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PLACE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6 OCTOBER 2022

Present: Cllrs Carole Jones (Chairman), Les Fry (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Toni Coombs, Sherry Jespersen, Andrew Starr and Roland Tarr

Apologies: Cllrs Ryan Hope, Val Potheary and Maria Roe

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Belinda Bawden, Cllr Laura Beddow, Cllr Richard Biggs, Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Mike Dyer, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Brian Heatley, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr Gary Suttle

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Anna Eastgate (Corporate Director - Place Services), Jack Wiltshire (Head of Highways), Gemma Clinton (Head of Commercial Waste and Strategy), David Diaz (Property Commissioning Manager), Jason Jones (Group Manager (Commissioning)) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

22. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24. Chairman's Update

The Chairman referred to a recent article in the Dorset Echo, connected to the agenda item '20mph Speed Limit Approach' and noted that it contained some errors, including within the headline. The council's Communications Team had requested that the article be corrected. The Chairman confirmed that the report on the agenda was with regard to the establishment of a process for the assessment of requests for 20mph limits or zones. The report did not consider individual requests.

The Chairman noted that the committee was a non-decision-making committee and as such, made recommendations to Cabinet.

25. Public Participation

Questions and statements had been submitted from members of the public. A copy of the questions and statements submitted and the responses to questions provided, are set out at Appendix 1.

26. **Questions from Members**

Questions from councillors were dealt with in exempt business as they related to the exempt report 'Eastern Area Household Recycling Centre'.

27. **20mph Speed Limit Approach**

The committee considered a report of the Road Safety Manager, which provided information on the review of the guidance for setting the principles, criteria, and process for 20mph schemes. The Place and Resources Overview Committee was invited to review the guidance ahead of consideration at Cabinet.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following areas were covered:

- Members of the committee expressed thanks to those members of the public that had submitted questions and statements in respect of the item
- Concern was expressed about the reference in Appendix B to the requirement to undertake a survey of residents and the requirement to have a threshold level of support of 60% from the respondents of households affected by the proposed 20mph scheme. This was felt to be too onerous for smaller communities and that it should be for applicants to determine how support and evidence was gathered, which could include different approaches. Reference was made to the wording included in 'criteria c' in the policy, which was felt to be adequate and set out what was required. A request was made that the wording relating to a survey and threshold limit should be removed from Appendix B and changed to 'must be able to demonstrate and quantify community support for the initiative', to be in line with the wording of 'criteria c'. This suggestion to be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration
- The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment and Lead Member for Highways noted that there was a need for a clear, data led demonstration of community support and a framework within which applications could be considered
- Consideration of the length of time to process an application, including process and costs
- A discussion was held on the requirement to establish a community speed watch. The Head of Highways noted that although a community speed watch did not have to be in place, it was beneficial if it was and that parish and town councils that wanted one, should be encouraged and supported. The Head of Highways confirmed that this could be supported through a minor amendment to the policy

- Discussion relating to the condition around average speeds being below 24mph and whether this was appropriate criteria
- The Council could review the process after a period of implementation, and it was suggested this take place after 1 year.

It was proposed by T Coombs seconded by S Jespersen

Recommendation to Cabinet

- a. That the policy for setting the principles, criteria, and process for 20mph schemes be approved with the comment as set out below;
- b. That the policy be reviewed 1 year after adoption.

Comment from the Place and Resources Overview Committee:

- That the wording in Appendix B, relating to the requirement to undertake a survey of residents and the requirement to have a threshold level of support of 60% from the respondents of households affected by the proposed 20mph scheme, should be removed and changed to 'must be able to demonstrate and quantify community support for the initiative', to be in line with the wording of 'criteria c'.

28. Place and Resources Overview Committee Forward Plan

Councillors noted the committee's forward plan.

The Chairman reported that an item 'Fees and Charges Policy' would be considered by the committee at the meeting on 24 November 2022.

29. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

30. Exempt Business

It was proposed by L Fry seconded by A Alford.

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting and the live stream of the meeting ended.

31. Eastern Area Household Recycling Centre - Exempt

The committee received and considered a report from the Head of Commercial Waste and Strategy.

Statements and questions were received from Councillors Goringe, Dyer, Cook and Roe.

T Coombs asked that ward members continued to be involved in the process.

It was proposed by T Coombs seconded by A Alford

Recommendation to Cabinet

1. To support progressing with the preferred site as set out in the report including negotiations with landowners to determine which of the options for acquiring an interest in the site would represent best value for money to the Council.
2. To support continued discussions with Hampshire County Council over a joint venture to upgrade the household recycling centre as set out in the report to serve residents of Hampshire and Dorset.

APPENDIX 1 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Agenda item 5 - Public Participation

Questions relating to agenda item 7 – 20mph Speed Limit Approach

1. Questions from Trevor Green (DGSA Wyvern Cargo Limited)

I think the question we need to know at this stage is where exactly are the proposed speed limits?

I briefly read the attached documents but it doesn't give an answer and would need to know this to give you an informed comment.

That said, Simon is looking to see if the RHA have an informed point of view and may respond directly.

The necessity for the limits is completely understood, even encouraged within the definition and criteria. To me, this is a relative perception of the individual, or individuals, and concerns surround Villages jumping on the preverbal bandwagon. Major Roads are not to be included which should include, for example, but not exhaustive of the A350 and C13 as this is part of the Advisory one-way route for HGV's in North Dorset.

The exception here is Melbury Abbas. I'm unsure how they managed to convince Dorset Council that it needs a 20 mph limit!!

Can Dorset Council define the term 'Major Road'?

20 mph speed limits would have a somewhat detrimental, possible disastrous effect, on transport in the area.

The reasons I see for this are, but again not exhaustive of, are:

- General slow-down of traffic causing delays and extending travel times, particularly if there are tight schedules or trying to get to the port in order to board that important ferry.
- Delays and re-routing can be disastrous and costly to all involved in the transport chain and end-user...i.e. me and you!
- Drivers Hours. As you may be aware, HGV and PSV drivers have a legal requirement to keep with their drivers hours rules. Reducing limits can have a detrimental effect because of increased travel times. Note, a 20 mph limit for 1 Village is one thing but when you have several, or more, villages on the same route it is a totally different ball-game. Drivers and their employers can be receive heavy fines for any Infraction of the Drivers Hours rules.
- As suggested, driving times will be increased which will, as previously said, increase driving times. The necessity for parking facilities for HGV's will therefore increase. Last time I checked, there are simply not enough parking facilities for HGV's in Dorset outside those routes under the remit of Highways authorities.
- HGV's generally have far more efficient engines that most other motor vehicles. At 20 mph however, most vehicles including HGV's run far less efficient , and therefore more polluting, at 20 mph than they do at 30. I fear you may be trading one safety issue for another.

Responses from the Head of Highways

Question 1 – *I think the question we need to know at this stage is where exactly are the proposed speed limits?*

The committee hearing is here to discuss the policy and is unable to discuss any individual requests. It is worthy to note that there have been 23 past expressions of interest for a 20mph speed limit reduction, but the full demand will only be known once local communities are able to submit an application.

Question 2 - *Can Dorset Council define the term 'Major Road'?*

Dorset Council follow the DfT guidance on road classification and the primary route network. It also has a local Highways Inspections Guidance Manual, and these documents will help guide the 20mph decision making process.

2. Questions from Peter Mole

1 Could you please explain the measure or quantitative method which is used for the threshold of “depth of residential development” and “high levels of pedestrian and cycle movement” in the assessment criteria?

Response from the Head of Highways

In relation to villages, the DfT document Setting Local Speed limits at point 132 says, "It may also be appropriate to consider 20 mph limits or zones in built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature, or where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high. Such limits should not, however, be considered on roads with a strategic function or where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function." The phrase "depth of residential development" has been used as an alternative way of describing village streets which are primarily residential in nature. While the DfT do not quantify a threshold for this, the criteria for a village itself is set out in DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/2004, which states that a reasonable minimum criterion for the definition of what constitutes a village, for the purpose of applying a village speed limit, would be that there were: 20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road) - and a minimum length of 600 metres. If there are just fewer than 20 houses, traffic authorities should make extra allowance for any other key buildings, such as a church, shop or school. Where the character of a village falls outside this definition, local authorities are encouraged to use their discretion in deciding whether a lower speed limit is appropriate.

The Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) for England and Wales, provides an evidence base for the potential level of active travel commuting (walking and cycling) and is calculated using outputs based on the last available Census (2011). Areas with short commutes and lack of hills indicate higher potential. The tool disregards current conditions: it shows what might happen with sustained promotion and Highways improvements such as a 20mph speed limit reduction

2 My impression is that the 2013 Department for Transport guidance is open to interpretation which inevitably leads to different implementation of measures in different parts of the UK. In line with attitudes and practice in Europe and North America there appears to have been a marked acceleration in the number of 20mph schemes in the UK over the last five years or so. With almost half of the UK population enjoying the protections and quality of life which goes with lower speed limits will we in Dorset expect to see broadly similar proportions of 20mph roads in the next few years?

Response from the Head of Highways

Scotland and Wales operate under separate guidance to England. Where applicable, the DfT 01/2013 'setting local speed limits' will form the basis for Dorset Council's policy. With the introduction of this policy Dorset will see an increase in 20mph schemes / zones on roads where it is appropriate to do so.

3. Questions from Gay Mole

We need a policy which urgently deals with the reality of the situation in Fontmell Magna which is very dangerous particularly for children, the elderly, the less mobile and those of an anxious disposition.

We are unique on the A350 in so much as 95% of the houses require us to step from our front gates onto a winding narrow busy road with speeding traffic and no pavement on either side. Many of the vehicles exceed the

current 30 mph limit and you can imagine how terrifying this can be particularly with HGVs and other large vehicles. I would like councillors to visit and see for themselves because it does not need to be like this and there are far too many hair raising near misses.

As far as the proposed policy is concerned could you please advise how point 1.7 will be applied in practice? The officers are familiar with the A350 in Fontmell Magna but the terms “strategic function” and “where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function” are not defined so it is not possible to understand whether this precludes a 20mph speed limit on the A350 here or whether the actual circumstance would make us eligible? Having traffic traveling along your footpath at high speed is quite alarming.

Thank you for the work you are doing.

Response from the Head of Highways

Identifying specific locations for which 20 mph limits can apply is beyond the scope of this committee as it would be inappropriate to predetermine a decision that may in the future be made as part the Traffic Regulation Order process. However, as part of the Traffic Regulation Order process, it will be necessary to consider a range of information including the evidence submitted within an application, the traffic survey data and information provided by the local Community Highways Officer. This information combined with the DfT guidance on road classification and the primary route network, and the local Highways Inspections Guidance Manual will help to establish whether a road forms part of the strategic road network or is a road where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function.

The Road Safety Team will be available to have an early conversation with a town/parish council and/or local ward member to discuss the likely success of a 20mph application. We always want to start from the point of how can we achieve this, but we must also be mindful to avoid unnecessary expense commissioning traffic surveys or unnecessary time spent consulting with residents in areas where an application is highly unlikely to proceed.

4. Questions from Cllr Brenda Mustoe (Winfrith Newburgh and East Knighton Parish Council)

1. Considerable emphasis is given within the DfT guidance and the Dorset Council interpretation to the desire to ensure greater safety for pedestrians. Could you please explain why there is no weighting within the Toolkit for roads that are mainly residential and with access to community services which have no pavement?

Response from the Head of Highways

The Priority Criteria Matrix is designed to be a proportionate tool for officers and is not designed to be exhaustive. Other relevant local conditions such as a lack of pavement are likely to be a factor identified within an application and

the local Community Highways Officers will be encouraged to consider this and any other local factors when they make their assessment to the Road Safety Team.

2. Do you not agree that it is iniquitous to deem an area suitable for a 20mph limit but unable to have one as there are insufficient funds but it can be self funded so disadvantaging the very small Parishes with low precepts?

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Council will rank and deliver schemes on a priority basis within the budget but would not be able to subsidise local town/parish councils if there are other schemes that have been identified as a higher priority.

5. Question from Cllr Christopher Addis

I am a Parish Councillor with Bothenhampton & Walditch PC. We have been very active in pursuing a 20 MPH speed limit within our two villages and this has included representation to Dorset Council and pro-active action within the villages where some twenty reflective '20 is plenty' signs, which we commissioned, have been located at strategic points.

We already score substantial points on the basis of the criteria outlined in the DC document **20 MPH Policy**, but we have other significant issues relating to safety and wonder if these might be considered important and therefore justify an increase in points.

1. Houses with front doors opening directly onto the street and where there is no pavement
2. Narrow roads with blind bends which are used by villagers for walking/cycling a) into town b) delivering children to school c) going to work
3. Substantial lengths of road with an absence of footpaths - see also 2 above
4. Several roads, running through the built-up areas of the villages, used as 'rat runs' during periods of heavy traffic on the A35. This is especially prevalent during the holiday seasons when motorists appear to show little regard for the natural restrictions that the environment described at 2 and 3 above would warrant.

Response from the Head of Highways

As question 3.

6. Questions from Becky Wallace

1. How will this be enforced?
2. Can we still monitor as part of speedwatch as we have previously been told speedwatch can only operate in 30mph zones.

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Police are responsible for speed enforcement operations including 20mph enforcement. Speeding concerns can be reported via the Dorset Road Safety Partnership website or to the Police non-emergency number 101. The concern will be reviewed and placed on a rota for investigation/deployment dependant on the nature of the report and resources available.

Community Speed Watch operations can be conducted on 20mph roads, and this was recently confirmed at the CSW Police event on Saturday 1st October 2022.

7. Questions from Helen Sumbler

Question 1

The new 20mph policy states that, as a guide, locations can be considered for 20mph schemes when three criteria apply, including:

“B. where existing mean speeds provide a realistic opportunity for compliance:

DfT guidance states that 20mph schemes should be self-enforcing. If the mean speed is already at or below 24mph, introducing a 20mph speed limit through signing alone is likely to lead to general compliance with the new speed limit. Means speeds above 24mph are likely to require additional traffic management or enforcement measures.”

This means that roads where mean speeds are >24mph, where there is arguably a greater need to reduce speeds and risk to more vulnerable road users, an application for a 20mph speed limit would not meet this criteria.

The DfT Guidance states:

“Successful 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits are generally self-enforcing, i.e. the existing conditions of the road together with measures such as traffic calming or signing, publicity and information as part of the scheme, lead to a mean traffic speed compliant with the speed limit.”

The ACPO Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines state:

“So, the police service position on all speed limits (including 20mph roads) is:”

...

“Only introduce where average speeds are already close to the limit imposed (24 in a proposed 20mph area) or with interventions that make the limit clear to visiting motorists;”

Why is the option to implement measures such as signing, publicity and information / interventions that make the limit clear to visiting motorists not included in criteria B, thus providing an alternative way to provide a realistic opportunity for compliance with 20mph where the mean speed is >24mph?

Response from the Head of Highways

The policy states that where mean speeds are above 24mph, this is likely to require additional traffic management or enforcement measures. This means that there is still an option to implement a 20mph on roads where the existing mean speeds are above 24mph. However, the additional measures are likely to require physical traffic calming measures that go beyond just signage and publicity.

Question 2

The ACPO Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines state that “Simply altering a sign without making it clear to all drivers who may use the road that the limit is changing, will risk high levels of offending with many unaware of their behaviour who may well have complied if it looked and felt like the limit.”

With this in mind, has Dorset Council considered inclusion of guidance in the policy about the application of 20mph speed limits across wider areas where multiple town / parish councils have or might be considering requesting a 20mph limit, e.g. Purbeck?

For such areas, clear signage and other roadside assets, e.g. planters, could be deployed at all entrances. This signage could be used to give the area, and all towns and villages within the area, a distinctive character, look and feel, and thus reinforce compliance with 20mph speed limits. The entry signage to the area could also emphasise the many benefits of lower speed limits, e.g. safer cycling and walking, less pollution so better for health and the environment.

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Council will evaluate 20mph schemes on a location-by-location basis but there is no restriction on local town/parish councils and/or local ward members coordinating their applications. The look and feel of a 20 mph limit/zone is important. The points raised here are valid. However, any such signage needs to comply with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, this is not something that Local Authorities can depart from. The principles of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 stand alone, hence it is not necessary to specifically add this to the policy.

8. Question from Dilys Gartside (20sPlentyforDorset campaign coordinator)

Before the Committee recommends this policy to Cabinet, will it demonstrate its stated **Reason for Recommendation ‘To ensure speed limit consistency across Dorset’** by engaging with the wider movement for safer roads and commit to sending an appropriate Member and/or Officer from Highways Travel and Environment to attend with me the national 20sPlenty Conference on 20th of this month at Oxfordshire County Hall titled **‘20sPlenty - the new Norm’** ?

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Council is open to conversation with the 20s Plenty Campaign Group. We must be mindful of all travel costs and the associated environmental impact. We would prefer the option to attend the conference virtually.

9. Question from Giles Watts (DCAN Transport Team and the Dorchester Transport Action Group (DTAG))

We welcome many of the changes you have made to Dorset Council's draft 20mph Policy including:

1. Removing the reference to A&B classified roads
2. Removing the need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances
3. Change of emphasis in the wording to provide greater recognition of vulnerable road users and local villages.

However, the new plan still seems to be half-hearted in its support for 20mph zones by including a number of tough criteria including:

1. No 20mph limits on "strategic" roads where movement of motor vehicles is the primary function
2. Mean speed must be below 24mph
3. Town/parish councils to pay for traffic surveys
4. Communities must have Community Speed Watch running for at least 1 year
5. Limited funding of £75k/year available from Dorset Council

While we recognise the need for regulation, these conditions seem overly restrictive. We should not forget that the main purpose of introducing 20mph zones is to improve the safety and everyday experience of residents, to improve air quality and to encourage people towards lower emission forms of transport.

For families living in, say, Chideock who are blighted by the constant traffic from a "strategic Road", I can't see how they will be helped by your policy. Instead, some of these rules need to be challenged and we should stick to the main principle which is that the DfT supports 20mph limits in streets which are "primarily residential" or where "pedestrian and cyclist movements are high".

Can I therefore ask if you will consider the following amendments to your policy ?:

1. 20mph limits can be introduced on "strategic" roads if they are supported by the town/village, a reasonable proportion of the local people, and, after negotiation, by the DfT.
2. Mean speeds do not have to be below 24mph. Peak speeds are much more important. This condition should be scrapped.
3. Surveys about car movements can be gained much more quickly and efficiently through sources such as Google Maps and satellite data. These sources should be allowed as an alternative to requiring traffic surveys run by a community Speed Watch groups.
4. Increase the funding available by Dorset Council for 20mph schemes.

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Council recognises that speed limits can be an emotive subject and is seeking to have a policy that balances the needs of all the communities that use the roads, including residents and the various types of road users that travel on the network. Obtaining the views of all these communities will continue to be an important part of the Traffic Regulation Order process for 20mph speed limits.

The 24 mph criteria is a key part of the DfT guidance.

Obtaining accurate speed survey data is important to ensure an evidence base and this will be achieved by the technical team. Human source intelligence from Community Speed Watch Groups is a useful tool of gaining additional evidence of existing speeds.

It will take time to fully assess the budgetary requirements and a review after the first year of implementation will be required to establish the benefit of additional funding for 20 mph areas against other highway improvements.

10. Questions from Nick Ward (Purbeck Transport Action Group)

1. Should not the criteria for 20 mph limits be directed at prevention of accidents, rather than responding to them after they have occurred?

Response from the Head of Highways

Dorset Council holds collision data dating back to 1998 and this information helps to provide an evidence base for highways road safety improvements. The Road Safety Team closely analyse this collision data and their activity is closely focused on cluster sites to ensure we have the greatest impact on reducing collisions. Whilst it is not possible to eliminate all risks from the road, the 20mph policy is aimed at preventing future collisions.

2. Will the budget allocated to installing 20 mph limits (£75k) be sufficient to cope with the likely demand?

Response

It is proposed to allocate an initial £75k per annum to the delivery of 20mph schemes, focused on the highest priority schemes. It will take time to fully assess the budgetary requirements and a review after the first year of implementation will be required to establish the benefit of additional funding for 20 mph areas against other highway improvements. There will be an option for any very large-scale priority schemes to potentially receive separate funding from the LTP budget, but this would need to be prioritised using the standard LTP scheme prioritisation process.

Town/Parish Councils will also have the opportunity to self-fund lower priority schemes that would not be delivered as part of the high priority Dorset Council programme, provided that they meet the essential criteria.

Statements start on the next page....

Statements relating to agenda item 7 – 20mph Speed Limit Approach

1. Statement from Cllr Andrew Davis (Chair, Fontmell Magna Parish Council)

After waiting nearly five months for the revised Dorset speed policy, it is very disappointing that the main body of the policy appears to be written to justify why the April policy was valid. The latest policy is again largely based on the outdated 2013 Department for Transport guidelines – which other, more enlightened, cities and towns have ignored when introducing their lower speed limits.

Dorset Highways have created a bureaucratic muddle of hurdles that make it very difficult for towns and parishes to justify a lower speed limit. For example the need to have formal public referendum requiring a threshold level of support of 60% support from the respondent of households affected by the proposed 20mph scheme. We have an elected representative form of local government and we do not expect Dorset Council to hold referendums to vote on every policy – perhaps they should? Another example of the very questionable illogic is the DC saying “Only introduce where average speeds are already close to the limit imposed (24mph in a proposed 20mph area)”. In Fontmell Magna, we have speeds of 42.2 mph (85 percentile) as surveyed by Highways.

The A350 in Fontmell Magna has **NO** footpaths/pathways etc. **EVEN THOUGH** there are houses that front onto and access it, on both sides throughout the entire length of the village. With the Village Shop, Church, School, Village Hall and Surgery all being in the west side of our village. The A350 remains a daily hazard for our residents, with many choosing to drive rather than risk a short walk, an understandable but absurd situation – hence the villagers’ strong support of a 20-mph limit.

We don’t need a scientific risk spreadsheet to tell residents the road is dangerous – just a **common-sense observation** is all that’s required to know that a lower speed limit would reduce the risk to vulnerable road users. Waiting for a fatality on our dangerous S bends to enable the higher score on the latest proposed matrix is **NOT** a safety policy – it is a sad excuse for doing nothing.

The Fontmell Magna Council recently canvassed all of its residents and 95.2% supported a 20-mph limit through the village and 82.5% supported a 20-mph limit on the A350 through the village. What was also very pertinent was over a third (34.5%) used a car in the village to make a short trip to the village hall or shop because they feel the A350 is too dangerous to walk on without a pavement.

The PC has already formally proposed and agreed that a 20-mph speed limit for the village and the A350 through the village and requested Dorset Highways to change the required regulations so this resident supported 20-mph speed limit can be implemented.

Safety Policy should never be determined solely by the cost of change. But the cost of **implementation of a new safety policy**, as quoted in the latest Dorset Speed Policy document is alarmingly high at £5k to £65k per town/parish. It appears to me some Council officials intend to use 20 mph as a licence to print money and frighten smaller parishes from applying for a lower speed limit. These costs need to be challenged and justified. For example, there is no reason for new signs and sign posts to be installed. DfT approved reflective decals can be purchased in bulk at £2.97 each – I had this confirmed by approved suppliers of decals. Furthermore, an allocation of an initial £75k of Local Transport Plan budget per annum to the delivery of 20mph schemes is far too low when there is demonstrated **cost-saving evidence** from many other Cities and towns that have adopted as 20-mph speed limit.

The Fontmell Magna road safety group would adopt the DAPTC Working Together Policy and fit the decals to existing signs. All that remains is changing the “3” on the 30 mph road markings to a “2” – a matter of hundreds of pounds for a village like Fontmell Magna.

We urge Councillors to reject this latest speed policy and instruct officials to adopt a “can-do” approach by working with Town and Parishes to implement a 20-mph speed limit in the most pragmatic way possible. This is what Dorset Councillors told us in April we were promised that the Task and Finish Group would be set up to promptly sort out an acceptable policy with suitable input from the public. We expect this commitment to be delivered in full.

2. Statement from Chris Ashley (RHA)

I would just like to set out the RHA’s position on 20mph speed limits – for your info, we are a trade association representing over 8000 hauliers across the UK.

Whilst we understand the desire for 20mph speed limits, our position is the same as the DfT’s guidance for roads “where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function”. As such, we ask that, where such speed limits are being considered, a detailed consultation on the affected area(s) takes place.

20mph speed limits may be appropriate for some roads – e.g. in residential areas. However, for others such as through roads, additional factors need to be considered. In particular, HGV engines are not designed to run optimally at 20mph – creating unnecessary additional emissions.

I also echo the comments made by Wyvern Cargo on the additional costs incurred by the logistics industry through longer driving times and/or re-routing. In a very low margin industry such as logistics, these costs would be passed on to the consumer.

I would be grateful if the Council could take into account our comments.

3. Statement from David Frankl (20 is Plenty Group)

This draft policy was again developed without any input from the Dorset 20 is Plenty Group. Our expertise was not used.

DfT guidance, issued in 2013 is vastly out of date. The DfT have acknowledged to me that it needs to be updated to reflect current practice as it does not reflect present Government policy. This states that where vulnerable road users and traffic mix it is **mandated** that the speed limit is 20mph.

The Government signed the Stockholm Declaration 2020 which in section 11 states “ Focus on speed management, including the strengthening of law enforcement to prevent speeding and **mandate** a maximum road travel speed of 30 km/h [20mph] in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix in a frequent and planned manner, except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe, noting that efforts to reduce speed in general will have a beneficial impact on air quality and climate change as well as being vital to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries”

Section 32 of “Setting Speed Local Limits”, DfT document 01/2013 quite rightly states: “Different road users perceive risks and appropriate speeds differently, and drivers and riders of motor vehicles often do not have the same perception of the hazards of speed as do people on foot, on bicycles or on horseback. Fear of traffic can affect peoples’ quality of life and the needs of vulnerable road users **must** be fully taken into account in order to further encourage these modes of travel and improve their safety. Speed management strategies should seek to protect local community life.”

This is Government policy and guidance yet the proposed process and accompanying flow chart takes no account of any of these matters and gives back to the highways engineers every opportunity to reject schemes. We need an opt out policy, not an opt in policy. I implore this Council to make a definitive decision to provide and fund 20mph schemes wherever they are requested and everywhere where people, live, work, shop and walk.

That is what the voters of Dorset want.

4. Statement from Lorna McCurrach

I live in Fontmell Magna and have to cross the A350 by foot from Mill Street at least twice every day. Traffic is heavy and fast and as the road here is on a bend I have to rely on my hearing to warn me of the oncoming traffic. I am in my late 70s with poor hearing so this is a risky operation: It would be significantly safer if traffic passed at 20 mph to give drivers more time to see pedestrians crossing especially those with a pram and toddler in tow who cross at a significantly slower pace.

The Times of 30.9.22 has headlined an article “blanket 20mph limit slashes deaths and improves ‘liveability’ “. This is explained in the study by researchers at Edinburgh University . They found that this can be achieved

simply with new signs rather than with extra traffic calming measures or police patrols making the scheme cost effective. The number of collisions in Edinburgh after introducing 20 mph dropped by 40% and fatalities by 23 % RSPA say that pedestrians are 40% less likely to die when hit by a car travelling at 20 % than at 30mph.

With this overwhelming evidence I urge you to follow the lead of other authorities and protect the people of Dorset .

5. Statement from Malcolm Croft

I was at The Dorset Police headquarters yesterday at the Community Speedwatch Conference. All day we talked about making Dorset roads safer for everyone.

This draft 20mph policy for Dorset does exactly the opposite. It will be impossible to put forward a case and overcome the hurdles put in place.

It must be redrafted so we can make the roads safer for everyone and funded properly.

6. Statement from Gareth Elkins (on behalf of residents of Stapehill Road, Ferndown)

I welcome the fact the Road Safety Manager has included a number of clauses from relevant DfT guidance. This guidance needs to be **used** to make Dorset Roads safer.

I am particularly heartened to read his second paragraph “The DfT encourages highway authorities to introduce 20mph limits in urban areas and village streets where “there are or – could be – significant numbers of journeys on foot where pedal cycle movements are an important consideration, and this outweighs the disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic.”

This message needs to be passed right down the chain as this is not put into practice. We have had years of Dorset Highways staff inventing their own criteria to reject requests to lower speed limits. Just last week, a Traffic Engineering Technical Officer invented his own excuses for rejecting a lower speed limit on the road where I live by stating the road was straight, with no bends and limited properties and businesses. None of this is in any DfT guidance.

I spent my life in health and safety. This is a health and safety matter. Safety considerations must be used, particularly where there are vulnerable road users on the road. Don't just say it, do it.

Dorset must be pro-active, slow traffic down to make roads safer and use a global 20mph policy to reduce carbon emissions. Please note you won't meet your carbon reduction targets unless you bring in a global 20mph policy for Dorset.

You need to put your money where your mouth is and fund this project properly. We don't want weasel words, we want action. £75k is just a drop in the ocean of what is needed and wanted by the residents of Dorset.

7. Statement from Michael Hobbs

At your April 2022 meeting , after representations from a number of rural Dorset villages and supported by attending councillors, Dorset Highways said they were going to revisit their 20mph policy, It is with utter dismay, after 5 months, that they have put their head in the sand, and decided to do precious little to meet the requests of Dorset rural residents.

It is time that the Dorset Executive and Councillors realised the depth of feeling and the need to have a positive approach to the current problems on our Dorset rural roads. They cannot keep using the cost argument as their excuse. Other councils have managed their finances to enable them to adopt 20mph speed limits.

The impression given is that the views of Dorset rural residents are constantly dismissed despite the dangers on our rural roads.

8. Statement from Ian Vaughan-Arbuckle

I have been closely associated with the matter of considering applications for the grant of 20mph, particularly in villages such as Langton Matravers where I live and in which I am a parish councillor with responsibilities for Highways.

I have made previous detailed comments on the policy under consideration to both this committee and to the Task and Finish Group some of which have been adopted. Throughout this process I have been cognisant of the need for the policy to reflect the DfT guidance without compromising the principles of implementing this important policy to meet particular circumstances in Dorset. For the want of minor changes, the document could still change the emphasis from giving the impression of being somewhat negative to being more positive in its approach to considering 20 mph requests, but this is not, in my view, something which should further delay implementation.

Most comments made during the consultation process have been noted and the relevant adjustments made so that, I believe, the policy is now ready for publication. Communities have been waiting a long time to be able to submit a bid to have the speed limit reduced and in doing so make their village/town both safer and to enhance the environment in which they live.

I would now ask the committee to support the proposed policy and to recommend it to Cabinet without further delay as I believe the policy is now fit for purpose.

9. Statement from Richard King

I am a retired professional driver (HGV 1, PSV all classes and security chauffeur) of over forty years standing.

20 mph will work only when the mean speed is low (as stated in the guidelines).

Most drivers are incapable of maintaining 30mph so how this campaign expects them to manage 20mph needs to be explained.

The only way to tackle the problem of excessive speed is by further and continuous driver education. Just updating the Highway Code won't do it: there has to be an incentive - like retaining one's driving licence.

Obviously training will cost money which has to be found (fines?) and nobody can legislate for lunacy meaning that there will always be some who just don't care.

The perfect situation would be a complete absence of speed limits.

The Roadcraft system allows the driver to determine the safest speed for any road under the conditions prevailing at the time. The police are taught this, so why not everybody else?

10. Statement from Roger Thomas

1. The Appendix C DfT guidelines on 20 mph speed limits are opaque and seem to be designed to do nothing. For example they state (inter alia):

"B.that 20mph schemes should be self-enforcing. Where existing traffic speeds are notably higher than 20mph, compliance will very likely be poor and therefore the benefits sought not realised."

2. This seems to mean that neither slow speeds nor high speeds justify a 20 mph. But the plain fact is that on the A350 in the middle of Fontmell Magna the closing speeds are a legitimate 60mph which is ridiculous for a road where two HGVs cannot pass without shuffling back and forth.

3. Accidents do happen and the cause is always high speed. Moreover there are virtually no safe places to walk along the road and on a daily basis (a) HGVs have to skid to a stop and reverse to get past each other and/or mount the pavement (b) when the road is clear the speed of cars goes up dramatically and (c) at night when drivers (especially HGVs) think they can tell if nothing is coming towards them, speeds go up again. (All pics taken from Middle Farm House on A350.) *Photos redacted*

4. I hope you can use your persuasive powers to convince those who have authority in these matters that a 20mph speed limit will be to the benefit of everyone - drivers, Fontmell residents and the poor souls who have to walk on the A350.

11. Statement from Nicholas Toomey

My only comment is that such zones are invaluable for balancing the needs of vehicle drivers, pedestrians and other road users, in particular where pavements are not available (such as Nottingham).

My strongest recommendation would be that these zones are properly enforced by the police with both fixed and mobile speed tracking resources.

This would help deter flagrant speeders, who are routinely recorded by our local speed watch team, are in receipt of letters from the police, yet do not alter their behaviour.

12. Statement from Barry Roberts

I have read through the recommendation from Tony Burden with some dismay as it seems to be recommending doing nothing about road safety for the convenient expediency of 'consistency'.

I would draw attention to the latest version of the highway code giving greater weight to the safety of the most vulnerable road users which in Fontmell Magna are the pedestrians and cyclists, including the elderly, the deaf and the very young in push-chairs, none of whom are protected by the policy of 'consistency'.

Taking evidence from the quoted DfT guidance given in the Report, the following observations (**in bold**) can be made:

1.3 Factors which are important in considering appropriate speeds are:

- Collisions - another resident has sent you photographs of these in one location alone - **they do happen!**
- Road geometry - the number of blind bends and narrow road width make Fontmell Magna **unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists**
- Composition of road users - **crossing the A350 is frighteningly dangerous for the elderly, partially-sighted or hard-of-hearing**
- Road environment - **the sound of heavy traffic resonates throughout the village, as does vehicle pollution.**

1.7 'It may be appropriate to consider 20mph limits or zones in built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature'. **The whole length of the A350 through Fontmell Magna is residential in nature.**

1.8 Assessments should include:

- Conditions and facilities for vulnerable road users - **there are no facilities for vulnerable road users as there are no pavements on any of the through roads of the village**
- Impacts on walking etc - **The impacts are severe as there is no safe place to walk or cross.**
- Congestion and journey time reliability - it is physically impossible to drive safely at 30 miles per hour around the bends on the A350 in Fontmell Magna while maintaining ability to stop within the distance which can be seen to be clear, therefore any change in journey time would be a matter of around 10 seconds if there were a 20mph limit. **Therefore the effect on journey time would be minimal and not an argument for maintaining a 30mph limit.**

1.11 Dorset Police state that the 'desired outcome has to be speeds at the limit chosen so as to achieve safe roads for other and vulnerable users...' **There is no evidence that this requirement has been considered.**

1.16 'Defining the wanted outcome of a 20mph limit is key'. **The wanted outcome is a safer environment for the whole community which will reduce car dependency, traffic pollution and use of fossil fuel.**

4. Well-being and health implications:

4.1 DfT guidance states that 'Important benefits of 20mph schemes include quality of life and community benefits, and encouragement of healthier and

more sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling' - **this aspect appears to have been overlooked!**

7. Equalities Impact Assessment:

7.1 'The policy takes account of vulnerable road users including children and the elderly' - **This clearly is not true - there is no evidence presented which suggests any consideration of the needs of the vulnerable road users.**

In summary, there is no evidence that the officer's report has taken note of any of the concerns raised by the residents and Parish Council of Fontmell Magna.

13. Statement from Anna Grant (Community Speedwatch Coordinator for Buckhorn Weston)

STATEMENT 1

The first criterion (A) ignores the extent to which satellite navigation and "rat runs" have increased the volume of traffic on roads which are primarily residential. That is certainly the case in our village where the roads were clearly built for villagers and other local residents, and for light local and farming traffic. It now suffers high traffic volumes. I suggest that the policy should make it clear that a 20mph limit can in principle be introduced on roads which were built to facilitate pedestrian movement and for light traffic even if the recent developments have led to an increase in traffic.

The second criterion (B) undermines the whole thrust of the shift to 20mph in villages and small towns. Despite the risks, drivers through our village routinely drive over the current 30mph limit, generally at speeds between 15-25% above it. Despite the efforts of the police and our CSW there is no realistic prospect of lowering this to a safe speed without a 20mph limit. But according to the criterion drivers are able to frustrate the introduction of a safe 20mph limit simply by driving routinely above the current 30mph limit. The net effect of this criterion is therefore to encourage drivers to drive just above the speed limit as a way of preventing the introduction of a 20mph limit. This makes no sense.

STATEMENT 2

My concrete proposal is that :

- criterion A should read: "they are in towns or villages where pedestrian and cycle movement would be facilitated by a 20mph speed limit on roads whose purpose, at the time the existing road was designed and built, was for light traffic use (evidenced, for instance, by the presence of houses close to the road and the absence of proper safe pedestrian passage."

- criterion B should be removed or replaced by the following: "it is reasonable to believe that a 20mph limit would lead to a significant improvement in the number of drivers driving at safe speeds and the police do not consider that a 20mph limit would be unenforceable".

14. Statement from Dilys Gartside (20sPlentyforDorset campaign coordinator)

With an intended budget of just £75,000 pa towards installing 20mph limits, the majority of residents will not get the benefit of slower traffic speed in their lifetime, thus the policy is already flawed by financial restraint and favours the wealthy outspoken communities who can fight for and fund themselves.

Despite the reassurances we were given in April that we would get a policy which enabled communities to live in the safety of lower traffic speeds, this policy criteria continues to misinterpret the spirit of the Government's guidelines and it is not the policy which will make Dorset villages and towns safer places for vulnerable road users nor will it encourage more active travel and the far reaching benefits it brings for all people.

15. Statement from Robin East

I am sending this email as a Fontmell Magna resident (not as a representative of any other organisation) to support Fontmell Magna Parish Council and the village's Community Speed Watch Team's representations related to **Agenda item 7**. Some of my comments being informed by my time serving as a Fontmell Magna Parish Councillor (2014-2018) and as a former representative (2015-2019) of the A350 Community Group.

In responding my starting point has to be the three specific areas of concern regarding Dorset Council (and its predecessors) performance when reacting to Dorset residents - individuals, parish councils or lobby groups - who have asked for assistance from, or questioned and challenged, the politics and the politicians who govern their lives, in particular at a County level.

I have heard these concerns being widely voiced over the past eight years and it appears that there is still no recognition of, or care about, Dorset Council's poor reputation for frequently failing to meet the legitimate needs of its residents. It was particularly illuminating to hear those concerns so eloquently expressed when David Sidwick spoke to several of the local parishes C.S.W. teams at Fontmell Magna.

- The first concern is the perception that Dorset Highways have, as a default re-active stance of always saying no, whatever the request and rarely, if ever, has it put forward a more proactive stance of "let's see what can be done."
- The second concern is that the absence of pro-activity can also be directed at Dorset Council and its predecessors.

- The final concern is how just how much credence should be given to the statement, so often quoted by Councillors, "it is Council officers who advise but it is the Councillors who decide."

Dorset Council Councillors now have the perfect opportunity to address all three concerns when it considers Agenda item 7 on the 6 October.

That opportunity is courtesy of the successful campaign of Dorset Council Councillors Sherry Jespersen and Jane Somper which has resulted in,

*"The Department for Transport, in consultation with Dorset Council and The Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body ruling that the **A350/C13 will no longer be included in plans for a major strategic road development** running from Poole to the M4 corridor."*

That statement means the Councillors now can and must make a decision that gives precedence to the needs of Dorset residents, in particular those impacted by the A350/C13, above a bureaucracy driven desire to put the motorised road user first. A change in precedence that is long overdue.

16. Statement from Ian Bruce (Resident and CSW Volunteer)

My concern with the policy is that it hides behind outdated (2013) DfT criteria and takes advantage of every barrier and obstacle to discourage applications for 20mph limits/zones while stating "Dorset Council's highway service will proactively identify and install 20mph schemes....". It is already clear the introduction of 20mph schemes across the County will take a very very long time due to budget constraints. This has always been the case when it come to introducing traffic calming measures; and clearly shows just how important road safety and quality of life issues are to our representatives. I am particularly worried for our youngsters walking to and from school and walking to catch school transport on unpaved roads and having to cross very busy main roads (A354), especially at this time of year with reduced daylight hours and deteriorating weather conditions. I hope the Councillors on the Committee who are parents, grandparents or otherwise related to school age children and other vulnerable road users, will seriously consider changing the emphasis of this policy document to demonstrate greater concern for residents while, at the same time, acknowledging there is a worsening (national) problem with driver behaviour and road safety. Speak to any Community Speed Watch (CSW) volunteer (all unpaid road safety ambassadors giving up their valuable time on behalf of their communities) about the abuse they have to suffer from so many irresponsible drivers. This policy document fails to give much hope of seeing tangible improvements any time soon.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION - Questions and statements received in advance from members with responses

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.51 pm

Chairman

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