

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD HOC PANEL - 20MPH SPEED LIMITS/ZONES

10.00am 26 JANUARY 2010

FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE

MINUTES

Present: Councillor West (Chair), Wells, Bennett, Watkins

Apologies: Councillor Mitchell

Also present: Roger French, Peter Salvage, Stephen Young, Phil Clarke, Libby Young

PART ONE

6. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

6a Declaration of substitutes

6.1 Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny Panels.

6b Declaration of interest

6.2 Please refer to the minutes of the panel's meeting on 19 January 2010.
No further declarations of interest were made.

6c Declaration of party whip

6.3 There were none.

6d Exclusion of press and public

6.4 In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if the members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I of the said Act.

6.5 Resolved – That the press and public are not excluded from the meeting.

7. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1 The Chairman passed on Cllr Gill Mitchell's apologies.
- 7.2 All those present were welcomed and introductions took place. The chairman thanked everyone for their involvement, particularly the witnesses and officers for taking the time to attend the public meeting and for being involved in the evidence gathering process.
- 7.3 It was noted that the final witness on the agenda from Portsmouth City Council was unable to attend today's meeting or any future meetings of the 20 mph scrutiny panel. An officer involved in implementing the scheme in Portsmouth has, however, agreed to try to answer as many of the panel's questions as possible via email.
- 7.4 For the benefit of all attendees the purpose of the scrutiny review was reiterated as: to investigate the effects of reducing the speed limit in some residential and built-up areas of the city to 20 mph. Speed reduction initiatives could include either redesigning roads within the city to include traffic calming measures, or simply reducing the default speed limit on roads to 20 mph through the use of signs only.
- 7.5 The format of the meeting was outlined, and it was noted that as members of the public are invited to apply to give verbal evidence to the panel at the panel's fourth and final meeting, or to submit written comments, there was no time allocated at this meeting for members of the public to ask questions or make points.
- 7.6 The panel agreed to proceed as outlined by the Chairman.
- 7.7 It was noted that the minutes from the previous meeting of the scrutiny panel are not yet available; however, every effort will be made to ensure that the minutes from this meeting and the previous meeting of the panel will be available before the panel's third meeting. It was noted that an amended biography for one of the speakers had been circulated at the beginning of the meeting.
- 7.8 The panel were reminded of the sample questions for the witnesses which had been circulated prior to the meeting and that they could refer to them when questioning the witnesses. The panel asked the witnesses if they could answer as many of the questions as possible as part of their presentations and submit to the panel, after the meeting, written answers to the sample questions.
- 7.9 Members of the panel requested that future meetings of the panel should take place in buildings where a hearing loop is available.

8. EVIDENCE-GATHERING SESSIONS

- 8.1 The panel heard evidence from a number of witnesses.
- 8.2a **Evidence from Roger French, Managing Director, Brighton and Hove Bus Company**

There are a number of implications for bus services in the city of introducing a blanket 20 mph speed limit, and the bus company has a number of concerns about this

particular approach. The bus company is supportive of introducing 20 mph speed limits where there are very particular reasons and evidence for introducing such a limit; indeed 20 mph speed limits in specific areas can work successfully. However, the bus company is deeply concerned that a blanket approach to 20 mph speed limits would be counter intuitive.

There are several points which can be made to illustrate the concerns which the bus company has with a blanket approach to 20 mph speed limits. It would cause longer journey times for buses and therefore to maintain the current bus network and timetables it would cost more to run. For example, currently a round trip from Patcham/Hollingbury to Hangleton via the city centre can take about two hours allowing for unexpected delays and some slack time at either end of the journey for the bus to rest. The current timetable runs every five minutes so 12 buses are required to run the service in one direction and therefore 24 in total to manage this route. If a 20 mph speed limit was introduced then it is going to take longer than the current time allocated including the slack time also factored in. So, the bus company will either have to introduce more buses to run the current service as it is, or instead of running a service every five minutes, it will have to run, say, every eight minutes.

Increased journey times brought about by 20 mph speed restrictions are likely to have an impact on some bus services, in particular some of those currently supported by the council. To maintain an hourly service for some routes instead of using two buses, the bus company would need to put on four buses or change the frequency of the buses from hourly to every 70 minutes. However, this will cause problems for bus passengers who will find it difficult to judge what time buses are supposed to arrive if they do not run at the same time every hour. This change in bus times will not encourage more people to use public transport. If a 20 mph speed limit is introduced across the city, the bus company will have to consider either operating a reduced level of service or a 10% increase in ticket prices in order to factor in the increase in journey time for the buses.

There is an argument for introducing lower speed limits in order to increase road safety, and the bus company assumes that this is the reason that 20 mph is being suggested. The bus company in Oxford is currently navigating the impact of a large area of Oxford City being restricted to 20 mph speed limits. Their experience of widespread 20 mph speed limits so far is that it has increased conflict between cyclists and buses. In order to keep to the 20 mph speed limit, the buses in Oxford are running at speeds of about 15 - 17 mph, which is the same speed which cyclists are moving at. As a result, cyclists and buses are finding themselves competing for road space and having to constantly overtake each other.

There is clear evidence to suggest that vehicles travelling at speeds of 20 mph will reduce the risks to pedestrians of being fatally injured in a collision. Indeed the current 20 mph speed restrictions on Western Road, Montpelier Road, North Street and the Old Steine and the exclusive bus lanes in this 3 mile corridor have resulted in no fatal collisions since they have been introduced, although there have been some minor incidents. The bus company is completely supportive of these kinds of speed restrictions as there were very particular reasons for introducing them. The bus company would also support the use of 20 mph speed limits in high risk areas such as schools, and where there is evidence that such a speed restriction would benefit pedestrian safety.

Most injuries caused by buses are to bus passengers rather than pedestrians or other road users, and these injuries are not the result of the speed of the bus but instead are caused by the mobility of bus passengers or driver error.

The enforcement of 20 mph speed limits is also of great concern. In some areas of the city where there are already 20 mph speed limits bus drivers will comply with this speed limit but other road users regularly do not. Sussex Police do not have the resources to enforce current road laws, for example, the use of bus lanes for buses only, was only enforced when the council took over the enforcement of these. If 20 mph speed restrictions introduced into the city are not enforced then they will not be complied with which causes problems for buses.

There is a risk that fuel consumption will increase if buses have to drive at a lower speed. The bus company in Oxford is currently investigating ways to ‘fine tune’ the buses engines and gear boxes and this may help, but there are costs involved in doing this.

Lastly, if residents are being encouraged to get out of their cars and use public transport, introducing a blanket 20 mph speed limit across the city will not enable the bus company to run a service that will appeal to residents. This is not to say that the bus company is against 20 mph speed limits where there are clear reasons for introducing them, as was the case around St Peter’s Church; and where there are risks for pedestrians, putting in 20 mph speed restrictions are worth introducing. However there are many factors which contribute to a road collision, such as pedestrians failing to look before they cross the road, which will still occur regardless of the speed of traffic.

- 8.2b The panel thanked Roger for his presentation and members of the panel asked what the average speeds of the buses are as they travel around the city.
- 8.2c The panel heard that it varies widely in the city from an average of about 20 – 27 mph, depending on the roads. For example, in Portland Road buses reach an average of 23 mph, Lewes Road: 29 mph, Ditchling Road: 18 mph, New Church Road: 27 mph, and Elm Grove: 19 mph.
- 8.2d Members of the panel commented that the experience of Oxford’s bus company in managing the recent introduction of widespread 20 mph speed limits in the city was of interest, and that any extra information, particularly around fuel consumption and the issue of conflict between buses and cyclists, which could be provided would be most useful.
- 8.2e The panel heard that the bus company in Oxford was trying to alter the maximum efficiency of their bus fleet in order to make the buses operate more efficiently in a 20 mph context; currently buses operate most efficiently in a 30 mph speed limit.
- 8.2f Members of the panel noted that when making recommendations about a potential model for a 20 mph scheme for the city they would need to consider that it may contribute to increasing the number of buses on the road without necessarily the benefit of an increase in the bus service or passenger numbers, and that this may contribute to increases in traffic congestion in the city.

- 8.2g The panel heard that the bus company operates at any one time 230 buses, and that to maintain services in a 20 mph context, 23 more buses would need to be out on the roads, which would contribute to congestion, although buses are not responsible for causing current congestion in the city.
- 8.2h Members of the panel asked if they could have a breakdown of average speeds attained by buses in the city, as this would help them to understand the impact that a blanket approach to 20 mph would have, particularly on arterial roads.
- 8.2i It was agreed that some figures could be provided, although members of the panel should be aware that average speeds will hide extreme speeds on a road.
- 8.2j Members of the panel asked if 20 mph speed restrictions were introduced into parts of the city which resulted in pockets of 20 mph speed limits, would it mean that the bus company would move some of their bus routes onto other roads.
- 8.2k Members of the panel heard that this would be dependent on how the speed limit is implemented. The bus company is not against pockets of 20 mph if they are well researched and there are reasons for them. However, excessive signage and, in particular, speed humps cause problems for the buses, although chicanes in some circumstances can work. It really does depend upon whatever model is implemented as to whether bus routes and services would change.
- 8.2l Members of the panel noted that one possible model would be to introduce 20 mph speed limits through just signage and no physical measures, on just residential streets. In such a model arterial roads would remain at 30 mph. This is a model which other cities have been adopting.
- 8.2m Members of the panel heard that keeping arterial routes at 30 mph would be considered by the bus company as a sensible approach, although it depends on what definition of arterial is being used. There are some roads in the city which are not arterial but having a 20 mph speed restriction in place would make little sense. There is also the problem that if just signage is introduced and the 20 mph speed limit is not enforced in some way then many road users will simply not comply with the speed limit.
- 8.2n Members of the panel noted that there are different areas of the city which are used in different ways. For example, the seafront route is a major thoroughfare dominated by vehicles, there are areas of the city where pedestrians are the main road users, and then there is the rest of the city which is used in equal measures by a variety of road users. It is the shared areas of the city which need careful consideration.
- 8.2o Members of the panel heard that this was a fair assessment, however, they were asked, in such a model where would the main spinal roads fit? Spinal routes are not defined as arterial roads, but they are key roads which keep traffic moving throughout the city. Additionally if 20 mph speed limits are implemented in residential areas, there will be no one to enforce it. Unless speed limits are enforced then any scheme introduced is unlikely to be a success.
- 8.2p Another witness asked if the average speed of buses given earlier was whilst the buses were in motion or if they were speeds for average bus journeys? Bus journeys can be

reduced by reducing the stoppage time of buses which can be aided by introducing alternative ticketing systems such as the oyster card scheme in London.

- 8.2q The panel heard that the average speeds of the buses given, were whilst the bus was in motion and that alternative ticketing systems may reduce bus stoppage times.
- 8.2r The panel thanked Roger French for his time and contributions.
- 8.2s Roger French informed the panel that he had to leave the meeting early but his colleague Peter Salvage, Operations Manager, would remain for the rest of the meeting to participate in the discussions.

8.3a Evidence from Phil Clarke, Road Safety Manager, Brighton & Hove City Council

Having previously provided information on the data on road collisions in Brighton and Hove at the scoping meeting for the panel, the evidence provided today is aimed at addressing the points which arose from the scoping meeting. Please may members of the panel refer to the briefing pack provided which contains more detail about average traffic speeds and 20 mph zones in the city.

It should be noted at this stage that the data related to 20 mph zones is problematic due to the often staged approach which is taken with their implementation. It is difficult, therefore, to precisely understand the impact of 20 mph schemes in the city. Additionally, on a technical note, the collision data associated with 20 mph zones is incomplete as the readily searchable collision database only dates back to 2001, and many 20 mph zones date back to earlier than that. The pack which has been provided contains information about some examples of the schemes in Brighton and Hove.

Point 1 – average speeds in the city – information and data (if available) i.e. – do vehicles manage to hit speeds of 30 mph on roads in the city/residential areas currently?

There are residential streets in the city where speeds of 30 mph plus are achieved. However, the speed of traffic on a road is dependent on the nature of the road, and average speeds need to be analysed on a road by road basis in order to understand what average speeds are in the city. This is why there is currently a citywide speed limit review being undertaken on all non A and B roads in the city in order to understand what speeds in the city are. The table included in table 1.2 of the briefing pack demonstrates some of the average speeds achieved in Poets Corner both before and after a traffic intervention. It is clear that by looking at some of the percentages that some of the streets were being used as rat runs before a scheme was implemented.

Point 2 – more information about the PBA speed limit review (timetable, objectives, methodology, outcomes etc)

The current PBA speed limit review is being done off the back of a mandatory review which all local authorities were required to undertake. This review into all non A and B roads is being conducted through the use of clusters of similar demographics. 22 clusters have been identified and collision data has been overlaid on these in order to enable a priority list of clusters to be produced. Other features will be overlaid on to

these clusters such as schools, playgrounds, and shopping areas. Each cluster will then have speed surveys undertaken, aerial mapping, and observational studies. From the speed limit review we expect that a series of recommendations for suitable speed limits on roads in the city will be produced. It will then have to be decided as to whether the recommendations are implemented or not.

In the previous mandatory speed limit review of all A and B roads, all the recommendations bar one were accepted in principle, and the only exception was a recommendation to raise the speed limit from 40 mph to 50 mph on the road near to Falmer (A270) station. This didn't feel appropriate in light of the road works being undertaken in relation to the stadium. Most recommendations were to maintain the current speed limits, and there were a few recommendations for speed reductions. From the current ongoing speed limit review, we are expecting that there may be some recommendations for reducing speed limits in some residential areas, particularly around schools. The current speed limit review will take about a year to complete. Those clusters where there have been the most number of accidents will be prioritised first.

Please note the table under section 2.11 of your pack, which details how average speeds are measured in relation to setting speed limits. Average speeds of 24 mph need to exist on a road before a 20 mph speed limit is introduced. Any average speed above this is unlikely to be self enforcing and therefore a 20 mph limit is unlikely to be complied with.

Point 3 – what is the current approach towards resolving and listening to demands from residents for calming/lower speeds, especially beyond the Safer Routes to School Programme (i.e. current protocols and feedback mechanisms etc)

Please refer to Appendix A of the briefing pack for the council's traffic calming policy. Please note that collision data is also considered when deciding whether traffic calming is suitable for a particular area. The road safety team at the council continuously assess and analyses the data to see where initiatives could be undertaken to reduce collisions. What the road safety team has found is that often when applications for traffic calming are made there is a perception that traffic is speeding; however, when officers are sent out to conduct speed surveys speeding is not always a problem. For example, officers were asked to introduce 20 mph on St Nicholas Road outside St Pauls C of E Primary School. When site visits were undertaken there were found to be low traffic volumes and no cars travelling above 18 mph. On Hangleton Way, average speeds outside two schools were found to be 16 mph. The main issue identified by officers undertaking site visits and speed surveys was congestion and inconsiderate parking by parents that led to an impression of speed and chaos.

Point 4 – historical information on existing 20 mph zones in the city

Please refer to your briefing packs for more historical information about 20 mph zones in the city.

Point 5 – the scope of implementation of 20 mph zones in Brighton and Hove currently (information about the timetable, funding and availability etc)

There is no traffic calming programme as such currently being undertaken but there is a priority list of sites and this is contained in Appendix E of your packs.

The costs of engineering measures are difficult to pin down. The scheme introduced into Hartington Road cost approximately £190,000, in 1997. If traffic calming measures were introduced into all 22 of the clusters identified as part of the speed limit review it would cost approximately £500,000 per cluster and £11 million in total. Please note these figures are very approximate. If a signs only approach to speed reduction was introduced into all 22 clusters than this would cost approx. £40,000 per cluster, and £880,000 in total. Please note these are only estimated costs, and are conservative estimates.

There is much evidence to suggest that 20 mph speed limits, when introduced with traffic calming measures, help to slow vehicles down. There is, however, no data to suggest that there is a direct link between 20 mph speed limits and increases in cycling and walking. It should also be noted that 20 mph limits and zones introduced in one road may have knock on displacement effects for other roads, for example, move more traffic on to arterial roads, or encourage rat running on other roads. 20 mph speed limits may just move some traffic problems around the city rather than solve all of them.

- 8.3b The panel thanked Phil for his evidence and the pack of information which he had put together for them.
- 8.3c Members of the panel were asked to note that the clusters identified as part of the PBA review are different sizes, with different routes inside of them, and that engineering measures have improved with time and newer measures introduced are likely to be more effective.
- 8.3d Members of the panel asked if the way the council currently decides whether areas of the city are ideal for traffic calming measures is effective, and if the council was to reduce the default speed limit surely drivers would comply with it; people adjust their behaviours and driving speeds according to what the rules are so if the default speed limit is adjusted people will comply. It is simply a case of drawing people's attention to the speed limits in place.
- 8.3e Members of the panel were informed that this is not always the case. Often when speed limits are introduced without enforcement measures they are not complied with. Additionally, it can cause the displacement of traffic and rat running in other areas of the city.
- 8.3f Members of the panel noted that often when drivers emerge from a speed limit they will accelerate rapidly. This is likely to apply to 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones where they boarder with 30 mph speed limits. Accelerating traffic could pose a danger to other road users.
- 8.3g These comments were agreed with and members of the panel were asked to note that part of the issue the city currently faces is that the city has islands of 20 mph zones and that they are not joined up. Also, part of the problem is that there is not a culture of slow driving in the city so drivers need to be forced to slow down. One of things that can be

done to address this is to keep the arterial routes in the city reasonably free flowing. If traffic is kept moving drivers are less likely to become frustrated with sitting in traffic and less likely to turn off and rat run. It is also important to keep the spinal routes of the city moving at a reasonable speed.

- 8.3h Members of the panel commented that if the roads liable to rat running were also included in a speed reduction scheme then this would avoid drivers rat running off of arterial roads and through residential areas. There are also other measures which can be undertaken, such as the scheme on St Johns road where a green pathway has been installed on the road for pedestrians to use as there is no pavement. This clearly identifies the road as being a mixed use, shared road and appears to have slowed traffic down.
- 8.3i Members of the panel also noted that whilst the average speeds of traffic may be low on some roads, it will hide the odd driver which speeds through roads much faster. There is a need to introduce a culture of slower driving into the city.
- 8.3j The panel's comments were acknowledged but the panel were asked to note that it will be difficult to achieve a culture of slower driving just from introducing 20 mph signs only. If it is made difficult for drivers to speed through the use of traffic calming measures than this forces drivers to slow down.
- 8.3k The panel thanked Phil Clarke for his time and contributions.

8.4a Evidence from Stephen Young, a Local Supporter of Living Streets

The most important benefit of 20 mph speed limits is that they cut deaths and injuries. However, 20 mph is also the key to unlocking other benefits. There is evidence from other cities in the UK, such as Portsmouth, and from the rest of Europe that 20 mph speed limits are hugely beneficial to increasing resident's quality of life and well-being.

The original 30 mph speed limit was introduced in 1934 when there were only 2 million cars on the road; today there are 28 million cars. If the leading cause of deaths in the UK is considered for various age groups; for those aged 5-9 and 10-14, it is being hit by a vehicle and for those aged 15-35 the leading cause of death is being in a motor vehicle accident. 49% of drivers admit to regularly 'driving significantly above' the current 30 mph speed limit in built-up areas. It is known that if as a pedestrian you get hit by a car travelling at 20 mph there is a 97% chance of survival. Being hit by a car at 35 mph there is a 50% chance of surviving. Where there is a risk of collisions occurring it is worth introducing a 20 mph speed limit. However, as where the risks actually are is hard to identify, and arguably risks are everywhere as people are very bad at judging risks, 20 mph should be implemented on all roads.

Evidence from Hull illustrates the huge impact which 20 mph zones, with traffic calming measures, can have on reducing deaths and casualties. A recent study from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine also illustrates the impact which 20 mph zones have had on road casualties in London.

As well as improvements in road safety, slower speeds can bring about other benefits; such as, better health, increased sociability, less noise, better walking and cycling

conditions and hence more active travel. A report from the Commission for Integrated Transport indicated that where cities have 20 mph speed limits covering between 65% and 85% of their street network, cities are transformed from being noisy polluted places into vibrant people-centred environments. A study undertaken in Bristol also indicated that reduced traffic speeds encourage more sociability between neighbours and local communities. Reduced speeds also avoid cars accelerating and breaking which reduces noise created by traffic. Introducing a blanket approach to 20 mph will further aid the reduction of traffic noise as traffic will be more likely to travel at a constant speed rather than accelerating and braking between 'islands' of 20 mph. Lastly, many people do not currently cycle or walk because of fear of speeding traffic. It is the fear factor which stops people from engaging in active travel. Britain's default speed limit is 60% higher than speed limits in European cities. European cities also have more cyclists and walkers and less problems with obesity.

The government's climate change adviser (David MacKay) has written that if the country wants to reduce climate change emissions from traffic then traffic has to go further between stops, move slower and move less. When 19 mph zones were introduced in Germany, car drivers on average; had to change gear 12% less often, use their brakes 14% less often and required 12% less fuel. Introducing a default 20 mph speed limit rather than islands of 20 mph speed limits or zones will aid traffic in moving smoothly and therefore reduce pollution and emissions.

Currently in Brighton and Hove, 20 mph zones are inconsistent, patchworky, and result in a 'postcode lottery' for residents, with some residents living in areas of 20 mph zones and others in 30 mph speed limits. The cost of introducing 20 mph zones is substantially more than introducing a default 20 mph speed limit; a 20 mph speed limit is cheaper and quicker to install as only signs are needed.

Enforcement is not always needed to change behaviour and culture, and when it comes to the carrot versus the stick, the latter cannot be relied on all the time, a culture of slower driving needs to be developed and a default 20 mph speed limit will aid this. 20 mph default speed limits are also no longer a theoretical debate; Portsmouth City Council has introduced them. In Brighton and Hove we need more sensible sharing of roads, not all pedestrians are drivers, but all drivers are pedestrians at some point in their day. Nationally, there is a lot of support for 20 mph; it creates safe, attractive and enjoyable streets. A 20 mph speed limit is a straight forward solution to addressing a number of local issues, there is no single policy which could achieve the same benefits so quickly and for such a modest financial investment for the council.

- 8.4b The panel thanked Stephen for his presentation.
- 8.4c Members of the panel noted that from the examples taken from Europe and used in the presentation it would be interesting to know what the cities' former speed limits were, for comparison purposes. Members of the panel asked for clarification on which model of speed limits in Brighton and Hove would provide most benefits for residents.
- 8.4d Members of the panel heard that the New Road development provided an interesting example of behavioural change in the city. Many traders were against the speed restrictions and the alterations at first, however, now the traders are very supportive of the way the road is used and the culture of the road has been completely transformed,

becoming attractive for non-motorised road users. We need more schemes like the New Road scheme in Brighton and Hove, and the schemes need to be better joined up. Roads like the seafront road where traffic speeds along, and yet borders on the most visited tourist destination in the city – the seafront – need to be made friendlier towards other road users, not just motorised traffic. The whole city, may be with some exceptions, should operate under a default 20 mph speed limit. Including arterial roads in a 20 mph scheme would not necessarily be problematic as there are other ways of dealing with, for example, increased bus journey times through reducing bus stopping times. A model similar to the approach taken by Portsmouth, which has introduced a default 20 mph speed limit, with a few exceptions, should be introduced into Brighton and Hove.

- 8.4e Members of the panel noted that it was unfortunate that a representative from Portsmouth had been unable to attend the meetings, but that every effort would be made to find out more about the model which Portsmouth has used and the benefits realised.
- 8.5a **Members of the panel and the witnesses present held a general discussion around the issues raised by the evidence given.**
- 8.5b Members of the panel were asked to note that whilst there have been some indications that the scheme introduced in Portsmouth has been successful, there is only one years worth of data available, and three or four years of data is needed in order to draw conclusions from the scheme. Additionally, there were a number of other measures introduced in the Portsmouth scheme as well as a speed limit reduction such as cul-de-sacs, changes to parking, and one way streets. It would be interesting to know from Portsmouth if these measures have had an impact on the overall scheme introduced. Early indications from Portsmouth are encouraging, but it should be noted that the demographics of the city are quite different, and the results from the scheme need to be carefully teased apart, with the effectiveness of the 20 mph limit from the other measures introduced distilled out.
- 8.5c Members of the panel were also asked to consider that there are other examples beyond Portsmouth where lessons can be learnt from, many cities in Europe have lower speed limits such as Copenhagen and Barcelona. The quality of life in these cities is measurably better than in the UK. Introducing a 20 mph speed limit is an incredibly cost effective way of creating increases in quality of life for residents.
- 8.5d Members of the panel noted that whilst speed reductions may encourage better quality of life, there are other factors which need to also be weighed into the equation such as the slowing down of traffic which may lead to more pollution.
- 8.5e The panel were informed that this is not necessarily the case as slower speeds may contribute to a modal shift in road use away from the car to more sustainable forms of transport. It was also suggested that the emissions implications of speed reductions are based on data collected under track conditions. Travelling at 20 mph, traffic tends to move more smoothly as there is less braking and less acceleration and therefore fewer pollutants are emitted. Studies in Germany have shown that lower speeds mean that on average; car drivers changed gear 12% less often, used their brakes 14% less often and used 12% less fuel.

- 8.5f Members of the panel asked if introducing other measures such as more pedestrian crossings would be more effective than reducing the speed limit.
- 8.5g The panel were informed that pedestrian crossings would be much more expensive to introduce. For example, the last crossing installed in the city cost about £65,000
- 8.5h Members of the panel noted that the scheme in Portsmouth is of great use in trying to understand the implications of a citywide 20 mph speed limit. Members of the panel noted that it would be interesting to know from Portsmouth City Council as to which criteria was used to decide what roads where reduced to 20 mph, the background thinking behind the scheme and how they reached their decision to implement the 20 mph scheme which they did.
- 8.5i It was asked as to whether introducing such widespread 20 mph speed limits might have potential negative economic impacts.
- 8.5j Members of the panel heard that it would potentially have a positive economic impact as the city would receive more visitors as the city would become renowned for being a safe and attractive place to visit. It should also be considered that the cost of each road collision on the public purse is huge. It is estimated that the cost to the UK of traffic collisions is £18 billion every year. The average cost of a road traffic accident in 2008 was £59,000 and for a fatal accident, when all costs are factored in, it could cost the economy an estimated £1.27 million. The cost of every road collision to the emergency services is high. For example the Fire and Rescue service now spend more of their time dealing with road collisions than fires. Lastly, the costs to the health service which could be prevented by introducing a default 20 mph speed limit and thereby reducing obesity and other health complications as more people participate in active travel need to be factored in.
- 8.5k Members of the panel noted that it would be interesting to know if Portsmouth and Oxford have park and ride schemes, and if there have been changes in the use of these services since the introduction of 20 mph speed limits.
- 8.5l The discussions were drawn to a conclusion and the witnesses thanked for their time and contributions. It was agreed that the witnesses would be asked to provide some further written evidence to back up the evidence they had given.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 9.1 11 February 2010, at 10 am, Committee Room 3, Brighton Town Hall
23 February 2010, at 10 am, Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 There was none.

The meeting concluded at 11.50