

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES**

<b>TO:</b>	<b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>15 SEPTEMBER 2021</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>PETITION RESPONSE: IS 20 PLENTY IN THE RESIDENTIAL STREETS OFF THE OXFORD ROAD?</b>		
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<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>KENTWOOD, NORCOT, BATTLE</b>
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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report recommends that the request for a 20mph zone to be implemented in across a number of residential streets off the Oxford Road be added to the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' list, that is also reported to this Sub-Committee. The report recommends that development of the scheme also be considered for implementation as part of the Oxford Road Corridor Study, should there be remaining funding available for this purpose, following delivery of the core scheme elements.
- 1.2 The report also recommends that representative speed surveys be conducted, as these would be required prior to development of any new 20mph schemes and can help inform the measures required to improve compliance.
- 1.3 This recommendation follows the receipt of a petition to the March 2021 meeting of this Sub-Committee, where the results of a widespread customer survey led by Battle, Kentwood and Norcot Ward labour Councillors was presented by Councillor Jo Lovelock. This survey demonstrated significant local support for the proposal, based on the responses received.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 - Overview of traffic calming considerations for 20mph zones.

## **2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That the request for a 20mph zone, as outlined in the petition received at the March 2021, be added to the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' list.

- 2.3 That officers conduct representative speed surveys within the proposed 20mph zone area and share the results with ward Councillors and the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport.
- 2.4 That the lead petitioner be informed of the decision of this Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed meeting minutes.

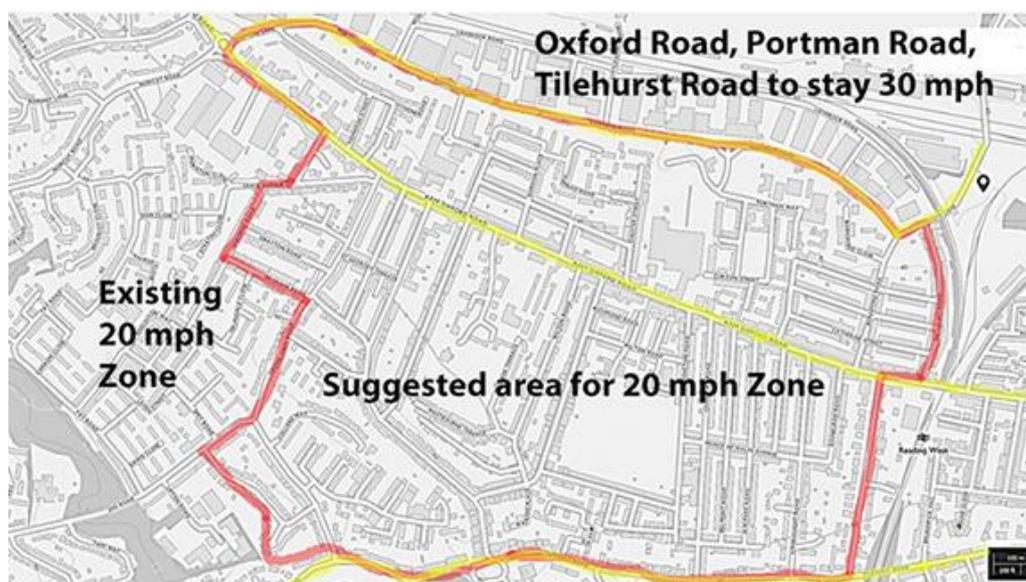
### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision of 20mph zones in residential areas is in line with the Council's Local Transport Plan, Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategies by removing barriers to the greater use of sustainable, healthy transport options.

### 4. THE PROPOSAL

#### Current Position

- 4.1 In January 2021, Labour Councillors from Battle, Kentwood and Norcot wards conducted a community survey to assess support for the introduction of a new 20mph zone in the area shown in the graphic below:



Of the 219 respondents, more than 80% indicated in favour of introducing this restriction and the results were reported as a petition to the January 2021 meeting of the Sub-Committee, introduced by Councillor Jo Lovelock.

- 4.2 Reading Borough Council has developed useful experience in delivering area 20mph zones in the borough, following national regulation changes in 2016 with the release of the new Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions. Appendix 1 provides a high-level overview of the range of traffic calming features that could be implemented within a 20mph zone and some of the considerations around these.

It is disappointing that the experiences in Redlands ward, in general, have shown that motorist compliance with the lower speed limit appears reliant on the

implementation of robust and frequent physical traffic calming features. Due to Police resourcing and priorities, speed enforcement over and above 'normal' levels cannot be assumed nor expected in a 20mph zone and nor does the Council have any speed enforcement powers.

This experience has informed the officer recommended approach toward new 20mph zones, which is that a scheme should be introduced with a robust and frequent range of physical traffic calming features, of which vertical features (i.e. humps and cushions) make up the significant proportion. This approach is considered to generate the greatest compliance by making the scheme largely self-enforcing.

- 4.3 The introduction of robust physical measures does, however, significantly increase the scheme costs and have a higher initial environmental impact due to the labour costs and materials required.

For context, the addition of physical measures to Kendrick Road, Upper Redlands Road, Allcroft Road and Morgan Road in the existing Redlands 20mph zone was allocated £100k. The extension of an existing zone in Northumberland Avenue was allocated £50k. The introduction of a new 20mph zone on Parkside Road, Southcote Road and Westcote Road was allocated £35k and contained relatively few physical features for the lengths of road. A new zone the size of that requested in this petition would likely exceed £300k, if delivered as recommended.

While there is currently no funding identified for the development and delivery of this new requested 20mph zone, there are mechanisms for potential allocation as follow.

#### Options Proposed

- 4.4 The schemes referenced in Section 4.3 were made possible by allocation of local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. The schemes in Northumberland Avenue and the Southcote Road area originated from community requests that were recorded on the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' list, which is reported to this Sub-Committee and is a document used for the consideration of this area of funding allocation.

It is recommended that the request for this new 20mph zone be added to this list of requested measures.

The list is being reported at this same Sub-Committee meeting, so the next update report is intended for the March 2022 meeting, but the request will be added to the list following this meeting, if this recommendation is agreed.

Consultations for the next allocations of local CIL funding are expected to commence later this year.

- 4.5 Depending on the potential funding available, consideration could be made for delivering the zone in phases, as funding becomes available. It is, however, recommended that each phase is delivered with a robust range of measures to avoid

the inefficiency of requiring further works at a later stage by maximising its 'self-enforcing' capabilities from the outset.

- 4.6 It is recommended that speed surveys are conducted within the proposed new zone to act as the baseline data that will be needed to inform the scheme design (and to measure success following delivery) once funding is available to develop the scheme further. These speed surveys will be limited, as they are outsourced and therefore a cost to the Council. Through-routes/primary roads will be prioritised as these are likely to be the roads with higher speeds that will require the most significant 'treatments' as part of the scheme design.

The results of the speed surveys will be shared with Ward Councillors and the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport. If agreed by the Sub-Committee and subject to contractor availability, it is intended that these surveys are conducted later this calendar year, but are co-ordinated around planned road works, school holidays and the busier build-up to Christmas.

### Other Options Considered

- 4.7 The Oxford Road Corridor Study has funding allocated and it is intended that development toward statutory consultation for the previously-agreed range of bus priority measures will commence from early next financial year.

Once these core elements are delivered, it is possible that any remaining funding could be considered for allocation against developing this 20mph zone proposal.

- 4.8 Other funding opportunities may arise, particularly considering the Government prioritisation of walking, cycling and use of sustainable transport modes for its funding. 20mph zones in residential streets can lead of a removal of barriers that some may have toward walking and cycling, through the potential reduction in through-traffic and perceived improvement in road safety that they bring.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The recommendation of this report is to record the request for a new 20mph zone so that future funding opportunities for development and delivery of the scheme can be identified. While this recommendation does not directly deliver a change, the introduction of 20mph zones in residential areas would contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan Themes, as set out below:

### **Healthy environment**

Reduced vehicle speeds increase the perception of safety and can remove some of the barriers that individuals may have toward the greater adoption of sustainable and healthy transport options, such as cycling and walking.

In some situations, the introduction of 20mph zones and speed calming measures can act as a deterrent to those persons using residential streets as rat-runs or short-cuts. This can have some localised environmental benefits in terms of reduced noise and vehicle emissions.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 The recommendation of this report doesn't introduce any physical changes at this time. As a result, an Environmental Impact Assessment has been conducted, which shows a net 'NIL' impact as a result of the Sub-Committee agreeing to the recommendation of this report.

Further assessments will be conducted when funding for scheme development and delivery is identified.

## **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 7.1 The petition for this new 20mph zone originated from a wide area community survey undertaken by Labour Councillors from Battle, Kentwood and Norcot Wards, where local support has been captured.

The recommendation of this report will result in this request being captured and recorded for future funding allocation, potentially through the Oxford Road Corridor Study, but also through local CIL allocations or other developer contributions.

- 7.2 The lead petitioner will be informed of the decision of this Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed meeting minutes, for the purpose of enabling feedback to the community. This report and subsequent meeting minutes and video recording of this meeting will be available from the Council's website.
- 7.3 Some of the processes for allocating funding to schemes involve public consultation, such as with the local CIL allocations. There are, therefore, further opportunities for community engagement enabling members to consider their local priority schemes/initiatives.
- 7.4 Once funding becomes available, the processes involved in delivering a 20mph zone and many of the traffic calming features in Appendix 1 will require statutory consultation, with feedback requiring consideration prior to any potential delivery of the scheme/feature.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant at this time as the report does not recommend any physical change. Assessment will be considered once funding for development and delivery of this scheme is identified.

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising from the recommendations of this report.

9.2 Appendix 1 provides high-level information regarding the legal processes that need to be undertaken prior to the potential delivery of a 20mph zone and many of the traffic calming features.

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Section 4.3 provides some context regarding the potential costs for development and delivery of this requested scheme and Sections 4.4 - 4.7 provide some potential funding sources.

The speed surveys and data analysis will be a recommendation that requires funding. The following information is based on agreement to the recommended actions of this report.

### 10.2 Revenue Implications

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Employee costs	NIL	NIL	NIL
Other running costs			
Capital financings costs			
<b>Expenditure</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL
Income from:			
Fees and charges	NIL	NIL	NIL
Grant funding			
Other income			
<b>Total Income</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL
<b>Net Cost(+)/saving (-)</b>	NIL	NIL	NIL

Staff costs will be capitalised.

### 10.3 Capital Implications

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	£10	NIL	NIL

Funded by Grant (specify) Section 106 (specify) Other services Capital Receipts/Borrowing	Capital integrated transport block (ITB) grant funding	N/A	N/A
Total Funding	£10	NIL	NIL

It is expected that the above funding will be necessary to deliver a representative range of speed data within the proposed zone area.

### 10.3 Value for Money (VFM)

Speed survey data will be required as part of the scheme design process, not only providing the baseline data for post-implementation comparison, but providing data that informs the design and supports the consultations that will be necessary as part of the scheme development process.

The surveys will be conducted by an existing contractor of the Council's and will be commissioned as a single work instruction to deliver best value. Officers will carefully consider the roads that can provide the most useful and representative data.

Future design, consultation and implementation is intended to be conducted using in-house resources. The areas that would need outsourcing are road marking and road sign creation, which are currently not tasks that the Council can undertake. However, these will be outsourced via existing contracts and will be instructed as a single job to maximise value for money and avoid an inefficient 'piecemeal' delivery approach.

### 10.4 Risk Assessment

It is not considered that there are any financial risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

### 11.1 Petition Receipt: Is 20 Plenty In The Residential Streets Off The Oxford Road? (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2021)