

**Minutes of the Portfolio Holder (Transport and Highways) Decision Session –
21st September 2012**

Present

Councillor Peter Butlin (Portfolio Holder, Transport and Highways)

Other Councillors:

Councillor Les Caborn
Councillor Jose Compton
Councillor Mike Perry

Officers:

Georgina Atkinson, Democratic Services Team Leader
Carolyn Burrows, Team Leader, Safety Engineering
Jo Edwards, Senior Road Safety Engineer
Ian Marriott, Community and Environment Legal Services Manager

Members of the public:

Kevin Barber
Mollie Barber
Andrew Battrick
Ralph Dearden
Alice Hardman
Linda Cashmore
Tony Jones
Phil Johnson

P.C. Neal Westwood, Warwickshire Police
P.C. Hattie Sibbick, Warwickshire Police

1. Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2. Various Speed Limits

Councillor Butlin, Portfolio Holder for Transport and Highways, welcomed the Councillors and members of the public in attendance.

He referred to the schedule of proposed Speed Limit Orders, as outlined at Appendix A to the decision report. Councillor Butlin explained that the proposed orders at References 1 to 5, 9, 10, 12, 15 and 16 had not received any objections; therefore, following consultation with the Senior Road Safety Engineer, it was agreed that those Speed Limit Order be approved.

Councillor Butlin explained that the proposed Speed Limit Orders which had received objections would be considered and that any objectors in attendance at the meeting would have the opportunity to present their concerns to the Portfolio Holder.

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Reference 6 – A3400, London Road / Shipston Road, B4035 Brailes Road
and Fell Mill Lane, Shipston-on-Stour

Jo Edwards, Senior Road Safety Engineer, provided an outline of the rationale for the reduction in speed limits along sections of the A3400 and B4035, following a number of road traffic incidents. She advised that the proposal had been fully supported by the Long Compton Parish Council and that additional signage and road markings would also be implemented to address the road safety issues.

Andrew Battrick spoke in objection to the proposed reduction in speed limit along the A3400 and outlined his view, as follows:

- In accordance with the Department for Transport Circular 01/2006, 'upper tier' roads had a recommended speed limit of 60mph. He considered the A3400 to be an 'upper tier' road.
- The highest mean speed recorded along the A3400 was 56mph, which demonstrated that the majority of drivers did keep within the current 60mph limit.
- At present, there was no road safety signage (apart from two small bicycle awareness signs); yet despite this, the majority of drivers did keep within the current 60mph limit, as demonstrated by the speed recording.

In light of the road safety issues which had been outlined by the Senior Road Safety Engineer, Councillor Butlin approved the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 6.

Reference 7 – Forshaw Heath Road / Forshaw Heath Lane / Mill Lane /
Poolhead Lane

Jo Edwards advised that all objectors would prefer the proposed 50mph speed limit to be reduced to a 40mph speed limit. However, the Department for Transport issued strict criteria in respect of the setting of speed limits and any further reduction than the proposed 50mph would also be contrary to County Council policy.

Councillor Perry reported that he had been on a site visit to the area and had also undertaken consultation with local residents. Within the current 60mph speed limit, drivers' mean speed along the road was recorded at 45mph; therefore it was anticipated that a reduction to 50mph would also reduce the level of mean speed. In light of this, Councillor Perry was in support of the proposed Speed Limit Order.

Councillor Butlin outlined the importance in ensuring that the County Council's speed limit policy was applied consistently across the county. Based on the road characteristics and environment, he considered that the 50mph speed limit was appropriate and therefore, the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 7, was approved.

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Reference 8 – Earlswood Common, Valley Road and Umberslade Road

Jo Edwards provided an outline of the rationale for the reduction in speed limit to 30mph, following a number of road traffic incidents. One objection had been submitted in respect of the proposal.

Councillor Perry spoke in favour of the proposal and referred to a number of recent road traffic incidents which had been attributed to the high speed of vehicles on the approach to the junctions of Earlswood Common, Valley Road and Umberslade Road.

Councillor Butlin considered that the Speed Limit Order had been proposed to address the serious road safety issues that had been experienced in the area and in light of that, the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 8, was approved.

Reference 11 – Brittons Lane, Norton Lindsey

Jo Edwards provided an outline of the rationale for the reduction in speed limit to 50mph, following a number of road traffic incidents. She explained that the objectors would prefer a lower speed limit than the proposed 50mph; however, the Department for Transport issued strict criteria in respect of the setting of speed limits and any further reduction than the proposed 50mph would also be contrary to County Council policy. It was important to acknowledge that the majority of drivers chose their speed according to the environment and the signs would indicate that 50mph was the maximum speed and not intended to be a target.

Alice Hardman spoke in objection to the proposal. She referred to her written objection, which had been included in the decision report, and clarified that she did not support a 40mph speed limit as this was still too high for the road. A copy of an objection pack that had been compiled by local residents was given to Councillor Butlin. Alice Hardman outlined the objection, on behalf of the residents which included the following points:

- There was a total of 12 residencies within a short space, so therefore the residents considered that the area was a hamlet, rather than isolated households.
- The objection had been supported by the local MP, Chris White.
- The characteristics of the road included sharp bends, no street lighting, a lack of turning points and no pavements.
- The road was frequently used by cyclists, horse riders and walkers, as well as the local residents.
- There had been a number of accidents along the road.
- There was a concern that the installation of 50mph speed limit signage would increase drivers' speed.

The residents considered that a speed limit of 30mph – and possibly 20mph on certain stretches – was a necessity, given the issues raised. Councillor Butlin was invited to undertake a site visit of the area before taking a decision on the proposed Speed Limit Order.

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In light of the issues raised, Councillor Butlin agreed to defer his decision in respect of the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 11, in order to read the objection pack and undertake a site visit, if considered necessary.

Reference 13 – A4177 Birmingham Road, Hatton / Five Ways Road, Stoney Lane

Jo Edwards provided an outline of the rationale for the extension of the 40mph speed limit on the approach to the Hockley Road junction, following a number of road traffic incidents. She explained that the majority of drivers chose their speed according to the environment and that enforced speed limits which did not reflect the environment often had a negative effect and could increase drivers' speed, rather than reduce.

Tony Jones spoke in objection to the proposed Speed Limit Order and outlined his view, as follows:

- He had been involved in the Parish Plan and therefore was aware of the reservations in respect of the National Speed Limit within the area, particularly along small side lanes.
- There was already a high level of speed limit signage installed in the area.
- There was an accident black spot at the Stoney Lane junction, caused by a large tree which reduced drivers' visibility.
- As Stoney Lane was a straight road, drivers often had the temptation to speed and overtake other vehicles.
- He suggested that a roundabout at the Hockley Road / Birmingham Road junction would be the most appropriate traffic calming method.

Phil Johnson spoke in objection to the proposed Speed Limit Order and outlined his view, as follows:

- That the stretch of the A4177, which was currently 50mph, should be reduced to 40mph, due to the high number of road traffic incidents that had occurred at the junction.
- The volume of vehicles parked along The Green, adjacent to the school, caused a build-up of traffic and made the road dangerously narrow.
- The 30mph approach to the school on The Green was insufficient.

Councillor Compton explained that the school now encouraged parents to park their vehicles in the church car park, rather than along the road. A recent site visit to the area, to ascertain whether there was any layby space for cars, had demonstrated a lack of space for parking. Councillor Compton agreed to contact the school again with regard to the issue.

With regard to Station Road and Mill Lane, Councillor Compton advised that she had submitted these for consideration next year.

Councillor Butlin considered that the Speed Limit Order had been proposed to address the serious road safety issues that had been experienced in the area and in light of that, the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 13, was

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approved. However, he acknowledged the concerns that had been raised by the objectors and agreed to monitor road safety at the A4177 junction, as referred to by Phil Johnson.

Reference 14 – Bubbenhall Road (Various Road, Stoneleigh)

Jo Edwards provided an outline of the rationale for the reduction in speed limit to 50mph. She explained that the objector would prefer a lower speed limit than the proposed 50mph; however, the Department for Transport issued strict criteria in respect of the setting of speed limits and furthermore, any further reduction than the proposed 50mph would be contrary to County Council policy.

Councillor Butlin considered that the Speed Limit Order had been proposed to address the serious road safety issues that had been experienced in the area and in light of that, the advertised Speed Limit Order, Reference 14, was approved.

Resolved

The Portfolio Holder agreed:

- 1) To approve the proposed Speed Limits Orders, as outlined in Appendix A to the decision report, as follows: References 1 to 10 and 12 to 16; and
- 2) To defer the decision in respect of the proposed Speed Limit Order in Appendix A (Reference 11), until a later date.

The meeting closed at 2.45 p.m.

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Portfolio Holder
(Transport & Highways)