



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH SEPTEMBER 2017

**SUBJECT: SPEED LIMIT REVIEW OF A AND B CLASS ROADS WITHIN
 CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek views and support from the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the methodology, outcomes and recommendations of a speed limit review of A and B class roads within Caerphilly County Borough prior to Public Notice being given.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Speed Limit Review has established that the majority of the existing speed limits within the borough are appropriate and conform to National guidance.
- 2.2 The Speed Limit Review across the classified highway network has identified a number of locations where changes should be considered in order to ensure that the speed limits posted on the highway comply with Welsh Government's evaluation criteria. Consequently it is recommended that changes be made to the existing speed limits at these locations whilst others be treated with speed management measures.
- 2.3 Members views are sought on the recommendations of the speed limit review prior to Public Notice being given.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report links directly to the Council's priority to ensure that communities are safe, green and clean places to live and to improve residents' quality of life through the setting of appropriate speed limits on the main A and B class roads within the County Borough.
- 3.2 The recommended course of action contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:
- *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Background

4.1.1 In 2009 Welsh Government issued new guidance for 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales' and requested that Local Authorities undertake a review of existing speed limits on their main A and B class roads. Therefore the following work has been undertaken:

- All speed limits on A and B class roads within the county borough have been reviewed in accordance with Welsh Government's 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales' guidance;
- Locations have been identified that would benefit from the introduction of speed management measures (in accordance with the Council's Speed Management Strategy) where there is widespread disregard for current speed limits.

4.1.2 The purpose of the Speed Limit Review was to analyse the speed limits of strategic routes (Class A and B roads) through the County Borough to establish whether they comply with current guidance and to ensure that a consistent approach has been applied when setting speed limits throughout the County and across Wales.

4.1.3 The 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales 2009' guidance in Appendix 1 supersedes that previously contained in Circular Road 1/93 (Department of Transport / Welsh Office 1993) although it builds on the same principles over many years. The guidance and implementation of change relates to the classified A and B county roads but also provides advice on setting limits in urban and rural areas. The classified A and B roads network moves transport between towns and cities and provides opportunities for residents to travel and enables businesses to get their goods and services to the market place. Transport networks that function well help provide employment opportunities, and improve access to services and markets whilst making efficiency enhancements and attracting inward investment. The efficiency of the Transport System is important but Highway Authorities must also give consideration to the safety, role, and design of a road when setting local speed limits.

4.1.4 In order to apply a consistent approach when carrying out the review and setting local speed limits on Local Authority Roads, the guidance considerations have been applied. This will ensure the limits are consistent and have similar attributes to those in other parts of the A and B road network throughout Wales. The following are the key points Welsh Government has identified.

Key points:

- Speed limits should be evidence led, self-explaining, and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel.
- Speed limits should encourage self-compliance and not be seen by drivers as being a target speed at which to drive in all circumstances.
- Highway authorities set 'local speed limits' in situations where local needs and considerations deem it desirable for drivers to adopt a speed which is different from the national speed limit. Changes to existing local speed limits could be lower or higher depending upon the conditions and evidence.
- The guidance is to be used for setting all local speed limits on trunk and county roads, (excluding motorways) whether single or dual carriageways in both urban and rural areas.
- The guidance should also be used as the basis for future assessments of local speed limits, for developing route management strategies, and for developing speed management strategies dovetailing with Local Transport Plans.

4.2 Review

4.2.1 Officers in the Engineering Services Division have completed a review of the existing speed limits in the borough in accordance with Welsh Government's guidance and Caerphilly County Borough Council's adopted Speed Management Strategy. A number of the borough's major A

and B roads pass through town centres such as Caerphilly, Blackwood and Aberbargoed and these town centre sections are not always considered strategic roads/links, as they are highly populated with pedestrians and motorists. Therefore they are classified as urban areas with 30mph speed limits. The restricted (30mph) speed limits on these sections of road conform to current guidance and a detailed analysis was not carried out for each, as the existing 30mph speed limits are considered appropriate.

4.2.2 Speed surveys were carried out on a number of defined links/routes and the mean speed data collected was the main guide for assessing the appropriate speed limit. The mean speed record is now the standard measure for use in appraisals and is considered the appropriate speed measurement for setting speed limits as it is an indicator of what motorists consider is the appropriate speed to travel. The collision rate has been considered in conjunction with the mean speed where a speed limit order is applied/considered for lower than the national speed limit. (The national speed limit for cars is 70mph on dual carriageways, 60mph on single carriageways in rural areas and 30 mph in built up areas). Other important factors such as the general standard of the road, the number of junctions and adjacent development have also been taken into account. The classified highway network must have an appropriate reason for a speed limit when the standard of the road is good and there are few junctions or limited adjacent development. All of these principles have been used where appropriate to assess the existing speed limits along the classified roads in the County Borough.

4.2.3 In Caerphilly County Borough there are six A class roads and eleven B class roads, all of which have been reviewed as part of this process. Details of the routes are shown in the maps in Appendix 2A and 2B and listed below:

- A467
- A468
- A469
- A472
- A4048
- A4049
- B4251
- B4252
- B4254
- B4255
- B4256
- B4257
- B4263
- B4511
- B4591
- B4600
- B4623

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 In order to review each road an assessment process has been developed in accordance with the 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales' guidance and the Council's adopted Speed Management Strategy. Full details of the assessment process are provided in Appendix 3 to this report.

4.3.2 In order to review each road they were split into a number of different links (excluding any urban classified areas) that represent either a change in the road's speed limit or in the nature of the carriageway. For each link, speed, volume and collision data was collected and analysed. By following the consistent assessment process in Appendix 3 some links have been highlighted due to poor collision records or high vehicle speed averages, and recommended changes to the road's speed limit or the inclusion of road safety measures have been recommended.

4.3.3 A total of 96 links were identified for evaluation against the Welsh Government Speed Limit Review Criteria split into the following classifications:

- The six A class Roads in the County Borough were divided into 68 links for analysis
- The eleven B class roads in the County Borough were divided into 28 links for analysis

4.4 Data

4.4.1 A summary of the traffic survey results and collision data for the 96 individual road links is provided in Appendix 4A and 4B to this report.

4.5 Summary of Recommendations

- 4.5.1 The review has determined that the vast majority of the existing speed limits within the County Borough conform with the 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales' guidance and only a small number of road sections have been identified as requiring further consideration/revisions of the existing speed limit.
- 4.5.2 The table in Appendix 5 provides a summary of the recommendations from the speed limit review, details of which have been forwarded to officers in relevant service areas and local ward members where changes have been proposed. Following this consultation exercise a number of comments and objections have been received, details of which are also provided in the table for information.
- 4.5.3 For those links that are highlighted for further review, each link will be looked at individually where either a change in the road's speed limit or further safety measures will be included. Minor additions could be added for those links where the mean speed is just above the current speed limit, such as vehicle activated signs (VAS), road markings, countdown markers or hatch markings. However for those links where the mean speed is considerably higher than the speed limit, minor engineering works would be required unless an increase in the speed limit has been recommended. These minor engineering works could include priority gateways, build outs or localised narrowing of the carriageway.
- 4.5.4 Gwent Police's Traffic Management Advisor has been involved in the assessment process and supports the majority of the recommendations contained within this report. However concerns have been raised regarding the proposed changes for A469 Link 7 Puzzle House Junction.
- 4.5.5 Members will be contacted individually in due course to discuss the recommendations outlined in Appendix 5 and the additional requests received for changes to be made to the speed limits in their respective wards. All proposed changes to the speed limits will be subject to the standard traffic regulation order process which involves a statutory consultation process with relevant parties including Ward Members, local residents and the Chief Constable of Gwent Police and Public Notice being given.
- 4.5.6 The recommendations would need to consider the responses from the Statutory consultation process and the amount of works would be reviewed to establish phasing based on available funding streams e.g. Welsh Government grants.

4.6 Way Forward

- 4.6.1 Based on the comments received to date, further consultations will need to be carried out before the recommendations contained in Appendix 5 can be taken forward. It is therefore recommended that the review continues and, following receipt of comments received from Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee, discussions will be held with individual ward members and Gwent Police's Traffic Management Advisor in due course. It should be noted that further public consultations will also need to be carried out and Public Notice given before a delegated decision can be made by the Head of Service in conjunction with the Cabinet Member on whether each individual recommendation contained in Appendix 5 of this report should be taken forward or amended.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 The proposals within this report contribute to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that it supports:
- Long Term – Setting of appropriate speed limits will benefit the efficiency and safety of the highway network into the long term.

- Prevention – A number of the proposed recommendations will help to create a safer highway network that could help to prevent/reduce road traffic collisions in the future.
- Integration – The recommendations contained within this report will help to ensure that a consistent approach is being applied to setting speed limits throughout the County Borough and across Wales.
- Collaboration – The methodology employed has been developed by Welsh Government and is to be used by all Local Authorities across Wales.
- Involvement – All of the proposals contained within this report will be subject to a formal consultation exercise with the public and all interested stakeholders.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied at this stage but will be considered as part of any traffic regulation orders that are taken forward in due course and any changes would be subject to a Statutory consultation process. Changes to speed limits can have a detrimental impact on people who fall under the protected characteristic groups, in particular children, older people, people with disabilities such as mobility, hearing and visual impairments.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Changes to the speed limits as recommended in the report would need to be funded from existing revenue budgets and/or from additional financial resources to be taken forward as part of a future programme of works.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 All comments received have been incorporated in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members are to review the methodology and consider its appropriateness.
- 10.2 Members are asked for their views on the proposed recommendations as set out in section 4.5 of this report.
- 10.3 Officers take these views, together with any others received, prior to the Head of Service making a delegated decision in conjunction with the Cabinet Member to progress the recommendations as identified following further consultations.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 In order to comply with Welsh Government's request that Local Authorities undertake a review of all speed limits on their main A and B class roads.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

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Cllr Sean Morgan – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability and Wellbeing and Future generations Champion
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Anwen Cullinane – Senior Policy Officer – Equalities & Welsh Language
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Shaun Watkins, Principal Personnel Officer

Background papers:

Report to Regeneration and Scrutiny Committee – 16 September 2008

Welsh Assembly Government consultation on draft guidance for setting local speed limits

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales guidance
Appendix 2A and 2B	Map of routes considered within speed limit review
Appendix 3	Speed limit review assessment process
Appendix 4A and 4B	Traffic survey and collision data
Appendix 5	Summary of recommendations and comments received