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Report of: Executive Director, Place

Report to: Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport

Date of Decision: 5th October 2017

Subject: Sheffield 20mph Speed Limit Strategy: Responses to a proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit in Sheffield City Centre

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision: Yes ☐ No ☒

- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000

☐

- Affects 2 or more Wards

☐

Cabinet Member Portfolio: Transport and Sustainability

Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee: Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes ☒ No ☐

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 473

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes ☐ No ☒

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:

*"The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."*

Purpose of Report:

This report describes the response from residents to the proposed introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Sheffield City Centre, reports the receipt of objections and sets out the Council's response.

Recommendations:

- 7.2 Make the Sheffield City Centre 20mph Speed Limit Order in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and inform the objectors accordingly.
- 7.3 Submit a proposal to affect the necessary works to introduce the proposed 20mph speed limit in accordance with the Capital Gateway Process.

Background Papers: N/A

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Julie Currey
		Legal: Richard Cannon
		Equalities: Annmarie Johnston
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	EMT member who approved submission:	Edward Highfield
3	Cabinet Member consulted:	Councillor Jack Scott
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Tom Finnegan-Smith	Job Title: Head of Strategic Transport and Infrastructure
	Date: 5 th October 2017	

1.0 PROPOSAL

- 1.1 In February 2011, Full Council adopted the following motion: *“To bring forward plans for city-wide 20mph limits on residential roads (excluding main roads)”*. This led to the adoption of the Sheffield 20mph Speed Limit Strategy by the Cabinet Highways Committee on 8th March 2012, the long-term aim of which is to establish 20mph as the maximum appropriate speed in residential areas of Sheffield¹. A total of seventeen 20mph areas have now been completed, with an eighteenth about to be introduced. Each speed limit is indicated by traffic signs and road markings only. They do not include any ‘physical’ traffic calming measures (such as road humps).
- 1.2 The Strategy was updated on 8th January 2015², in part to better define how individual roads would be considered suitable for the introduction of a 20mph limit. Broadly speaking, residential roads on which average speeds are 24mph or below will automatically be considered suitable. The inclusion of roads with average speeds of between 24mph and 27mph will be considered on a case by case basis using current Department for Transport guidelines. Roads on which the average speed is above 27mph will not be included unless additional capital funding can be identified for appropriate traffic calming measures to help encourage lower speeds.
- 1.3 The draft Sheffield City Centre Masterplan 2013 (Section 4.5 Accessible City) proposed that a City Centre-wide 20mph limit (excluding the Inner Relief Road) be evaluated aimed at smoothing flows, reducing collisions and making walking and cycling safer.
- 1.4 Funding was received from the South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership for a study to be carried out, looking into the feasibility of a 20mph speed limit within the City Centre. This was completed in 2015 and concluded that a 20mph speed limit would be suitable for the majority of the City Centre Streets. However it was recommended that the existing 30mph speed limit be retained on certain strategic routes in the City Centre.
- 1.5 This report describes the response from residents to the advertisement of the intention to introduce a 20mph speed limit order in parts of Sheffield City Centre, reports the receipt of objections and sets out the Council’s response.
- 1.6 The proposed City Centre ‘Sign only’ 20mph limit would be constructed in phases co-ordinated with the Sheffield City Region Investment Fund (SCRIF) programme of City Centre improvements (Grey to Green, Knowledge Gateway, Sheffield Retail Quarter). This is likely to be in 3 phases.
- 1.7 The City centre scheme will be implemented using SCRIF funds with a

¹ [Sheffield City Council - Meeting of Cabinet Highways Committee on Thursday 8 March 2012](#)

² [Sheffield City Council - Highway Cabinet Member Decision Session on Thursday 8 January 2015](#)

contribution from the University of Sheffield.

2.0 HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 Reducing the average speed of drivers in the City Centre is expected, over time, to bring about a reduction in the number and severity of traffic accidents, helping to create '*safe and secure communities*'. Implementing the 20mph speed limit described in this report together with an ongoing 20mph programme in residential areas would contribute to the creation of a safer residential environment and '*thriving neighbourhoods and communities*'. Conducting and responding positively to public consultation is in keeping with the '*an in-touch organisation*' value of the 2015-2018 Corporate Plan.

2.2 This scheme represents a step towards influencing driver behaviour and establishing 20mph as the default maximum appropriate speed in the City Centre. This will contribute to the delivery of:

- the Corporate Plan commitment of "*working towards all residential areas being covered [by a 20mph speed limit] by 2025, at the latest*"
- Policy W of the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy 2011-2026 (To encourage safer road use and reduce casualties on our roads);
- the Council's Vision For Excellent Transport In Sheffield (a better environment; a healthier population; a safer Sheffield); and
- The Fairness Commission's recommendation for a 20mph speed limit on all residential roads in Sheffield.

3.0 CONSULTATION

3.1 A Speed Limit order was advertised from the 14th July 2017 to 11th August 2017 which set out the proposal to create a 20mph speed limit order covering Sheffield City Centre. A total of 33 responses were received.

Consultation responses	
Supportive	19
Objections in principle	7
Questions and comments without expressing a view	7

An anonymised summary of the comments received is available to view on

request.

- 3.2 19 people have registered their support for a 20mph limit. Some examples of the comments received are listed below.

'I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Sheffield Council's plans to make the majority of Sheffield City Centre a legally binding 20mph maximum speed area.'

This is an area which is increasingly populated by residents living in City Centre developments, workers in new office blocks and small businesses, and ever more people are simply taking advantage of the increasing number of leisure/eating establishments and events like street markets.'

Mr A, by email

'CycleSheffield welcomes the Council's plans to reduce vehicle speeds within the city centre and supports the proposed 20mph zone.'

CycleSheffield, by email

'I just wanted to express my support for this proposal. It's not likely to increase journey times greatly, but should make roads safer, reduce pollution, and make people aware of their speed more generally. Please proceed with this idea!'

Mr T, by email

3.3 Objections

7 people have objected to the *principle* of introducing a 20mph speed limit in the City Centre. Each objector makes one or more of the following points:

Road safety - *To gain respect a 20 limit should only be used selectively. Better generally to keep limit at 30 and enforce it. This doesn't require new signs. There are not enough accidents to justify a blanket 20 limit,*

Officer comment: The 20mph Speed Limit Strategy is not intended to be a way of dealing with specific accident problems. In common with many other local authorities throughout the country the Council is attempting to change the driving culture and redefine what is considered to be the appropriate speed to drive at in residential areas through the introduction of 20mph speed limits. The long term goal is to reduce the intimidatory impact of traffic on our neighbourhoods and make the streets of Sheffield a more pleasant place to be.

Whilst the accident record of each area plays a part in the process of prioritising the introduction of 20mph areas the Council's policy is to

eventually introduce the 20mph limit in all residential areas, irrespective of the accident record.

The Council continues to invest in Accident Saving Schemes and road safety education, training and publicity targeted primarily at locations and areas with the highest number of accidents.

Enforcement - *'What a waste of rate payers' money. This is a totally unenforceable regulation. The police have neither the inclination nor the resources to enforce it'*

Officer comment: The evidence base on which Councillors made their decision to introduce this 20mph speed limit is set out in the March 2012 report to Cabinet Highways Committee which explains the likely effects of introducing a 20mph speed limit in residential areas on vehicle speed and accident rates. Councillors have been made fully aware that any initial reductions in speed are likely to be marginal, perhaps 1 or 2mph (but by as much as 4mph on some faster roads) and that to be successful a critical mass of drivers need to convert supportive sentiments into actions.

South Yorkshire Police understandably target the vast majority of their enforcement efforts on major roads as those are the roads where most accidents, and the most severe accidents, occur. The police have indicated that 20mph speed limit areas will therefore not be subject to routine pre-planned enforcement. Community concerns about speeding issues and requests for short-term enforcement at a particular location (for instance outside a school) should be reported to South Yorkshire Police's Local Policing teams (formally the Safer Neighbourhoods teams) by ringing their non-emergency 101 number.

The success of the 20mph Speed Limit Strategy hinges on the willingness of the Sheffield public to alter their own behaviour when driving in these areas. There will be some, a minority, who pay little heed to the current limit, never mind a new one. Such behaviour remains a matter for the police. But it is hoped that the majority will be supportive, take responsibility for their own actions, and help redefine what is and isn't an acceptable way to drive in residential areas. It will undoubtedly take time for people to alter long established habits, but even a marginal reduction in average speeds will, over time, contribute to the creation of safer streets.

Air quality - *'travelling at 20mph requires a lower gear, thus an engine will be higher revving, using more fuel and therefore outputting more Co2.'*

Officer comment: At a constant lower speed a driver will generally use less fuel, but it would be misleading to suggest that there would be an immediate reduction in vehicle exhaust emissions resulting solely from the introduction of 20mph speed limits. In the short-term, the small reductions in speed initially produced by sign-only 20mph speed limits are unlikely to affect vehicle emissions to any appreciable degree. A study of the impact of the introduction of [un-calmed] 30km/h speed limits on vehicle exhaust

emissions³ concluded that “... *emissions of most classic pollutants should not be expected to rise or fall dramatically*”.

More recently (April 2013), research carried out on behalf of the Cross River Partnership into the impact of 20mph speed limits on tailpipe emissions of NOx, PM10 and CO2 found that 20mph limits are beneficial in reducing PM10 for both diesel and petrol engines and beneficial in reducing NOx and CO2 for diesel engines. Whilst there can be a small increase in NOx and CO2 emission for petrol engines, overall there is a positive effect from 20mph speed restrictions on ambient local air quality. The researchers concluded that it would be incorrect to assume a 20mph speed restriction would be detrimental to ambient local air quality, as the effects on vehicle emissions are mixed.

Journey times - *I would like to voice my strong disapproval of this new proposal. As a resident of the area this would make my travels much more complicated and cause further delays.*

Officer comment: Journey times are invariably effected by the amount of time you are stopped at congestion points, traffic lights, zebra crossings, rather than the maximum speed at which you drive. The the average urban journey will take around 40 seconds longer, regardless of the size of the town when driving at 20mph.

Finance - *‘Please don't waste our time and money with this. ‘Please use this money to fix the appalling potholes and such like, that will make the centre more attractive.’*

I'm against your move and I'm certain the money could be spent better elsewhere’

Officer comment: The funding for this 20mph scheme is provided by the Sheffield City Region Investment Fund (SCRIF) and a contribution from the University of Sheffield. It cannot be used to alleviate the impact of government cuts to the funding of other services.

3.4 Other Consultees

South Yorkshire Police have been consulted and no response was received for this specific scheme.

However a general statement in response to the Sheffield 20mph Strategy is held on our records.

The Head of the Road Policing Group has issued the following statement

³ [Impact of 30 km/h zone introduction on vehicle exhaust emissions in urban areas](#) (Luc Int Panis, Steven Broekx, Carolien Beckx; Belgium, 2006)

on behalf of South Yorkshire Police:

“The South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership has worked hard to achieve significant reductions in the numbers of collisions on our local roads. We have achieved all our agreed targets in reducing the number of people who are killed or seriously injured over the last few years however, we know that this success brings little comfort to the individuals, friends and families of those who are victims of such collisions.

It is well known that speed is a primary cause of collisions that result in death or serious injury and pedestrians and cyclists are the most vulnerable road users when in the presence of speeding vehicles. Within our local residential areas we know that the collision rates, when these factors come into play, are too high and need to be addressed.

South Yorkshire Police working alongside their colleagues in the Safer Roads partnership shares the clear commitment to address the causes of collisions and support new initiatives that help to achieve this goal.”

The police will review the specific proposals together with current vehicle speed data for the area as part of the Road Safety Audit process. Speeds will continue to be monitored on any roads on which they feel drivers' speeds may not reduce after the reduction of the 20mph limit. If in time speeds remain unaltered additional measures will be considered to improve compliance with the new limit.

- 3.5 No response has been received from South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service or the Yorkshire Ambulance Service.

RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4. Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted and signed off Number 473. The EIA concluded that safer roads and reduced numbers of accidents involving traffic and pedestrians would fundamentally be positive for all local people regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. However, the most vulnerable members of society (i.e. the young, elderly, disabled and carers) would particularly benefit from this initiative. No negative equality impacts were identified.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The Final Business Case for the 2017/18 20mph scheme programme was conditionally approved by the Thriving Neighbourhood and Communities Transport Sub Board in July 2017 and this included an allowance (estimated at £22,000) for the design of and consultation on the Sheffield

City Centre 20mph scheme.

- 4.2.2 The total estimated cost of the scheme, including legal procedures, consultation, design fees, works cost, contract administration is £394k. The estimated allowance for the future maintenance (commuted sum) is around £300k. Making a total cost of £694k for the scheme.
- 4.2.3 The City Centre 20mph Limit scheme described in this report will be funded by an allocation from the Sheffield City Region Investment Fund (SCRIF). There is also a £22k allocation from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) settlement for the project management, preliminary design and consultation of this scheme in 2017/18. The commuted sum will be funded from the negative commuted sums on record for 2017/18
- 4.2.4 The allocation for the implementation of the 20mph speed limit will be subject to funding being available and approval being gained through the Capital Gateway Process.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council as local highway authority have the power to vary speed limits on roads (other than trunk or restricted roads) by making speed limit orders under section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, for the purposes outlined in section 1 of that act. The procedure in relation to consultation and notification, which is set out in Schedule 9 of the Act and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 must be followed, and proper consideration given to all duly made representatives.
- 4.3.2 The Council must also have regard to the Department for Transport national policy, which encourages local authorities to consider implementing 20mph speed limits in residential areas.
- 4.3.3 The Council must also be satisfied that the proposed restriction will secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians). Provided the Council is so satisfied, it is acting lawfully and within its powers.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 Those objections that relate to the principle of introducing sign-only 20mph speed limits are effectively objections to the approved Sheffield 20mph Speed Limit Strategy. As such, no alternative options have been considered.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Reducing the speed of traffic in residential areas will, in the long term,

reduce the number and severity of accidents, reduce the fear of accidents, encourage sustainable modes of travel and contribute towards the creation of a more pleasant, cohesive environment.

- 6.2 A 20mph speed will also make the City Centre a more attractive place to visit, thus enhancing the regeneration of the central area.
- 6.3 The introduction of a 20mph speed limit in the City Centre would be in-keeping with the City's approved 20mph Speed Limit Strategy. The long term objective of the Sheffield City Council's 20mph Strategy is to establish 20mph as the maximum reasonable speed in all suitable residential areas of Sheffield. This strategy is currently being rolled out across the City and it follows that a city centre 20mph limit will link in with this and improve road safety in the central area.