



Haringey Council

Agenda item:

[No.1]

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

On 6 December 2010

Report Title: Scrutiny Review - 20 MPH Speed Limit

Report of: Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer : Robert Mack, Principal Scrutiny Support Officer Tel: 0208 489 2921

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: N/A

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

- 1.1 To approve the draft scope, terms of reference and work plan for the scrutiny review on the 20 mph speed limit.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

2.1 N/A

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and/or other Strategies:

- Council Plan priority; A cleaner, greener Haringey
- Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Safer for All and An Environmentally Sustainable Future.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the scope, terms of reference and work plan for the review be approved.

<p>5. Reason for recommendation(s)</p> <p>5.1 Included within the body of the report.</p>
<p>6. Other options considered</p> <p>6.1 Included within the body of the report.</p>
<p>7. Summary</p> <p>7.1 A scrutiny review has been commissioned on the feasibility of introducing a 20 mph speed limit across Haringey. This report proposes a scope, terms of reference and a work plan for this review.</p>
<p>8. Chief Financial Officer Comments</p> <p>8.1 The review will be carried out by strategy services, all costs will be contained within their existing budget provision. There is no budget provision within the UE budget and no additional financial commitments can be considered. Recommendations as a result of this report must be cost neutral or offer potential savings to the service.</p>
<p>9. Head of Legal Services Comments</p> <p>9.1 The Head of Legal Services notes the contents of this report. The Council as local highway authority have the power to vary speed limits on roads other than trunk or restricted roads by making traffic regulation orders under s84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("the Act"). There are no legal implications arising from the review at this stage, however, if the Council is to implement 20mph restrictions the procedure in relation to consultation and notification which is set out in Schedule 9 Part III of the Act and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 must be followed. The Council must also have regard to the Government's Guidance in devising speed limits.</p>
<p>10. Head of Procurement Comments – [Required for Procurement Committee]</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>11. Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments</p> <p>11.1 There is a correlation between deprivation and level of risk of becoming a road traffic accident casualty. Any measures that the Council and its partners take to reduce to improve road safety will therefore benefit many disadvantaged communities.</p>

12. Consultation

12.1 Consultation will be an integral part of the review. The panel will receive evidence from a range of stakeholders. This will include a range of resident associations and interest groups, who will be invited to attend of specific meeting of the panel to give their views.

13. Service Financial Comments

13.1 The cost of undertaking the scrutiny review is provided for in the budget for overview and scrutiny. In addition, value for money issues and any potential financial implications arising from the review will be considered in liaison with the service finance lead.

14. Use of appendices/tables and photographs

14.1 N/A

15. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

15.1 Background papers are as follows:

Braking Point – Report by the Transport Committee of the London Assembly – April 2009

Interim Evaluation of the Implementation of 20 mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth - Atkins - Final Report

16. Report

Introduction

16.1 It has been established clearly that there is a link between traffic speed and road collisions. Excessive speed has been shown to be a direct contributory factor in about 20% of all collisions and a major factor on a third of all road deaths. This does not necessarily mean that drivers are breaking the speed limit but may instead be driving faster than appropriate for the conditions. Reducing speed limits has therefore been widely accepted as an important means of reducing road casualties. Research has shown that for every 1 mph reduction on average traffic speed, road collisions are reduced by 5%.

20 mph speed limits and zones

16.2 20 mph speed limits have been introduced in many areas in order to achieve this. These have been targeted particularly at areas that are considered to be “high risk”,

such as around schools and hospitals. Police forces have generally been reluctant to enforce these and there is an expectation that such schemes should be self-enforcing. For example, the current policy of the Metropolitan Police is not to enforce 20mph speed limits except in exceptional circumstances. They expect such limits to be self-enforced through the use of appropriate traffic calming features. This has been achieved by the use of physical calming measures such as speed humps and cushions, width restrictions and chicanes.

- 16.3 Local authorities have therefore generally implemented 20 mph speed limits through designating specific areas as 20 mph zones. There are now around 400 of these in London, covering 11% of total road length. These zones are streets where a speed limit has been set and physical calming measures introduced to reduce speed. Boroughs have lead responsibility for changing and enforcing speed limits on minor roads in London whilst Transport for London are responsible for major arterial roads. The introduction of limits and zones is subject to specific Department for Transport guidance which states that if the mean speed on a road is 24 mph or lower, a 20 mph speed limit can be set and enforced by signage alone. If mean speeds are any higher than this, physical calming measures should be used. The Metropolitan Police are currently insisting that the relevant guidance is followed or appropriate exemption is sought for the Department for Transport
- 16.4 Measures used to support and enforce speed limits include traffic calming and speed cameras. Research has shown that the more disruptive measures are the most effective;
- Road humps reduce average speed by 10 mph
 - Speed cameras reduce average speed by 20 mph
 - Signage alone reduces speeds by 1 mph.
- 16.5 Evidence from TfL has shown that 20 mph zones have been very effective in reducing road casualties. Casualties were found to have gone down by 42% and fatal or serious casualties by 46%. The impact has been particularly great in more deprived areas, which suffer higher casualty figures.

Default 20 mph speed limits

- 16.6 Some local authorities have considered introducing default 20 mph speed limits for whole areas. These apply to all residential roads in an area. In streets not already within 20 mph zones and subject to physical calming measures, enforcement was by signage alone.
- 16.7 A London Assembly report entitled "Braking Point" looked at the issue of default 20 mph speed limits in detail. It reported that there were a range of views about the potential of default 20 mph limits amongst the London boroughs. Eight boroughs were actively pursuing the option, other boroughs felt that further evidence was required on their impact and some did not believe that it should be considered and were taking forward alternative approaches.
- 16.8 The report concluded that there was as yet incomplete evidence to determine the potential effectiveness of default 20 mph speed limits. It concluded that there was a case for further testing the likely benefits and recommended that the Mayor work with boroughs planning to introduce default 20 mph limits to monitor their

effectiveness and that the results of the programme should be published and used to inform future TfL and borough policy.

- 16.9 In reaching its conclusions, the report drew on the experience of Portsmouth City Council which has introduced a city wide default 20 mph speed limit and had reported initial results showing an average speed reduction of 3 mph. However, this pre-dated the independent evaluation which provided more detailed information of the overall impact of the scheme.
- 16.10 In terms of cost, the report noted that Islington were planning to spend £1 million to introduce a borough wide default limit. Other boroughs are intending to implement 20 mph speed limits on a piecemeal basis through introducing more 20 mph zones over a period of time until all their residential streets are covered. The cost of these zones can vary considerably depending on their size and the enforcement measures that are used. The report quotes a range between £40,000 and £250,000. Southwark have calculated an average figure of £143,000 per zone and a total of £1.9 to cover the remaining 20 mph zones that it is planning.
- 16.11 Portsmouth was the first city to introduce a default 20 mph limit on all residential roads. On most of the roads where the speed limit signs and road markings were installed, the average speeds before installation were less than or equal to 24 mph. The relatively low speeds on these roads before the implementation of the scheme were mainly due to narrow carriageways and on-street parking, which reduced the effective width.
- 16.12 20 mph signs were also provided on roads with median speeds greater than 24 mph in order to avoid inconsistency and confusion. These were not accompanied by any physical calming measures. As this was contrary to the Department for Transport guidance, special dispensation from the Secretary of State needed to be obtained.
- 16.13 An independent evaluation of the scheme was published by the Department for Transport in September 2010. The evaluation found that the average speed after the 20 mph speed limits were imposed was 1.3 miles per hour lower than the average speed before the speed limits were imposed. At sites where the average before speed was greater than 24 mph, the average speed reduced by 6.3 mph. Despite a reduction in the number of sites with average speeds above 24 mph, which was 21 before the schemes implementation, 19 sites were found to still have average speeds between 24 mph and 29 mph after the schemes were implemented. The changes are regarded as being statistically significant.

Average Traffic speed changes after 20 mph speed limit implementation

Sector	Average Before Speed (mph)	Average After Speed (mph)	Speed Change (mph)
Central West	20.2	19.1	-1.1
South East	19.6	18.6	-1.0
Central East	18.5	17.9	-0.6
North East	18.2	16.4	-1.8
South West	18.4	16.9	-1.5
North West	23.9	22.2	-1.7
All Sectors	19.8	18.5	-1.3

16.14 The analysis showed the total accident reduction was 21% and the number of casualties fell by 22%. The number of killed or seriously injured (KSI) accidents increased by 8% and casualties by 6%. However, the total numbers of KSI accidents were very small and therefore susceptible to variations. These figures compare against a national reduction in casualty rates of 14% and of 12% in KSI casualties.

16.15 The evaluation came to the following conclusion:

“early figures suggest that the implementation of the 20 mph Speed Limit scheme has been associated with reductions in road casualty numbers. The scheme has reduced average speeds and been well-supported during its first two years of operation.”

16.16 In summary, the report states that the effects of implementing the 20 mph Speed Limit scheme (use of signing alone) were as follows:

- “The average speed reduction achieved by installing speed limit signs alone is less than that achieved by the introduction of 20 mph zones partly because 20 mph Speed Limits are implemented where existing speeds are already low;
- Within an area-wide application of 20mph sign only limits, those roads with average speeds higher than 24 mph may benefit from significant speed reductions, but not to the extent that the 20mph speed limit is self enforcing;
- Based on the available data for two years after scheme implementation, casualty benefits greater than the national trend have not been demonstrated”;

16.17 A scrutiny review on sustainable transport was undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2009/10 and recommended that the Council develop a borough wide a 20 mph speed limit to be operational in all residential areas and, where appropriate, enforced by traffic calming measures. The recommendation was partially agreed by the Cabinet on the basis that a 20 mph speed limit in residential areas was only effective with physical measures to slow traffic.

Scope of Review

16.18 It is proposed that the review considers the feasibility of the introduction of a default borough wide 20 mph speed limit for residential streets. As part of this, the review will consider:

- The potential for reductions in traffic speeds and road casualties through the introduction of 20 mph speed limits in areas not already covered by existing 20 mph zones that are enforced by signage alone
- The views of local residents and whether such a policy has potential to gain wide support. As such schemes are intended to be self enforcing, this is particularly important.
- The relative cost effectiveness of this approach in comparison to the current approach to reducing speed limits, where appropriate, to 20 mph
- The sustainability of potential benefits i.e. whether initial improvements are likely to be maintained without the need for physical calming measures.

Terms of Reference:

16.19 It is proposed that the terms of reference be as follows:

“To consider:

- the feasibility of the introduction of a default borough wide 20 mph speed limit for suitable residential streets and, in particular, whether reductions in traffic speeds and casualty figures are likely to be achieved without the need for physical calming measures and enforced by signage alone;
- whether a time limited pilot scheme in a suitable town centre *location* should be set up to test the potential effectiveness of such a scheme”.

Sources of Evidence:

16.20 Suggested sources of evidence for the review are as follows:

- Research documentation and national guidance
- Evidence on the effectiveness and outcomes of schemes in local authorities which have already implemented default 20 mph speed limits, such as such as Portsmouth, Bristol and Islington.
- Information on relevant work in this area being by Transport for London and the Mayor
- Relevant financial data including comparative costs of specific schemes
- Interviews with key stakeholders and local residents organisations

Key Stakeholders:

16.21 These are as follows:

Council Services:

- Joan Hancox - Head of Sustainable Transport
- Malcolm Smith, Transport Policy, Haringey Council

Partners:

- North East Area Traffic - Police
- Chief Inspector Sonia Davis - Police

The Cabinet

- Cllr Nilgun Canver – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Other Groups/Organisations:

- Haringey Transport Forum
- Jenny Jones – London Assembly
- Joanne McCartney - London Assembly
- 20s Plenty
- Local resident associations, including cyclists, walkers and parents
- Motoring organisations

Community Involvement and Consultation

16.22 It is suggested that an appropriate means of obtaining a representative sample of the views of local residents be sought. Haringey Transport Forum may provide a useful means of obtaining the views of a range of stakeholders, including residents. It is a forum set up by Sustainable Transport to discuss transport issues and is attended by officers, Police, resident representatives, TfL Officers and other invited guests depending on issues at the time.

Membership of Panel:

- Councillors Bull, Basu, Newton and Weber.

Timescale

16.23 It is proposed that the Review Panel aims to finish its work by the end of January 2011.

Evidence Sessions

16.24 As follows:

Meeting 1:

Proposed Date: 4 October 2010

Aim/Objective:

- To receive evidence on the Council's current policy in respect of the 20 mph speed limit

Possible Witnesses:

Tony Kennedy, Transport Policy and Projects Manager, Urban Environment

Meeting 2:

Proposed date: 18 October

Aim/Objective:

- To consider the response of the Police to the enforcement of the 20 mph speed limit

Possible Witnesses

- North East Area Traffic - Police
- Chief Inspector Sonia Davis – Safer Neighbourhood Team, Police

Meeting 3:

Proposed date: 15 November

Aim/Objective:

- To receive evidence on the work undertaken by the London Assembly on the issue

Background Information:

“Braking Point” – London Assembly Transport Committee report April 2009

Possible Witnesses

- Jenny Jones – London Assembly
- Joanne McCartney - London Assembly

Meeting 4:

Proposed date: 13 December

Aim/Objective:

- To obtain an overview of the views of interest groups and local resident organisations on the 20 mph speed limit

Possible Witnesses

- Local resident associations, including cyclists, walkers and parents
- Motoring organisations
- 20s Plenty

Meeting 5:

Proposed Date: 17 January

Aim/Objectives:

- To agree appropriate conclusions and recommendations for the review.

Background Information:

An issues paper summarising all the evidence received by the review and highlighting key issues will be produced.

