

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 10 OCTOBER 2012

REPORT OF: JASON RUSSELL, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
HIGHWAYSSUBJECT: A24 LEATHERHEAD ROAD, ASHTEAD SPEED LIMIT
ASSESSMENT**KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

The Cabinet Member is asked to consider whether to endorse the Mole Valley Local Committee's request to reduce the speed limit on A24 Leatherhead Road, Ashtead. Under the County's Speed Limit Policy, the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment is given the authority to endorse a new speed limit which does not comply with the policy.

DETAILS:

1. The Mole Valley Local Committee's programme of Integrated Transport Schemes for 2011/12 included the investigation of the A24 Leatherhead Road, Ashtead between Knoll roundabout and The Warren, with a view to reducing the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. At its meeting on 14 September 2011, the Mole Valley Local Committee received a report on various speed limit assessments carried out in the District, including the outcome of the assessment for this road. Officers recommended that, based on the evidence, no change be made to the speed limit.
2. The Local Committee sought Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment approval to reduce the speed limit to 30mph, the Committee's preferred limit. Following a site meeting, the Cabinet Member agreed that no change be made to the speed limit on the A24 Leatherhead Road, with the speed limit remaining at 40mph. It was suggested that the speeds be reviewed after 12 months to determine if speeds had reduced sufficiently to allow a lower speed limit to be introduced. A further speed assessment has been carried out and at its meeting on 12 September 2012, the Mole Valley Local Committee received a report setting out the outcome of this assessment. A copy of the report presented to the Local Committee is attached as Appendix 1.
3. The table below sets out the current speed limit, the limit being sought by Mole Valley Local Committee, the preferred limit under the Speed Limit Policy and the limit recommended by officers to Mole Valley Local Committee for approval.

Road	Current limit	Committee preferred limit	'Preferred limit' under policy	Report recommendation
A24 Leatherhead Road	40 mph	30 mph	40 mph	40 mph

4. Under the Speed Limit Policy a Local Committee may decide, exceptionally, to implement a speed limit which does not reduce speeds to a level approaching the new limit. Where the Police object to the proposed speed limit reduction and the local officer recommends against proceeding, the decision should be endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, having taken advice from officers and the Police.
5. The Mole Valley Local Committee rejected the officer recommendation that the speed limit on the A24 Leatherhead Road remain at 40mph. The Local Committee agreed an amended recommendation which was to seek Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment endorsement, in accordance with the Speed Limit Policy, to reduce the speed limit on this road to 30mph.

Consultation

6. The Police were consulted as part of the speed limit assessment process. The Police view is that the A24 Leatherhead Road should have its speed limit set in line with the preferred limit as determined by Surrey's Speed Limit Policy.
7. The Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment has sought advice from the South East Area Team Manager. The Area Team Manager confirmed that the speed limit requested by the Local Committee does not comply under Surrey's speed limit policy and was not supported by the Police. This was reflected in the original recommendation to Mole Valley Local Committee. The Area Team Manager's view is that the 40mph speed limit on the A24 Leatherhead Road between the Knoll roundabout and The Warren acts as a buffer between the higher speeds on the Leatherhead by-pass and the M25, slowing speeds down gradually before traffic enters the 30mph limit in Ashted village. The Area Team Manager also advised that there is no safe location within the section of the A24 between Knoll roundabout and The Warren where the Police can carry out enforcement.

Financial and value for money implications

8. In March 2012, Mole Valley Local Committee allocated £45,000 from its Integrated Transport Schemes (ITS) budget 2012/13 to investigate and implement speed management schemes. A further £33,000 of funding for speed management schemes was carried forward from the 2011/12 ITS budget. Of this, £5,000 has been allocated to the review of the speed limit on the A24 Leatherhead Road. This should cover the cost of any changes arising from the review. However, the Local Committee agreed that the Area Team Manager, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, would be able to vire money between the schemes, if required.

Equalities implications

9. There are no equalities implications arising from changes to speed limits on the public highway.

Risk management implications

10. There will be no risk management implications arising from a decision to retain the existing 40mph speed limit. If a decision is made reduce the speed limit, the advertisement of a speed limit order will be required. Objections may be received when the speed limit order is advertised. The Mole Valley Local Committee has authorised delegation of authority to the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee and the local Divisional Member to resolve any objections received in connection with the speed limit proposals considered on 12 September 2012.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

11. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
12. Reductions in speed limits should have a positive impact on emissions as vehicles speeds are lowered.

Legal implications/legislative requirements

13. Changes to speed limits are introduced through the making of a Speed Limit Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

14. There are no Corporate Parenting or Looked After Children implications resulting from changes to speed limits on the public highway.

Section 151 Officer commentary

15. The Section 151 officer confirms that all material, financial and business issues and risks have been considered in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment agree that:

1. The Mole Valley Local Committee request to reduce the speed limit to 30mph on the A24 Leatherhead Road between the Knoll roundabout and The Warren is not endorsed; and
2. The recommended outcome proposed by Officers in the report to the Local Committee is approved. (Appendix 1)

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A 30mph speed limit does not comply with the Speed Limit Policy and is not supported by the Police or Officers.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

If the recommendations are approved, the speed limit will remain at 40mph. The Mole Valley Local Committee will be informed of the outcome of this review.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

South East Area Team Manager
Strategic Director Environment and Infrastructure
Strategic Finance Manager

Informed:

None

Sources/background papers:

Mole Valley Local Committee Report, 14 September 2011- Mole Valley Speed Limit Assessments (Various)
Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment Decision, 23 November 2011– Speed Limits at Various Sites in Mole Valley
Mole Valley Local Committee Report, 12 September 2012 – Mole Valley Speed Limit Assessment – Holmbury Lane and Ranmore Common Road (includes A24 Leatherhead Road)
