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**Decision Session – Executive Member for  
City Strategy**

**2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009**

Report of the Director of City Strategy

**Petitions for 20mph Speed Limits on Residential Roads**

**Summary**

1. To advise the Executive Member of the receipt of two petitions for 20mph speed limits on residential roads one on a city wide basis, the other in the South Bank area of the City. The background to city-wide 20mph speed limits was covered in the City Strategy EMAP report of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and reiterated in the EMAP report of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 this report does not repeat those arguments again, however the report does consider the development of a data led process for addressing requests for 20mph speed limits across the city.

**Recommendations**

2. The Executive Member is recommended to:
  - 1) Request officers to progress a list of potential sites for additional 20mph limit schemes and bring a subsequent report to Members setting out the process for allocating funding to requests for 20mph speed limits on residential roads
  - 2) Continue to address speed management issues under the current policy rather than introduce a city-wide 20mph scheme.
  - 3) Inform the lead petitioners of the outcome of the report.

Reason: To ensure that speed issues are addressed through a data led process that targets resources at casualty reduction but enables officers and Members the opportunity to gather data on the effect of 20mph speed limits and whether it would be appropriate to promote a city-wide scheme in the future.

**Background**

3. A petition containing 126 signatures in support of a 20mph speed limit (without traffic calming) on the residential streets in the South Bank area and a petition containing 73 signatures in support of a city-wide 20 mph speed limit on residential streets were referred from Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009. The City Strategy EMAP considered the background and arguments for and against such

a proposal at its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and it is not proposed to reiterate all those arguments again.

4. The main points from those reports are summarised here. Portsmouth City Council has implemented city-wide 20 mph speed limits on almost all its residential streets. The scheme was prepared as a result of a road safety initiative to reduce accidents. The scheme is designed to reduce speeds and create a culture where driving too fast in residential areas is seen as anti-social. It took two years to develop and was completed in two phases. The scheme covers 410 km of residential roads, approximately 1200 roads.
5. It would be possible to implement a scheme in York similar to that introduced in Portsmouth. It would have a wider impact than purely casualty reduction and support other policy areas such as cycling. However, such a scheme is not designed to reduce speeds on roads where the average speed is above 24 mph and, as result would not tackle a high percentage of the roads that are currently the subject of complaint and request. A significant proportion of accidents that occur on York's roads would not be resolved such as those occurring at junctions with classified roads. The introduction of a city-wide 20mph speed limit is likely to result in a less significant reduction than is at first apparent. From the recent sample of roads where speed surveys have been carried out, any scheme that was introduced in York would be on a smaller scale, as the number of roads meeting the average speed criteria appears to be lower. Traffic calming would be required on other roads where the average speed limit is currently over 24 mph, which would increase the cost of implementation.
6. The introduction of a city wide scheme would provide a consistent means of responding to requests and complaints about speed on residential roads. It would require criteria to be established that would identify 'residential' roads and would not apply to radial routes into the city centre or distributor roads.
7. It would possibly be in the same cost region as Portsmouth for a city-wide scheme, approximately £500,000 (although cost estimates have not been carried out) to address what are currently medium and low priority issues. It would not address speed issues on non-residential roads, where a significant proportion of casualties in York occur, in particular at junctions where clusters of accidents often occur. In addition it would not conform to the current policy in terms of capital expenditure targeted at specific high casualty sites.
8. The result of the Portsmouth scheme against casualty reduction has yet to be reported and it is not yet clear whether the city wide 20 mph speed limits have been effective at reducing casualties. The EMAP report recommended that a trial site should be identified for a 20mph speed limit area to identify whether such a scheme is appropriate and beneficial within York and that the current speed management plan continues to be implemented to target casualty reduction until such time as the outcome of the trial and the Portsmouth scheme are known.
9. Other towns and cities such as Oxford, Norwich and Newcastle are either actively pursuing the implementation of 20 mph speed limits on residential

roads or are considering implementation. It should be noted that successful legal issues have been raised at Portsmouth with regards to the legality of signage with the possibility of refunds of fines imposed and civil action against the Highways authority who are legally responsible for the imposition of the limit.

## **Response to the Petition**

10. No significant alterations to policy have occurred to implement a city-wide 20 mph speed limit on residential roads since Members considered the issue on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008. At that meeting Members decided to implement a trial within York and await the outcome of the local trial and the Portsmouth city-wide scheme before deciding whether wider implementation is appropriate within York. The speed surveys have been undertaken on the streets within Fishergate and consultation undertaken. The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is due to be advertised in the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and assuming that there are no objections to the TRO the appropriate signing will be implemented.
11. The current speed management policy concentrates resources on roads that have a proven accident record in order to focus on casualty reduction, a key government target. In the past City Strategy EMAP considered the speed management policy and determined what measures are appropriate on those roads where surveys indicate that the average speed of vehicles exceeds the speed limit.
12. In addition the Council is currently working with the 95 Alive partnership on a project to determine whether the introduction of speed cameras (including mobile cameras) would further reduce casualties on York's roads. It is acknowledged that 20mph speed limits have wider implications than purely speed and casualty reduction (paragraph 5 above).
13. As part of a growth bid for 2009/10 Members agreed to allocate £30,000 to implement 20mph speed limits on residential roads in York. It was agreed at the City Strategy EMAP meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 that officers would, in conjunction with North Yorkshire Police, compile a list of suitable sites where 20mph limits could be introduced. The sites will be based on a set of criteria, (currently being defined) to enable Members to determine where additional sites could be introduced in the future. This process will add to the data being collected to enable decisions about 20mph speed limits on residential roads to be made at a point in the future.
14. A working group including officers and North Yorkshire Police met on 24<sup>th</sup> April to discuss criteria for establishing a suitable location. It was agreed that in the first instance roads and areas with a casualty record should be targeted first and mapping of casualties against residential areas without any traffic calming is currently being undertaken. Once the extent of areas that fall into this category are known the group will consider whether additional criteria are required and what those criteria might be. It is proposed to bring another report setting out the criteria and process for allocating funding to the Executive Member Decision Session later in the summer.

15. The police are working closely and supportively with the Council in implementing suitable 20mph limits, however due to restricted resources, they are concerned that any schemes would need to be robust and self enforcing.

## **Consultation**

16. In relation to 20mph speed limits, North Yorkshire Police have indicated that they would like to work with officers to develop a list of areas where a 20mph limits would be appropriate and have the potential to have a positive effect on reducing casualties and vehicle speed.
17. No comments have been received so far from Ward Councillors. Any comments from Ward Councillors or lead Members will be presented at the meeting.

## **Options**

18. Option 1 – Complete a list of potential future 20mph sites and the criteria against which they will be determined and assessed.
19. Option 2 – Do not compile a list of potential future sites and allocate the funding available on the basis of petition requests.

## **Analysis**

20. Option 1 – Enables forward planning to take place and provides a structure within which to assess any requests received by the Council for implementation prior to the outcome of the trial in Fishergate
21. Option 2 – Allocates the funding to areas where residents request action to be taken but funding is not allocated on a data-led basis.

## **Corporate Priorities**

22. A data led approach of assessing road safety issues and prioritising schemes meets the Council's corporate priorities to create a Safer City. It also supports the aims and objectives of the Road Safety Strategy as part of the Second Local Transport Plan.

## **Implications**

23. There are no Financial, Legal, Human Resources, Equalities, IT, Property or other implications envisaged.

## Crime and Disorder

24. Speeding is a criminal offence and the Council has a responsibility to deliver an effective Speed Management Strategy.

## Risk Management

25. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, no significant risks have been identified arising from the recommendations.

## Contact Details

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Report Approved



Date

19.05.09

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** *List information for all  
Implication ie Financial* *Implication ie Legal*

Wards Affected: All

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

### Background Papers:

EMAP report Petition for 20mph speed limits on residential roads in Fishergate Ward  
14<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

**Annexes:** None