

KCC have amended their policy regarding 20 mph speed limit sites. The review recommends that a number of pilot schemes be trialled to understand the effectiveness of more innovative traffic calming measures at certain locations.

MBC Joint Transportation Board considered 20mph zones on 10/7/19 with a view to considering the introduction of 20mph schemes in Maidstone.

20mph speed limits which are advertised solely through the use of repeater signs and road marking roundels generally achieve a reduction in vehicle speeds of 1-2 mph. Such an approach is therefore appropriate where the average traffic speed is found to be 24 mph or lower. When the prevailing speeds are higher than this it is considered appropriate to install formal traffic calming features in a bid to reach compliance.

Traditional physical traffic calming measures such as speed humps do have a better effect at reducing vehicle speeds but features can prove cost prohibitive to implement and are often viewed as unpopular by many types of user. Alternative, more innovative and less intrusive traffic calming measures should therefore be considered for use on 20mph schemes where the average traffic speed is 24-28 mph.

Potential methods include centre line removal, bus build-outs, on-street parking bay modifications and gateway features. In addition to being lower in cost, such measures are more psychological in nature and therefore encourage a reduction in vehicle speed through changing driver's perception of the road environment.

Amendments to the current 20mph policy are therefore proposed as part of a two-stage approach:

1. **Verify community support** for a 20mph speed limit, along with a scheme sponsor (e.g. **Parish Council, County Member** etc).
2. **Verify local benefits** and need for a 20mph speed limit (scheme appraisal based on local factors) to determine the effectiveness of proposed measures in reducing vehicle speeds and personal injury collision rates, in addition to an improvement in the road environment i.e. increased levels of walking, cycling etc.

In light of the above, **KCC will trial schemes** to deliver 20mph limits at sites around the County which have followed the two-stage process. This is where the existing average traffic speeds are found to be 24-28mph and where the location is considered to be appropriate for alternative innovative traffic calming measures. At this stage the pilot locations have not been confirmed.

Pilot schemes will be evaluated 12 months after implementation, with the results reported back to Cabinet Committee. The precise timing of this report is not yet confirmed. However, a report can be brought back to this committee following Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee's consideration on the results. There are costs associated with implementing 20mph schemes, however there is a small amount of Local Transport Plan funding made available to monitor and review these sites that may come forward with community support for the pilots.

SPC Road Safety Group recommends that Staplehurst Parish Council apply to be part of the pilot study. The area boundary should be Offens Drive at The Parade and Bathurst Road from Offens Drive to Thatcher Road. Pope Drive signage should be near Butcher Close to include the unfenced green. This 20 mph area would include both the Primary School and Recreation Ground, improving the safety of children in particular and encouraging parents to rely less on their vehicles. It would necessitate only four sets of boundary signs as well as the repeater signs.

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29/7/19