

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Town Centres, Economic Growth and Prosperity</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>28 May 2012</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Proposed 20mph zone within Rotherham town centre</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

**5. Summary**

To inform Cabinet Member of a proposal to introduce a 20mph zone on the majority of roads within Rotherham town centre.

**6. Recommendations**

**It is recommended Cabinet Member resolve that:**

- i) detailed design and consultation on introducing a 20mph zone in Rotherham town centre is undertaken and, subject to no objections being received, be implemented.**
  - ii) the Director of Planning and Regeneration use powers delegated to him to promote a Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a 20mph zone in Rotherham town centre, in the area shown on drawing number 126/46/TT85.**
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## 7. Proposals and Details

In order to signify to drivers that the town centre environment is different to the general road environment, due to its high pedestrian activity, it is considered desirable to introduce a 20mph speed restriction in Rotherham town centre.

During the last three years in the area considered for a 20mph speed restriction there have been thirty seven injury road accidents resulting in no fatal, seven serious and thirty slight accidents. Within these thirty seven accidents, twelve pedestrians and three cyclists were injured.

A 20mph speed restriction could be introduced to town centre in one of two ways; either by a 20mph speed limit, indicated by speed limit repeater signing only, where measured mean traffic speeds are below 25mph; or by a 20mph zone where vehicles are restricted to 20mph by the use of traffic calming in which no part of the zone is more than 50m from a traffic calming feature. With the recent revision to the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions the traffic calming features for use in 20mph zones have been increased to include speed limit roundels in addition to the more traditional forms of traffic calming such as road humps, speed cushions or road narrowing.

A 20mph speed limit/zone would lead to

- a slight reduction in injury accidents. Although traffic speeds in the proposed zone are already low the additional signing and measures would lead to a 1-2 mph reduction in mean speeds potentially giving a 6-12% reduction in accidents
- an increase in cycling and walking as reduced vehicle speeds would make this a more attractive activity. There may also be an impact on obesity as people travel by more active modes
- the use of a lower design standard for Highway Works. This would enable more flexibility in the design of Highway Works associated with development and may also lead to cost reductions

Access for buses, visitors to the town centre and delivery vehicles would be unaffected.

A series of speed surveys have been undertaken on key roads throughout the town centre to establish which of these two ways of introducing a 20mph speed restriction would be most appropriate. The measured speeds are shown on plan number 126/46/TT85, a copy of which is attached as Appendix A.

A preliminary design has been undertaken for a 20mph speed limit and this would cost in the region of £22,000 to design and implement. This would require 20mph speed limit signs erecting at all entrances to the area covered by the speed limit together with extensive, regularly spaced, 20mph speed limit repeater signs.

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A preliminary design has also been undertaken for a 20mph zone; with no point on the highway within the zone more than 50m from a traffic calming feature. In view of the traffic calming that is already in place, or that is currently proposed (Minute number 112 from Cabinet Member meeting of 12 April 2012 refers), such a zone would only require two sets of speed cushions on Moorgate Road, several 20mph speed limit roundels marked on the carriageway and 20mph speed limit signs at all entrances to the area covered by the zone. This would cost in the region of £23,000 to design and construct. A plan showing the layout of the speed cushions on Moorgate Road and a typical 20mph roundel is shown on drawing number 126/17/TT197, a copy of which is attached as Appendix B.

Both of these methods would enable the introduction of a 20mph speed restriction to Rotherham town centre, both are practical to implement and have similar costs. However given that a 20mph speed limit would require the installation of numerous speed limit repeater signs throughout the town centre, with the subsequent effect on the streetscape and sign clutter, it is recommended that the 20mph speed restriction is implemented as a 20mph zone.

## **8. Finance**

The recommended scheme is expected to cost £23,000 and funding is available from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2012/2013.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

If a problem developed with inappropriate speed following implementation of the 20mph zone South Yorkshire Police would not currently undertake any speed enforcement. In order to resolve such a problem further traffic calming may need to be implemented; however current vehicle speeds and the layout of the proposed traffic calming should make this a small risk.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The recommended scheme contributes towards promoting sustainable transport as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and specifically would “*give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements...*” and “*create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter...*”

The introduction of a 20mph speed limit within the town centre would also allow the use of a lower design standard for Highway Works. This would enable more flexibility in the design of Highway Works associated with development and may also lead to cost reductions.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

South Yorkshire Police have a guidance document on 20mph speed limits and zones which sets out their position with respect to these. They will support a 20mph speed limit if mean vehicle speeds are 24 mph or below. They will support a 20mph zone if traffic calming is used to reduce the mean speed of vehicles to 20mph.

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Drawing number 126/46/TT85, showing the extent of the proposed 20mph zone and details of the measured speeds on key roads throughout the town centre, is attached as Appendix A.

Drawing number 126/17/TT197, showing the proposed traffic calming on Moorgate Road and typical 20mph speed limit roundel details, is attached as Appendix B.

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