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

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

Report of the Director of City Strategy

**A19 FULFORD ROAD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS**

**REQUEST FOR 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT FRONTING FISHERGATE AND ST GEORGE'S SCHOOLS**

**Summary**

1. This report deals with requests for a 20 mph speed limit on the section of Fishergate fronting Fishergate and St George's Schools as part of the planned improvements to this section of the A19 Fulford Road corridor.
2. The report notes that the outline improvement scheme for this section of the corridor was considered at the City Strategy Decision Session (City Strategy EMDS) meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. Following representations to the meeting, the Executive Member decided that the scheme should include a 20mph speed limit on the section fronting the two schools. The report also notes that a petition with 267 signatures calling for the introduction of a 20mph limit outside Fishergate and St George's Schools was subsequently presented to Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 by Fishergate ward councillors on behalf of residents.
3. The report reviews national guidelines on the use of 20 mph speed limits and the development of a 20 mph speed limit policy for York, including a report to the City Strategy EMDS meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011. It notes that the Fishergate / Fulford Road corridor is a major arterial route to and from the city centre as well as a key route for the emergency services and, as such, the schemes do not include any physical traffic calming measures. It also notes that, whilst current Department for Transport (DfT) and City of York Council (CYC) guidelines support the provision of 20 mph speed limits outside schools, they do not support 20mph speed limits on the major road network.
4. The report then reviews and analyses the results of speed surveys carried out at four locations between Cemetery Road and Fishergate School. It outlines the resultant 20 mph speed limit scheme that has been developed in consultation with the Executive Member and Fishergate ward councillors. The proposed scheme covers the section of Fishergate between The Lighthorseman and Escrick Street and encompasses the two schools and adjacent side roads.
5. The report then summarises feedback from consultation on the scheme and advertising of the associated traffic orders, and seeks a decision as to whether

to implement the proposed 20mph speed limit scheme with or without amendments.

## **Recommendations**

6. The Executive Member for City Strategy is requested to:

a) Note the contents of this report and its annexes.

b) Note the options presented and indicate which option to progress.

Reason: To address safety issues and improve conditions on this part of the corridor.

## **Background**

7. The former Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel (City Strategy EMAP) and this City Strategy EMDS have previously considered a number of reports on proposed improvements to the A19 Fulford Road corridor. As a result major improvements have been implemented between Cemetery Road and Heslington Lane with some minor improvements further south.
8. Attention has now switched to the section of the corridor from the Cemetery Road junction northwards and the City Strategy EMDS meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 considered a report on proposed improvements to this section. Representations were made to that meeting requesting that a 20mph speed limit be included on the section fronting Fishergate and St George's Schools as part of any scheme. The Executive Member agreed that the outline proposals should form the basis of the improvement schemes with a recommendation that these should include a 20mph speed limit fronting Fishergate and St George's Schools.
9. Subsequently a petition with 267 signatures calling for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit outside Fishergate and St George's Primary Schools was presented to Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 by Fishergate ward councillors on behalf of residents.
10. An improvement scheme has now been developed for the section between Cemetery Road and Escrick Street. Consultation on that scheme has been carried out in tandem with consultation on the proposed 20mph speed limit scheme. As the Fishergate / Fulford Road corridor is a major arterial route to and from the city centre as well as a key route for the emergency services, the scheme does not include any physical traffic calming measures.
11. The improvement scheme was considered at an Officer In Consultation (OIC) meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2011 to enable the works to be put in hand whilst the road is closed for Yorkshire Water's sewer repairs. However a decision on the associated 20mph speed limit scheme was deferred to be considered at this City Strategy EMDS meeting. The Director and Executive Member gave general approval to commence works on the improvement scheme. However to appease the concerns of the ward councillors, widening of the eastern footway between Winterscale Street and Fishergate School, which would result in a loss

of substandard width cycle lanes, would be deferred pending a decision on the 20mph speed limit.

## **Review of 20mph Speed Limit Guidelines**

### **National Guidance**

12. Department for Transport (DfT) circular 01/06 states “successful 20mph zones and speed limits should generally be self enforcing”. With this in mind it is suggested by the DfT that only streets with a mean speed of 24mph or less are considered for 20mph speed limits. This is because signed only 20mph speed limits are proven to reduce speeds by only a small amount.
13. Recent trials of signed only 20mph speed limits in Portsmouth indicated that for the group of sites monitored with average speeds of 24mph or more before the scheme was introduced, the average speed reduction was 6.3mph.
14. This has led to revised intermediate guidance issued in December 2009 prior to the forthcoming revision of circular 01/06 which does not place as much emphasis on 20mph speed limits being only applied to streets with a mean speed of less than 24mph. The guidance is somewhat more relaxed and does offer greater flexibility, however the revised guidance letter does state:

“We want to encourage highway authorities, over time, to introduce 20 mph zones or limits into:

  - streets which are primarily residential in nature; and into
  - town or city streets where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high, such as around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas; where these are not part of any major through route.”
15. There is therefore a desire from central government to see greater use of 20mph limits or zones, but not on major through routes. The obligation to ensure that there is no expectation placed upon the police to carry out enforcement above their routine activity is still present and this still suggests that signed only 20mph speed limits should only be applied to streets with a relatively low mean speed.
16. The DfT guidance does however suggest that variable speed limits using appropriate variable message signs may be particularly relevant where a school for example is located on a road that is not suitable for a regular 20mph zone or limit, for example a major through route. This has been considered in York and elsewhere, however the general consensus is that this is only feasible on a short section of road without side roads as otherwise additional expensive variable message signs would be required if the scheme is to be legally compliant and enforceable.

## Local Guidance

17. Prior to 2009, the 20mph policy in York was to introduce traffic calmed 20mph zones where appropriate, e.g. outside schools, local shops or play areas. More recently a trial 20mph speed limit scheme using signs only was implemented in the nearby Grange Street area of Fishergate and another trial will be implemented shortly in a larger area in South Bank.
18. The current policy on 20mph speed limits, which was re-affirmed at the last City Strategy EMDS on 1<sup>st</sup> February, is to prioritise requests and petitions into a list based upon: the proportion of households signing a petition; number of accidents in the area; the road being residential or mixed priority; the average speed being below 24mph; and any wider benefits associated with walking and cycling. These suggestions and petitions are currently being progressed when funding is available. (Note: The decisions in relation to this item have now been called in for consideration at the SMC (Calling In) meeting on 28 February 2011.)

## Review of Speed Survey Data

19. Speed surveys have been carried out at four locations between Cemetery Road and Escrick Street for five consecutive days from the 12<sup>th</sup> October until 17<sup>th</sup> October 2010. The locations of the speed surveys are indicated on a plan at **Annex A**. A summary of the observed speed data is attached at **Annex B**.
20. The results show that city-bound mean daytime speeds at Sites 1 and 2 on the section between Cemetery Road and New Walk Terrace are in the order of 26 to 27mph but increase in the evening and overnight. Outbound mean speeds are nearer 30mph or higher near New Walk Terrace and 26 to 28 mph near Cemetery Road junction increasing overnight.
21. The mean speeds at Sites 3 and 4 on the section fronting both of the schools are lower. Day-time city-bound mean speeds are around the 24 mph level in the vicinity St George's School and 17 mph in the vicinity of Fishergate School, where the nearby "Give Way" slows approaching traffic. Day-time outbound mean speeds are in the order of 24mph at both sites. Speeds increase in the evening and overnight when traffic flows drop off.
22. Based on the above and the DfT guidelines, a 20mph speed limit between Cemetery Road and New Walk Terrace is unlikely to be self-enforcing without additional speed reduction measures as the current mean speeds on the section appear to exceed 24mph at all times.
23. However a 20mph speed limit on the section fronting the two schools would be more likely to be respected during the day without the need for traffic calming measures. At night-time, or other times when flows are low, there would however be an increased risk of a 20mph speed limit being ignored.

## Proposed 20mph Speed Limit Scheme

24. As the Fishergate / Fulford Road corridor is a major route to and from the city centre as well as a key route for the emergency services, the improvement

scheme does not include any physical traffic calming measures. It does however include proposals to provide reduced and consistent traffic lane widths to encourage drivers to maintain a safe speed.

25. Based on the existing speed data, for a 20mph speed limit scheme to stand a reasonable chance of being self-enforcing, it should initially only extend from The Lighthorseman to Escrick Street which would encompass the two schools and local shops. Consideration was given to the southern end of the scheme being located south of the Grange Garth / New Walk Terrace junction to protect the junction however it would not be practical to provide adequate signing in view of the proximity of parked vehicles.
26. If the 20 mph speed limit only covered the main road, the adjoining side roads would each need large change of speed limit signs. It is therefore sensible and logical to include the adjacent side roads in the proposed 20mph speed limit scheme. For consistency Escrick Street, which is immediately adjacent to Fishergate School, and New Walk Terrace, which would otherwise be the “odd man out”, are included in the proposed scheme though these will need change of speed limit signs as they will adjoin sections of road that will remain as 30mph. All the side roads are relatively short cul-de-sacs and, based on observations and the data from the trial area to the south, vehicle speeds are unlikely to exceed 20 mph so the limits should be self-enforcing.
27. As noted above, whilst DfT and local guidance supports 20mph speed limits outside schools and shops, the support tends to exclude major through routes. Consideration has been given to a part-time speed limit, as recommended by the DfT, however this would be expensive to implement with potential legal and operational difficulties.
28. Discussions were held with the ward councillors and the Executive Member who agreed that the scheme shown in the attached **Annex C** should form the basis of the scheme for public consultation. The plan also shows the nearby existing 20mph speed limits and zones.
29. The plan shows that Melbourne Street would be converted from a 20mph zone to a 20mph speed limit. The only change would be in the signing at either end as the traffic calming and speed limit would remain the same. This change would however avoid the potentially confusing situation of trying to sign 20mph zones within or immediately adjacent to 20mph speed limits.

## **Consultation**

30. Details of the proposed 20mph speed limit scheme were included in an information leaflet on the proposed improvement scheme which went to about 550 properties in the related area.
31. Copies of the speed limit traffic order notice and plan were published in the local press and erected on site. In addition, letters with copies of the speed limit notice attached were delivered to all properties directly affected by the proposed 20mph speed limit scheme and copies of the notice. The leaflet and the notice gave information as to the correct procedure should anybody wish to lodge an objection to the proposals.

32. Whilst the proposed scheme meets a lot of the national and local guidance, in particular as regards the two schools, the local shops, and the adjacent residential areas, it is on a main road which goes against current national and local guidance. As such officers have some concerns regarding its potential impact on the network and, if it is decided that the scheme should be implemented, it will need to be carefully monitored and its effects evaluated before any decision is made to extend it or to implement similar schemes elsewhere.

### **Comments of North Yorkshire Police**

33. The North Yorkshire Police have been consulted on the proposed 20mph speed limit and associated improvement scheme. As it is not possible to provide the sort of facilities for cyclists on this section that have recently been provided on Fulford Road to the south, they support the aim to provide an environment whereby motorists and cyclists can safely share the same road space.
34. They welcome the proposed improvements in principle, other than the 20mph speed limit, but are not convinced as to the safe feasibility of the project, with regards to the benefits to pedestrians in general and those going to and from the schools in particular.
35. Whilst they have no concerns about the proposed 20 mph speed limit on the adjacent side roads, they have the following concerns about the proposed 20mph speed limit on Fishergate:
- The imposition of a 20mph speed limit on a main arterial road such as this, is in direct contradiction to DfT guidance Circular 01/2006 and TAL 09/99.
  - The 85th% speed data obtained for Fishergate is high for the current, 30mph, speed limit. The 85th% speeds do not fit DfT guidance for the setting of 20mph speed limits and the new limit is likely to fail.
  - Fishergate is a main road and a key response route for the Police and Fire Service who may well have to be travel at speeds well in excess of 20mph. This has the potential to lead to complaints against the respective organisations and give the impression that they do not support or are ignoring the 20mph speed limits, which is not the case.
  - There will be a mismatch between pedestrians and motorists and the environment will be less safe.
  - The Police have concerns that the non-compliance rate will be high, in particular when traffic flows are low.
  - The Police consider that physical traffic calming measures may be required to ensure compliance with the speed limit and which could not be put in place as it would breach DfT guidance and the CYC's own policy.
36. The Police formally object to the making of a 20mph speed limit in Fishergate and the stance of the police is that should the 20mph speed limit be imposed despite those objections then the police understanding would be that:
- The relevant traffic authority for the highway concerned is responsible for the management of that highway.

- The imposition of any 20 mph speed limit is made with due regard to the traffic authorities responsibility under the relevant legislation and will comply with DfT guidance.
  - The assumption of North Yorkshire Police is that if correctly placed, the speed limit will be self enforcing and the relevant traffic authority are fully responsible for ensuring that it meets those aims.
  - With due regard to the obligations of the traffic authority, North Yorkshire Police will not undertake any routine speed enforcement on any highway that has a 20 mph limit imposed.
  - It will be the duty of the relevant traffic authority to put into place corrective speed reduction measures if that limit fails.
37. It is the expectation of the North Yorkshire Police for the highways authority to discharge its legal responsibilities for the management of the highway. Therefore, they would expect the said highway authority to impose any 20mph speed limits with due regard to the DfT guidance and ensure that any imposition of such a limit results in vehicles travelling at an appropriate speed along that road.

### **Public Objections**

38. The public objection period ends on Friday 18 February 2011, which is after this report is finalised. There have been three objections received to date. Should we receive any further objections these will be reported in an addendum and / or at the meeting.
39. One objection has been received from a resident of the Broadway area of Fishergate ward who works locally, has a child at Fishergate school, and often walks, drives, and cycles along Fishergate. He is also a Member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists who takes a keen interest in road safety issues. Whilst he supports the introduction and expansion of 20mph speed limits in the side streets around Fishergate, he thinks that imposing such a limit on the main A19 Fishergate would actually increase, rather than reduce, the risk of accidents. He offers the following reasons:
- At the times when children are arriving and leaving the schools, the volume of traffic means that speeds are already low and the 20mph speed limit is unlikely to have an effect on vehicle speeds at those times.
  - Outside of the school hours and when the traffic is lighter, allowing higher speeds, a 20mph limit would have little credibility. This could in turn lead to dangerous overtaking manoeuvres which would be inherently dangerous.
  - He refers to the old DfT Advisory Notice 9/99 and is concerned that, with the short length of 20mph speed limit, there is a risk that vehicles heading south might speed up on leaving the 20mph limit, where children will be approaching or leaving school.
40. The second objection is from a resident of New Walk Terrace who opposes in the strongest possible terms the proposals to create 20mph side streets in the Fishergate area. He considers that any change is unnecessary as there has never been an accident and it is difficult, if not impossible, to drive down these side roads at higher than 20mph. He is concerned about the visual intrusion of

20mph signs across the area. He also considers that the proposed 20mph outside the schools in Fishergate itself does not justify the investment. As an aside he wants the signs in the Grange Street / Grange Garth area removed

41. The third objection is from a couple who live in Grange Garth who also object to the existing and proposed 20mph speed limit schemes in the cul-de-sacs. They consider that the extension of 20mph for all 6 cul-de-sacs would adversely affect the environment and damage the New Walk Conservation Area. They say that it has never been possible to exceed 20mph in these streets due to on-street parking and, in their opinion, they have the adverse impact of the signage for absolutely no benefit or betterment.

#### **Other Public Comments**

42. Both Fishergate and St George's Primary Schools strongly support the proposed 20mph speed limits. The petition with 267 signatures, which was presented to Full Council in July 2010, indicates strong support for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, as does subsequent public feedback.
43. A number of people who support the proposed 20mph speed limits have requested that the 20mph on the main road should extend southwards to the Grange Street / Cemetery Road junction area.

#### **Officers Comments**

44. As noted earlier in the report, whilst this section of Fishergate meets many of the criteria for a 20mph speed limit or zone, it is on a major access route to and from the city centre. As such it does not fully meet the current guidelines for a 20mph speed limit but the latest national guidelines do not prevent consideration of a 20mph speed limit. However as it is on a key route for the emergency services it would be inappropriate to consider physical traffic calming measures as part of the scheme.
45. There is strong support for the 20mph speed limit on Fishergate and, if approved, its effect would be closely monitored. This would give a good indication of the suitability of the speed limit and the appropriateness of extending it to the Grange Street / Cemetery Road junction and / or implementing 20mph speed limits on similar roads elsewhere.
46. New Walk Terrace is the only road where 20mph signs or repeaters could be required in a conservation area. As it would initially at least connect to a 30mph section of main road it would need the gateway signs as exist on Grange Garth and Grange Street. Officers would look at relocating the existing Grange Garth signs to serve both Grange Garth and New Walk Terrace if New Walk Terrace is part of the approved scheme. New Walk Terrace could be deleted from the 20mph speed limit scheme, however it would potentially become an isolated side road on which 30mph was permitted.
47. Escrick Street would also require gateway speed limit signs but these could well replace the existing school warning signs. This road is adjacent to Fishergate School, who strongly support the proposed improvements and the proposed 20mph speed limits.



48. If Sandringham Street, Marlborough Grove, Blue Bridge Lane, and Winterscale Street were to be excluded from the proposed 20mph speed limit there would be the illogical situation of 30mph side roads accessed from a 20mph main road. In addition we would be obliged to erect large gateway signs on new poles at the entry to each side road as opposed to a small repeater sign (if required) attached to an existing post or lamp column. As such excluding these side roads, as proposed in two of the objections, would directly result in additional large signs which the objectors dislike and which officers are trying to avoid or minimise.
49. As noted in an earlier section of this report, existing vehicle speeds on the section between Cemetery Road and The Lighthorseman are higher than on the section between The Lighthorseman and Escrick Street (Fishergate School). As such the proposed scheme only covers the latter section which encompasses the two schools. Extending the scheme southwards towards Grange Street / Cemetery Road could be considered as a second stage, subject to further monitoring.

## Options

The options for the Executive Member to consider are:

50. **Option 1** is to implement the 20 mph speed limit scheme as proposed and shown on **Annex C**.
51. This is the option to choose if the Executive Member supports the scheme and feels that the comments and objections do not require the proposed scheme to be amended. There is strong local support for the scheme and it meets many of the national and local guidelines. However part of it is located on a main road which goes against current national and local guidance.
52. **Option 2** is to implement the 20mph speed limit scheme with amendments to suit any comments or objections.
53. This would be the option to choose if the Executive Member considers that the comments and objections warrant changes to the proposed scheme. Potential amendments the Executive Member may wish to consider are:
  - (a) Not to implement the proposed 20mph on Fishergate if he considers that a 20mph speed limit on this road is inappropriate: and / or
  - (b) Not to implement a 20mph speed limit on New Walk Terrace if he considers that a 20mph speed limit on this road is inappropriate.
54. **Option 3** is not to implement the scheme.
55. This would be the option to choose if the Executive Member considers that it would be inappropriate to introduce a 20mph speed limit on a main road and on the adjacent side roads.

## Implementation

56. If approved the 20mph scheme would be implemented in conjunction with the associated improvement scheme on which works have commenced.

## Corporate Priorities

57. The 20mph speed limit should help contribute to the following elements of the Corporate Strategy.
- **Sustainable City** – The improvements along the corridor aim to provide improved pedestrian and cycling facilities to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and reduces the impact on the environment. The introduction of a 20mph speed limit, in particular on a section of main road where there is not space to provide cycle lanes, should provide additional benefits.
  - **Safer City** – The improvements along the corridor aim to improve safety, in particular for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The introduction of a 20mph speed limit should provide additional safety benefits.
  - **Inclusive City** – The improvements along the corridor should encourage more walking, cycling and use of public transport. Improved footways and crossing facilities will benefit the young and the elderly as well as the mobility and visually impaired. The introduction of a 20mph speed limit should provide additional benefits to these groups of people.
  - **Healthy City** – The improvements along the corridor will help with improving the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York by providing facilities to encourage walking and cycling and by helping to reduce air pollution in key areas, as well as improving the actual and perceived condition of the city's streets. The introduction of a 20mph speed limit should help achieve these aims.

## Implications

This report has the following implications:

- **Financial**
58. The estimated cost of implementing the proposed 20 mph speed limit scheme as part of the overall improvement scheme is £10k. Funding is available from the multi-modal schemes element of the 2010-2011 City Strategy Capital Programme.
- **Human Resources**
59. There are no foreseen implications.

- **Equalities**

60. There are no foreseen implications.

- **Legal**

61. The City of York Council, as highway authority for the area, has powers under the following Acts and associated Regulations to implement improvements to the highway and any associated measures:

- The Highways Act 1980
- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- The Road Traffic Act 1988

- **Crime and Disorder**

62. As the Fishergate / Fulford Road corridor is a main arterial route and a key route for the emergency services, the 20 mph speed limit will not be accompanied by any physical traffic calming measures. The Police have indicated that they will not have resources to carry out additional speed enforcement and, as such, the scheme will need to be self-enforcing.

- **Information Technology**

63. There are no foreseen implications.

- **Property**

64. There are no foreseen implications.

## **Risk Management**

65. The proposed speed limit is on a main road and there will be no physical measures to make it self-enforcing. As such the main risk is that some motorists may ignore the speed limit at certain times of the day leading to requests for enforcement, traffic calming measures, or even the removal of the speed limit.

66. However if the scheme is successful it could lead to requests to be extended southwards to Cemetery Road and for similar schemes to be implemented elsewhere in York. This scheme will need to be carefully monitored and evaluated to inform any future requests and decisions.

67. Speeds will be monitored and the Executive Member kept apprised of the findings.

## **Member comments**

68. As noted earlier in the report, Fishergate ward councillors (Councillors D'Agorne and Taylor) have been involved in discussions on the extent of the proposed

20mph speed limit scheme. Councillor D'Agorne, who is also Leader of the Green Party has the following comments:

69. "Whilst initially disappointed that the section from Grange Garth to Cemetery Road has not been advertised for inclusion in the 20mph limit, I understand the reasoning and would strongly support the implementation as recommended for Fishergate from Escrick Street to New Walk Terrace including all the side streets to form a logical 20mph area. I am very supportive of the intention to complete the footway widening works while the road is closed for sewer repairs and see the 20mph limit as an integral part of this project to enhance safety in this area with two primary schools, local shops and a pub.
70. In determining a 20mph limit for this area I would ask that speeds on the Grange Garth to Cemetery Road section are monitored at intervals over the next year to see whether lower speeds might allow a southward extension in the future."
- 71 The comments of Councillors Merrett and Gillies are awaited and will be reported to the meeting.

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Report Approved



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**Wards Affected:** Fishergate

All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

### Background Papers:

A19 Fulford Road and Fishergate  
Gyratory Improvement Studies  
20mph Speed Limits: Your City Results  
and an Update on Policy Development

City Strategy EMDS – 1 June 2010  
City Strategy EMDS – 1 February 2011

### Annexes

Annex A Location of speed surveys  
Annex B Summary of observed speed data  
Annex C Proposed 20 mph speed limit scheme