundary signs and repeater signs. 20mph limits are most appropriate for roads where average speeds are already low, and the guidance suggests below 24mph.

In looking at the information available from relevant sources it was essential to ascertain if the safety and public health benefits of implementing 20mph speed limits, especially in town centres, outweigh the costs of signage, ancillary highway works and enforcement.

Members noted that the speed limit review that was mentioned at the Committee meeting on 2 May 2019 was originally aimed at looking at new requests and not a review of all existing speed limits. The recently appointed Strategic Manager for Highways however had indicated a wish to undertake a full review, together with reviewing a number of other key policies and strategies that would ultimately form the Local Transport Plan. Progress with this work would be reliant on resources being made available as there was insufficient staffing resources and expertise within the existing section.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the experiences of other areas, such as Lancashire, Borders Council, Bath and North East Somerset, Sefton, Faversham and Portsmouth, in implementing 20mph speed limits/zones be looked at as part of the proposed review of speed limits.
2. That the review of speed limits should include :-
  - a. An understanding of the potential environmental impacts of 20mph speeds on air quality and carbon emissions as well as noise;
  - b. The potential enhancement of walking and cycling conditions' which 20 mph speeds may bring, together with issues such as health benefits and increased sociability;
  - c. Not be constrained by historical accident statistics in determining 20mph speed limits/zones if an otherwise strong case can be made for the introduction of such a restriction in a specific area;

- d. The ongoing improvements in car technology such as speed limiters.
3. THAT the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure should ensure that funding is made available for the speed limit review to be undertaken during 2021/22.
4. THAT a report be submitted to the Policy and Scrutiny Committee on the timeframe for the proposed review of all the relevant plans and strategies that will link into the new Local Transport Plan so that it can have the opportunity of providing input before they are finalised.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda and minutes of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Regeneration, Planning, Housing and the Environment – 2 May 2019

Contact Point: Cllr Michael Beston, ☎ 07885644426 e-mail  
michael.beston@iow.gov.uk

Cllr Michael Beston  
Chairman of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Neighbourhoods and  
Regeneration