

Updated Speed Limit Policy

Consultation with Local Committees

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Introduction

- Proposed change to the speed limit policy
- The process for assessing speed limits

Introduction

- Speed management reduces casualties
- Anti-social driving concerns Surrey residents
- It is a quality of life issue (Drive SMART)
- Speed limits - One part of speed management

Old Policy

- Local Committees have delegated authority to set speed limits but must do so within policy set by cabinet
- Required that both Police and County Council had to agree on a speed limit change
- This was informed by measurements to see if the prevailing average speeds were close to the proposed new limit

New Policy

- Allows the Local Committee to proceed with a speed limit which may be much lower than the prevailing average speed
- In exceptional circumstances would need endorsement by a Portfolio Holder.
- A clear basis for the decision is needed and might include a site visit.

Considerations

- Increased Local Committee decision making
- Respect for the views of local residents
- However unrealistically low limits could raise expectations and may not be successful in reducing speeds
- Changing a speed limit can be costly and needs to be funded from approved budgets

Step 1: Determine Length of Road

- At least 600m long – too many changes are confusing and ineffective
- Existing features may provide natural thresholds for changes in speed limit
- 20 mph limits and zones are recommended to be introduced over a whole area rather than single stretches

Step 2: Determine Preferred Limit

- The default national speed limit in an urban area (with a system of street lighting not more than 183m apart) is 30mph
- The default national speed limit in a rural area (without street lighting) is 60mph
- Local authorities can change these limits
- Urban and rural preferred speed limit hierarchies are presented for guidance

Urban Hierarchy

- Home Zones: specially designated streets with shared road space and careful design
- 20 mph:
 - residential, not main routes, pedestrians, schools, infrequent bus services
 - busy town centre shopping streets
- 30 mph: local distributors where movement of traffic is important
- 40 mph: strategic routes, consider dedicated facilities for peds and cyclists

Rural Hierarchy

- Quiet Lanes: specially designated single track lanes designed for slow speeds
- 30 mph: villages with extensive development
- 40 mph: roads with partial development
- 40 or 50 mph: mainly B and C roads
- 50 or 60 mph: main strategic roads

Step 3: Compare Proposed Limit with Existing Speeds

- Introduce new limit if similar to existing speeds
- If not consider supporting measures (traffic calming, VAS, community speed watches)
- Exceptionally-introduce lower limit anyway
 - Decision to be endorsed by Portfolio Holder
 - Have a site meeting to consider specific issues

Step 4: Monitoring

- Has the scheme been successful in reducing speeds to an acceptable level?
- If not do additional measures need to be taken?

Conclusions

- Speeding is a prime concern of residents
- Speed limits are one speed management tool
- Policy provides guidance for urban and rural
- Proposed policy allows Local Committees to set speed limits much lower than prevailing traffic speeds in exceptional cases
- Portfolio holder endorsement required after site visit to consider any specific issues
- Must provide a clear basis for all decisions