

<b>SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 6</b>
<b>2 NOVEMBER 2010</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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### Update on Speed Limits in Rural Areas

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform the commission on progress achieved regarding the:
- Government’s current position in relation to the publication of the National Road Safety Strategy and the potential lowering the speed limit on rural roads to 50 mph;
  - Proposed implementation of 20 mph speed limits around rural schools.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the commission reconsider their original recommendation to proceed with the implementation of 20mph speed limits outside rural schools, based on the existing low speeds recorded outside the schools and the low level of accidents.

#### 3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report falls within the priority of creating strong and supportive communities as defined by the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The report links to the achievement of National Indicators 47 and 48.

NI47 : The reduction of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

NI48 : The reduction of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A previous report was presented to the commission in October 2009.

#### 5. NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

- 5.1 At the time of the previous report the previous Government was consulting on the proposed National Road Safety Strategy to 2020.

The publication of the strategy was subsequently deferred pending the North Review of Drink and Drug Driving (subsequently published 16 June 2010).

In the intervening period there was a change of national government which is now fully investigating the economic and public service resource impact of any suggested changes to the law, taking account of the current financial and economic situation.

Consequently the National Road Safety Strategy has not been published and thus no further progress has been made.

## 6. 20MPH SPEED LIMITS OUTSIDE RURAL SCHOOLS

- 6.1 Informal Consultation has been undertaken with the head teachers of the rural schools, the parish councils that represent these areas and the appropriate Ward Councillors with regards to the proposed introduction of the 20mph speed limits. All schools and parish council are supportive of the proposals and no objections were received.
- 6.2 Speed surveys have been undertaken outside all schools within the area for which the 20mph limit is proposed. These were conducted during the times when pupils arrive for the start of the school day and again during the middle of the school day. Similar speed surveys would be undertaken following the introduction of the 20mph speed limits to determine any speed reduction achieved.

	Peak Hour Average Speed mph (nr of vehicles)	Off Peak Average Speed mph (nr of vehicles)
Barnack	15 (50)	19 (13)
Castor	24 (100)	23 (100)
Eye	24 (100)	25 (100)
Glington	25 (100)	27 (100)
Helpston	28 (100)	30 (100)
Newborough	19 (89)	30 (50)
Northborough	21 (68)	24 (40)
Thorney	20 (81)	21 (40)
Wittering	27 (100)	26 (100)

The surveys demonstrate that speeds are already low at the time when pupils are arriving for school. In many locations speeds are compliant with those that would be expected within a 20mph speed limit.

- 6.3 In terms of accidents outside the school there have been none in the last 5 years outside the schools in Newborough, Castor, Wittering, Helpston, Barnack, Northborough or Thorney.

Outside the remaining schools there have only been the following accidents all of which resulted in slight injuries.

Eye – 12/03/2007 at 08.20hrs a 10yr old child ran out from a bus and was hit by a car.

Eye – 21/11/2005 at 13.15hrs, 2 cars were involved in a shunt turning right into a side road

Glington AMVC – 15/09/2009 at 08.40hrs two cars were involved in rear end shunt

Glington Primary – 31/01/2006 at 23.40hrs a single vehicle lost control and struck a post

Of these accidents, three have occurred during the school day but only one has involved a child.

Since the time of the original report there have been no people killed or seriously injured outside rural schools.

- 6.4 The cost of implementing the 20mph speed limit at the above locations is estimated at £16,000.

This funding has been identified from the Integrated Transport element of the Local Transport Plan allocation.

- 6.5 Given the existing low speeds and small number of accidents outside the schools it is considered that the expenditure of £16,000 to implement 20 mph speed limits can not be justified. The Commission is therefore requested to reconsider its decision.

6.6 The formal traffic regulation orders and the letters of formal consultation have been prepared. Should the commission wish to continue with the implementation of speed limits the letter would be delivered.

The consultation must then run for a statutory minimum period of 21 days. Should no objections be received the orders will be made and the speed limits implemented thereafter.

**7. NEXT STEPS**

7.1 Should the Commission wish to proceed the speed limits would be implemented as proposed. A further report for information would be submitted to the commission on completion of the follow up speed surveys.

**8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

8.1 None

**9. APPENDICES**

9.1 None

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