

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT & HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE

Item under consideration: Surrey RoadSafe Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy 2024 to 2035

Date Considered: 4 December 2023

The Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee received a report on the **New Draft Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and 20 mph Speed Limit Policy**. The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth.

In advance of receiving this report the Committee held a private 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. External stakeholders including the Police and representatives from the campaign group 20s Plenty were present. The session was held in private to allow for frank and honest discussion. A note of this session is included at the Annex.

In considering the new draft Road Safety Strategy and 20mph Speed Limit Policy, the Select Committee, inter alia, noted that:

1. To realise the ambition of the Vision Zero road safety strategy there 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. 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.
2. 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.

3. 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.
4. 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 are supported by the Fire and Police Service.
5. 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-activate 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.
6. A range of funding streams are available including additional funding of £2.5m for road safety, ITS scheme funding, and Members' highway 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.
7. 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.

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.

Johnathan Hulley

Chairman, Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE

PRIVATE COMMITTEE SESSION ON 20MPH

Item under consideration: NEW 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT POLICY FOR SURREY

Issue:

1. On 5th October the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee held a private information gathering session on the development of a new 20mph speed limit policy for Surrey.
2. The session was attended by Council Transport Officers, Cabinet Members, the Police and representatives of the campaign group *20s Plenty*. A written submission was provided by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service as well as input from the Police and Crime Commissioner. A list of attendees is provided at the Annex.
3. This report provides an overview of the discussion along with key findings and interim conclusions of the Select Committee.

Recommendation/Action:

- For the report to be circulated for information to relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.
- For the report to inform iCab consideration of the revised draft policy on 21 November 2023.

Findings:

4. Fatal and serious collisions have not reduced in Surrey over recent years. Surrey has among the highest number of pedestrian and cyclist road casualties of any local authority with the majority taking place on 30mph speed limit roads. In 2022 Surrey was the second worst in the country for deaths and serious injuries.
5. When collisions occur at 20mph 90% survive and at 30mph around 40% survive. There is good evidence that reducing vehicle speeds reduces the severity and impact of collisions and can help to encourage more walking, wheeling, and cycling.
6. 20mph speed limits form part of a wider Vision Zero and Safe System approach to road safety which incorporates 5 elements: Safe Speeds, Safe road users and behaviours, Safe roads and streets, post collision care and safe vehicles. The County Council (including SFRS), Surrey Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, and National Highways are collaborating to develop a new partnership road safety strategy.
7. Surrey's aim is to
 - develop a flexible and targeted approach with 20mph speed limits introduced where they are judged to be **credible** and successful at reducing speed, **appropriate** for the local highway and **supported locally**.
 - to focus 20mph in certain priority areas and types of locations such as schools and village centres (where also appropriate and locally supported).

- To introduce limits where a reduction in speed is credible and successful without the need for enforcement or significant supporting measures (although supporting measures will be necessary in some areas). “**Lower speeds in the right places**”:
8. Enforcement processing capacity is already stretched, and additional enforcement measures would place further pressure on limited resource. A commensurate increase in Roads policing resource or back-office processing capacity is unlikely in the current environment in the short to medium term.
 9. In the Police’s view enforcement measures such as static or mobile cameras should not be routine. 20mph should be self-enforcing / ‘self-policing’ as far as possible with limits introduced where they have the support of local communities and the greatest chance of success without enforcement measures. Concerns were expressed that a signed-only approach might not always be enough to change behaviour and that additional traffic calming or other environmental measures may be necessary to achieve reductions in speed where 20mph is introduced.
 10. Existing national ACPO speed enforcement guidelines recommend locations are surveyed after implementation to measure the success of speed reduction interventions. If unsuccessful, further consideration of suitable alternative measures should take place and be implemented until successful speed reduction is achieved. The Police continue to support this approach for signage supported by environmental changes such as road markings or traffic calming, where necessary.
 11. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service support a data-driven and evidence-led approach to introduction of 20 mph where appropriate based on a robust assessment of benefits and impacts. The impact of 20 mph speed limits on emergency response should be factored in including the speed emergency vehicles can travel and ease of progress where there are limited pass points in urban areas. Where implemented, the impact of 20 mph speed limits should be regularly reviewed and evaluated.
 12. There are benefits in taking a holistic approach to implementation which considers the surrounding area as opposed to implementation street by street, or in the immediate vicinity of a hospital or school. Risk and speeds may be higher on more peripheral and less congested routes such as the journey to school from a neighbouring residential area.
 13. ‘20s Plenty for Us’ supports local communities in asking for 20mph speed limits where people work, live, learn, shop and play. Having analysed what has worked in other parts of the UK including Scotland and Oxford, *20s Plenty* advocate:
 - An approach tailored for Surrey: Half of all Local Authorities in UK are committed to 20mph on most residential streets but all are taking a different approach. Important to find an approach that is appropriate for Surrey and which suits its unique mix of urban and rural communities.
 - Not a blanket approach but focused where there is community support.
 - Targeting a wider surrounding area, not just individual streets: Many of the benefits are to be found in reducing speeds and road traffic accidents on surrounding roads.
 - Making certain types of areas the norm for roll-out such as schools, town centres and residential streets, then working out the exceptions.
 - Setting a central budget for implementation.

14. Research shows that 20mph speed limits reliably reduce speeds even where they are signed-only, although not necessarily by the full amount (e.g. reductions of 2-6mph where speed limit is reduced from 30mph to 20mph); and that speeds reduce even without enforcement as one slower driver helps others to comply.

Committee Conclusions:

That the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee:

- I. Supports the current direction of travel in policy terms, specifically development of a flexible approach to the implementation of 20mph where credible, appropriate and supported locally.
- II. Supports the location-based approach with principles around the types of locations that should be considered as a priority for 20mph (e.g. schools, village centres)
- III. Notes that increasing enforcement of 20mph could place additional pressure on already stretched police road safety resource and back-office processing capacity and also on the courts.

JONATHAN HULLEY

Chairman of the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee

20MPH PRIVATE COMMITTEE SESSION ATTENDEES

- Assistant Chief Constable Sussex Police Simon Dobinson, Head of Operations Command (Joint with Surrey Police)
- Kevin Deanus, Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience
- Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth
- Katie Stewart, Executive Director for Environment, Transport and Infrastructure
- Paul Millin, Strategic Transport Group Manager
- Lucy Monie, Director, Highways and Transport
- Duncan Knox, Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager
- Adrian Berendt, 20s Plenty
- Alistair Bayliss, 20s Plenty
- CEH Select Committee Members: Catherine Baart, Stephen Cooksey, Jonathan Hulley (Chairman), Andy Macleod, Lance Spencer (Vice-Chairman), Steve Bax (Vice-Chairman), Richard Tear, Buddhi Weerasinghe, John Beckett

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