

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	15 January 2014
3.	Title:	Setting Local Speed Limits – changes to guidance
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

To update the Cabinet on changes to the guidance for setting local speed limits, and seek approval for the attached policy on the introduction of 20mph speed limits/zones and the intention to investigate suitable locations for the introduction of 20mph speed limits.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended Cabinet resolve that:

- i) the changes to the guidance issued by the Department for Transport for setting local speed limits be noted**
- ii) the document about the use of 20mph speed limits, attached as Appendix A, be approved and adopted as Council policy**
- iii) in line with the policy investigations be carried out into suitable locations for the introduction of 20mph speed limits.**
- iv) A further report be submitted once suitable locations have been identified for the introduction of 20mph speed limits**

7. Proposals and Details

Setting the right local speed limits is vital for road safety, local growth and local health outcomes. Speed limits need to be suitable for local conditions and local authorities are best placed to develop solutions that suit their communities, working in conjunction with the police.

In order to assist local authorities in setting speed limits revised guidance was issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) earlier in 2013. DfT Circular 1/2013 'Setting Local Speed Limits' gives guidance to local councils which will help in the setting of more consistent speed limits on local roads. It outlines how speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel, that is they should encourage self-compliance. The new guidance incorporates recent changes that create more flexibility for authorities to implement 20 mph limits and zones. It has also been designed to help explain to the lay person why and how local speed limits are determined. The revised circular has been issued following full public consultation in summer 2012 and replaces Department for Transport circular 01/2006, which is now cancelled.

The new guidance incorporates a speed limit appraisal tool which will help to assess the full costs and benefits of any proposed speed limit changes, and help to make evidence-based decisions to change speed limits that reflect the needs of all road users. The tool assesses the effect on casualties and journey times, and also attempts to assess issues that are difficult to monetise, such as those that enhance quality of life.

The document also asks local authorities to keep speed limits under review with changing circumstances, and to consider the introduction of more 20 miles per hour limits and zones, over time, in urban areas and built-up village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists, using the criteria contained in the guidance.

In line with the emphasis in the guidance on 20mph speed limits and zones, and the increasing public and political interest in such speed limits, a policy document has been produced on the use of 20mph speed limits and zones in Rotherham and is attached as Appendix A. This sets out the different types of scheme, their benefits, and the factors that will be taken into consideration in the assessment and prioritisation of 20mph schemes. In line with this document it is recommended that investigations be carried out into suitable locations for the introduction of 20mph speed limits with a view to producing a rolling programme of schemes.

8. Finance

Funding for 20mph zones and speed limits, once suitable areas and roads have been identified, will come from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Capital Programme.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Ensuring speed limits are set appropriately in accordance with the new guidance will contribute to reducing the number and severity of collisions taking place on Rotherham's roads. Speed limits that are not set in accordance with the new guidance may not contribute to reducing collisions.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Ensuring speed limits are appropriately set is in line with the objectives set out in the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy, and the associated road safety and casualty reduction strategy for improving road safety.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Department for Transport Circular 1/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits
South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan
South Yorkshire Road Safety and Casualty Reduction Strategy

South Yorkshire Police have been consulted for their views on the proposed 20mph policy and have given their support for the document.

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