

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Chippenham Area Board</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> July 2012</b>
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>'20' is Plenty'</b>

## **Purpose of Report**

To report to the Area Board the current issues relating to the request to trial '20' is plenty' in Chippenham and to recommend a way forward.

## 1. Background

- 1.1. At its meeting of the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 Councillor Bill Douglas sought the support of the Area Board to trial '20 is plenty' by means of advisory speed limits in selected areas of the town including Monkton Park, Wood Lane and the Webbington Road estate.
- 1.2. The Area Board members noted Councillor Douglas' proposal and agreed to refer the issue for the consideration of the Chippenham Area Transport Group (CATG).
- 1.3. At its meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> May a full and open discussion on the issue was held by the attending members of the CATG, including Councillor Douglas and representatives from Wiltshire Highways. The group agreed there was currently a lack of clear guidance and understanding regarding both '20 is plenty' and <sup>1</sup>advisory speed limits and asked for further investigation to be undertaken by highway officers before a final decision is made by the Area Board.
- 1.4. "20s Plenty for Us" is a national campaign which seeks a default 20mph speed limit in all residential streets without the introduction of physical traffic calming. A number of predominately urban authorities, most notably Portsmouth City Council, Sheffield City Council and Newcastle City Council, have already introduced area wide 20mph speed limits. It should be noted that whilst many of the limits may have been introduced as part of a wider '20 is plenty' initiative, the restrictions were implemented by means of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) and are not advisory.
- 1.5. Part of the confusion nationally regarding the '20 is plenty' initiative is the number of adopted guises and seemingly different interpretations between highway authorities. As outlined in point 1.4 above, many local authorities have broadly welcomed the initiative and have used it to enable the introduction of area wide 20mph limits, whereas others, such Essex County Council, have used it as a basis for the introduction of part time advisory 20mph limits outside schools.

Individual groups have also adopted the initiative and sought to encourage lower speeds in their community with the use of unofficial roadside posters and bin stickers displaying the typical '20 is plenty' sign. Refer to **Appendix 1. (Sign no. 2)**. It should be noted however that such signs are not <sup>2</sup>prescribed and their use may be considered unlawful.

- 1.6. There are a number of national pressure groups such as '[GoSlower.org](http://GoSlower.org)', '[Slower-speeds.org.uk](http://Slower-speeds.org.uk)' and '[20splentyforus.org.uk](http://20splentyforus.org.uk)' who support and promote the principle of the '20 is plenty' initiative through their web sites and seek the introduction of default 20mph limits in all residential streets. However the means by which they seek to achieve this appears to differ.

[Goslower.org](http://Goslower.org) promotes voluntary speed limits by means of short targeted roadside poster campaigns. Refer to **Appendix 1 (Sign no. 4)**, whereas

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<sup>1</sup> Advisory limits are not enforced by a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)

<sup>2</sup> A sign which forms part of 'The Traffic Sign Regulations & General Direction 2002' (TSRGD 2002)

[‘20splentyforus.org’](http://20splentyforus.org) and [‘Slower-speeds.org’](http://Slower-speeds.org) seek the introduction of permanent ‘legally’ enforceable 20mph limits without physical traffic calming, but do not support the use of advisory limits.

- 1.7. In Scotland the ‘Twenty’s Plenty’ campaign has been used by individual highway authorities to implement advisory 20mph speed limits in a number of residential areas. Initially the campaign was formed as part of a nationwide trial but was subject to formal legislation from the <sup>3</sup>Scottish Executive in 2001.
- 1.8. The physical measures supporting 20mph advisory limits in Scotland consist of green bordered signs on the entry roads combined with smaller repeater signs at intervals of 100m throughout the area in question. An example of the sign is shown at **Appendix 1 (Sign no. 3)**.

Glasgow City Council’s before and after quantitative monitoring of these areas showed little change in overall vehicle speeds or injury collisions but attitudinal surveys did show strong public support for advisory 20mph limits.

- 1.9. One of the biggest concerns regarding the implementation of a ‘20’s plenty’ by means of advisory speed limits in Wiltshire relates to the display of 20mph speed limit signs within a 30mph limit. The TSRGD 2002 clearly states *‘speed limit repeater roundels should not be placed on a road on which a system of street lighting is present with columns spaced at not more than 183 metres apart and which is subject to a 30mph speed limit’*.

Whilst enforcement of the posted limit may still possible, it is argued the display of non-prescribed 20mph signs and repeaters, would lead to a degree of ambiguity regarding the validity of the TRO which could give rise to legal challenges and restrict the ability of the police to successfully prosecute offenders. This may in turn actually result in an overall increase in vehicle speed as police enforcement activities are curtailed. <sup>4</sup>ACPO do not support the routine enforcement of 20mph speed limits and believe any restriction should be self enforcing and supported by engineering controls.

- 1.10. The Department for Transport (DfT) is currently proposing a number of changes to *Circular 01/06 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’*. It’s unfortunate that despite the initial consultation document being issued to local authorities back in 2009 the formal document is yet to be published. We do know it is likely to outline a change to the previous guidance on 20mph speed limits and zones and encourage highway authorities to adopt a less prescriptive and more flexible approach in the future. There is also little doubt the final circular will actively support the introduction of carefully considered 20mph limits and zones in residential streets and in town centres.
- 1.11. The Police have indicated they do not support advisory speed limits or the use of non-prescribed signs on the public highway. They argue that such limits may serve to confuse the travelling public and detract from the legally posted restriction, making enforcement activities increasingly difficult.

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<sup>3</sup> SEDD Circular No. 6/2001

<sup>4</sup> Association of Chief Police Officers.

- 1.12. Current legislation in the UK (other than in Scotland) does not permit the use of advisory speed limit signs. The DfT has given a clear indication they will not grant special authorisation to any non-prescribed sign which depicts Diagram no. 670. Refer to **Appendix 1 (Sign no. 1)**. It's important to note that whilst the DfT does not currently support advisory speed limits, they will consider authorisation of advisory part time 20mph speed limit signs with flashing school warning lights for the use in the proximity of schools only. Refer to **Appendix 1 – (Sign no. 5)**.
- 1.13. In anticipation of the revised guidance on 20mph limits, Wiltshire Council is currently undertaking its own trial at a select number of village locations. The core aim is to determine the effect of 20mph restriction where signing alone is used to signify the restriction rather than traditional traffic calming methods such as humps or chicanes. Whilst the trial does not currently include urban or residential areas, the results will assist the council in developing a supporting local policy for the use of such limits elsewhere in the county once the final guidance from the DfT is finally published.
- 1.14. In the absence of a clear framework or legally prescribed signage to signify '20 is plenty' or advisory speed limits, it is difficult to see how such limits could be suitably managed and unambiguous in its message to drivers. One option for the requested areas of Chippenham may be the erection of roadside posters as part of a concentrated road safety campaign. Refer to **Appendix 1 (Sign no.6)**

Roadside posters are classed as advertisements and are not governed by the TSRGD 2002. As a result they can be tailored to convey a variety of messages to the road user which may, in this instance, include a worded '20 is plenty' message. It is worth noting that such posters would need to be repeated throughout the lengths in question and experience would indicate they are only likely to remain effective for a relatively short period.

- 1.15. Given the above points, it is not considered advisable to pursue an advisory speed limit or '20 is plenty' trial in Chippenham at the present time. It is suggested that once the final revised guidance on 20mph limits is published by the DfT and the results of Wiltshire's own trial are known, the residential areas in question are assessed against the future Wiltshire Council adopted framework policy.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. Not to pursue a '20 is plenty' trial in Chippenham at the present time.
- 2.2. To instead consider the use of a targeted poster campaign to promote road safety messages in the selected areas of Chippenham, subject to consultation with the local community.

## **3. Environmental & Community Implications**

- 3.1. Environmental and community implications were considered by the CATG during their deliberations. The funding of projects will contribute to the

continuance and/or improvement of environmental, social and community wellbeing in the community area, the extent and specifics of which will be dependent upon the individual project.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1. All decisions must fall within the funding allocated to Chippenham Area Board.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1. There are no specific legal implications related to this report.

#### **6. HR Implications**

- 6.1. There are no specific HR implications related to this report.

#### **7. Equality and Inclusion Implications**

- 7.1. There are no specific Equality and Inclusion implications related to his report.

<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix 1 – Signage
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## APPENDIX 1.

1.



**Prescribed Sign to Diagram 670. The Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002.**

- ✓ Where a 20mph limit is enforceable by means of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).
- ✗ Any length of highway where a TRO for a 20mph speed limit is not in force.

2.

**20's Plenty**



**Where People Live**

**Non-prescribed sign currently used to promote the '20s Plenty initiative'**

- ✓ Where a 20mph limit is in place by means of a TRO but not erected on the legally adopted highway.
- ✗ Any length of highway in which a TRO for a 20mph limit is not in force.

3.



**Sign approved by Scottish Executive to signify an advisory 20mph limit.**

- ✓ In Scotland where an advisory 20mph speed limit is in place
- ✗ Elsewhere in the United Kingdom due to its status as a non-prescribed sign by The DfT.

4.



**Roadside poster erected off-highway to encourage 20's plenty initiative**

- ✓ Erected by local communities. Normally off-highway. Mostly temporary.
- ✗ On the public highway as permanent signs

5.



**\*Part time advisory 20mph speed limit outside schools only.**

- ✓ Advisory & part time, for use outside schools only. Note: Requires special authorisation from the DfT
- ✗ Elsewhere on the highway network

6.



**\*Temporary roadside posters to reinforce road safety messages**

- ✓ Erected by on the public highway for short periods. \*Note – Roadside posters are not governed by the TSRGD 2002
- ✗ As permanent signs on the highway.

