

AGENDA ITEM

**REPORT TO APPEALS AND
COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

18 JANUARY 2013

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**YARM PRIMARY SCHOOL - PROPOSED SCHOOL ZONE AND 20MPH SPEED
LIMIT**

1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views regarding an outstanding objection received following advertising of a proposed 20mph speed limit on roads around Yarm Primary School, namely Spitalfields, The Larun Beat and associated Close's.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (i). Members give consideration to the objection raised and the comments of the Head of Technical Services.
- (ii). A recommendation on the merits of the objection is made to the Head of Technical Services.
- (iii). The local Ward Councillors, Yarm Town Council and the objector are informed of the Committee's recommendation.

3.0 DETAIL

3.1 The School Zone project has been brought forward as part of Stockton Borough Council's Sustainable Travel Strategy that includes a policy to implement a 20mph speed limit, both mandatory and advisory, outside every primary school in the Borough. The Government are actively encouraging local authorities to develop 20mph zones within residential areas, and particularly around schools, for both road safety and active travel reasons, to encourage parents, children and all local residents to travel by more sustainable and active modes of transport, such as walking and cycling.

3.2 Yarm Primary School was one of 10 schools in the Borough identified for the introduction of School Zones during the 2011/12 period. The initial proposals for Yarm Primary School included traffic calming measures, in addition to a mandatory 20mph speed limit, and a public consultation exercise was therefore required, as detailed in Scheme of Delegate Report TS.E.87.11.

3.3 The consultation results indicated that 53% of respondents did not support the scheme featuring road humps. The main reason given by the majority of

respondents was that the proposed road humps were unnecessary. The road humps were proposed on sections of route where it was felt that it may be difficult to impose a 20mph speed limit without physical measures because the road geometry facilitated higher vehicle speeds. Speed surveys were therefore undertaken, the results of which indicated that average speeds were below the existing 30mph limit and within the Department for Transport threshold for introducing a 20mph speed limit without additional traffic calming measures. The 4 proposed road humps were therefore removed from the scheme. Having altered the scheme to remove the road humps, it was estimated that there was 91% support for the scheme from respondents.

- 3.4 The revised scheme, proposing the mandatory 20mph speed limit via signage only, was progressed through the relevant consultation procedure involving Ward Councillors, the Town Council and the Police, and was approved as a contender for funding by the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport via Scheme of Delegation report TS.E.60.12 in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.5 Funding for the scheme was carried over to 2012/13 following approval. A notice for the proposed 20mph speed restriction was advertised in the Herald and Post and on site on 18 October 2012 with the objection period expiring on 8 November 2012. Following the publication of the statutory notices, the Director of Law and Democracy received one letter of objection.

4.0 DETAILS OF THE OBJECTION

- 4.1 A copy of the letter of objection from Mr Ron Simpkins, 38 The Larun Beat, Yarm, Stockton-on-Tees, TS15 9HR and subsequent correspondence, are attached as **Appendix 2**. The objectors concerns are summarised in the table below, alongside a response from the Head of Technical Services.

Concern	Response
1. Waste of Council resources.	1. The proposed scheme is part of a Borough wide strategic action to put in place 20mph limits, both mandatory and advisory, outside of every primary school in the Borough. This action is an outcome of the Sustainable Travel Strategy, a daughter strategy, to the Third Local Transport Plan, and aims to encourage walking and cycling to school and to improve road safety.
2. Most drivers do not exceed the 20mph limit, the proposed limit will make no difference to those that do. Existing car parking, particularly at school times, restricts traffic speeds.	2. Speed surveys carried out on The Larun Beat have shown average speeds of between 23.1mph and 25.6mph depending on the survey location. This data was collected over a full week. Department for Transport policy encourages local authorities to introduce 20mph limits on lesser residential roads, particularly where this is reasonable for the road environment,

	<p>there is community support and streets are being used by pedestrians and cyclists. This is reflected in the policy to introduce 20mph limits outside all primary schools in the Borough to encourage sustainable travel to school, contained within the Sustainable Travel Strategy, a daughter strategy of the Third Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>In this case, it is considered that the number of signs proposed do not significantly effect the environment through which the roads pass (note that the number of repeater signs have been reduced to the absolute minimum required by Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manual and these are fixed to existing lamp columns). Public support has been demonstrated, and the roads around the school are obviously used by significant numbers of vulnerable road users. Scheme of Delegation report TS.E.60.12 recommends that the speed surveys be repeated one year after introduction of the scheme to monitor the effectiveness of the 'signs alone' scheme.</p>
<p>3. The money would be better spent on carriageway maintenance.</p>	<p>The Council's Local Transport Capital Settlement is split between two block allocations – 'Structural Maintenance', which includes the maintenance of roads and bridges, and 'Integrated Transport', which covers a wide variety of measures including Local Safety Schemes and Sustainable Travel schemes.</p> <p>Care For Your Area are responsible for the maintenance of all adopted roads and footways in the Borough. A Zonal inspection regime works on a 6 monthly programme with the Borough split into 6 geographical areas. A team of asset inspectors carry out detailed inspections to identify any faults and monitor the condition of roads and footpaths so repairs can be identified and treated.</p>

5.0 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the proposed measures is estimated at £3,211.12.

6.0 POLICY CONTENT

Improvements to road safety / reducing traffic speeds is a key objective of the Area Transport Strategy Steering Groups. Reducing the number of children (aged under 16 yrs) killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents is a key performance indicator for Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP 3) (2011 – 2016). Implementing 20mph limits outside of all primary schools in the Borough is an action included in the Sustainable Travel Strategy, a daughter Strategy of LTP3.

7.0 CONSULTATION

The original scheme proposal was amended to remove suggested traffic calming features following an unfavourable public consultation exercise. Subsequent traffic surveys indicated that prevailing traffic speeds were at a level to enable a 20mph speed limit to be introduced by signs alone. The number of signs proposed has been reduced to a minimum. As a result of these amendments, it is estimated that 91% of respondents would support the scheme. The Police and emergency services have no objections, no adverse comments were received from the Ward Councillors or Yarm Town Council. Scheme approval in principle was given by the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Transport for consultation and advertising purposes. Statutory consultations involving advertising on site and in the local press have been carried out. This resulted in one objection being received, the objector will be invited to the Appeals Committee meeting.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The measures proposed should reduce traffic speeds which should in turn reduce the potential for accidents (or the severity of any accidents which do occur).

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Environmental Implications:

The scheme should improve road safety on the treated length of roads at each of the schools, thus ensuring that the Borough continues to be a safe, healthy and attractive place in which to live and work.

Community Safety Implications:

Addresses road safety concerns and provides improved accessibility for school children at each of the schools.

Background Papers:

Scheme of Delegation Reports TS.E.87.11 & TS.E.60.12

Education Related Item:

No.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Yarm Ward – Councillor M Chatburn, Councillor B Houchen and Councillor A Sherris.

