

Report of Director of City Development and Director of Public Health

Report to Executive Board

Date: 14 February 2014

Subject: DEPUTATION – 20'S PLENTY FOR US CAMPAIGN

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

- 1 This report addresses the Deputation received at the 13 November meeting of the Council from the 20's Plenty for Us Campaign regarding default speed limits on roads in Leeds, which requested the adoption of a "Total 20" policy for a mandatory 20 mph speed limit for all residential streets in Leeds.
- 2 In responding to the Deputation it is important to stress Leeds' long commitment to road casualty reduction where the number of people killed and injured on our roads is currently the lowest on record. Lower speed limits have a major role in better safety and 20 mph limits have long been used in the city and are making a practical contribution to Leeds' Best City Council objectives and continuing the progress to further reduce road casualties with consequential benefits for the more active and healthy local modes of travel, such as on the journey to school.
- 3 Limiting traffic speeds to 20 mph is seen by organisations such as Barnardos as a key element in enabling active and healthy lifestyles for children. Leeds' approach to the implementation of 20 mph schemes mirrors the main points raised by the Deputation in that:
 - There is an overall aspiration for all residential streets in Leeds to have a 20 mph speed limit

- 20 mph schemes currently being delivered and proposed cover the largest feasible area and aim to include whole communities
 - Securing public support is needed for the schemes to function most effectively.
- 4 The approach Leeds has adopted to the introduction of traffic calming features reflects Police recommendations and experience and introduces features where necessary, and builds on the success of traffic calming schemes in Leeds district in the last 20 years. A blanket approach using only signs and focusing entirely on the speed limit cannot always achieve the required speed reduction and ensure issues for pedestrians and cyclists or conflicts which cause collisions are dealt with.
- 5 Although the relaxation of regulations on 20 mph schemes means these are now more readily delivered, the phased approach followed by the Council is considered to reflect the finite availability of annual resources and to enable progressive local community consultation rather than that of the area wide option of a “Total 20” approach.

Recommendations

The Executive Board is requested to:

- i) note the contents of the report, and the success of the current programmes in the context of the overall road safety record for Leeds;
- ii) endorse the continuation of the targeted approach to the progressive roll out of 20 mph speed limits in the city with a view to extending the opportunity to all residential areas as resources permit;
- iii) consent to work with partners in and outside the Council such as 20’s Plenty for Us and Public Health services on promoting the 20 mph speed limits and maximise their benefits by securing the greatest possible public support and compliance, and to adopt new avenues to obtain funding for the introduction of schemes, publicity and marketing;
- iv) acknowledge the 20’s Plenty for Us Campaign’s work in raising the profile of this issue and their request that this matter be scrutinised and refer to the Scrutiny Board, Sustainable Economy and Culture for their consideration; and
- v) note that the Head of Transport Planning will be responsible for implementation.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report responds to the Deputation received by the Council on 13th November 2013 from the 20's Plenty for Us Campaign.
- 1.2 The Deputation requested that the City adopts a consistent approach to the implementation of 20 mph speed limits, and a default 20 mph speed limit on the majority of urban roads to be Council policy.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Overall road injuries in Leeds lie on a continuing downward trend which has been the pattern for several decades, with presently the number of fatal and serious road injuries at their lowest ever recorded level. However, this is a process of continuing improvement and programmes and initiatives to reduce road collisions and injuries are a matter of continuous development. A particular focus will remain on vulnerable road users including pedestrians, cycle and motor cyclists, children and young people and elderly people. The use of lower speed limits and 20mph limits in particular has key role in this within local communities.
- 2.2 The benefits of reducing vehicular speeds to 20 mph have long been recognised and have been advocated as a default local speed limit in urban areas by pedestrian and cyclists' organisations. The benefits include: a reduced number of road casualties, increasing the chance of survival for a pedestrian in collision with a vehicle to 97%, encouraging more journeys on foot and by cycle, alleviating some of the negative effects of traffic by making neighbourhoods better places to live through improved interaction, reduced congestion and pollution, and by encouraging more local journeys, especially on foot and by bicycle. Lower speeds can also contribute to reducing health inequalities as evidence suggests that disadvantaged areas experience higher rates of road casualties when compared with more affluent areas –a child living in an area of high deprivation is five times more likely to be killed in a road collision than a child living in an affluent area. Limiting traffic speeds to 20 mph is seen by organisations such as Barnardos as a key element in enabling active and healthy lifestyles for children. to play outdoors and to travel independently to school and to socialise, which in turn has a huge role to play in reducing obesity, preventing further decline in cardiorespiratory fitness and reducing asthma as well as conduct, behavioural and emotional problems, including the ability to perceive risk.
- 2.3 Twenty-miles per hour limits also play an important complementary role since, by contributing to more useable local streets, they can help encourage more active and sustainable travel patterns with consequential benefits for improved health and environmental outcomes. More specifically, this can contribute to preventing ill health arising from inactivity (i.e. diabetes, coronary and vascular health) by stimulating exercise as part of everyday activities. This is particularly important for children of school age, as this group is both more vulnerable to serious road injury due their inability to judge traffic speeds, and partly as a consequence now have less freedom to use their local streets for independent travel, leading to falling levels of physical activity and a raised potential for ill health in later life. It is estimated that the size of the area the children were able to travel has shrunk

within three generations from around six miles to just a fraction of a mile, mainly due to perceived and real risks to children's safety and the rise in car borne journeys. By stimulating greater choices in the way we travel local 20 mph limits can therefore deliver both road safety and health benefits to many residents across the city thus helping realise our Children Friendly City and Best City ambitions for Leeds.

- 2.4 Since the 1990s, Leeds City Council and other local authorities have implemented traffic calming measures and 20 mph schemes to improve road safety and reduce the road injuries in local communities. Where applied, such schemes have reduced road injuries by 50% on average but, because of a mandatory requirement for traffic calming features, they have often been expensive to implement and sometimes generated objections from residents who disagreed with the traffic calming measures. The resulting zones have tended to be small in size and focused on very specific areas.
- 2.5 Historically the regulations for 20 mph schemes have required that speed reduction is underpinned by traffic calming measures and the 50 or so schemes introduced before 2012 have followed this pattern. In November 2011, however, the Department for Transport introduced new, more flexible, guidelines which relaxed some of the more stringent requirements for traffic calming by allowing greater reliance on signing measures to support the wider use of 20mph limits.
- 2.6 Lower 20 mph speed limits can be particularly beneficial in residential areas where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high, such as around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas which are not part of any major through route. These schemes can help improve air quality and reduce noise by smoothing traffic flows, as the majority of noise and pollution due to fuel consumption are generated at gear changes and braking. The revisions to the regulations have enabled the Council to progress a more ambitious programme to extend the use of 20mph limits, with an emphasis on the school locations and residential areas in the city. This targeted approach was selected, having considered the option of a more extensive area wide approach, because it was considered that it enabled resources to be both better targeted and to also allow a greater tailoring to local circumstances.
- 2.7 During the current programme, which commenced in 2012, over 40 new area schemes are being introduced which will bring coverage of 20mph limits to around 520 km of residential streets by the end of March 2014. Preparations are now being made for the next forward programme which, subject to resources, will run from 2014 to 2020 and deliver a further 120 local area schemes to more than double the length of residential streets within a 20 mph limit to 1,200 km. The total length of 30 mph urban streets is approximately 2,000 kms. In addition, 20 mph schemes are also considered as part of appropriate residential planning applications and the basic needs school expansion programme as well as the proposed City Connect cycle route.
- 2.8 Overall, the identified schemes programme will deliver a 20 mph speed limit on around 60% of all urban streets in the city and surrounding communities by 2020. As part of the overall plan, the proposed City Connect cycle superhighway from Leeds to Bradford includes a corridor of 20 mph local speed limits in communities

abutting the route. The aim is that by 2020 all local schools and their residential hinterlands will be located within an effective speed reducing 20 mph speed limit area.

3 Main issues

3.1 At the 13 November 2013 Council meeting, a Deputation was received from the 20's Plenty for Us Campaign. Presented by the national campaign manager, the deputation called for:

- Contiguous "Total 20mph" speed limit policy for Leeds which would be an enforceable, mandatory, signed, default 20mph speed limit for the majority of roads in Leeds – or failing this the establishment of a scrutiny inquiry to examine the evidence and report on such an option.
- A consistent approach with signs as opposed to using traffic calming features on an area basis, to create a 20mph speed limit across the widest possible area of the city thereby creating a consistent low speed limit across the whole community.
- The deputation also identified the need for effective enforcement and marketing.

3.2 In many regards the Council is already following these principles with its own programmes and, as described earlier, the support of a change to the guidelines nationally is delivering more and more extensive schemes than hitherto. The use of 20 mph speed limits and zones has been reviewed on a number of occasions and the impact of schemes is monitored on a continuing basis. As such the Council shares many of the principals and the common overall aspiration articulated by the deputation. 20s Plenty for Us are also campaigning for a reversal of national policy so that 20mph is designated the default national speed limit for urban areas. If adopted, all other urban limits would be signed as exceptions, with 30mph roads including repeater signs as now applied to urban limits above this level, thus obviating the present need for repeater signs in most 20 mph limit areas. The Campaign recognises that higher speed limits justified for distributor, major and primary road networks would mostly remain within this scenario, but suggests that a carefully drawn strategy could result in overall cost savings for the wider area introduction of 20 mph speed limits.

3.3 The principle of the current Leeds programmes is to implement schemes by using signs only and to provide physical features when site and speed surveys together with community feedback specifically indicate that some form of extra speed management is needed to bring traffic speeds down and where this cannot, or has not, been achieved by signs alone. This draws on the experience and recommendations of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and experience elsewhere which, on the basis of our own evidence so far, shows that this approach leads to schemes which deliver tangible long term speed reduction and casualty benefits in permanent zones which do not require revisiting in the future. An annual implementation programme backed by speed monitoring and consultations on the provision of traffic calming also helps to secure community support through working in partnership in the interests of local people.

- 3.4 The aim so far in Leeds has been to introduce locally appropriate 20 mph speed limits in residential areas across the city, whilst continuing to ensure the effective working and traffic movement of our main and key secondary traffic movements for the wider economy and connectivity the city needs. This is now being achieved by a combination of signs, road markings and traffic calming tailored to the local situation which also reflects the financial and practical imperatives. If the availability of funding and resources continues at the current level, and the current rate of progress is maintained, this will deliver around 20-30 large 20 mph schemes each year.
- 3.5 The current cost for delivering the programmes described earlier in this report is estimated to be of the order of £5 - £6 million in a climate where the allocated Local Transport Plan funding for local minor schemes is circa £3 million per year. The phased approach now being followed in many ways differs only in the method of delivery, in that a "Total 20" policy is unlikely to make much practical difference to the overall size of the area covered by 20 mph schemes for an equivalent level of resource. Ultimately the end result can be the same as progressively local schemes are stitched together appropriately across the community as funds permit.
- 3.6 In Leeds schemes are currently prioritised to support casualty reduction and improve local mobility and with a view to linking new and existing 20 mph areas together across communities as programmes are progressed.
- 3.7 This approach allows for a phased implementation based on objective criteria. The number of casualties in an area will be used as the overriding priority. However, as the programme progresses and the casualties become more and more dispersed, the evaluation criteria are likely to include the following:-
- Speed of traffic, particularly the control of excessive speeds;
 - Existence of other attractors such as shopping parades and parks, and of existing 20 mph schemes to aid coherence;
 - Community support;
 - Cost per resident; giving a notional figure of value for money.
 - Indices of deprivation; and
 - Synergies with other initiatives such as active healthy lifestyle promotions, sustainable school travel and the development of low carbon transport.
- 3.8 The practice of other cities is a matter for continuing review through the networks in which the City is involved. In contrast to Leeds, experience in other authorities such as Portsmouth – which implemented area wide schemes without features - shows that signs alone fail to reduce traffic speeds where these are above 27mph and Portsmouth is now understood to be returning to retrospectively fit traffic calming measures on some of its streets.

- 3.9 Elsewhere, authorities which are formally adopting a “Total 20” policy have phased its implementation over a number of years, with areas prioritised according to their accident record or areas of social deprivation. In Birmingham, it is estimated that the delivery of a “Total 20” approach will need to be phased over five years at a cost of approximately £7million. The authority, like Leeds, has also prioritised its initial 20 mph schemes programmes based on casualty records. Overall, the notion that a “Total 20” approach as a default speed limit could be a more cost effective approach is unproven and would depend on both the timing of any national change, for which there is no commitment, and the individual approach of local authorities.
- 3.9 The experience of other Core Cities, as well as the 20’s Plenty for Us Deputation point to the importance of community engagement and the need to win hearts and minds. Prioritising implementation of 20mph schemes in areas where these are welcomed and needed is a good first step to win residents’ support and endorsement of the limit, but a wider publicity and branding campaign to maximise the awareness and benefits of the existing and planned schemes by greater community ownership and engagement is also required. This is the area where the involvement of a grass roots organisation such as 20’s Plenty for Us will be invaluable.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Residents and Ward Member consultations are carried out for every scheme proposal; these almost always reveal substantial public support. The deputation raises a salient point about the importance of marketing and in line with the Best Council vision the work and engagement with local communities is a matter for ongoing review and learning as each programme progresses. There is thus an opportunity for community groups such as 20’s Plenty for Us to engage with programme at a local grass roots level to influence schemes and contribute to their marketing and promotion.
- 4.1.2 In order to successfully implement speed restriction schemes and for them to become accepted and adopted by all members of the communities, it is essential to engender strong support and hence compliance with the local speed limit. As the 20’s Plenty for Us Campaign have highlighted, to be effective any marketing campaign needs to be underpinned by firm understanding of the motivations and barriers and promote compliance as the norm within the communities. The West Yorkshire Road Safety Partnership has extensive experience in such work and increasingly the expertise of Public Health services is being sought to improve the delivery and effectiveness of road user behaviour change programmes.
- 4.1.3 The Deputation has also invited Members to consider whether this matter should be scrutinised, which Board members may wish to consider in the light of the discussion presented in this report.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Limiting traffic speeds is a cost effective way of improving road safety and quality of life in local communities and residential areas. Following a targeted approach, starting with the locations of greatest need and with an emphasis on casualty reduction and supporting local journeys, is likely to make the greatest difference. As such, programmes have often focussed on those densely built up areas ranking high on the Indices of Deprivation as residents in these areas, particularly children, are more likely to live near and use busy roads with a greater risk of road injury. However, it is recognised that the benefits of lower local speed limits have broader application in the city and programmes are now evolving across the wider city and communities.
- 4.2.2 The Equality, Diversity Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment was prepared for 20 mph speed reduction schemes around schools and residential areas and is attached as an appendix. The assessment identified the following key positive impacts:
- Make it more pleasant and safer to walk and cycle, encouraging a healthier lifestyle
 - Improve the quality of life for the local community
 - Provide safer passage while crossing the road for all pedestrians, but particularly beneficial for those with a mobility impairment, disabled people, parents supporting pushchairs, and younger and older people
- 4.2.3 No negative impacts were identified for any of the protected equality characteristics. Slight negative impacts were slightly increased journey times and potential impact of traffic calming features if installed incorrectly.
- 4.2.4 The Impact Assessment stresses that the benefits of the schemes far outweigh any potential disadvantages and has not recommended any adjustments to the current process.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Best City ambition is to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place. Twenty miles-per-hour schemes contribute to this ambition by improving the safety and quality of life of Leeds residents by enabling safe pedestrian and cycling journeys in local communities and reducing traffic collisions to make a specific contribution to the Best City for Communities and Child Friendly City ambitions.
- 4.3.2 The ambition for Leeds City Council is that all schools and their local communities across the city will ultimately have the opportunity of a 20 mph speed limits provided in their area. This aim is supported by the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan objective “To enhance the quality of life of people living in, working in and visiting West Yorkshire” where more extensive 20 mph limits will support greater opportunities for walking and cycling for all and help children especially travel independently through safer streets in their neighbourhood and to school.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The delivery of 20 mph speed limits forms part of the programmes for improving road safety contained in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (WYLTP). Such schemes generally show high value for money both for the direct benefits to road safety and also importantly their indirect benefits for active travel and health, with consequential reductions in the demand for health care. The potential value for money of such schemes has been enhanced by the changes to Government guidelines, which have allowed around a two-thirds reduction in schemes costs, however the full benefits can only be captured if speeds are reduced and the Council's programmes aim to reflect this. The minimal approach to traffic calming features, together with Police support, maximises driver compliance while minimising cost as advocated by the deputation.
- 4.4.2 Whilst this report has no specific implication for resources, the overall approach to casualty reductions is being reviewed as part of the next three year WYLTP implementation plan, which will reflect both the importance of road safety and the role of 20 mph schemes in its allocation of resources for 2014-17.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications. The report is eligible for Call-In.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 It is considered that the Council's current and planned programmes will deliver 20 mph speed limits across the city in a way which is inclusive and effective in improving road safety. By ensuring effective engagement, careful design which relates to local communities and their needs the risks of objections are minimised and similarly the most effective use of finance is also achieved. A wide area based approach, such as "Total 20", which has not been used in Leeds runs the risk that measures are not always effective and could lead to safety issues being overlooked at locations which actually need features or improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Council shares in many regards the aspirations of the 20s Plenty for Us Campaign which aligns closely with those of our Best City ambitions, especially with regard to having a *child friendly city* and safer, stronger communities and better environments. Leeds is learning from the many areas where such speed limits are used and works closely with its local authority networks and partners to learn and draw on their experience and best practice. The 20's Plenty for Us Campaign's contribution to this experience is well recognised and highlights the range and value of such schemes.
- 5.2 This report has set out the Council's approach and the strides that are being taken with its own programmes for lower speed limits across large areas of the city. This work both reflects our own experience as city and that of many others with such schemes and aims to ensure a best value for money approach which reflects

the resources available and the role of 20 mph speed limits in the wider work to reduce road injuries and improve mobility on the highway network.

- 5.3 In practice a “Total 20” policy for a default speed limit may not make a substantial practical difference to the extent nor the benefits of the schemes being delivered in Leeds and could leave some neighbourhoods of the city without any scheme for some years. Ultimately, if national policy should change, Leeds 20 mph schemes could be readily adapted, although revised signing would be required for the residual 30 mph network, so any costs savings would be notional and depend on the final design and delivery arrangements.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is requested to:

- i) note the contents of the report, and the success of the current programmes in the context of the overall road safety record for Leeds;
- ii) endorse the continuation of the targeted approach to the progressive roll out of 20 mph speed limits in the city with a view to extending the opportunity to all residential areas as resources permit;
- iii) consent to work with partners in and outside the Council such as 20’s Plenty for Us and Public Health services on promoting the 20 mph speed limits and maximise their benefits by securing the greatest possible public support and compliance, and to adopt new avenues to obtain funding for the introduction of schemes, publicity and marketing;
- iv) acknowledge the 20’s Plenty for Us Campaign’s work in raising the profile of this issue and their request that this matter be scrutinised and refer to the Scrutiny Board, Sustainable Economy and Culture for their consideration.; and
- v) note that the Head of Transport Planning will be responsible for implementation.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council’s website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.