

Approval of a framework for prioritising 20mph projects

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendation: that the Cabinet be asked to:

- (a) approve the framework for assessing and prioritising requests for 20 mph Speed Limits for use in the preparation of schemes for delivery in 2022/23 (pending agreement of budgets);
- (b) agree that amendments to the framework are delegated to the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management.

1. Summary

This report sets out the proposed framework for assessing and prioritising requests for 20 mph Speed Limits (20SPL).

2. Introduction

Newton Abbot 20 mph Pilot Scheme has been in progress since September 2019 and is intended to test whether introducing a default 20SPL will bring increased gains in;

- road safety by reducing the number and severity of collisions
- increased active travel and benefits to public health
- reduced congestion by improving traffic flows
- reduced emissions by encouraging modal shift for local trips by making walking and cycling safer and easier
- increased sense of public safety, making the streets accessible again to vulnerable road users who feel threatened by fast-moving traffic.

Requests for new 20SPLs continue to be received and are being added to a waiting list. There is a substantial desire from elected Members and residents to have 20SPL considered in their communities.

A budget is being sought for 20SPL schemes for 2022/23 from the Local Transport Plan or Section 106 contributions which should provide funding to progress a number of sites, depending on scale. It is proposed to assess and prioritise requests using the system proposed to establish a programme of works for 2022/23, which can then be utilised in future years subject to review. The proposed system conforms to current policy but introduces a wider range of factors to reflect the potential benefits and allow schemes to be progressed where there is greatest benefit, and need.

3. Proposal

It is proposed that elected Members are invited to make representations for their communities where it is felt that the introduction of a 20SPL would be beneficial; this may be for the whole community or a discrete part of the community.

Requests will be reviewed against a framework, a copy of which is included at Appendix 1 and the proposals prioritised based on alignment with current Policy principles of:

- significant vulnerable road user activity
- mean speeds are low (24mph or below).

The framework includes additional factors to ensure that resource is directed to where there will be greatest benefit, including:

- speed related casualty collision history
- support from wider community
- active Community Speed Watch
- deprivation Index ranking
- existing Air Quality Management area.

All schemes will also be considered via safety audit prior to progression. The Framework is included at Appendix 1; however it is acknowledged that as proposals are considered, and depending on the volume it may be necessary to amend the scoring within the framework to provide separation between schemes.

4. Options/Alternatives

It is considered that it is not appropriate to delay delivery of Policy compliant requests for 20SPLs where budget is available. A prioritisation system is necessary as it is anticipated demand will exceed capacity to respond to requests and allows schemes to be progressed where the need and potential benefits are greatest, and to achieve best value.

The proposed framework incorporates elements adopted by other authorities, it supports partner organisations by considering matters relating to enforcement and air quality. For example, by considering mean speed and the presence of an active Community Speed Watch, pressure on Police resource to enforce will be reduced and residents can be empowered to affect driver behaviour in their own community.

Other options were considered but were not felt to be appropriate at this stage:

- Prioritising sites in order of population size and working down: This option would initially concentrate resource where more people benefit. However, this may not target areas with greatest need.
- Selecting geographical clusters: This may be a case of starting at one end of the authority area and working systematically across, or, picking groupings of communities through another mechanism. It has the benefit of creating a consistent approach to speed management across each area which can

improve compliance. However, it does not reflect the benefit that can be achieved compared to prioritising sites according to a proven need.

The Newton Abbot 20 mph Pilot Scheme will provide data and information which will enable and inform a review of the proposed system and DCC's 20SPL Policy.

5. Financial and Resource Considerations

A budget of £100k has been earmarked for 20SPLs for 2022/23 through the Local Transport Plan or Section 106 contributions where appropriate which will provide for a number of schemes.

6. Legal Considerations

The proposal is to apply existing County Policy with additional scoring mechanism to ensure resource is directed with best effect.

There are no specific legal considerations.

Speed Limits must be set in accordance with the procedures set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).

7. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

It is expected that introducing appropriate 20SPLs will offer a positive environmental impact by increased active travel; reduced congestion by improving traffic flows; and, reduced emissions by encouraging modal shift for local trips by making walking and cycling safer and easier.

The inclusion of Air Quality Management areas in the prioritisation framework will assist in targeting areas where there will be gains in this respect.

8. Equality Considerations

It is expected that introducing appropriate 20SPLs will assist in community cohesion and focus resources to areas where there is a higher risk of residents being affected by road safety matters. By including within the framework the Index of Mass Deprivation should help prioritise those areas with greatest need.

9. Risk Management Considerations

The proposal is compliant with the existing County Policy. However, an additional scoring mechanism has been included to ensure resource is directed with best effect.

All schemes will also be considered via safety audit prior to progression.

No risks have been identified.

10. Public Health Impact

It is expected that introducing appropriate 20SPLs will offer a positive public health impact by increased active travel; improvements in air quality as a consequence of reduced congestion by improving traffic flows; and reduced emissions by encouraging modal shift for local trips by making walking and cycling safer and easier.

11. Conclusions

The proposal allows for the gathering and prioritisation of requests for new 20SPLs from elected Members and communities. This will remove the current frustration that all new schemes must await the outcome of the Newton Abbot 20 mph Pilot Scheme.

The proposal uses a simple mechanism for prioritising schemes where the need and potential benefits are greatest.

In the longer term future changes to the speed Policy and any decision to roll out 20SPLs on a default basis will be informed by the Newton Abbot 20 mph Pilot Scheme.

Meg Booth

Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Highway Management: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper

Date

File Reference

Nil

Approval of a framework for prioritising 20mph projects - Final

Appendix 1 to HIW/21/82 - 20 mph Assessment System

Name of Community / Location*			
Community Support (via local Elected Member and Local Town/Parish Council)		Pass / Fail	
POLICY COMPLIANCE		Score	Sub Total
Traffic Speed (85th %ile)			
Below 24 mph		4	
25-30 mph		2	
Above 31 mph		0	
Speed Related Injury Collision (3 year record)			
Each Slight		1	
Each Serious		2	
Each Fatal		3	
Vulnerable Road Users / Environment			
School/Playground		1	
Health/Social Care Facility		1	
Community Facility		1	
Footway both sides		-1	
Footway one side		0	
No Footway		1	
Pedestrian crossing		-1	
OTHER FACTORS			
Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)		2	
Community Speed Watch Scheme		2	
Road Character			
A road		0	
B road		1	
C class road		2	
Unclassified road		0	
Index of Multiple Deprivation			
Decile 1 and 2		5	
Decile 3 and 4		3	
Decile 5 and 6		0	
Decile 7 and 8		-3	
Decile 9 and 10		-5	
Total Score			

*Where multiple sections of highway are proposed for 20SPL, assessment will be made on representative length(s).