

Meeting date: 9th January 2024

Report to: Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Report title: Schools 20mph Speed Limit Programme update

Report from: Paul Tovey – Head of Highway Management

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Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege
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Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: NA

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 A review of speed limits operating around schools in the Borough was undertaken in 2022, which identified locations where a lower 20 mph speed limit would be appropriate and in line with the Council's Road Safety objectives.
- 1.2 On 12th July 2022, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure approved, subject to the statutory consultation process, the introduction of 20mph speed limits at 12 schools listed in **Appendix A**.
- 1.3 This report considers the representations received during the consultation process and provides technical responses to the matters raised. Having considered these, it is recommended that the 20mph speed limits should be implemented as advertised.
- 1.4 Due to the number of schools in the Borough, and assuming there are no changes to funding, it is estimated that it will take 4 years to complete this project. **Appendix D** identifies schools for Year 3 (2024/25) of the delivery programme and schools to be reviewed in subsequent years.

2. **Decision(s) Recommended.**

2.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- (a) Approve the implementation of the proposed schools 20mph speed limit (Year 2), notwithstanding the objections received, as detailed in **Appendices A, B and C.**
- (b) Agree, subject to the funding being approved as part of the annual highways Asset Management and Priorities report, to progress the schools 20mph speed limit programme 2024/25 (Year 3) programme, as set out in **Appendix D.**
- (c) Agree to receive a further report in February 2025, setting out progress and recommendations for subsequent years' programmes.

Report Title: Schools 20mph Speed Limit Programme update

3. Matters for Consideration

- 3.1 A review of the speed limits around schools within the Borough was undertaken during 2022, which identified roads adjacent to schools where a lower 20mph speed limit would be more suitable.
- 3.2 To amend a speed limit, the statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) legal process must be followed. The aim of reducing the speed limit is to achieve safe and appropriate driving speeds, preserve or improve the amenities of an area and to mitigate danger.
- 3.3 Every school location within the Borough was assessed and it was identified that most locations would be suitable for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit.
- 3.4 Year 2 of the programme was approved at the 27th February 2023 Environment and Infrastructure Cabinet decision meeting and was formally advertised on 5th October 2023. A list of the sites, and a copy of the individual location plans are contained in **Appendices A** and **B**.
- 3.5 The Council must consider all representations received during the consultation process and may:
- Decide not to proceed with the proposal.
 - Amend the proposals by reducing the extent or effect, or
 - Implement the proposal as originally advertised.
- 3.6 Any additional restrictions or locations should be re-advertised and progressed under a separate TRO.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 102 representations were received during the consultation period. These are summarised below, and officer's responses are detailed in **Appendix C**.

Ref	School	For	Against	Neutral	Other
Y2-S1	St Annes RC School Fordbridge Community School				Various matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S2	Grace Academy Whitmore Nursery		2		
Y2-S3	Coleshill Heath School				
Y2-S4	St Andrews RC Primary School	3	1	1	Various matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S5	Kineton Green School	38	17	13	Extents on Kineton Green Road to join. Part-time 20mph. Various other matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S6	Our Lady of Compassion RC School Langley School Reynalds Cross School				
Y2-S7	Langley Primary School				
Y2-S8	Coppice Junior School		2	1	Various matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S9	Lighthall School Woodlands Infant School	1	1		Various matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S10	Berkswell CofE Primary School		3		Request for 20mph to be on Meriden Road instead. Conservation area concerns.
Y2-S11	Greswold School	1	3		Extend to Seven Stars service road. Various matters. See Appendix C.
Y2-S12	Castle Bromwich Infant School			1	Enforcement. Traffic calming.
All	General comments	3	8	3	Part time, enforcement, extensions, against blanket restrictions.
	Total	46	37	19	

- 4.4 The number of representations received was high in relation to year one but still low compared with the number of households and motorists who will be affected. This may suggest support from local communities and road users for 20mph speed limits outside schools.
- 4.5 There was a request to extend the 20mph scheme to Winchcombe Road in Lyndon as there is an entrance here to St Andrew RC Primary School (Y2-S4). This request has merit, and it is suggested that this road is considered as part of the year 3 programme.
- 4.6 Considering the level of feedback received to the proposals and potential environmental and safety benefits, it is recommended that the Year 2 schemes be implemented as advertised. As the number of 20mph speed limits increases around the borough, there has been some positive feedback and early evidence that compliance is improving. It is therefore recommended that consultation for Year 3 of the schools' 20mph programme should be progressed, as detailed in **Appendix D**.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option.

- 5.1 The proposed 20mph speed limits detailed in **Appendix A and B** are in line with Department for Transport guidance and recommendations and are aligned to the Council's 20mph Speed Limit policy.
- 5.2 The level of representations received demonstrates general support for 20mph speed limits outside schools and, on this basis, it is recommended that the proposed 20mph speed limits (Year 2) should be implemented as advertised.
- 5.3 It is also recommended that the schools' 20mph Speed Limit programme should continue in 2024/25 with delivery of the Year 3 programme as detailed in **Appendix D**. This will contribute towards the Council's road safety priorities by targeting improvements for vulnerable road users and in the event of a collision, the severity of any injuries may be lower.

6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the Council Plan:

Priority:	Contribution:
People and Communities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. 2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 4. Enable communities to thrive. 	People and our local communities are at the heart of our speed management priorities. Solihull has one of the safest local road networks in the country and this means that people have a greater chance to take the opportunities that are available to them in a safe and sustainable way.

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>Economy:</p> <p>5. Develop and promote the borough's economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres.</p> <p>6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2.</p> <p>7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable.</p>	<p>There are strong links to the local economy and the effective performance and operation of the highway network. Inappropriate speeds can create delay, increase the risk of a serious road traffic collision from occurring as well as discouraging use by vulnerable road users. As such improving compliance and reducing vehicle speeds have the potential to contribute towards maintaining a health borough economy.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <p>8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality, and reduce net carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The type of environments through which a highway passes can play a huge part in helping aid compliance of speed limits to an extent often greater than posted speed limits. Therefore, establishing the correct environment around our highway assets has the greatest potential to set appropriate vehicle speeds depending on the function of the road in question.</p> <p>Reducing vehicle speed can promote and encourage active forms of travel, reducing car reliance and therefore can contribute towards air quality and carbon emission targets.</p>
<p>9. Promote employee wellbeing</p>	<p>Reduced speeds can encourage and facilitate active travel by making our roads and streets more attractive for journeys by foot and cycle both of which can have a positive impact of health and wellbeing.</p>

6.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

- 6.2.1 In January 2021, a report entitled Speed Enforcement in Solihull – A new Approach was taken to the Stronger Communities & Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board. This report as a joint report with West Midlands Police considered the approach taken with regards to speed limit management and enforcement, which the Board supported.
- 6.2.2 A statutory Traffic Regulation Order consultation exercise took place between 5th October 2023 and 26th October 2023. This process provided an opportunity for all stakeholders, residents, and road users to feed into and comment on the proposed speed limits.
- 6.2.3 Representations were received from a range of stakeholders including members of the public and Ward Members.

6.3 Corporate Parenting Implications

6.3.1 There are no implications because of the recommendations of this report.

6.4 Financial implications:

6.4.1 The changes to speed limits proposed as part of the Year 2 review are funded through a £25,000 capital allocation from the Council's 2022/23 Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). This capital allocation will fund all necessary changes to permanent legal order, signage, lining and all other associated costs proposed with these changes.

6.4.2 Progression of the school's 20mph Speed Limit Year 3 Programme will be subject to funding being allocated from the 2024/25 Local Network Improvement Programme (LNIP) which is being considered as part of the Highways Asset and Priorities Report which will be considered at the February decision-making session.

6.5 Legal implications:

6.5.1 None because of the recommendations of this report.

6.5.2 Speed limit changes follow a legal process to ensure successful prosecution in the event anyone is caught exceeding the maximum speed limit.

6.5.3 The proposed changes have been progressed in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 2012.

6.6 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

6.6.1 None identified as a direct result of this report.

6.7 Equality implications:

6.7.1 None at this stage in the process and generally in terms of speed limits and enforcement then these apply equally to every motorist.

6.8 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

6.8.1 The recommendations resulting from this paper have the potential to positively contribute to regional road safety targets as set out in the WMCA Regional Road Safety Partnership.

7. List of appendices referred to:

7.1 Appendix A – List of Schools and Roads where changes to the existing speed limit are proposed.

7.2 Appendix B – Plans of roads where changes to existing speed limits are proposed.

7.3 Appendix C – Summary of representations received to proposed speed limit changes.

7.4 Appendix D - List of Schools forming the Solihull Schools 20mph Programme.

8. Background papers used to compile this report.

8.1 20mph Speed Limit Review – Next Steps (12th July 2022 Cabinet Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure).

8.2 Speed Limits in Solihull – A Review and Approach to the use of 20mph limits (3rd June 2021 Cabinet Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure).

9. List of Other Relevant Documents

9.1 Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits.