



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET
7 September 2010

ITEM 9

Report of the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods

VEHICLE SPEED MANAGEMENT REVIEW

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out a series of proposals in relation to the management of vehicle speeds. The proposals will enable the Council to begin to develop a new approach to speed management for the city's road network.
- 1.2 The report proposes an examination of fixed speed cameras to clarify their effect on vehicle speeds and the level and severity of road accidents. As part of the examination three existing fixed speed cameras will be deactivated. During the period the cameras are out of operation vehicle speeds will be measured and the results will help inform us of the role that such cameras will play in the future.
- 1.3 A review of speed limits across the city needs to be undertaken. Ensuring that speed limits are appropriate is an important function for the Council. Setting the correct speed limit can help to reduce road traffic accidents and ensure that our roads are used to their maximum benefit. The report sets out a proposal to experimentally reduce the speed limit on the A608, Mansfield Road, from 40 mph to 30 mph. The results of the experiment will help us determine the most appropriate speed limit here and in other locations.
- 1.4 It is local people, residents, who express the greatest concern about speed limits and who regularly raise complaints about excess speed in their area. Recognising that speed limits are set not only for vehicle drivers but also for other people using the road we are eager to develop speed management approaches that recognise the concerns of local people. The report proposes the use of speed activated signs in locations where Neighbourhood Boards consider speeding to be an issue. The signs will enable vehicle speeds to be monitored and will also send a positive sign to motorists to drive considerately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve a review of the role and use of fixed speed cameras. The review will consider whether speed activated signs can be as effective as cameras in maintaining compliance with speed limits and will also consider whether existing camera locations continue to be appropriate. As part of the review speed cameras on Burton Road, Nottingham Road (adjacent to Pentagon Island) and on the A514 at Shelton Lock be taken out of use while their impact on vehicle speed is assessed.

- 2.2 To approve a reduction in the speed limit of Mansfield Road, A608, to assess whether a 30 mph speed limit is appropriate for this road. The experiment will last for 12 weeks.
- 2.3 To approve the approach that Neighbourhood Boards are offered the opportunity to deploy speed activated warning signs on roads within their area where vehicle speeds cause concern. The use of such signs to be governed by the operational policy attached to this report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The proposals will help inform future decisions in relation to the management of vehicle speeds and will ensure that the concerns of local people can be addressed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 As Highway Authority the Council is responsible for setting speed limits on the public highway and for reporting the level of road traffic accidents which involve personal injury.
- 4.2 For several years the Council, working in partnership with the Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership, have chosen to deploy speed cameras at locations where vehicle speeds have been higher than the speed limit and where there is evidence to suggest that inappropriate speed has contributed to the level or severity of road traffic accidents. Evidence indicates that speed cameras are effective in reducing vehicle speed and the level of road casualties on roads where cameras are used have fallen.
- 4.3 Government allocate funding to the Council to help reduce the number and severity of road traffic accidents. In recent years all highway authorities have been set targets for this and speed cameras, along with other measures, have assisted in our efforts to reach these targets. The funding for these initiatives has recently been cut and we need to explore whether there are more cost effective ways to target the reduction in road traffic accidents.
- 4.4 In previous years the Council receive approximately £343k Road Safety revenue grant with the majority of this funding, around £220k, being required to support speed cameras. For 2010/11 this funding has been cut to £248k. Working with Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety partners we are exploring options to reduce these costs significantly. The Council remains committed to improving road safety and reducing the number of road casualties particularly those involving vulnerable road users including cyclists and pedestrian. The review of speed management set out within this report will help us to identify where to prioritise resources and guide us to the level of investment we need to make to keep road users safe.

- 4.5 As part of the review it is proposed that we assess the impact that speed cameras have on vehicle speeds in Derby. We propose to deactivate speed cameras in three locations while continuing to measure vehicle speeds. On initial deactivation the speed camera location will be supplemented by speed warning signs which will warn drivers when they exceed the speed limit. A further period of speed measurement will also be undertaken following the removal of the warning sign and the results will help us to determine the future of fixed speed camera locations across the city and will provide evidence about the effectiveness of vehicle activated warning signs and whether these type of signs are a suitable replacement for some fixed speed cameras. The three trial sites will be for cameras located on Burton Road, Nottingham Road (adjacent to Pentagon Island) and the A514 Shelton Lock.
- 4.6 The cameras will be covered over for a period of 12 weeks from approximately 27th September 2010. A speed activated warning sign will be erected for the first 6 weeks. Speed measurements will be analysed at the end of the 12 week period and reported to the Cabinet Member in early 2011 when a decision on whether to retain the cameras will be made. The results relating to these three locations will also be used to inform decisions about other fixed speed cameras within the city.
- 4.7 In order to effectively manage vehicle speeds we must start by ensuring that speed limits are appropriate. There are very many factors which influence the speed at which motorists feel comfortable travelling and the speed limit itself is just one of those factors.
- 4.8 We are about to embark on a review of speed limits across the city, particularly looking at roads where the speed limit is higher than 30 mph. One such road, currently subject to a 40 mph speed limit, is the A608 Mansfield Road. The road is a key link into the city and serves as both an inter-urban route as well as a local road providing access for local people. Recently the speed limit on this road before it enters the city has been reduced to 40 mph and consequently there is now no change of speed limit as the road enters the built up area of the city. Through the Neighbourhood Board and ward members many complaints have been received about the speed of vehicles using this route and people have expressed concern that the speed limit is too high.
- 4.9 To help inform our speed management review we propose trialling a 30 mph speed limit on Mansfield Road between the city boundary and the Paddock public house. The trial would see the speed limit reduced to 30 mph for a 12 week period with vehicle speed measurements taking place throughout the trial. During the first 6 weeks of the trial speed activated warning signs and street posters would be positioned to help advise drivers of the speed limit. These would be removed during that latter part of the 12 week period to determine whether the lower speed limit could be self regulating. The road would revert to a 40 mph limit at the end of the trial period and the results of the speed measurements, together with comments from local people and users of the road would then be considered before any longer term proposals were brought forward.

- 4.10 Neighbourhood Boards often approach the Council expressing concern over the speed of vehicles using local roads. Quite often there are limited actions that are available to respond to these concerns. Within the Highways and Transport 2010/11 work programme, approved by Cabinet earlier this year, funding has been set aside to develop a responsive speed management approach to help local people in these instances. The proposal is that a number of speed activated warning signs are provided which can then be deployed to meet the needs of Neighbourhoods. The signs, which flash to warn motorists when they are travelling too fast, will be available to Neighbourhood Boards. The cost of positioning the signs will need to be met by the Neighbourhood Board using their Highways and Transport funding but the initial purchase of the signs will be funded through the Local Transport Plan capital allocation included in the 2010/11 Highways and Transport work programme.
- 4.11 A loose criteria to guide Neighbourhood Boards on when and how the speed activated warning signs can be used has been developed and is attached at appendix 2. It is envisaged that where the demand for the signs is higher than availability the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods will determine, in conjunction with Neighbourhood Boards, which requests receive priority.
- 4.12 In order to facilitate the proposed review of speed cameras and the temporary speed limit on Mansfield Road, 7 speed activated warning signs need to be acquired. Rather than hiring these signs it is proposed that they be purchased and that these signs then be offered to Neighbourhoods to help with local speed management issues. It is envisaged that the signs will be available for this purpose from mid November 2010.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 A range of options, from very minimal change to taking away all camera enforcement have been considered. However, this approach of trialling a number of different scenarios to assess the impact and then make longer term decisions seems to be the most appropriate, bearing in mind the Council's responsibilities as the Highway Authority in relation to road safety.

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Background papers:	Background papers None Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices:	Appendix 2 – Speed Activated Sign Guidance Note

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The purchase and initial deployment of 7 speed activated warning signs is expected to cost £24k. Capital funding to meet these costs has been set aside in the 2010/11 Highways and Transport programme for Area Wide Speeding Issues. On-going costs associated with the redeployment of signs to meet Neighbourhood priorities will need to be met by Neighbourhood Boards.

Legal

- 2.1 The setting of speed limits is a statutory function of the Council acting as Highway Authority.

Personnel

- 3.1 None

Equalities impact

- 4.1 None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 The proposals are consistent with Council's corporate objectives for a City with Stronger, Safer and Cleaner Communities where everyone feels safe and confident in their lives.