

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE		
DATE:	12 MARCH 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	20MPH SPEED LIMITS/ZONES - UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATIGIC ENVIRONMENT PLANNING & TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORT	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 There has been a series of reports to Cabinet through TMAP and more recently TM Sub on 20mph speed limits/zones.
- 1.2 This report summaries the current position highlighting an expected change in the Traffic Signals & General Directions (TSRGD) by the Department for Transport (DfT) that may lead to significant reduction in cost of the signs at the entry/exit points into the 20mph area.
- 1.3 The TSRGD is expected to be published later this spring and it is recommended to consider its impact before implementing this scheme.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That members note the report.
- 2.2 That due to expected changes in the TSRGD this report recommends to wait until these changes are published which may reduce the cost of signs at the entry/exit points into the 20mph area.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The objectives of lower speed limit areas fit into the context of wider transport and cross-government priorities:
 - The national vision is for a transport system that is an engine for economic growth but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life in our communities.

- We want our roads to become safer, less congested and less polluted.
- We want to encourage sustainable local travel and economic growth by making public transport and cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion.
- We want to contribute to wider public health and safety outcomes by contributing to a reduction in road casualties.

4. EASTERN AREA IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

- 4.1 The Eastern Area 20mph scheme was advertised twice, in two phases, due to an omission of naming all streets. Statutory advert approval was gained on the basis of a drawing that showed both the original Uni & hospital area study alongside the eastern area study and the extended areas of influence of both areas. The original advert (23rd May 2014) only covered the original Uni & hospital study area. The second advert (24th July 2014) then covered the eastern area study area and everything that the first advert missed.
- 4.2 The scheme is now in the final very detailed design stage. This involves weighing up the cost benefits of mains power v solar power. There are clear benefits of solar where ducting for mains exceeds 10m or where we have to dig across a road. Conversely if there is mains power within a few metres, the cost of the sign is much cheaper than solar. This work is dependent upon gaining detailed survey and prices from contractors and this will be completed shortly. It was always intended to deliver the scheme this financial year i.e. by the end of March 2015.
- 4.3 However, as a part of our detailed design it has come to light that the Department for Transport (DfT) are proposing to change the rules of illumination for 20mph (at the entry/exit points to the lower limit) as a part of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) review. On enquiring what these changes are likely to be the DfT is non-committal and have advised us to either use the TSRGD as it is now or delay the scheme until the review process is complete. Therefore officer advice is that we should wait as the changes are not likely to increase the cost of 20mph signing and may lead to significant reduction in cost by as much as £100K.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The Eastern Area Study initiative has already resulted in public exhibitions, consultation with residents and wider stakeholder engagement. This is a model that is being developed for wider use and has already been adopted as a part of the Oxford Road Area Study. As the two area studies develop so will a consultation strategy that will be used for further 20mph consultation.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 The Council has carried out a equality impact assessment scoping exercise, and considers that the proposals do not have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The estimated cost of introducing 20mph across east Reading through signs alone is £200K. However, if the signing requirements are changed particularly in the requirement to illuminate the entry/exit signs this cost could be halved.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Various TMAP and TM Sub Reports.