

Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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TRAFFIC MITIGATION IN RURAL AREAS

1. PURPOSE

- To inform the committee regarding road traffic casualties in rural areas.
- To inform the committee regarding achieving reduction in speed limits on rural roads.
- To inform the committee regarding achieving reduction in speed limits outside schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Await the release of the Government's new 10 year Road Safety Strategy and guidance for future Road Safety Strategy at a local level. The national consultation may yield to a blanket reduction on rural roads from 60mph – 50mph.
2. Do not pursue further speed limit reductions outside primary schools as this is currently not a priority in terms of casualty reduction. Casualty data shows that 8 slight collisions have occurred outside rural primary schools over the last four years.
3. Officers continue to review casualty data and investigate requests received for casualty reduction measures in rural areas
4. Officers continue to implement appropriate measures which may include reduction in speed limits as and when required and resources be directed to areas which will have the greatest impact in achieving target NI47 - reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on Peterborough roads.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The data on casualty from road traffic collisions is collected by Cambridgeshire Constabulary on behalf of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership and the data is analysed and published annually in the Joint Road Casualty Data Report.

Over the past five years approximately 80% of all casualties occurred in urban wards in the Peterborough area. Similarly, 89% of casualties that occurred in rural wards occur on roads with a speed limit of 40mph or above outside the village envelope i.e. on roads between the villages.

The Government recently consulted on the new road safety strategy, which closed on 14th July 2009, the results of which are expected prior to the end of the calendar year. The consultation made specific reference to the following two items:

- Revising existing guidance to highway authorities recommending that lower limits (60mph to 50mph) where evidence suggests it would reduce casualties.
- To amend guidance recommending that highway authorities over time introduce 20mph zones or limits into streets which are primarily residential in nature.

Impacts in reducing speed limits from 60mph – 50mph and 30mph – 20mph:

	Reduction 60mph – 50mph	Reduction 30mph – 20mph
Reduction in the severity of injury	<p><i>Slight/minimum reduction</i> Research suggests that the risk of the driver dying in a head on collision involving two cars travelling at 60 mph is around 90 per cent. This drops to around 65per cent at 50mph and around 15 per cent at 40 mph.</p> <p>Reducing the speed limit from 60mph to 50mph would have little impact on the severity of injury to vulnerable road users or single vehicle collisions.</p>	<p><i>Significant reduction</i> DfT Suggest if you are a pedestrian and are hit at; 40mph there is 90% chance of being killed 35mph there is a 50% chance of being killed 30mph there is a 20% chance of being killed 20mph there is a bout 2.5% chance of being killed</p>
Reduction in the likelihood of injury	<p><i>Slight reduction</i> Whilst the slower speeds would allow drivers more time to react to an incident, there are many other factors that influence the occurrence of a collision.</p> <p>Likewise there is no historic data as to the speed of vehicles that have been involved in collisions.</p>	<p><i>Limited</i> Very few collisions in 30mph limits occur outside schools. Since 2004 8 slight injury collisions have occurred outside rural primary schools. Drivers naturally moderate their speeds due to the volume of traffic in such locations at the start and end of the school day.</p>
Compliance with new limit	<p><i>Limited</i> Limited compliance with 50mph on rural roads unless blanket reduction on all rural roads. Police usually only support the reduction in speed limits when vehicle speeds are already low.</p> <p>It would create a two tier hierarchy of rural roads at both 50 and 60 mph with no discernable distinction between the two to the average driver. Consequently compliance of the lower limit is unlikely to be self enforcing creating a non sustainable burden of enforcement on the police for it to be effective.</p>	<p><i>Limited</i> Limited compliance unless the speed of vehicles is already low, or traffic calming is installed to physically restrict speeds.</p> <p>Police only support the introduction of 20mph when engineering measures are introduced at the same time unless current speeds are already low.</p>
Street Clutter	<p><i>Considerable increase</i> More signs would be required on the carriageway. This is in contrast to set guidelines from the Department for Transport in relation to street clutter</p>	<p><i>Considerable increase</i> More signs would be required on the carriageway. This is in contrast to set guidelines from the Department for Transport in relation to street clutter</p>
Costs	<p><i>Significant</i> New signs would be required at the terminal points and every junction along the length of road where there is a change of speed limit. Costs would be In the region of £1k per pair of signs. Additional costs would be incurred if the signs require to be illuminated.</p>	<p><i>Significant</i> New signs would be required at the terminal points and every junction along the length of road where there is a change of speed limit. Costs would be In the region of £600 per pair of signs, subject to any lighting requirements.</p>

3.2 Process for reducing speed limits.

To implement a reduction in speed limit it is necessary to follow the statutory process to make a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), which is simplified below:

- Undertake formal written consultation with statutory consultees including the police and other affected parties.
- Advertise the proposals in a local newspaper (Evening Telegraph) and erect notices on site.
- After 21 days consider any objections to the proposal and advise objectors of outcome.
- If proceeding arrange for the order to be sealed by Legal Services.
- Publish a notice of making in a local newspaper stating the date when the order becomes effective.
- Erect the required road signs to effect the changes on site.

National guidance, published by the Department for Transport, exists for the setting of speed limits and this is used by both the Highway Authority and the Police.

4. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

- Local Area Agreement – National Indicator 47:
Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs) in road traffic accidents on Peterborough's road

During 2008 the total number of KSIs was 101 of which 29% occurred in rural wards.

- National Indicator 48: Reduce the number of children (0-15 years) killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

During 2008, 8 children were killed or seriously injured of which 2 were in rural wards.

5. CONSULTATION/KEY ISSUES

- A Safer Way: Consultation making Britain's Road the Safest in the World

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership – Joint Road Casualty Data Report 2008
- A Safer Way: Consultation making Britain's Road the Safest in the World
- Setting Local Speed Limits - DfT Circular 01/2006
- The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996

7. APPENDICES

- Casualty data by village envelope.
- Casualty data by ward .

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