

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)

DATE: 07 MARCH 2014

SUBJECT: PETITION – REDUCE SPEED LIMIT TO 20MPH OR 30MPH
OUTSIDE LIMPSFIELD C OF E SCHOOL – WESTERHAM
ROAD, OXTED

DIVISION: OXTED



SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To consider a petition containing approximately 175 signatures (from teachers and school children) requesting that the speed limit of the section of road outside the Limpsfield C of E School (Westerham Road, Oxted) be reduced to 20mph or 30mph, in order to address concerns from school children, teachers and parents regarding safety.

RESPONSE:

Limpsfield CofE Infants School is located on the A25 Westerham Road, Limpsfield, catering for 180 pupils aged 4 to 7 years. The section of the A25 outside the school is a dual carriageway with a single traffic lane in each direction and subject to a 40mph speed limit. There is an uncontrolled crossing point to the east of the school where pedestrians can cross the A25, with a waiting area in the central reservation protected by guard railing. A school crossing patrol operates at this point at both the start and end of the school day. The pedestrian guard railing at this crossing point was extended recently to help make the crossing point safer.

The school operates a Walking Bus where the children are escorted from Grub Street across the common to the school. An Advisory 20mph speed limit which operates when the flashing school lights are on at the start and end of the school day has been introduced on the A25 outside the school.

Surrey's Community Engagement Team, together with the Police, works closely with the school to provide help with the School Travel Plan and to provide road safety advice. The subject of vehicles speeds was discussed at a recent meeting and it was agreed that this issue needed further investigation.

As part of this scheme, speed surveys were carried out prior to the signs being erected. The survey carried out during school term time between 08.35 and 09.35 recorded the mean speed, the measure used to determine speed limits, as 31mph in both directions. A survey carried out in the school holidays at the same time of day recorded mean speeds of 33mph eastbound and 37mph westbound. This suggests that drivers do slow down when children are walking to school. The after survey to measure the effectiveness of the Advisory 20mph signs is programmed to be carried out in the Spring 2014.

A policy "Road Safety Outside Schools" is being developed that sets out the process that will be used by Surrey County Council for investigating and responding to

concerns about road safety outside schools, including concerns about traffic speeds. The draft policy is the subject of a report to this meeting of the Tandridge Local Committee. It is suggested that this policy forms the basis of how the request for a reduced speed limit outside Limpsfield Infants School is taken forward. This will involve working with the school and carrying out a site visit attended by Surrey Officers and the Police. As set out above, it is already intended to carry out a further speed survey at this location.

Changes in speed limits need to comply with Surrey's speed limit policy. This is currently being updated to take into account new government guidance. As reported elsewhere on this agenda, the new policy highlights that changing speed limits with signs alone will not necessarily be successful in significantly reducing the speed of traffic if the prevailing mean speeds are much higher than the proposed lower speed limit. Any change in speed limit will require the support of the Police as they are responsible for enforcement.

The divisional member for Oxted has asked Officers to carry out a speed limit assessment of the A25 between the County boundary and Godstone. It is intended that this piece of work will be carried out during 2014/15. The speed surveys carried out at Limpsfield Infants School will form part of this wider speed limit review.

Contact Officer:

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