

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

i.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development
ii.	Date:	Monday 3th March 2014
iii.	Title:	Proposed response to the Highways Agency consultation on Maximum Mandatory Speed Limit – M1 Junctions 28 to 35a
iv.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

The report sets out the Council's proposed response to the Highways Agency's consultation on a maximum mandatory speed limit for the M1 Motorway between junction 28 (Mansfield) junction 35a (Chapelton).

6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member is asked to resolve that:

- i. The proposed consultation response be approved, subject to comments being received from the Improving Places Select Commission.**
- ii. The sanction of the Mayor be sought to exempt the recommendation from the usual call in procedure in order to allow the response to be submitted to the Highways Agency by the appropriate deadline.**

7. Proposals and Details

The Highways Agency on behalf of the Department for Transport is currently progressing proposals for the implementation of the Smart Motorways Project (previously known as the Managed Motorways Project), which if implemented, will see the hard shoulder of the M1 Motorway between Junctions 28 and 31, and Junctions 32 and 35a converted to a live running lane for all traffic.

An environmental assessment has been carried out which indicates that the scheme, which has all lane running at all times could have a significant adverse effect on local air quality at sensitive receptors and at AQMAs, particularly in the Sheffield and Rotherham areas, when operating at the national speed limit and the predicted levels of traffic growth.

In order to mitigate the adverse impacts on air quality that arise from operation at the national speed limit, the Highways Agency is proposing to implement a maximum mandatory 60mph speed limit on the section of the M1 Motorway between Junctions 28 and 35a.

A consultation document <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/m1-junctions-28-to-35a-maximum-mandatory-speed-limit> has been sent to all Local Authorities affected by the proposals and this Council's proposed response is attached as an appendix to the report.

The Council continues to engage with the Highways Agency regarding the implementation of the Smart Motorways Project and Meetings are being held with them to consider the impact on economic growth and practical elements of the scheme including operation and enforcement.

8. Finance

The proposal is being promoted by the Highways Agency for a reduced speed limit on the M1 Motorway, which forms part of the Strategic Highway Network. Consequently, there are no financial implications for the Council, should this be implemented.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is a risk that should the proposals not be progressed then the implementation of the Smart Motorways Project may not proceed if air quality objectives are not met.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive 2008/50/EC is designed to establish a long term integrated strategy to tackle air pollution and to protect against its effects on human health and the environment. It was transposed into law in England by The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 and consolidates air quality standards and objectives set out in The Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000, Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 and the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007).

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Highways Agency – M1 Junctions 28 to 35a Maximum Mandatory Speed Limit – Consultation Document.

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