

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

4 June 2024

Speed Limit Assessments Task Group

Background

1. At its meeting on 11 January 2024 the select committee resolved to set up a Task Group to look at the Speed Limit Assessments process.
2. The first meeting of the task group was on held 1 March 2024.
3. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [20 March 2024](#).

Membership

Cllr Helen Belcher OBE
Cllr Johnny Kidney
Cllr Jonathon Seed (Chairman)
Cllr Martin Smith
Cllr Derek Walters
Cllr Bridget Wayman

Terms of Reference

4. Draft terms of reference were discussed and agreed at its first meeting (1 March). These are set out below:
 1. To support a review of the Speed Limit Assessment process.
 2. To review the current processes.
 3. To consider the following areas and to make recommendations on how:
 - Speed limit assessments can support a safe system approach i.e., safe vehicle, road use, speeds, roads, and post-crash response.
 - Speed limit assessments can help develop public confidence in road safety measures.
 - Relevant evidence and guidance are used during a speed limit assessment.
 - Local needs and conditions are examined during an assessment.
 - Community views and feedback, including those of relevant local services e.g., police, are considered and how these are weighted and seen to be taken into account with other relevant criteria.
 - Community impacts are considered.
 - Lessons can be applied from the current pilot programmes.

- Final decisions are reported to local communities.
4. To make recommendations to the Environment Select Committee by (tbc).

Recent activity

Guidance and assessment report (26 March 2024)

5. The task group looked at the recently revised Department of Transport guidance *Setting Local Speed Limits* (March 2024). The changes mostly relate to 20mph limits and emphasises the need for limits to be appropriate, enforceable and to maintain public confidence.
6. The task group also looked at a small number of recent speed limit assessment reports. They considered the evidence gathered and how it was interpreted as well as the role of local intelligence.
7. The task group considered a list of speed limit assessments over the last 18 months provided by Highways. This will be used to inform a discussion with selected Chairmen of LHFIGs (23 May 2024)

Meeting with AtkinsRéalis and Highways Officers (20 May 2023)

8. The task group met with senior Highways officers and AtkinsRéalis to look at the role of external consultants and the compiling of evidence for the development of speed assessments.
9. The task group looked at how an assessment is triggered, what evidence is gathered and how, the guidance used, the development and drafting of assessment reports and the process of amendment.
10. The task group particularly focussed upon the use of community information, the interpretation of Department for Transport guidance, the use of collision data and the consideration of vulnerable road users.
11. The task group will be meeting with selected Chairmen of Local Highway & Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIG) to consider their experiences of the speed limit assessment process.

Meeting with Selected Chairmen of LHFIGs (23 May 2023)

12. The task group met with several Chairmen from Local Highway & Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIGs) who had requested speed limit assessments in the last 18 months. This was to understand their experience of undertaking assessments.
13. The discussion covered how concerns were dealt with, the interpretation of the criteria, how to balance competing views, that assessments varied due to the location and environment, the costs involved and how to manage speed by utilising other tools which are outside of the assessment process.

Climate Emergency Task Group

Background

13. The Climate Emergency Task Group (CETG) is a standing task group reporting to the Environment Select Committee. The task group's initial terms of reference were endorsed by the Select Committee on 3 September 2019 and were revised on 9 November 2021.
14. The task group has produced two reports with recommendations:
 - Energy and Transport & Air quality (29 September 2020)
 - Planning (13 January 2021)
15. At its meeting on 14 June 2022 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2022/23.
16. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on [20 March 2024](#).

Membership

17. The membership of the task group from April 2024 is as follows:

Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Sarah Gibson
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Brian Mathew
Cllr Nick Murry
Cllr David Vigar
Cllr Ian Wallis
Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman)

18. Cllr Tony Jackson resigned from the task group in April 2024.

Terms of Reference:

19. The task group's revised terms of reference were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on the 9 November 2021. These are:
 - a) To help shape and influence the development of Wiltshire Council's programme (in all relevant areas) for meeting its objective of making Wiltshire Council carbon neutral and seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 (excluding the geographical area administered by Swindon Borough Council).
 - b) To scrutinise the delivery of this objective through the Climate Strategy (2022-2027) and its delivery plans, as well as key plans, policies, and programmes, such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Including the way in which the Council is

measuring progress and how it is performing and reporting against baselines.

- c) To provide recommendations on other aspects of decarbonising the county including partnership working and community-led approaches as well as acting as a national role model.

Recent Activity

Air Quality Action Plan 2024-2029 (15 March 2024)

20. The task group asked about the consultation process and its responses. The response was quite low given the subject. In the public consultation there was not a high confidence that the plan would deliver results, but it is a dynamic document, and it is intended to change and adapt to circumstances.
21. The task group welcomed the increase in monitoring and that air quality is improving. Much of the improvement driven by cleaner cars though diesel lorries remain a problem.
22. The task group raised other air quality concerns, not created by vehicles. Some of these factors, like wood burning stoves and fire pits, could be addressed via planning.
23. The task group will continue to monitor the plan.

Wessex Community Energy Network Event (16 May 2024)

24. The Chairman of the task group attended this event co-hosted by Wiltshire Council. It explored opportunities to engage with local communities in creating, saving, and sharing energy.

Forward work plan

25. The Climate Emergency Task Group forward plan is attached at Appendix 2.

Proposals

That the select committee:

- 1. Notes the update on the Task Group activity provided above.**
- 2. Re-appoints the Climate Emergency task group and the membership listed in the report, with the commencement of the 2024/25 Council year.**
- 3. Notes the activity of the Climate Emergency Task Group (June 2023/June 2024), see Appendix 1.**
- 4. Notes the Climate Emergency Task Group's draft forward work plan, see Appendix 2.**

Cllr Jonathon Seed, Chairman, Speed Limit Assessment Task Group

Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman of the Climate Emergency Task Group

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Activity June 2023 / June 2024

29 June 2023	Draft Local Plan The task group were briefed on the elements of the Local Plan that lower emissions and protect the natural environment.
9 October 2023	Climate Strategy The task group looks annually at progress with the delivery of the Climate Strategy
16 January 2024	Carbon Audits The task group considered the pros and cons of carbon audits for small to medium sized businesses.
2 February 2024	Climate Change Adaptation Plan The task group received an update on the development of a revised adaptation plan.
15 March 2024	Air Quality Strategy 2024-2029 The task group were briefed on the new strategy, the evidence underpinning it and the actions identified.

APPENDIX 2

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

June 2024	Tree & Woodland Programme Programme begins autumn 2023, with update on progress available 2024.
2024	Local Nature Recovery Strategy Each statutorily required local nature recovery strategy is specific and tailored to its area.
2024	Climate Change Adaptation Plan To review the council's draft plan.
2024	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUGS2) Update on the government funded programme for retrofitting.
2024	Bio-diversity Net Gain Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new planning policy with the potential to change the face of nature recovery in England.
2024	Local Transport Plan To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles charging.
October 2024	Annual update on the Council's response to the Climate Emergency
2025	Carbon Offsetting Strategy Update on the development of the strategy.
tbc	Soft Plastic Recycling
tbc	Alternative fuels
tbc	Biogas To explore the potential for biogas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles.