

South Chichester County Local Committee

16 September 2014

Chichester 20mph Speed Limits

Part I

Report by Head of Highways and Transport and the Divisional Manager, Engineering Solutions

Electoral Divisions:
Chichester North,
East, South, West.

Executive Summary

In July 2013, West Sussex County Council implemented the extensive area-wide scheme that has introduced signed 20mph limits without traffic calming in Chichester. The scheme covers the majority of residential streets which previously had a 30mph speed limit. Main roads such as 'A' and 'B' classified roads were excluded from the scheme.

Recommendation

That South Chichester County Local Committee note and give comment about the Chichester 20mph Speed Limits Scheme Assessment report.

1. Background

- 1.1 In July 2013, West Sussex County Council implemented 20mph speed limits without traffic calming in Chichester. The scheme covers the majority of residential streets which previously had a 30mph speed limit. Main roads such as 'A' and 'B' classified roads were excluded from the scheme.
- 1.2 The scheme was implemented with the support of the "20's Plenty for Chichester" campaign group, a community group made up of volunteers who gained community support for the implementation of a default 20mph speed limit across Chichester. The campaign principles are for slower speeds and less congestion across the city, improving the quality of life, reducing the number of casualties, encouraging more people to walk and cycle and improving air quality.
- 1.3 The County Council, in its capacity as Highway Authority, can introduce a 20mph speed limit where average vehicle speeds are below 24 mph. This criteria meets conditions agreed with Sussex Police as the enforcement authority.

2. Discussion

- 2.1 In March/April 2014 average speed surveys were undertaken in the same locations (or similar) as the pre-scheme survey sites approximately 2 years earlier.

- 2.2 The highway consultant CH2M Hill were commissioned to produce an assessment report on the average speed of vehicles within the 20mph speed limit area and the full report is in the Appendix.
- 2.3 The results show that there is an observed reduction in speeds at 89% of the sites, comparing speeds before and after the implementation of the 20mph speed limit. Overall, this equates to an average speed reduction of 1.7mph across all 35 sites surveyed.
- 2.4 The monitoring survey indicates that the scheme is generally reducing vehicle speeds across Chichester to what would appear to be consistent with 20 mph schemes elsewhere in the country. Department for Transport guidance on signed only speed limits states that 1-2mph reductions in average speed is the likely outcome.
- 2.5 The results of the analysis indicate that pre-scheme implementation, average speeds below 24mph were observed at 22 (63%) sites and above at 13 (37%) sites. Post scheme implementation, average speeds below 24mph were observed at 27 (77%) sites and above at 8 (23%) sites. It is therefore considered that the speeds are at the desired level after implementation at 77% of sites.
- 2.6 A total of 11 of the sites had a pre-scheme average speed of 24mph or greater. Post scheme implementation show this is reduced to 8 sites. The greatest average speed observed following the implementation of the scheme was 26.5mph on Florence Road.
- 2.7 In addition to Florence Road, Quarry Lane, College Lane, Norwich Avenue, Brandy Hole Lane, Whyke Road, The Broadway and The Avenue all exhibit average speeds of 24mph or higher. These streets are highlighted as potentially requiring further attention to reduce the average speed of vehicles.
- 2.8 Options for further consideration may include speed management features to physically reduce vehicle speed and/or targeted campaigning with advertisement and education to help encourage slower driving. Complete removal of the 20mph speed limit and return to 30mph is an option in some streets where this fits appropriately with adjoining streets.
- 2.9 At this time it is not proposed to make any changes to the scheme. Over the coming 6 to 9 months more information will be gathered before returning to the Committee with proposals to improve the operation of the scheme, should this prove necessary.
- 2.10 In terms of changes in road traffic accident statistics, reported personal injury accidents are recorded by the County Council's Road Safety Team on a monthly basis as a matter of routine. Whilst a first year report can be given, for a scheme of this nature it is reasonable to adopt a 5 year assessment of post scheme analysis in order to make a fair judgement on the effect on road safety as annual fluctuations in road accidents may not reflect accurate results.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Sussex Police have been sent a copy of the consultant's report and their views have been requested, both in terms of the report and their experience of the performance of the scheme.
- 3.2 A summary of the Sussex Police response is as follows:
- In the main the 20mph speed limit is working well.
 - However, many complaints were received from members of the public regarding perceived low levels of compliance and the diversion of police resources to handle the complaints.
 - The Neighbourhood Police Team has empowered the local community to engage in the use of Speed Indicating Devices (SID) within the 20mph speed limit.
 - The use of painted roundels on the carriageway generates cyclic maintenance requirements and Sussex Police would wish to be reassured the Authority will maintain the signage and road markings necessary to ensure lawful enforcement of the speed limit is possible.
 - Request the County Council review the inclusion within the scheme of Florence Road, Quarry Lane and College Lane or consider traffic management features to reduce the average vehicle speed.
 - Request that for a scheme of this nature in future the County Council ensure a media and education strategy is prepared complemented by literature and information packs along with the necessary staff and volunteers to support it.

4. Equality Impact Report

An Equality Impact Report is not required at this time because this report is for information only. A full impact appraisal was carried out prior to the final decision to implement the scheme and it was attached to that decision report.

Geoff Lowry
Head of Highways and Transport

Peter Bradley
Divisional Manager, Engineering
Solutions

Contact: Richard Wells, 03302 226347

Appendices

[Appendix A](#) – 20mph Speed Limits Scheme Assessment by CH2M Hill, July 2014

Background Papers

20mph speed limits report, South Chichester CLC, 6 November 2012