

## **Draft Cabinet Minutes – 12 April 2022**

### **6. 20mph Speed Limits - Task & Finish Group Recommendations**

Councillor Wallace Redford (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning) explained that the Task and Finish Group had been convened following a motion at full council to consider the evidence, cost, impact and/or benefit of 20mph speed limits in residential areas including schools and other sites of wider interest across Warwickshire and to report the outcome of this work to Cabinet. The Group had concluded that a blanket approach offered little benefit and had engaged in discussion over a wide range of how effective 20mph schemes already implemented in Warwickshire were and also looked at the options for advisory signage and what would benefit schools in particular. To support the work, the Group had looked at two specific areas in Warwickshire investigated for a blanket approach (New Arley and Kenilworth) but neither showed the benefits for full schemes and this supported the Group's conclusion that a targeted approach was more suitable. Discussions with the Police had drawn the conclusion that 20mph limits were only effective when motorists were already abiding by 30mph limits. The final recommendations were set out in the report.

Councillor Tracey Drew read a statement from Councillor Jonathan Chilvers who was unable to attend the meeting. The statement reflected on Councillor Chilver's perception of the approach the Task and Finish Group had taken to the topic and the resulting quality of its report, which Councillor Chilvers considered mis-represented the findings. Councillor Chilvers suggested that Cabinet should request further work be undertaken to assess the success of schemes around the country in places like Warwickshire and then put in place a fair and costed process to support communities that wanted 20 mph speed limits. Councillor Seccombe requested that the statement be sent to the Portfolio Holder in accordance with normal custom and practice.

Councillor Drew drew attention to the government's £30 million investment in highways decarbonisation projects which would enable councils to complete for small amounts of money to deliver 'pioneering projects' to decarbonise. She noted that residents in Kenilworth were supportive of a change to slower speed limits and traffic calming subject to consultation, and that road safety was a key concern for residents hesitating to walk and cycle who would have greater confidence if there was a 20mph speed limit. She considered that the benefits were tangible and credible. She asked how quickly the council could consider applying to the aforementioned fund with an innovative scheme to effectively introduce 20mph speed limits.

Councillor John Holland recognised that there were clearly divided views on the subject. He noted that the Secretary of State had indicated a presumption that residential streets would be subject to 20mph speed limits, which were also popular with residents. However, he noted that there were two elements to their introduction with the council being required to implement them and the police to enforce them. He welcomed the report's emphasis on the role of the local councillor in the debate and considered that this represented a workable way forward if the Portfolio Holder was minded to work with local councillors. In terms of using delegated budgets, he

believed that the costs of introducing lower speed limits could be less than the costs indicated in the report as it was feasible for well-informed local councillors to take advantage of opportunities that arose when roads were scheduled for repair and align the introduction of traffic calming works in order to limit the additional costs.

Councillor Martin Watson, who had been a member of the Task and Finish Group, commented on the work of the group, contradicting the statement of Councillor Chilvers in terms of the approach that had been taken. He advised that the Task and Finish Group had looked at the introduction of a blanket scheme but understood that it would not be universally welcomed. He also referred to an article in the Shipston Forum which stated that it would be pointless to implement a reduced speed limit that would not be enforced and therefore technology in the form of speed cameras, etc was required to support enforcement. He highlighted the view of the Task and Finish Group that one size did not fit all and that was the reasoning behind the conclusions.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse noted that the Task and Finish Group report gave a flavour of the debates that had taken place and welcomed the presentation of the report in that sense. Referring to the last bullet point of paragraph 4.8 of the covering report, regarding the definition of the metrics for success, he considered that there was merit in the elected member for the area working within specified parameters, but he was unclear what the metrics for success actually were, particularly around the weight of community opinion (eg in Shipston) and he sought an understanding of how the metrics would be put together into a framework. He was of the view that it would be a worthwhile exercise for the metrics to be delivered through the scrutiny function to ensure member and community involvement and allow more discussion and debate to take place.

Councillor Judy Falp considered that it was important to have the option to implement 20mph limits but noted that 20mph limits were not universally welcomed. She felt that it was important to address existing issues with delegated budgets before Councillors were expected to engage with their residents as per the recommendations.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe reflected that when she had joined the Council there were five 20mph trial schemes in place which were not extended due to limited requests to do so. In the division she represented, a number of Parish Councils had asked to join the debate and make their views known but only one was interested in pursuing a 20mph area. She noted that implementing lower speed limits required expenditure of public funds and not all residents were supportive of them. In fact, she was aware that despite the presentation of a petition of over 1000 signatures from Shipston, the Town Council had not given the idea support. She advised that there were villages in the division she represented where a 20mph limit would be welcome outside schools but not in the wider area and she did not consider that a wider speed limit was useful if drivers were not compliant. Compliance with speed limits was an operational police matter and, at the time of the meeting, police resources were stretched and she was, therefore, conscious that the decision would have an impact on the Council's partners. She considered that the report presented a compromise to those

individuals who were interested in a 20mph zone, not a blanket approach, and she was of the view that this was more in-line with the Warwickshire way of working.

Councillor Andy Crump stated that as part of his role, he was a member of the Road Safety Partnership and considered that there were still too many fatalities on roads. He referred to one of the public speaker's comments about the similarities between Shipston and other communities but considered that this was not the case and the approaches taken required some finesse. He referenced projects in the division he represented where residents had been accepting of measures in place but considered that measures required public support to be successful. He considered there were other issues to be tackled, eg around education, as speed was a small factor in accidents at low speed, and agreed that the Task and Finish Group's recommendations had merit.

Councillor Wallace Redford acknowledged the comments that had been shared. He noted that there was a member development seminar due to take place on 27 April 2022 which he trusted would clear up any confusion around the use of delegated budgets. He also noted Councillor Roodhouse's comments regarding the metrics for success and suggested that the seminar should cover this point as well so that members were aware of the information, data and communication required.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Supports the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group on 20 mph speed limits as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report;
2. Asks that all Members be informed of the options for using their Delegated Highways Budgets to fund speed limits and engineering measures designed to reduce speed, the potential availability of the Community Action Fund, the preferred approach of targeting specific locations, the criteria for 20 mph speed limits and what evidence is required to support a proposed 20 mph speed limit; and
3. Asks the Strategic Director for Communities to monitor the use of Members' Delegated Highways Budgets for 20 mph limits and report back to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2023.