



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (REIGATE AND BANSTEAD)

REVIEW OF 20MPH SPEED LIMITS OUTSIDE SCHOOLS 28 FEBRUARY 2011

KEY ISSUE

To review the 20mph speed limits installed outside four schools in Reigate and Banstead approved by Local Committee on 10 January 2005. This report considers the implications of Surrey County Council's revised speed limit policy on these 20mph speed limits. It also reviews the previous Local Committee approval to introduce 20mph speed limits outside all schools in Reigate and Banstead.

SUMMARY

On 10 January 2005 the Local Committee considered a report outlining the findings of a speed limit review outside schools within Reigate and Banstead and agreed to initially implement a 20mph speed limit outside four schools and to adopt a programme of implementation borough wide, in priority order. This report reviews the effectiveness of the 20mph pilot schemes outside the four schools, considers the implications of Surrey County Council's revised speed limit policy on these 20mph speed limits and seeks approval to make the required Traffic Regulation Order to formalise the 20mph speed limit at the four pilot schools. In light of both the results of the pilot schemes and Surrey's revised speed limit policy, this report seeks approval to revoke the previously approved programme in favour of a school/site specific approach to delivering Safer Routes to Schools in Reigate and Banstead.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Reigate and Banstead) is asked to agree that:

- (i) The required Traffic Regulation Order be made to formalise the 20mph speed limit at the four pilot schools.
- (ii) Any objections to the Traffic Regulation Order be reported to the next available meeting of the Local Committee for their consideration.

- (iii) The decision to implement 20mph speed limits outside all schools in Reigate and Banstead be revoked and a revised approach be adopted whereby the specific issues at each school are considered and appropriate, staged, interventions undertaken, subject to the identification of funding in the forward programme.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following a wide ranging review of 20mph zones across Britain by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), Surrey County Council included the following key proposal within its first Local Transport Plan (LTP1) in 2001:

“We will implement 20mph zones in a systematic way as part of area wide schemes in urban areas, and the streets around schools will generally be made 20mph zones. If there are clear reasons for a higher speed limit being retained, other lining, signing and calming measures will be employed”.

The latest Local Transport Plan (LTP2), published in 2006 makes no reference to 20mph zones in relation to travel to school although they continue to be one measure that can be used to address speed issues outside schools.

- 1.2 At the 8 March 2004 Local Committee it was agreed to allocate funding to initiate the implementation of 20mph speed limits around all 48 schools within the District. Following this resolution speed surveys were undertaken in the vicinity of school entrances, the results of which were presented to Local Committee on 10 January 2005. A pilot scheme involving four schools was approved for implementation. It was further agreed that a programme of implementation be continued to reduce the speed limit to 20mph outside schools in the Reigate and Banstead area, in a priority order developed in conjunction with the Members Task Group.
- 1.3 The four pilot schools were Meath Green Junior (Horley), Reigate St Mary's Preparatory (Reigate), Kingswood Primary (Lower Kingswood) and St Anne's Catholic Primary (Banstead). The extents of the 20mph speed limits implemented are shown on the plans in **Annex A**.
- 1.4 A report to the 7 December 2009 Local Committee reviewed the effectiveness of the 20mph pilot schemes, provided an update on current policy and reviewed the Local Committee's commitment to introduce 20mph speed limits outside all schools in Reigate and Banstead. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report as the Cabinet had agreed to carry out a review of the County's speed limit policy. Members felt that the outcome of this review should be known before they made a decision on the 20mph speed limits outside schools in Reigate and Banstead.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 A review of Department for Transport guidance and County policy dating back to when the decision was made to pilot 20mph speed limits outside schools was included as part of the December 2009 Local Committee report.
- 2.2 The revised Surrey County Council speed limit policy was approved by Cabinet in October 2010. The policy in terms of introducing 20mph speed limits by signs alone remains unchanged, recommending that they are

appropriate only where speeds are already low (average 20mph or less, 85thile 24mph or less) and further traffic calming measures are not needed. However, the new policy allows a local committee to decide, exceptionally, to implement a speed limit which does not reduce speeds to a level approaching the new limit, although a new limit should always reduce average speeds.

- 2.3 The benefits of encouraging pupils to walk and cycle to school are well documented. One of the main issues is the environment along the route to school and in particular, immediately outside the school gates. This is where, for a short time at the start and end of the school day, there is vehicle congestion, short term parking mixing with rush hour traffic and pupils crossing the road. This situation exists at many schools but, in most cases, excessive vehicle speed is not the main problem. The apparent chaos reduces the possibility of speeding and solutions to improve safety are more likely to involve improved visibility, providing crossing facilities, repairing or widening the footway together with involving pupils, parents and the school community. Surrey's guidance concludes that identifying the precise nature of a problem outside schools is the key to finding the best solution.

3 REVIEW OF THE PILOT SCHEMES

- 3.1 In 2005 four schools were selected as a pilot to test the impact of implementing 20mph speed limits with minimal signing and road markings. The schools were selected to cover the Reigate and Banstead area geographically. 'Before' speed surveys were undertaken in 2004 between 10am and 3pm, Monday to Friday, within the close vicinity of the school entrances, providing results that were not influenced by peak time congestion. 'After' surveys were carried out in 2008 at the same locations. The results are given below.

| School | Road | Before(2004) 85 th % mph | After (2008) 85 th % mph (mean mph) |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Meath Green Junior | Meath Green Lane | 33.88 | 32 (26.5) |
| | Greenfields Road | 24.90 | 27 (22) |
| Reigate St Mary's Prep | Chart Lane | 28.48 | 26.5 (22) |
| Kingswood Primary | Buckland Road | 30.60 | 25.5 (22.5) |
| St Anne's Catholic Primary | Garratts Lane | 34.04 | 29.5 (26) |
| | Holly Lane | 38.00 | 34.5 (30) |
| | Bolters Lane | 28.54 | 29 (29) |
| | Court Road | 24.54 | 22 (18.5) |

- 3.2 Analysis of the accident history for the four sites has also been carried out before and after implementation of the 20mph speed limits, as below.

| School | Accident Data | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| | Before (1999-2004) / After (2005- Nov 2010) | | | | |
| | Slight | Serious | Fatal | Pedestrian casualties (age) | Speed related |
| Meath Green Junior School | | | | | |
| – Meath Green Lane | 0/0 | 1/0 | 0/0 | 1 (14)/0 | 0/0 |
| – Greenfields Road | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 |
| Reigate St Mary's Prep | | | | | |
| – Chart Lane | 0/2 | 1/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 |
| Kingswood Primary | | | | | |
| - Buckland Road | 3/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 2 (14/child)/0 | 0/0 |
| St Annes Catholic Primary | | | | | |
| – Garratts Lane/Bolters Lane(1) | 8/6 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/2 (50,92) | 0/0 |
| – Holly Lane | 3/1 | 1/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 1/0 |
| – Court Road | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 |

(1) Accidents at the roundabout junction. All vehicle only accidents, mainly the result of drivers failing to give way.

- 3.3 It can be seen from the above data that the effect on 85th percentile speeds after the implementation of 20mph limits at the four schools has ranged from increased speeds of 2mph to speed reductions of 5mph. Court Road in Banstead is the only location where 85th percentile speeds have reduced to the level required by the speed policy for the introduction of 20mph speed limits.
- 3.4 None of the four pilot schemes selected had a speed related personal injury accident problem prior to the measures being installed. At all locations, reported personal injury accidents have reduced in number or severity within the pilot 20mph speed limit areas. Personal injury accidents have been reducing countywide over this period and **it is not possible to tell whether the changes noted at the four pilot sites result from this overall accident trend or from the reduced speed limits.**

4 VIEWS OF SURREY POLICE

- 4.1 The following comments were made by Surrey Police prior to implementation of the four pilot schemes.

“Surrey Police will always support safe routes to schools schemes as they are designed to protect one of the most vulnerable road user groups, and a reduction in the speed of vehicles around schools could ultimately lead to reduction in the number and severity of collisions.

Our only area of concern are that any reductions in speed limits will be self enforcing as it would be impossible to provide enough coverage on a regular basis to every school. We would of course enforce any restrictions as part of our normal patrols and when duties permit. Also although in theory we support 20mph speed limits outside schools each must be treated on its merits with respect to the detail of what measures are required at each school, as there will always be differences to be considered. The 85%tile

speeds at the various locations are very important as I feel just by signing a 20mph speed limit a reduction of a few miles an hour may be achieved but if the speeds are too high in the first place measures other than signing will need to be considered. This is why each site needs to be considered on its merits.”

- 4.2 Further comments have been sought from the Police on the existing 20mph speed limits outside the four pilot schools.

“I must agree that although the speeds have not been significantly reduced, it would send the wrong message to the local community if the limit were to be removed. There has to be a starting point to reducing speeds outside schools and these limits, although as I say not making a significant difference, could be just that start. It could be in time to come when the economy improves that further measures could be considered if necessary.

We will continue to support schemes such as these and I really stand by the comments I made when these limits were first proposed.”

5 WAY FORWARD FOR 20MPH LIMITS OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

Pilot Schools

- 5.1 The pilot 20mph speed limits outside the four schools has demonstrated that signing alone does not produce the levels of speed reduction required to bring average traffic speeds down to 20mph. This level of speed reduction at the four pilot sites is likely only to be achieved through the introduction of physical traffic calming features or through enforcement. The allocation of limited resources to fund the provision of physical measures could not be justified by the accident record at these sites when prioritised against other accidents sites in the Borough.
- 5.2 To remove the 20mph limits and return the roads in question to a 30mph limit could be seen as encouraging speed and is likely to be perceived in a negative light by both the schools and parents concerned. It is therefore proposed that Members use their new powers under the revised speed limit policy to retain the 20mph speed limits at the four pilot schools.
- 5.3 The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) covering the 20mph speed limits at the four pilot schools were formally advertised for public comment in May 2005. Objections were considered by Local Committee in September 2005 and approval was given to proceed with implementation. It should be noted that as these were pilot schemes and subject to change, a ‘have made’ TRO was not progressed. Due to the length of time elapsed since the original statutory consultation, It will be necessary to readvertise the 20mph speed limits outside the four schools. Local Committee will need to consider any objections made during the new statutory public consultation period.
- 5.4 A review of the 20mph signs and road markings at the four schools will be carried out and any replacement or new signs provided, as required. This will ensure that the 20mph speed limit is clear to all road users and can be enforced by the Police.
- 5.5 The enforcement of speed limits is a matter for Surrey Police but until there is a TRO in place covering the 20mph limit outside the four schools, the Police

cannot carry out enforcement action. Once the TRO has been made, a request can be made to the Police to carry out enforcement action at the four pilot schools.

Other schools in Reigate and Banstead

- 5.6 In light of the results of the pilot schemes, it is recommended that the previous Local Committee approval to implement 20mph limits at all schools is revoked and a revised approach be taken whereby the specific issues at each school are considered, prioritised and appropriate interventions undertaken, subject to funding being made available.
- 5.7 Staged interventions may deliver a more comprehensive solution and provide better value for money. In general a hierarchy approach based on the three E's (enforcement, education, engineering) could be taken. This approach would involve identifying whether the school has a Travel Plan, what issues have been raised in the Travel Plan, whether enforcement is an appropriate first step, then whether education and training could address the issues before expectations are raised to provide an engineered solution for which funding then needs to be sought. Indeed, engineering measures may well have limited benefit during the school start/end times but cause problems for local residents outside of those times
- 5.8 In terms of delivering a managed, value for money and deliverable approach to Safer Routes to Schools in Reigate and Banstead, a database has been produced that contains a list of all schools in the Borough and includes the following information:
- School Travel Plan (in place or being produced)
 - Walking training
 - Cycle training
 - Speed limits/measured speeds
 - Accident history
 - Issues raised by school
 - Engineering schemes identified
 - Engineering schemes delivered

It is proposed that this database forms the basis for prioritising the future Safer Routes to School programme.

6 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The cost of advertising the draft Traffic Regulation Order and making the Order is estimated to be £2000. Whilst there is no budget currently available to carry out this work, the Local Committee could agree to add this to the forward programme so the work can be carried out as soon as funding becomes available. The cost of providing new or additional signs and road markings, if required, could also be funded in this way.
- 6.2 The cost of removing the four pilot schemes is estimated to cost between £7,500 and £11,000 plus the cost of any traffic management required at the sites.

7 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The reduction of vehicle speeds outside school will encourage more people to walk and improve the local environment.

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no crime and disorder implications.

9 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The implementation of 20mph speed limits at four pilot schools in Reigate and Banstead has achieved limited success in reducing speeds in the vicinity of the schools and has demonstrated that signing alone does not produce the levels of speed reduction required to bring traffic speeds down to 20mph, as required by Surrey's speed policy.
- 9.2 To remove the 20mph limits and return the roads in question to 30mph could be viewed as encouraging speed and is likely to be perceived in a negative light by both the schools and parents concerned. Using the new powers given to Local Committee's in the revised speed limit policy, it is therefore to retain the 20mph speed limits at the four pilot schools and readvertise the Traffic Regulation Orders to provide the legal backing required for enforcement.
- 9.3 In light of the results of the pilot schemes and Surrey County Council's policy regarding the introduction of 20mph limits outside schools, it is recommended that the previous Local Committee approval to introduce 20mph limits at all schools in Reigate and Banstead be revoked. A revised approach is proposed whereby the specific issues at each school are considered and appropriate, staged, interventions undertaken.

10 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The retention of the 20mph speed limits at the four pilot schools would reinforce the message about the need to drive at appropriate speeds outside schools where concentrations of vulnerable road users are found. The advertising and making of the appropriate Traffic Regulation Order would provide the legal backing required for the Police to enforce the 20mph speed limits.
- 10.2 The consideration of specific issues at each schools would allow appropriate, staged, interventions to be made, providing a managed, value for money and deliverable approach to Safer Routes to Schools in Reigate and Banstead. This approach will be subject to the identification of an appropriate source of funding in Reigate and Banstead's forward programme.

11 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 11.1 If Local Committee approves the recommendations, work will commence to readvertise the 20mph speed limits at the four pilot schools. A review of the existing 20mph signs and road markings at the four sites would be carried out in the spring.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS Surrey County Council Speed Limit Policy
Local Committee reports

- 10 January 2005
- 19 September 2005
- 7 December 2009