
Decision Session
Executive Member for City Strategy

6th April 2010

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Petitions for 20mph speed limits on residential roads in York

Summary

1. To advise the Executive Member of the progress towards prioritisation of a number of petitions and requests for 20mph speed limits and to set out the proposed response to a number of petitions.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member for City Strategy is recommended to:
 - a) Agree the prioritised list of petitions and requests
 - b) Agree to progress the next four schemes on the list through the 2010/11 capital programme, which are: Holly Bank area, Westminster Road, Low Poppleton Road and Millfield Lane.
 - c) Note that the second stage LTP3 consultation will contain a question on 20mph speed limits.

Reason: To enable a response to petitions to be progressed and a number of 20mph speed limit schemes to be developed for implementation during 2010/11 as part of the capital programme.

Background

3. In December 2009 a report was presented to the Executive Member Decision Session (EMDS) setting out a set of criteria for prioritising the petitions and requests for 20mph speed limits on residential roads in York.
4. The prioritisation is to be considered against, at least 50% of households within the street have signed the petition, the occurrence of an injury accident during the previous three years, of any severity or road user, average speed on the road must be 24mph or below, the road must be a 'residential' or 'mixed priority' road within the context of the speed management plan and where wider benefits associated with increasing walking and cycling could be expected e.g. cycle facilities are available or planned. Officers have also used

the presence of a school, shopping area or play area to assist in the prioritisation.

5. A number of petitions have been received requesting 20mph speed limits in areas across York. Five petitions were presented at Council on 9th July 2009 requesting 20mph on streets across York. The first petition relates to Newlands Drive (signed by 77 residents); the second relates to Nunmill Street (signed by 40 residents); the third relates to Scarcroft Hill (signed by 44 residents); the fourth relates to Lidgett Grove (signed by 13 residents) and the fifth petition is a request for a citywide 20mph signed by 65 residents. None of these petitions with the exception of Nunmill Street were submitted with 50% household support.
6. The December EMDS report recommended that the petitions in paragraph 5 were included in the prioritised list and brought back to a future Decision Session meeting. Nunmill Street and Scarcroft Hill are being addressed through the South Bank 20mph trial, proposed at the December EMDS and agreed at an Officer in Consultation meeting on 23rd February 2010. Newlands Drive was discussed in the report in relation to a suggestion of increased traffic flows and speeds. Whilst traffic flows had not increased and average traffic speeds were recorded at between 19-21mph it was agreed that Newlands Drive should be considered as part of a wider area with Lidgett Grove and four other petitions, which have recently been presented at Council (see paragraph 7).
7. A further five petitions were presented at Council on 15th October 2009 and relate to Ouseburn Avenue (signed by 22 residents); Millgates (signed by 27 residents), Viking Road (signed by 13 residents) and Low Poppleton Lane, signed by 8 residents (note that this is not the same as households). These petitions are to be considered as part of a wider area with Newlands Drive and Lidgett Grove. In addition a petition for the Holly Bank area signed by 107 residents was also presented on 15th October. None of these petitions achieved 50% household support.
8. Petitions for Cranbrook Road signed by 29 residents and Beckfield Lane signed by 36 residents were presented at Council on 3rd December 2009. Neither Cranbrook Road nor Beckfield Lane petitions achieved a 50% household support rate. In addition part of Beckfield Lane already has a 20 mph limit (enforced by traffic calming).
9. The development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and the various stages of consultation to be undertaken as part of the process was presented to EMDS on 2nd March 2010. The second stage of the city-wide consultation is due to be distributed in Your City at the beginning of April and will include a question on 20mph speed limits on residential streets in York to enable a more coherent and proactive policy for addressing 20mph limits to be developed.

Prioritising petitions and requests

10. The prioritised list is meant to be a working document and as such will change over time as other petitions and requests are assessed. Not all the requests and petitions received so far have been assessed. The December report to EMDS agreed that petitions would be included in the list of schemes to be prioritised against the agreed criteria rather than dealt with separately. The list of petitions received and requests made to the Council is contained in Annex A. Annex A contains the table setting out the latest prioritised position based on available information. The number and severity of casualties together with the speed data has been used as the primary criteria for assessment. Only two petitions received so far have been submitted with at least 50% of household supporting the proposal. Clearly there is an element of judgement included in the assessment as there are a number of criteria to be balanced. Those with recorded accidents have been given priority and those with no accidents and less than 50% support are lower down the prioritisation.
11. In order, top of the current list is the South Bank area which has been agreed for implementation. Holly Bank area has two recorded casualties although it does not have 50% household support on submission. Westminster Road was agreed at the EMDS on 1st September 2009 when consideration was given to the Westminster Road petitions. Low Poppleton Lane has 50% household support and has had one slight casualty in the last three years and is adjacent to Millfield Lane which has had one serious and one slight accident although it has neither 50% household support nor is it the subject of a petition.
12. The capital programme includes an allocation to be used for a speed limit review, progressing outcomes from the speed review process and 20mph speed limit schemes. The estimated costs of implementing these schemes, including consultation, advertising the TRO and signing are as follows:
 - South Bank area £45,000
 - Holly Bank area £3500
 - Westminster Road £750 (to be implemented using Network Management budget for signing, lining and traffic regulation orders)
 - Low Poppleton Lane/ Millfield Lane £2600

Petitions

13. The petitions for Newlands Drive, Lidgett Grove and Ouseburn Avenue request a reduced speed limit. The covering letter suggests that these roads have experienced rat-running and increased vehicle speed resulting from the alterations to the junction at Beckfield Lane/Boroughbridge Road. The traffic data for Newlands Drive reported to December 2009 EMDS showed that through traffic had not increased. The average vehicle speeds on all these roads is below 24mph, further detail is provided in Annex B. Before data for

Ouseburn Avenue and Lidgett Grove, regarding through traffic, was not collected as it was not anticipated that traffic would divert to use these roads. Some vehicle flow data was obtained from the week -long speed survey. This is shown below:

	Lidgett Grove (average number of vehicles per hour)	Ouseburn Avenue (average number of vehicles per hour)
Avg. Flow Weekday 7-8am	6.4	14.25
Avg. Flow Weekday 8-9am	31.2	36.75
Avg. Flow Weekday 9-10am	67	73.25
Avg. Flow Weekday 3-4pm	31.4	30.4
Avg. Flow Weekday 4-5pm	41.6	48
Avg. Flow Weekday 5-6pm	41.8	56.8
Avg. Flow Weekend 9-10am	9	28
Avg. Flow Weekend 4-5pm	26.5	31

14. There are approximately 106 households on Ouseburn Avenue and a further 29 on Lidgett Grove. In the absence of detailed through traffic and local traffic flow data it is difficult to draw any absolute conclusions. It can be seen though that traffic levels on Lidgett Grove regularly exceed the number of households on the street, probably suggesting some evidence of through traffic. Ouseburn Avenue is less conclusive. In many cases it has similar levels of vehicle flow as the far smaller Lidgett Grove.
15. It is not possible to confirm whether traffic flows have increased on Millgates and Viking Road as there is no data against which to compare current traffic flows. However, traffic flow data was recorded on Beckfield Lane prior to the signals being installed and again after the installation. An average of 294 vehicles per hour were recorded prior to installation and 288 vehicles per hour afterwards.
16. Beckfield Lane speed data returned an average speed of 27.5 mph and therefore does not meet the criteria to be considered under this process for a signed only 20mph scheme. The speed survey was conducted within the existing 30mph section. In addition it is identified in the Speed Management Plan as a Mixed Priority Route, therefore it does not meet the criteria for a residential route. It can, however, be considered as a 20mph zone with traffic calming outside of the 20mph speed limit prioritisation process and further options are being considered as part of the Beckfield Lane phase 2 safety scheme development.
17. Viking Road is already part of a 20mph zone (i.e. with entry signs and traffic calming). The traffic data returned an average speed of 15.4mph. The Ward Member has suggested that as it is a large zone additional signing may help to reinforce the speed limit. Network Management have advised that all the entry points into the zone are correctly signed and the regulations do not allow for

repeater signing within a 20mph zone. Therefore no further action is to be taken.

18. It would seem appropriate to consider Newlands Drive, Lidgett Grove, Ouseburn Avenue, Cranbrook Road and Millgates as part of a wider 20mph speed limit area, in particular as a request has also been received for Wheatlands Grove, which runs perpendicular to both streets. This area would have a boundary with the current 20mph zone surrounding Carr Infant and Junior Schools, and which includes Viking Road. The recent proposed revision of Dft's speed limit circular (which is subject to final confirmation of alterations) suggests that 20mph speed limits sharing a boundary with 20mph zones should be avoided as it may cause confusion. The circular suggests that it may be more appropriate to have the whole area as a 'zone' that included minor traffic calming engineering works. This would make a scheme in the area more expensive to deliver and would require more extensive consultation. It is proposed to wait until revisions to the speed circular have been confirmed and there is more certainty regarding signing current 20mph zones within or adjacent to 20mph limits before progressing further with this scheme. It is also appropriate to wait until the results of the Fishergate and South Bank trials are available.
19. As an area it has been prioritised and included within the table in Annex A. Unless additional funding can be found for this area scheme it is unlikely that it can be funded in 2010/11 but it is currently prioritised for delivery in 2011/12. If however the Ward Committee wished to fund the scheme as a local priority it could be progressed sooner.
20. The petition for Low Poppleton Lane was for a 20mph speed limit although it was the covering letter that made reference to increased heavy traffic, vehicle speeds and vibration from the buses as a result of the installation of the bus gate. An engineering inspection of the site has not identified any significant defects with the installation of the traffic calming in this location, however it has identified some maintenance issues that need addressing. Engineers have passed the inspection information to Neighbourhood Services for inclusion in the routine maintenance programme. It does however have a recorded accident on the road and does meet all the other criteria. Another request has been received relating to Millfield Lane. Millfield Lane meets the criteria for implementing a 20mph speed limit and is adjacent to Low Poppleton Lane. It is proposed to include Millfield Lane from Low Poppleton Lane to the A1237 outer ring road within the 20mph speed limit.

Consultation

21. Councillor Potter replied that in her view all residential streets should be 20mph across York. She also expressed concern with the criteria agreed at the December EMDS in that the response rate will not reach 50% and that this will be used to block 20mph areas going forward. There's an increasing number of properties where people work away, are student/holiday/short term lets, etc. in some of these parts of the city. She thought that 50% of those returning the ballot paper was reasonable.

Councillor Merrett also commented that the Micklegate Ward Members were concerned about the likely response rate simply not reaching 50% and requiring a 50% response rate. By way of example if you applied 50% turnout to Council elections you'd have no Council at all, as turnout very rarely reaches 50% anywhere. Our experience canvassing is that there are a significant double figure percentage (>20%) of properties where we can never contact anyone at all, despite revisits, so I can see even if we got a 75% vote in favour, the turnout will fail the 50% return test, and we don't think that should be a reason for not proceeding.

22. The 50% household support rate was in relation to the prioritisation of the requests and petitions. Officers agree that a scheme could be progressed on a lower percentage return provided at least 50% of the returns were in favour and no significant objections were received.
23. The relevant Highways Authority for the highway concerned is responsible for the management of that highway. The imposition of any 20 mph speed limit on any highway by the relevant authority, is not objected to due to the following understanding. The imposition of any 20 mph speed limit is made with due regard to the Highway Authorities responsibility under the relevant legislation and any imposition 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 highways authority are fully responsible for ensuring that it meets those aims. With due regard to the obligations of the Highways 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 highways authority to put into place corrective speed reduction measures if that limit fails.

Options

24. Option one – Agree the latest prioritised position and agree to progress the schemes in paragraph 11 through the 2010/11 capital programme.
25. Option two – Agree the prioritisation but do not proceed with further delivery until the results of the LTP3 survey are known.
26. Option three – Do not agree the current prioritisation or implementation of further 20mph schemes.

Analysis

27. Option one – The introduction of the agreed criteria and process for responding to petitions and requests has provided a consistent approach, which is data led. It has identified a number of areas that would benefit from the introduction of a 20mph speed limit. Available funding has been identified from the growth bid in 2009/10 (£30,000) and the draft capital programme for 2010/11 that allows for progress towards delivery to commence.

28. Option two – Uses the agreed criteria to identify schemes but delays implementation until later in the year when a response from residents about the wider context within which 20mph has been considered, understood and reported to EMDS. This may allow funding to be directed in another way to fit in with any longer term policy.
29. Option three – Does not allow for any progress towards implementation.

Corporate Objectives

30. A data led approach of assessing road safety issues and prioritising scheme 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 and contributes to A Safer City.

Implications

Financial

31. Option One – The cost of the schemes has been estimated at a total of £51,100. Costs will include consultation, Traffic Regulation Orders and signing as well as monitoring costs. The South Bank scheme is being funded from the revenue growth award of £30,000 available for implementing 20mph speed limits and a £15,000 contribution from the capital programme. The remaining schemes can be funded from the 2010/11 capital programme. These costs do not include staff time which can be charged to the capital programme.

Option two – No financial implications.

Option three – No financial implication.

Legal

32. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will need to be in place in order to enable the speed limit on any road to be altered. The Council has powers under the Highways Act and Road Traffic Regulation Act to undertake and implement TROs.

HR

33. Staff time would be required to undertake the consultation and implement the schemes. This work is not currently accounted for and other areas of work may be delayed as a result.

Other

34. None

Crime and Disorder

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

Risk Management

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

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Report Approved

Date 15 March 2010

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all*

Financial

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Wards Affected:

All Y

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annex A – Prioritisation Table

Annex B – Table of vehicle speeds for roads covered by the petitions