Council	Agenda Item 53
16 December 2010	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:		**Overview & Scrutiny Report: 20 MPH Speed Limit Review**		
Date of Meeting:		**16 December 2010**		
Report of:		**Strategic Director, Resources**		
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Wards Affected:	All			

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 The Council's Constitution requires that the findings of scrutiny panels, along with the executive response, be reported to Full Council for information.

1.2 This report presents a summary of the 20 mph Speed Limit Scrutiny Panel findings and recommendations (Appendix 1) along with the Cabinet Member response (Appendix 2).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That Member's note Appendices 1 and 2.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The 20mph review was called for by Councillors in response to a large number of requests from residents for speed reductions in specific areas. It was felt a systematic and citywide approach was needed.

3.2 The panel found that when introduced in the right areas 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones can be used to not only increase safety for all road users, preventing accidents and reducing speeds, but bring about benefits in health and quality of life.

3.3 The panel concluded that 20 mph speed limits should be introduced on all residential roads, on roads where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users such outside schools, routes to schools, on roads next to parks and playgrounds, sports and leisure facilities, community buildings, older people's care homes, local shops, on roads which are primarily for residential use and on busy shopping streets.

3.4 The full scrutiny panel report along with the evidence base is available in Members rooms and on the overview and scrutiny web pages.

3.5 The Executive response to the scrutiny recommendations is attached as Appendix 2.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report. The Scrutiny Review undertook extensive consultation.

4. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

Legal Implications:

5.2 As indicated in paragraphs 1.1 and 2.1 above, and in accordance with the council's procedure rules on overview and scrutiny, this report is purely for Council to note. There are no further legal implications arising directly from the report.

Lawyer consulted: Oliver Dixon Date: 25 November 2010

Equalities Implications:

5.2 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

Sustainability Implications:

5.3 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.4 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.5 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.6 No specific implications as this report is purely for the Council to note.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of the 20 mph scrutiny review.
2. Executive response to the scrutiny recommendations.

Documents in Members' Rooms:

1. Full Scrutiny Panel report and evidence base

Appendix 1

20 Miles Per Hour Speed Limit Review Panel Summary

1. Background

Panel Membership - Councillors Pete West (Chair), Jayne Bennett, Gill Mitchell, David Watkins, Geoff Wells

1.2 The panel held 4 public meetings and heard evidence from the following groups and organisations:

- Sussex Police
- Air Quality, Brighton and Hove City Council
- UK Noise Association
- Brighton and Hove Bus Company
- Road Safety Team, Brighton and Hove City Council
- Living Streets
- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
- Older People's Council
- Bricycles
- Cabinet Member for Environment, Brighton and Hove City Council
- Proposer of Notice of Motion (Councillor Ian Davey)
- London Road Area Local Action Team
- Lansdowne Area Resident Association
- Hangleton and Knoll Ward (Councillor David Smart)
- Goldsmid Ward (Councillor Melanie Davis)
- Westbourne Ward (Councillor Denise Cobb)
- Woodingdean Speedwatch Group
- Friends of Queens Park/Queens Park Local Action Team
- Lewes Road for Clean Air Group

1.3 A number of council departments, and local and national organisations and groups were contacted between December 2009 and March 2010 and invited to make comments on the impact of 20 mph speed limits/zones in the city:

- Tourism and Venues, Brighton and Hove City Council
- Culture and Economy, Brighton and Hove City Council
- Economic Partnership
- Brighton and Hove Business Forum
- North Laine Traders Association (NLTA)
- City Clean, Brighton and Hove City Council
- The Taxi Forum
- Big Lemon Bus Company
- East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS)
- South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb)
- Brighton and Hove Federation of Disabled People
- Environmental Protection UK

- Public Health, Brighton and Hove City Council
- 20s Plenty Campaign
- Royal Society of Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
- The Institute of Advance Motorists (IAM)
- The Environmental Transport Association (ETA)
- The RAC
- The AA

1.4 Terms of reference

1. To gain an understanding of the collision statistics
2. To seek a range of views as to the impact of 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones on road safety in terms of reducing vehicle speeds and casualty numbers
3. To investigate what options other local authorities across the country are pursuing in terms of 20 mph speed limits/zones
4. To gain an understanding of the potential environmental impacts of 20 mph speeds on air quality, tail pipe and carbon emissions as well as noise
5. To gain an understanding of the potential 'other benefits' which 20 mph speeds may bring, such as health benefits, increased sociability, and better walking and cycling conditions
6. To gain an understanding of any potential consequences of any displacement of traffic as a result of introducing lower speed limits
7. To gain an understanding of the speed limit review currently being undertaken in the city and the links with this investigation
8. To identify the benefits, feasibility and potential costs of various 20 mph speed options for the city
9. To develop recommendations for the future development of council policy on 20 mph speed limits/zones

2. Key findings

An extensive study of 20 mph zones in London has demonstrated that 20 mph zones are associated with a 42% reduction in all casualties, and that areas adjacent to 20 mph zones also see a reduction of 8% for all casualties. There is no doubt that when traffic is forced to travel at speeds of 20 mph or less, it saves lives.

However, some of the traditional traffic calming measures used in the past such as speed bumps and humps are very unpopular with drivers, cyclists, taxi drivers, buses, and many residents living near to the zones.

Additionally, 20 mph zones are very resource intensive to implement and as a result interventions in Brighton and Hove have had to be prioritised depending on the severity and numbers of accidents occurring and the resources available. This has meant that the council has reacted to traffic problem areas and road accidents in a piecemeal and small-scale way, and has left residents feeling that their concerns about dangerous roads are not being dealt with adequately enough. The

panel feels that a new approach to introducing these types of road safety measures needs to be introduced and that this approach needs to have a wider impact and not be so costly.

Conclusions from an independent interim evaluation of the area-wide 20 mph speed limit scheme introduced in Portsmouth are interesting to note. After implementation there was an average speed reduction of 0.9 mph on roads included in the scheme. On some roads included in the scheme where average speeds were higher than 24 mph significant speed reductions were seen on some of the roads. There was a 13% over all reduction in accidents and a 15% reduction in the number of casualties, although reductions in both accident and casualty numbers fluctuated across the city. It should be noted that the evaluation of the Portsmouth scheme is based on one years worth of data and road safety data requires three years of data to be considered robust, however, the results so far do indicate some positive benefits from the scheme.

The Portsmouth scheme demonstrated that where average speeds of 24 mph or less exist, then 20 mph speed limits can be successfully used to formalise an existing practice of slow driving, and act as a deterrent to aggressive driving as well as reduce casualty numbers. Additionally, 20 mph speed limits can reduce speeds on roads where average speeds are higher than 24 mph, although not always so that average speeds are compliant with the 20 mph speed limit.

20 mph speed limits are likely to be effective on clusters of streets where average speeds are low, or next to 20 mph zones to increase the area covered by the zone. When 20 mph speed limits are introduced in areas where they are right for local conditions they work to reduce traffic speed, prevent accidents, formalise already slow driving behaviour, and deter aggressive driving.

As well as road safety benefits there are additional and important benefits which 20 mph speed limits/zones have. 20 mph speed limits/zones help to improve the urban realm and create safer environments for vulnerable road users. This encourages residents to engage in more active travel which will improve the health of local residents as well as contribute to creating vibrant people-centred environments. There are indications that slower speeds also increase community ties and may help to prevent social isolation so increasing residents' quality of life. Additionally, there are key health benefits which 20 mph speed limits/zones help to achieve; less transport-related air pollution and noise from traffic will benefit residents' health, and potential mental health benefits will arise due to the reductions in accident related traumas. 20 mph speed limits/zones help to make areas of the city more accessible to vulnerable road users.

Any speed reduction initiative introduced needs to consider issues of enforcement, compliancy, and coherency. The police do not have the resources to enforce 20 mph speed limits when they are introduced in

ways which are not considered to be in line with the guidance. Sussex Police recommend therefore that 20 mph speed limits should only be introduced on roads where average speeds are less than 24 mph. If a speed reduction initiative is to be introduced on roads where average speeds are more than 24 mph, then traffic calming measures should be introduced to make these areas self-enforcing. Speed reduction initiatives should be easy to comply with in order to ensure that drivers are not unnecessarily criminalised. In order to ensure maximum effectiveness any changes to speed limits need to be coherent and made in ways which make sense to drivers and other road users.

Evidence gained from the Speed Limit Review of all C and Unclassified Roads will be important in evidencing where in the city average speeds are currently 24 mph or lower.

The environmental impacts of speed reductions are difficult to assess because of the number of variables involved. Driving styles greatly impact on the amount of pollutants and emissions emitted from a vehicle. Simplistically, regular acceleration and braking increases fuel consumption and the amount of pollutants emitted, conversely if traffic is kept moving, or there is a reduction in the volume of traffic, then less pollutants and emissions are emitted. Any speed reduction initiative introduced needs to take this relationship into account, as well as factor in the potential benefits which may arise should residents choose to use more sustainable forms of transport as the roads are perceived to be safer due to speed reductions. Reducing speed limits may help to also reduce noise from traffic, so increasing the benefits of speed reductions for residents.

Evidence from the UK Noise Association suggested that reducing the speed limit on main roads in the city would be beneficial for reducing noise pollution. However, such benefits need to be weighed up against the need to keep traffic flowing through and around the city and avoiding congestion. The panel felt that over all it would be better to keep main through roads moving at 30 mph, where these roads have average speeds of over 24 mph, or were not heavily used by vulnerable road users.

However, there are key safety concerns with some of the main roads in the city; in particular vulnerable road users do not feel safe being able to cross busy main roads and there are often no safe places or crossings available to vulnerable road users in the right locations. These safety concerns need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

There is widespread concern amongst residents about the safety of many of the roads in the city as a result of the speed at which traffic travels. Many residents feel that they should not have to wait until an accident happens in their area before a road safety initiative is introduced. There is a large amount of support and demand from residents for speed reduction initiatives. Such concerns and demands

require the council to take a much more widespread and systematic approach towards making road safety improvements.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 The panel, on the basis of the evidence they had heard and collected, feel that the council needs a new approach to introducing speed reduction initiatives in the city, an approach which is more widespread and works to create safer roads for vulnerable road users across the city.

3.2 The panel found that when introduced into the right areas 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones can be used to not only increase the safety of roads for all road users, preventing accidents and reducing speeds, but to bring about benefits in health and quality of life outcomes. Indeed, 20 mph speed limits/zones not only help to improve local environments and make them safer for vulnerable road users they help to create vibrant people-centred environments, strengthen community ties and promote sustainable travel choices. 20 mph speed limits/zones also help to bring about key health benefits by increasing physical exercise as well as reducing transport-related air and noise pollution which heavily effects residents' health.

3.3 The panel concluded that the city would benefit from having areas of 20 mph speed limits introduced into the city and that 20 mph speed limits should be used primarily on roads which vulnerable road users use the most; such as roads outside schools, routes to schools, on roads next to parks and playgrounds, sports and leisure facilities, community buildings, older people's care homes, local shops, on roads which are primarily for residential use, as well as on busy shopping streets. Introducing 20 mph speed limits on these roads sends a clear message to drivers that there are safety reasons for driving slower.

3.4 The panel concluded that 20 mph speed limits should be introduced on all residential roads, on roads where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users, and on roads where average speeds are 24 mph or less. Evidence from the speed limit review of all C and Unclassified roads will help to identify which roads these are. Information on the speed limit review, including the methods for identifying the clusters and priority areas needs to be made available.

3.5 The panel also concluded that where average speeds on residential roads and in high pedestrian and cyclist use areas are higher than 24 mph, then speed reduction initiatives should be supported by traffic calming measures, although speed bumps and humps should ideally not be used.

3.6 20 mph speed limits and zones need to be easily identifiable and therefore common features should be used to indicate to drivers that they are entering an area which requires them to drive slower. Where

possible, 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits should be joined together to form 20 mph areas as this will help to ensure that speed limits in the city are coherent and easy to comply with. Care should be taken when implementing 20 mph areas to ensure that traffic problem areas and rat running is not created on roads not included in the 20 mph areas.

3.7 Where the criteria are met, 20 mph areas should be accompanied by the introduction of more crossing facilities to better enable pedestrians and cyclists to cross main busy roads and to link 20 mph areas. This will greatly aid vulnerable road users to move safely around the city.

3.8 The panel found that in terms of overall benefits the main through roads in the city where they do not fit into the above criteria, should not be included in speed reduction schemes. However, the road safety concerns of residents using these roads, which are mostly about being able to cross the road safely, need to be attended to as a matter of priority.

3.9 Residents need to be involved and consulted on plans to introduce 20 mph areas in order to ensure community buy-in into speed changes and therefore better compliancy. Local action teams, many of which have road safety as a key priority in their action plans, and residents' associations', should also be involved in plans to introduce 20 mph areas. This consultation process as well as public expectation will need to be carefully managed. Additionally, the criteria for the implementation process of 20 mph areas should be made available to residents.

3.10 The impacts of 20 mph initiatives need to be carefully monitored and evaluated.

3.11 The Road Safety Team and Transport Department at the council have undertaken a number of highly successful schemes which have made the city's roads considerably safer for residents and visitors. Indeed 20 mph speed limits/zones are just one element of a much larger programme of road safety projects and engineering work undertaken by the council. The approach recommended by the panel aims to build on this good work and offer a more widespread and systematic approach to implementing 20 mph speed limits/zones across the city. Such an approach will require the whole Transport Department to be involved in developing and implementing the schemes and will need resourcing.

3.12 The panel developed the following recommendations based on the evidence heard from the expert witnesses and the opinions received from residents:

Recommendation 1

That the council introduce a policy of reducing speed limits on roads primarily for residential use, and on those roads where high numbers of vulnerable roads users use the roads; particularly those roads outside schools, routes to schools, roads outside parks and playgrounds, sports and leisure facilities, community buildings, older people's care homes, local shops and on roads in busy shopping areas.

Recommendation 2

That the speed limit review currently being conducted to assess average speeds on C and Unclassified roads in the city be used to identify roads in the city that would benefit from 20 mph speed limits as average speeds are 24 mph or less.

Recommendation 3

That those roads identified in recommendations 1 and 2 be clustered together to form coherent 20 mph areas.

Recommendation 4

That a report which sets out the work being undertaken by the speed limit review, including the methods for identifying clusters and priority areas, and containing a timetable for implementation be brought to the next meeting of the Environment Cabinet Member.

Recommendation 5

That where needed 20 mph areas are supported by additional traffic calming measures. However, these measures should ideally not include the use of speed bumps or humps but high quality design measures which are fit for purpose for local areas.

Recommendation 6

That easily understandable criteria for the implementation of 20 mph areas be made available to residents so that they can understand why some areas of the city will be prioritised for speed reduction initiatives first.

Recommendation 7

That taking into account those areas identified in recommendations 1, 2 and 3, main roads in the city should not have speed reduction initiatives introduced. However, the council should look as a matter of priority at other road safety measures which can be used to make these roads safer for vulnerable road users. In particular, the concerns of residents about being unable to cross these types of roads safely should be addressed.

Recommendation 8

That as a matter of priority, and where criteria are met, more crossing facilities, zebra crossings, and safe spaces for vulnerable road users to cross roads are introduced in conjunction with 20 mph areas and on main busy roads.

Recommendation 9

That Local Action Teams and local residents' associations are actively involved and consulted with on plans to introduce 20 mph initiatives in their areas.

Recommendation 10

That, in order to ensure community buy-in and maximum compliancy, residents are engaged and consulted with on plans to introduce 20 mph initiatives into their areas.

Recommendation 11

That as part of the public consultation and engagement exercise, awareness raising and education campaigns are also undertaken to highlight key problem areas in the city and the need for slower speeds and safer driving and road use in the city.

Recommendation 12

That a carefully planned, long-term monitoring and evaluation exercise takes place so that evidence on the impacts of the initiatives introduced, and effectiveness of gaining and maintaining community buy-in, can be collected and responded to.

Recommendation 13

That 20 mph areas are identified as quickly as possible and that adequate funding is prioritised and set aside for implementing these initiatives as part of the Local Transport Plan (3).

Recommendation 14

That the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor progress of these recommendations with the first update report brought to the committee after six months.

Recommendation 15

That the feasibility of piloting in a suitable area, new technology to manage traffic speed such as 'green light wave' technology and other forms of smart technology be considered.

Appendix 2 – Executive Response

Rec #	Recommendation	Officer Comments and Response	Date
1	**That the council introduce a policy of reducing speed limits on roads primarily for residential use, and on those roads where high numbers of vulnerable roads users use the roads; particularly those roads outside schools, routes to schools, roads outside parks and playgrounds, sports and leisure facilities, community buildings, older people's care homes, local shops and on roads in busy shopping areas.**	The recommendation to use such zones outside schools that are not situated on A class roads is accepted. However, further work is needed to establish priorities so that limited funding can be properly directed using the Road Safety Programme (This programme is managed by the council's Road Safety Team and delivers a raft of engineering measures to improve road safety across the city. Recent examples include improvements to Chalky Road and ongoing work to improve conditions for pedestrians at the Upper Drive/Old Shoreham Road junction). The recommendation to implement such a large area of the city would cost millions. Key to establishing priorities for any 20mph zones is the City Speed Limit Review which is underway.	
2	**That the speed limit review currently being conducted to assess average speeds on C and Unclassified roads in the city be used to identify roads in the city that would benefit from 20 mph speed limits as average speeds are 24 mph or less.**	The need to separate those roads suitable for just a reduction in speed limit as opposed to supporting other options such as traffic calming is accepted and will be given a priority, this will form part of the City Wide Speed Limit Review.	Ongoing and subject to progress re Recommendation 1
3	**That those roads identified in recommendations 1 and 2 be clustered together to form coherent 20 mph areas.**	Once the City-wide Speed Limit Review work has been completed priority sites will be identified for any potential measures with the exception of those regarding schools which will be prioritised as per recommendation 1.	

4	**That a report which sets out the work being undertaken by the speed limit review, including the methods for identifying clusters and priority areas, and containing a timetable for implementation be brought to the next meeting of the Environment Cabinet Member.**	A report on the Speed Limit Review will be brought to the November 2010 Environment Cabinet Member Meeting.	
5	**That where needed 20 mph areas are supported by additional traffic calming measures. However, these measures should ideally not include the use of speed bumps or humps but high quality design measures which are fit for purpose for local areas.**	Subject to funding, this will require a case by case analysis of suitable road safety options and consultation with the residents. All measures will be designed in accordance with best practice guidance for street design, including Manual for Streets and Brighton & Hove Council's Streetscape Design Guidance.	
6	**That easily understandable criteria for the implementation of 20 mph areas be made available to residents so that they can understand why some areas of the city will be prioritised for speed reduction initiatives first.**	Agreed. In line with best practice the council will make the criteria that helps officers prioritise road safety measures in a given area understandable and available to residents.	

7	**That taking into account those areas identified in recommendations 1, 2 and 3, main roads in the city should not have speed reduction initiatives introduced. However, the council should look as a matter of priority at other road safety measures which can be used to make these roads safer for vulnerable road users. In particular, the concerns of residents about being unable to cross these types of roads safely should be addressed.**	Agreed**.** These roads are constantly being assessed in order to identify any appropriate remedial action. The Council supports the introduction of enhanced crossing provision for vulnerable users and is recommending a review of criteria against which crossing provision is made subject to availability of funding.	
8	**That as a matter of priority, and where criteria are met, more crossing facilities, zebra crossings, and safe spaces for vulnerable road users to cross roads are introduced in conjunction with 20 mph areas and on main busy roads.**	Agreed - as per recommendation 7	Ongoing
9	**That Local Action Teams and local residents' associations are actively involved and consulted with on plans to introduce 20 mph initiatives in their areas.**	All residents and representatives bodies will be consulted on any plans to introduce 20 mph zones in their area.	Ongoing from start of implementation/consultation
10	**That, in order to ensure community buy-in and maximum compliancy, residents are engaged and consulted with on plans to introduce 20 mph initiatives into their areas.**	Agreed. As per recommendation 9.	Ongoing from start of implementation/consultation

11	**That as part of the public consultation and engagement exercise, awareness raising and education campaigns are also undertaken to highlight key problem areas in the city and the need for slower speeds and safer driving and road use in the city.**	The Road Safety Team currently manages a programme of education, training and publicity which is focussed at those areas and road users that are considered most vulnerable. This will continue and changing attitudes towards excessive or inappropriate speed will form part of that work. The aim is to make speeding socially unacceptable. Education, training and publicity will have a significant role in supporting the harder measures such as changes in speed limits and traffic calming. An example of this is the ongoing London Road scheme which has combined publicity and education during the consultation stage.	Ongoing and already in place
12	**That a carefully planned, long-term monitoring and evaluation exercise takes place so that evidence on the impacts of the initiatives introduced, and effectiveness of gaining and maintaining community buy-in, can be collected and responded to.**	Agreed . Data preceding implementation of any scheme would be gathered and retained in order that 'before and after' comparison data could be compared and effectiveness measured.	All before and after data to be compared. Evaluation to take place annually from 12 months after implementation date of a particular scheme
13	**That 20 mph areas are identified as quickly as possible and that adequate funding is prioritised and set aside for implementing these initiatives as part of the Local Transport Plan (3).**	The Speed Limit Review is being progressed and the potential increased use of 20mph speed limits/zones has been submitted as an item for consideration and possible inclusion within LTP3, subject to availability of funding.	
14	**That the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor progress of these recommendations with the first update report brought to the committee after six months.**	Agreed.	The first/second quarter of 20011

15	**That the feasibility of piloting in a suitable area, new technology to, manage traffic speed such as 'green light wave' technology and other forms of smart technology be considered.**	Whilst use of new technology for managing speed will be considered, this will need to be done on a case by case basis as local demographics etc will determine the suitability for piloting any particular technology. Green waves to allow progress through the City's network at predetermined speeds are a familiar concept in Brighton & Hove and have been in use for a considerable number of years. The technology is utilised at the City's fire stations, on a red light call the fire officer chooses a route via a control panel and this triggers a green wave through all of the traffic signals along this route to coincide with the speed of the fire engine. Use of average speed cameras may be an option subject to suitable route identification and obtaining the necessary Type Approval. Across the network generally traffic signal timings are calculated to reflect the speed of the traffic and how long it takes to get from one set of lights to another. It would always be possible to turn this around and set the timings to reflect the traffic speed that you are looking for and to clear congestion.	Subject to suitability and availability of specific funding.