



OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT & HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE ON A REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL – 'MOTION ON VISION ZERO'

KEY ISSUE / DECISION:

1. To provide feedback from the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee on the Council motion titled 'Vision Zero' as referred by the Council.
2. This report sets out the conclusions of the Select Committee and invites Council to note that all of the points contained within the Original Motion on Road Safety and Vision Zero tabled on 21 March 2023 have been addressed.

BACKGROUND:

3. Will Forster submitted a motion to a meeting of the County Council held on 21 March 2023 on the topic of road safety and Vision Zero. It was resolved that this Motion be referred to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee for the purpose of consideration and making recommendations to the Cabinet or the Council for decision.
4. The motion asked the Council to embed a Vision Zero "Safe System" approach to reduce serious injuries and fatalities involving road traffic and to set a target for there to be zero casualties on Surrey Roads. Full text of the motion presented to the Council meeting on 21 March 2023 is as follows:

Will Forster (Woking South) to move under Standing Order 11 as follows:

This Council notes that:

- Road collision statistics in Surrey have hardly changed over the last ten years.
- In 2021 24 people were killed and 647 were seriously injured.
- The effects of a road traffic collision can have a physical, emotional, social and economic impact on everyone involved.

- In financial terms the cost of road collisions in Surrey was approximately £250 million in 2021.

This Council further notes that:

- Vision Zero is a set of principles and policies aimed at eliminating serious injuries and fatalities involving road traffic. It shifts responsibility for crashes from road users to the designers of the road system - if one occurs, it is up to authorities to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Vision Zero ambition has already been adopted by comparable authorities such as Essex, Kent and Oxfordshire County Councils.

This Council calls on the Cabinet to:

- I. Adopt a Vision Zero “Safe System” approach to road danger reduction.
- II. Work closely with partners and stakeholders to take a whole system approach, working together on infrastructure, behaviour, technology and legislation to achieve this change.
- III. Set a target date for there to be zero fatalities and severe injuries on Surrey’s roads.
- IV. Embed Vision Zero in all relevant Surrey County Council policies, including, but not limited to, implementing the fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4).
- V. Instruct officers to bring a paper to Cabinet within six months to address how these points will be achieved.

THE PROCESS:

5. According to the Surrey County Council constitution, Part 1 of the Standing Orders states that:

- When an original motion is referred to the Cabinet or appropriate committee under Standing Order 12.3, the Member of the Council who has moved the original motion and his/her seconder shall be notified of the meeting at which the Cabinet or committee will consider it. They shall have the right to attend the meeting and speak to the motion.
- Where an original motion is referred to the Cabinet or a committee, it will report upon the motion to the following ordinary meeting of the Council and Standing Order 8.8(b) shall not apply to such report.

6. The motion was referred to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee at the Council meeting on 21 March 2023 and considered formally by the Select Committee at its meeting on 4 December 2023.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ANALYSIS:

7. Following the referral, the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

- Scheduled *A New Road Safety Strategy for Surrey* at its July 2023 Committee session and held a range of informal discussions and meetings with service representatives on the original draft strategy encompassing a Vision Zero approach and new 20mph speed limit policy. This draft strategy was subsequently withdrawn by officers pending further work to understand the impact on key stakeholders and to address concerns around deliverability.
- Held a *special evidence gathering session on 5 October* to hear the views and experiences of key stakeholders and to learn from the experience of others in implementing new 20mph speed limit policies. This involved external stakeholders including the Police and representatives from the Campaign group 20s Plenty. The session was held in private to allow for frank and honest discussion.
- Arranged a full committee pre-meeting to consider the revised draft Strategy (*Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy*) which was shared with the Committee on 22 November and scheduled the Strategy to be considered by the Select Committee at its December public meeting alongside the Vision Zero Motion.
- Requested a service briefing report on the Motion and invited the proposer of the Motion to present their case at the Committee's public meeting on 4 December alongside consideration of the new draft *Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy*.

8. On 4 December 2023, the Select Committee heard from the proposer of the Motion, service representatives and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Economic Growth and considered in detail the New Draft Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and 20 mph Speed Limit Policy. In considering the Motion the Select Committee noted that:

- I. The new draft Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy was developed in collaboration with key partners and follows the best practice Safer Systems approach. It contains a vision and an interim target to work towards zero fatalities and serious injuries. The draft strategy is aligned with and supports the objectives of County Council's LTP4, Climate Change Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- II. All of the points contained within the Motion on Road Safety and Vision Zero tabled on 21 March 2023 have been addressed, albeit slightly later than the six-month deadline proposed in the motion.
- III. The new draft Strategy will be presented to Cabinet on 19 December 2023, seeking permission to proceed with public and stakeholder consultation beginning in January 2024 and running for ten weeks.
- IV. The proposer Cllr Will Forster was broadly supportive of the new strategy but expressed concerns about the length of the public consultation and the adequacy of funding to meet the policy.

9. In considering the new draft *Surrey RoadSafe Partnership Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy* the Committee noted the following key points:

- I. To realise the ambition of the Vision Zero road safety strategy to eliminate road deaths and casualties there needs to be an enhanced focus on *reducing speeds*. Nearly half of all Surrey's Road casualties (49%) are located on 30 mph speed limit roads most of which are in built up areas. In addition, 81% of pedestrian casualties and 69% of cycling casualties took place on 30 mph speed limit roads.
- II. One of the central aims of the new strategy is therefore 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 people want them. This will help reduce casualty numbers and the high number of pedestrian and cyclist casualties on Surrey roads.
- III. The proposed approach is pragmatic and designed to be flexible. Resident support for 20mph will need to be demonstrated and decision-making kept as local as possible. Blanket roll-out is not proposed.
- IV. The approach has been refined to address Police concerns that additional enforcement measures will place pressure on limited enforcement processing capacity and that a signed-only approach might not always be enough to change behaviour. The proposals set out in the new draft *Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy* are supported by the Fire and Police Service.
- V. Under the proposed new model, physical traffic calming measures will only be required where the mean average speed is 28mph or above. Below that 20mph can be implemented with light touch accompanying measures such as vehicle-activated signs (VAS) and carriageway roundels or *signed only 20mph* where the mean average speed is below 24mph. This is a change from the existing policy under which physical traffic calming measures are required above 24mph.
- VI. That a range of funding streams are available including additional funding of £2.5m for road safety, ITS scheme funding, and Members' highways maintenance allocations which are rising to £120k per annum. The exact size of public appetite and requirement is not yet clear however the expectation is that demand will be high.
- VII. That there is more work to be done to work out the detail of the local consultation and decision-making process and that officers accept the risk that this new process could prove lengthier than the existing one. Officers highlighted the importance of introducing 20mph limits where they have the support of local communities and the greatest chance of success without enforcement measures.

10. After detailed discussion and noting the responses to its key lines of enquiry, the Select Committee agreed the following conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

RESOLVED

That the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

- I. Notes that Surrey has some of the highest numbers of pedestrian and cycling road casualties of any local authority in Great Britain and welcomes the draft Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy aimed at reducing fatal and serious collisions to zero by 2050. Further Welcomes the collaborative approach that has been taken and that the Strategy has been developed in partnership with Surrey Police (including the Police and Crime Commissioner), Surrey Fire and Rescue and National Highway colleagues.
- II. Supports the new target for reducing collisions by 50% by 2035 (and to zero by 2050) and the new 20mph policy which allows greater flexibility to implement more 20mph speed limits across Surrey where they are supported locally. Further supports the principles underpinning the new approach including that:
 - The focus should be on reducing speeds in town centres, residential areas, village centres and near schools.
 - That any new speed limit must be supported by local people and the local County Councillor.
 - and that requirements or expectations for additional enforcement by Surrey Police should be carefully managed.
- III. Is concerned over the available funding to meet the demand to implement more 20mph speed limits which is likely to be high and asks that further work is done to review and clarify funding arrangements including the funding position for each County Councillor (who will be responsible for making the final decision on whether to proceed with schemes in his/her area under the new policy). This should take account of the Integrated Transport Scheme budget for County Councillors and other available sources. Consideration should be given to granting more flexibility to Councillors on how they choose to use their Members Highways Allocation.
- IV. Urges further work to clarify the process of local community engagement including how to determine adequate levels of engagement and support to approve a scheme plus the process for agreeing schemes with RoadSafe Partners, and how any conflict will be managed. Expresses concern that the approach set out might in fact prove more onerous than the existing one, making 20mph more rather than less difficult to achieve.
- V. Asks that clarity on this and the funding position above be brought back to the Committee in Spring/Summer 2024 following completion of the public consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

11. Based on its consideration of the issues as set out in this report, the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee recommends that Council:

- I. Note that all of the points contained within the Original Motion on Road Safety and Vision Zero tabled on 21 March 2023 have been addressed.
- II. Note that both proposer and Committee are broadly supportive of the revised strategy but that concerns remain specifically in relation to funding to meet the demand to implement more 20mph speed limits which is likely to be high, and over the process for local engagement and consultation which could prove lengthier than the existing approach and risks making 20mph more rather than less difficult to achieve.
- III. Notes that the Committee has made recommendations to Cabinet on these issues (as set out at paragraph 10) and invited officers to report back to the Committee at its April public session.

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Sources/background papers:

Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee Agenda – 4 December 2023

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee, 04/12/2023 10:00 \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

Council Agenda – 21 March 2023:

[Agenda item - ORIGINAL MOTIONS - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)