

County Council – 17 December 2021

Item 13(b) – Notice of Motion by Cllr O’Kelly

20mph Speed Limits – Revised Briefing Note

In 1999, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 was amended to allow local authorities to designate 20mph speed limits without the prior approval of the Secretary of State. In 2013 the Department for Transport (DfT) provided revised guidelines on the Setting Local Speed Limits (DfT Circular 01/2013), encouraging traffic authorities to consider introducing more 20mph limits over time, and over a larger number of roads. It states that where there is expected to be a positive effect on road safety and a generally favourable reception from local residents, traffic authorities are able to use their powers to introduce 20mph speed limits on major streets where foot and cycle movements are important, and on residential streets where the characteristics of the street are suitable. It advises that 20mph limits are most appropriate where the mean speed is already at or below 24mph; and states that speed limits should encourage self-compliance with no expectation of additional police enforcement.

The County Council’s own speed limit policy was set in 2010 but was reviewed in 2016 to ensure it aligned with the latest DfT guidance. The policy allows for speed limits to be set at 20mph where specific criteria are met.

20 mph speed limits have been set in numerous places across the county in line with our own policy.

A [study carried out in 2018 for DfT](#) was inconclusive about the casualty reduction benefits of 20mph limits but was positive about the perception, community and health benefits.

The County Council is currently consulting on a new Transport Plan. Once adopted it is expected a new road safety strategy and associated speed limit policy will follow. This will afford the County Council the opportunity to review its approach to setting speed limits and work closely with associated stakeholders including the police, health authorities and communities in establishing a workable and effective process.

The specific issue of quiet lanes will be addressed as part of the new road safety framework. In the meantime, The County Council is looking at sites that would be effective as demonstrator projects to understand how effective such schemes could be.

Lee Harris

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