

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

## CABINET

DATE: 19 DECEMBER 2023



REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

LEAD OFFICER: KATIE STEWART, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBJECT: A NEW DRAFT VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY AND 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT POLICY

ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: GROWING A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY SO EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT / TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITY / ENABLING A GREENER FUTURE / EMPOWERED AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

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| <b>Purpose of the Report:</b> |
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A new Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy has been drafted in collaboration with Surrey Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and National Highways. The aim of this new strategy is to help us collectively reduce death and injury on our roads. It has been drafted following a best practice Vision Zero and Safe Systems approach, with a target to reduce collisions where someone has been killed or seriously injured by 50% by 2035. The strategy also includes a new policy for a more flexible approach to implementing 20 mph speed limits.

The new Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and new 20 mph speed limit policy will contribute to **growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit** because fewer road collisions will make road journeys more reliable, and this will support the prosperity of Surrey's businesses. It will also contribute to **tackling health inequality**, as research and evidence demonstrate a link between greater road risk and deprivation<sup>1</sup>. It will also contribute to **enabling a greener future**, because making walking, wheeling, and cycling safer and more pleasant in place of using motor vehicles will reduce carbon emissions and air pollution, including that derived from congested motor vehicle traffic when collisions occur. The new road safety strategy includes road safety training and opportunities for local people to contribute to improving road safety, for example, Community Speed Watch, thus **empowering communities**.

<sup>1</sup> [Pedestrian safety in areas of deprivation - Report and review of the research, June 2021, RoSPA, Birmingham](#)

## Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Welcome the new draft Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and the collaborative work of Council Officers, Surrey Police, The Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, and National Highways that has produced the draft document.
2. Agree that a public and stakeholder consultation on the draft strategy, inclusive of a new 20 mph speed limit policy, be held commencing in January 2024 and running for 10 weeks to mid-March 2024.
3. Agree that the results of the public and stakeholder consultation, along with any proposed changes to the strategy and 20 mph speed limit policy, be brought back to Cabinet in Spring 2024 for final approval.

## Reason for Recommendations:

A new Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy, incorporating a new 20mph policy, based on best practice is crucial to reducing road death and injury throughout Surrey.

## Executive Summary:

### Introduction

1. Whenever there is a road collision reported to the police resulting in personal injury, the details are recorded by each police service using a national standard format. This data is then compiled nationally to inform national road safety policy and interventions. It is also shared with the local highway authority who use computer mapping to identify locations and patterns of collisions on the road network to prioritise casualty reduction highway improvements, and to analyse overall trends in the data<sup>2</sup>. Casualties are categorised as either fatal, serious, or slight depending on the severity of the injury suffered, using standard definitions.
2. Summary analysis of the trend in the total annual numbers of fatal, serious, and total number of road casualties on Surrey's roads has shown that:
  - The longer-term reduction in fatal casualties has stalled in recent years.
  - The trend in the combined total of fatal and serious casualties has remained mainly static since 2020, with some recent increases due mostly to recent changes in the recording method use by the police.
  - Overall, the total number of road casualties continues to decrease.
3. Considering this data, the County Council and partners need to do things differently if we are to be successful in reducing fatal and serious casualties in the future. Therefore, the County Council has worked with Surrey Police, the

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<sup>2</sup> Summary data is available for viewing on [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk) and national data (including an interactive dashboard) is available here: [Road accidents and safety statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://Road%20accidents%20and%20safety%20statistics%20-%20GOV.UK%20(www.gov.uk))

Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, and National Highways to create a new Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy as presented in **ANNEX 1**.

4. The new strategy includes a summary analysis of the trend in road casualties, proposes a new casualty reduction target, and describes a new flexible approach to implementing 20 mph speed limits. This meets the commitment set out in [Local Transport Plan 4](#) to develop a new road safety strategy for Surrey, building on the best practice Vision Zero and Safe Systems approach, replacing the previous [Surrey Road Safety Strategy](#) that has now expired.

### **Vision Zero and Safe Systems**

5. Our new Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy puts people at its centre, coming from the belief that every road death or serious injury is preventable. It is built upon the underlying principles that:
  - Human beings make frequent mistakes that lead to road collisions.
  - The human body by nature has a limited ability to sustain collision forces with known tolerance to injury thresholds.
  - It is a shared responsibility between stakeholders (road users, road managers, vehicle manufacturers, etc) to take appropriate actions to ensure that road collisions do not lead to serious or fatal injuries.
6. A Safe System approach recognises these facts and seeks to design them out of the equation. Put simply, it means that all elements of the road system, for example, vehicles, infrastructure, road users, and post-collision care work together as one to minimise the chance of a collision, or, if a collision does take place, to prevent death or serious injury from occurring. The approach is a shared responsibility (road users, highway managers, enforcement agencies and vehicle manufacturers) to act to ensure that road collisions do not lead to serious or fatal injuries.
7. A Safe System approach has five pillars that work together to minimise risk, namely:
  - Safe roads and streets
  - Safe speed
  - Safe vehicles
  - Safe road users and behaviours
  - Post collision care
8. A Vision Zero approach to road safety was endorsed by the intergovernmental conference on road safety in 2019 which resulted in the Stockholm Declaration for a 50% reduction in fatal and serious collisions by 2030, compared to 2020<sup>3</sup>. To achieve a similar ambitious reduction in road

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<sup>3</sup> [Stockholm Declaration - RoadSafetySweden](#)

casualties in Surrey, we will need to work toward roads that are designed with a 'forgiving' infrastructure, that recognises the vulnerability of human beings and the mistakes they make. This includes setting speed limits and managing vehicle speeds to an appropriate level for the different types of roads and their use by vulnerable road users such as people walking, wheeling, cycling and riding horses.

### **Our Vision Zero Target**

9. The draft strategy outlines a vision for zero death or serious injury on Surrey's roads by 2050. In the early 2000s there used to be 60 to 70 fatal collisions per year in Surrey, whereas in more recent years that number has reduced to 20 to 30 fatal collisions per year. Therefore, we believe that this vision zero target will be challenging, yet achievable.
10. To work toward Vision Zero by 2050, we have set an interim target for a 50 per cent reduction in people being killed or seriously injured (KSI) by 2035 with reference to a baseline average for 2019 and 2022. We have selected these two years for the baseline because they are more likely to represent the typical annual number of KSIs in Surrey as they were unaffected by COVID (unlike 2020 and 2021), and were less affected by a change in the police reporting system (unlike 2018). We have also set the year 2035 for the target as by the time our final strategy is published in 2024, we will be several years into the current decade.

### **Speed Management and a New Approach to 20 mph Speed Limits**

11. There is overwhelming research and evidence that faster motor vehicles increase the risk of collision and make the consequences worse<sup>4</sup>. Concern over vehicle speeds is a frequently mentioned highway issue raised by Surrey's residents.
12. In June 2022 the Cabinet Member with responsibility for road safety allocated an additional £3million over three years to help tackle excessive vehicle speeds and road safety on Surrey's roads<sup>5</sup>. This funding is being invested in more average speed cameras, spot speed cameras, traffic calming and junction improvements at the sites with the worst speeding and collisions.
13. The County Council has also embarked on a proactive, strategic review of rural speed limits with the aim of replacing all the existing 60 mph national speed limits on rural roads with lower speed limits set at a more appropriate level and more in keeping with the use and nature of the road. The first of these began to be implemented in September 2023.

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<sup>4</sup> [Road Crash Trauma, Climate Change, Pollution and the Total Costs of Speed: Six graphs that tell the story | GRSF \(roadsafetyfacility.org\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth Decisions - Monday, 27 June 2022.](#)

14. To realise the ambition of the Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy, there also needs to be an enhanced focus on reducing speeds in town centres, residential areas, and village centres, especially near schools, where the exposure to risk for people walking, wheeling, and cycling is greater. For example, in 2022, nearly half of all Surrey's road casualties (49%) were located on 30 mph speed limit roads, most of which are in built up areas. Also, 81% of pedestrian casualties took place on 30 mph speed limit roads, with nearly all involving collision with a motor vehicle. Similarly, 69% of cycling casualties took place on 30 mph speed limit roads, with 79% of these resulting from collisions with a motor vehicle.

15. Most leading international and national organisations that advocate for road safety, public health and climate change also advocate for lower 20 mph speed limits in urban areas. This was also endorsed in the Stockholm Declaration. Therefore, we want to allow greater flexibility to implement more 20 mph speed limits across a greater number of Surrey's roads, especially in town centres, village centres, residential areas and near schools where local people want them. This is because lower speeds, especially where there are more people walking, wheeling, and cycling, will provide a range of benefits including:

- Reduced risk and severity of collisions, especially for people walking, wheeling and cycling
- Making places easier and more pleasant to walk, wheel and cycle
- Reduced noise and air pollution

16. Our new approach to 20 mph limits is presented in detail within the Surrey RoadSafe Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and has been developed with consideration to the following principles:

- Any new 20 mph speed limits should be supported by local people and local County Councillor(s).
- We do not advocate a blanket approach and recognise that some main roads could remain at 30 mph.
- We will only implement 20 mph speed limits that are predominantly self-enforcing to retain credibility with road users. Therefore we will use additional supporting measures where existing speeds are higher.
- There should be no expectation that Surrey Police would be required to provide additional enforcement across Surrey's road network over existing levels to make any new 20 mph limits work.
- Any new speed limit will be evaluated to check how successful it has been in reducing speeds, and if necessary further supporting measures will be considered to improve compliance.

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| <b>Consultation:</b> |
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17. The draft Surrey RoadSafe Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy presented in **ANNEX 1** was developed in collaboration with colleagues from Surrey Police,

the Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and National Highways.

18. A previous draft of the strategy was submitted to the Surrey RoadSafe Governance Board for their endorsement on 30 October 2023 with their comments and amendments incorporated into the latest draft presented in **ANNEX 1**.
19. There was a private meeting of the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee on 5 October 2023 to hear evidence from witnesses on different approaches to 20 mph speed limit policy.
20. The draft strategy as shown in **ANNEX 1** was also presented to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee on 4 December 2023 for scrutiny. The comments and views from that meeting will be provided to Cabinet for their consideration.
21. Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that the draft Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy, including the new 20 mph speed limit policy, be subject to a public and stakeholder consultation starting in January and running for 10 weeks to mid-March 2024. The results of the consultation and any recommended changes to the strategy and 20 mph policy will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration and final approval in Spring 2024. An outline plan of how the consultation will be undertaken is provided in **ANNEX 2**.

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| <b>Risk Management and Implications:</b> |
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22. The experience of other local authorities highlights public engagement and communications campaign work as being vital to explain the reasoning for implementing 20 mph speed limits and to assess and secure resident support for any proposed changes. This will also help improve compliance and the success of new 20 mph speed limits, likely reducing the demand for additional enforcement.
23. The implementation of 20 mph speed limits has proved popular in other local authority areas, so there is potential for an increased resident demand for lower speed limits in Surrey if the proposed policy is adopted. To manage any increased demand, requests will need to be prioritised in consultation with the Cabinet Member and local divisional member(s).
24. Experience elsewhere has shown that the impact on overall journey times following the introduction of 20 mph speed limits is minimal, with most of the delay occurring at junctions rather on the links (sections of road) between junctions. However it will be particularly important to assess the impacts on bus journey times, and where possible mitigate any adverse impacts with bus priority schemes.

## Financial and Value for Money Implications:

25. The consultation on the draft Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy will be undertaken within existing budgets and resources. Implementation of new highway road safety schemes, including new 20 mph speed limit schemes, will be undertaken using existing budgets or external funding. These funding opportunities will include, but are not limited to:

- Central road safety scheme budget
- Central road safety outside schools budget
- Funding from Active Travel England for cycling or walking schemes
- The Countywide Integrated Transport Scheme budget (following nomination and prioritisation of County Councillor nominated schemes)
- County Councillor individual highway allocations
- Local Street Improvements programme
- Major Transport Schemes
- Funding from new or amended developments as a condition of planning consent
- Community Infrastructure Levy

26. Following the public and stakeholder consultation and the planned approval of the final new 20 mph speed limit policy by Cabinet in the Spring, if resident desire for new 20 mph schemes is very high, there will potentially be a need to prioritise scheme delivery. If this does arise, a prioritised list of new 20 mph schemes will be agreed with the Cabinet Member, including the prioritisation methodology, noting the various funding sources available for highway improvements as set out above.

27. The Department for Transport publish the average value of prevention per reported casualty and per reported road collision for Great Britain every year, for use in cost benefit calculations. The most recent data published in September 2022 is presented in **TABLE 1** below.

28. In recent years, within Surrey there have been between 24 to 36 fatal collisions per year. The resulting estimated value of preventing these would be between £50million to £76million.

**Table 1: Average value of prevention per reported casualty and per reported road collision: Great Britain**

| <b>Severity</b>            | <b>Cost per casualty (£)</b> | <b>Cost per collision (£)</b> |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Fatal                      | 2,114,526                    | 2,342,203                     |
| Serious                    | 237,614                      | 270,421                       |
| Slight                     | 18,318                       | 27,320                        |
| Average for all severities | 83,752                       | 112,243                       |
| Damage only                | -                            | 2,522                         |

29. It can be seen that reductions in road collisions and casualties can result in large savings to society, though it should be noted that these savings do not necessarily accrue to the organisations undertaking the investment.

#### **Section 151 Officer Commentary:**

30. Significant progress has been made in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and the financial management capabilities across the organisation. Whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the increased cost of living, global financial uncertainty, high inflation and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to be forward looking in the medium term, as well as the delivery of the efficiencies to achieve a balanced budget position each year.

31. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.

32. The cost of implementing highway safety improvements including 20 mph speed limits will be considered alongside other priorities and funding within the Council's overall budget, as it develops its Medium Term Financial Strategy for approval.

#### **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:**

33. In the [Local Transport Plan 4](#) the County committed to developing a new road safety strategy for Surrey, building on the best practice Vision Zero and Safe Systems approach and the Vision Zero strategy will form a sub strategy of the Local Transport Plan 4.

34. While there is no legal requirement to have a Vision Zero road safety strategy, there is a legal duty under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for local highway authorities to:

- Prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety.
- Carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles.
- In light of those studies take measures to prevent road accidents (this includes advice and training, construction and improvement of roads); and
- In constructing new roads, take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to reduce the possibilities of such accidents when the roads come into use.

35. The report refers to the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety and the consequent Stockholm Declaration which is not a legally binding declaration but calls on nations to take steps to promote road safety. The UK Government have not adopted a Vision Zero strategy, but many local authorities have, as it is recognised as international best practice and advocated by leading road safety organisations.
36. With regards to implementing lower speed limits, highway authorities are empowered by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1988 to set speed limits on the highway.

**Equalities and Diversity:**

37. A full Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment is presented in **ANNEX 3**.
38. In summary it was noted that improvements in road safety and successful management of vehicle speeds will make it easier for people with mobility impairment to walk, wheel, cycle or ride horses. It will also make using roads safer for more vulnerable age groups such as children, older people, and pregnant women. There is also research evidence of a link between people from more deprived areas being at greater risk of road collisions, so a successful road safety strategy will provide a positive benefit to more deprived areas too.
39. Measures are in place to cater for SEND children, children in receipt of free school meals and with specific religious beliefs in the delivery of road safety training in schools so that they are not excluded due to religious festivals or clothing.
40. There could be a possibility that the journey times of buses might be negatively impacted by lower speed limits in urban areas, and this might have a negative impact on older and younger people who have a greater reliance on bus services. Therefore, we will assess any such impacts on a case-by-case basis and mitigate these with bus priority measures if necessary.

**Other Implications:**

41. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

| <b>Area assessed:</b>  | <b>Direct Implications:</b> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children                        | No significant implications |
| Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults | No significant implications |

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| Environmental sustainability and compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience | Road safety improvements and successful management of vehicle speeds can help to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution from internal combustion engines. It can also help to reduce emissions through encouraging more people to walk or cycle instead of using a motor vehicle. Fewer road collisions will also reduce the emissions deriving from road congestion that would otherwise occur following collisions. |
| Public Health   | Road safety improvements and successful management of vehicle speeds will contribute to making active travel (walking, cycling and push scooting) more attractive. A greater take up of these modes is healthier for individuals.<br>Successful management of vehicle speeds can also reduce emissions and improve air quality.  |

**What Happens Next:**

42. If approved by Cabinet, the draft Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy will be published for a public and stakeholder consultation commencing in January and running until mid-March 2024. The comments received will be analysed and a proposed final strategy, with amendments based on ‘what people said’ will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration and approval in Spring 2024.

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**Consulted:**

Surrey Police  
Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner  
Surrey Fire and Rescue Service  
National Highways  
Surrey County Council Public Health colleagues

**Annexes:**

Annex 1: Draft Surrey Roadsafe Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy  
Annex 2: Outline Consultation Plan

## Annex 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

### **Sources/background papers:**

Pedestrian safety in areas of deprivation - Report and review of the research, June 2021, RoSPA, Birmingham

<https://www.rospa.com/media/documents/road-safety/factsheets/Pedestrian-safety-in-areas-of-deprivation.pdf>

[www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk)

Road accidents and safety statistics - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

Local Transport Plan 4

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/policies-plans-consultations/transport-plan/your-travel/pedestrians>

Surrey Road Safety Strategy

Stockholm Declaration - RoadSafetySweden

[\(https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/about-the-conference/stockholm-declaration/\)](https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/about-the-conference/stockholm-declaration/)

Managing speeds on Surrey's roads - Surrey County Council ([surreycc.gov.uk](http://surreycc.gov.uk))

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-safety/safer-vehicle-speeds/managing-speeds-on-surreys-roads>

Road Crash Trauma, Climate Change, Pollution and the Total Costs of Speed: Six graphs that tell the story | GRSF ([roadsafetyfacility.org](http://roadsafetyfacility.org))

<https://www.roadsafetyfacility.org/publications/road-crash-trauma-climate-change-pollution-and-total-costs-speed-six-graphs-tell-story>

Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth Decisions - Monday, 27 June 2022.

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=637&MId=8699&Ver=4>

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