

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 43

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Response to the report of the Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 'An Investigation into 20 mph speed limits/zones'		
Date of Meeting:	23 September 2010		
Report of:	Acting Director of Environment		
Contact Officer: Name	Phil Clarke	Tel:	293705
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The council has over a number of years implemented 20mph zones in areas where there was evidence that in the interests of road safety such measures were justified. Predominantly such zones were in the vicinity of schools, playgrounds or busy shopping streets.
- 1.2 In response to a high number of requests from local residents for 20 mph zones the Cabinet Member for Environment requested that the Environment & Community Safety Committee (ECSOSC) undertake a review of the future approach to the implementation of 20 mph zones in the city.
- 1.3 The review undertaken by ECSOSC has been helpful in providing input and advice from a wide range of interested parties. The full report (Appendix A) which describes the scrutiny process and summarises evidence, findings and recommendations, has been considered by Officers and a full response to all the recommendations produced by ECSOSC is contained in Appendix B of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the evidence, findings and recommendations of the Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee and its scrutiny panel in relation to 20mph speed limits and zones.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member notes and agrees the actions detailed in the officer response to Scrutiny's recommendations (Appendix B) with particular regard to timescales and any constraints identified.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 The council is committed to providing transport choice and reducing road casualties in line with the targets set by the Department for Transport. Collision data is constantly analysed and a joint programme of road safety engineering measures alongside education, training and publicity initiatives is used to

address identified issues. The use of 20mph zones has formed part of the package of measures used at suitable locations.

- 3.2 The existing 20mph zones are self-enforcing by way of traffic calming measures or other speed reducing features. Owing to the staged approach adopted for the introduction of such measures there is very little data available nationally to indicate the effectiveness of the measures. The Scrutiny Review provides an opportunity to assist and agree a way forward in prioritising further requests for 20 mph.
- 3.3 The recommendations are welcome and Officers are in agreement that they are useful in providing a basis upon which to create a possible future programme of investment should 20mph zones become an appropriate road safety solution for specific locations. However, it must be accepted that not all the recommendations could be achieved quickly and a staged approach would be required and all long term financial implications considered alongside other priorities. A City-wide policy of 20mph zones or speed limits may require a complimentary, multi million pound programme of speed reduction features to ensure its effectiveness and enforcement.
- 3.4 The findings and recommendations of the ECSOSC review are contained in Appendix A. These findings have been considered by Officers and a full response to all the recommendations produced by ECSOSC are contained in Appendix B of this report
- 3.5 By definition, increasing the number of 20mph zones and limits across the City requires a reduction in speed limits supported by Traffic Regulation Orders and consultation with local residents. Compliance with technical design standards, relevant criteria, Government guidelines and accepted good practice may influence the practical implementation of such measures.

4. CONSULTATION:

- 4.1 The panel held public meetings on 19 January, 26 January, 11 February, and 23 February 2010.
- 4.2 A number of council departments, local and national organisations and groups were contacted between December 2009 and March 2010 and invited to submit comments on the impact of 20 mph speed limits/zones in the city: The panel also heard evidence from numerous groups and organisations (see Appendix C):
- 4.3 Additionally, all elected members, Local Action Teams and neighbourhood forums were emailed and invited to submit their opinions and comments for the panel to consider. In order to facilitate this process a standard comments sheet with background information on the scrutiny review was sent to all those who expressed an interest in contributing.
- 4.4 Information about the scrutiny review was included in a January issue of the school bulletin along with a copy of the comments sheet. All independent schools were emailed and sent a copy of the comments sheet to complete with their opinions and comments.

- 4.5 A press release on the scrutiny panel was issued after the panel's scoping meeting and again in January which attracted some interest from members of the public who were sent a comments sheet to complete and return.
- 4.6 Members of the panel undertook a site visit to Portsmouth on 12 March 2010. Panel members met with the engineer responsible for implementing the 20 mph scheme in Portsmouth and were taken on a tour of the scheme.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The costs of implementing the full list of recommendations is not possible to estimate at this time, as some of the measures mentioned would have to be assessed at the relevant time on a case by case basis. At the moment the scale and detail of the measures required to fulfil all of the recommendations is not known and might change as time progresses.
- 5.2 It would be appropriate to include the implementation of wider use of 20mph limits/zones alongside other priorities within the LTP3 programme with an incremental approach to funding and delivery. LTP3 will be finalised by 31st March 2011. However, given the recent in-year savings to both Transport Capital and Revenue budgets and uncertainty over future allocations which will be announced in the Autumn spending review, it is not possible to make any firm commitments regarding future funding allocation. The cost of introducing City-wide 20mph speed limits is likely to be very high based on experience in the City and elsewhere.
- 5.3 The measures mentioned within the recommendations, such as improved pedestrian crossings could also be contained within the programme for LTP3.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice

Date: 19/08/10

Legal Implications:

- 5.4 The Council has the power under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make Traffic Regulation Orders imposing 20 mph speed limits, and under the Highways Act 1980 to introduce speed humps and other traffic calming measures. The appropriate statutory procedures regarding advertisement and consultation must be followed.

Lawyer consulted: Carl Hearsom

Date: 26/08/10

Equalities Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct equalities implications

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.6 The panel did receive evidence into the effects of implementation of 20mph limits/zones on air and noise pollution. That evidence is contained within the body of the panel's report but is not conclusive in nature.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.7 Sussex Police provided evidence to the panel which is contained within the report. Any increase in the use of 20mph limits/zones has the potential to create an increase in the demand or expectation for speed limit enforcement. Sussex Police is responsible for such enforcement and has made it clear that it expects speed limit changes to be in accordance with established criteria (DfT Circular 1/2006) and that 20mph limits should be self-enforcing. In line with national policy Sussex Police will not routinely undertake directed enforcement activity within 20mph limits or zones.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.8 There are a number of risks associated with the implementation and non-implementation of 20mph limits/zones. These include reputation and failing to achieve the various targets already mentioned. The overall purpose of the scrutiny report is to identify how the council can best manage expectation and opportunity for the wider use of reduced speed limits and at the same time minimise the risks by adopting a balanced and evidence led approach to implementation.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The Council needs to consider the recommendations at corporate level as the proposals would have an effect citywide and any programme of implementation would be a large-scale, high cost project.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The full submission of analysis reports and evidence by the Scrutiny Panel facilitated consideration of options in how to address the issues raised. The recommendations proposed by the panel are the final outcome of the options considered.
- 6.2 Officers have considered all the recommendations and subject to timescale/capacity and funding issues feel the recommendations provide a useful basis for developing a programme framework to make more use of 20mph limits/zones. The alternative is to not increase their use.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 The recommendations for which consideration and approval are sought are as a result of Scrutiny. Considerable supporting evidence was provided to inform the process from the start.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. A: Full Scrutiny Report
2. B: Officer Response
3. C: List of Consultees/those from who evidence was received

Documents In Members' Rooms:

None

Background Documents:

1. Local Transport Plan 2006/7-10/11

