

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 10 March 2014

Agenda item:

Wards: All

Subject: **Reference from Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel – 20mph Zones/Limits**

Lead officer: Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Russell Makin, Chair of Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel

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Recommendations:

That the Cabinet consider the following recommendations made by the Sustainable Communities O&S Panel further to considering how the Environment and Regeneration Department had responded to a council motion agreed in November 2012 on establishing the feasibility of 20mph zones/limits in the borough:

- a) That Cabinet commission research data gathering and analysis to establish if 20mph zones/limits or 'homezones' should be implemented borough wide, on a case by case basis, or not at all, in Merton;
- b) That Cabinet undertake benchmarking looking at other councils in London that have rolled out 20mph schemes borough wide to determine what lessons can be learned, what considerations need to be made and if there would be similar success if such a scheme was rolled out in Merton;
- c) That Cabinet establish the financial implications of rolling out a borough wide 20mph zones/limit scheme and identify what benefits could be accrued;
- d) That Cabinet report back the findings on 20mph zones/limits and 'homezones' in the borough to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel to consider as part of their 2014/15 work programme.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.2 To present to Cabinet the recommendations of the Sustainable Communities O&S Panel in relation to their scrutiny review of 20mph zones and limits. In particular, the Panel wish to express their frustration at the lack of progress made in response to a council motion agreed in November 2012 regarding establishing the feasibility of 20mph zones/limits in the borough. Members have made these recommendations in response to concerns that the council motion had not been fully addressed and to ensure that this work is progressed.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 At its meeting on 26th February 2014, the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the work undertaken and data collected to date by the E&R department to support their analysis of the feasibility of a borough wide 20mph zone/limit.

3. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 3.1 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel received a report detailing the work that the E&R department had undertaken and the associated data that had been collected. However, Members did not feel that this report reflected sufficient progress in responding to the council motion agreed at their meeting in November 2012, which was as follows:

As part of the work to increase road safety and reduce casualties, Merton has a combination of roads with 20 mph limits and 20 mph zones, the majority of which have been implemented during the last 4 years. In order to assess the effectiveness of the current Merton schemes, monitoring analysis has been commissioned. This is focusing on a comparison of 'before' and 'after' accident data at each of the individual limits and zones, along with 'before' and 'after' traffic flow and vehicle speed data at each. This work will be reported in the next few months. The intention is to examine this evidence alongside the evidence from Boroughs such as Portsmouth and Islington which have implemented 'area wide' 20mph speed limits to determine what has and will work best to reduce road traffic casualties in an outer London Borough like Merton.

This Council affirms that:

(1) it is important that road traffic policy and schemes are based on empirical evidence and developed in consultation with residents; and

(2) asks that this work is completed with due urgency as a priority and

(3) asks that a Report is presented to both Cabinet and Scrutiny with balanced recommendations for future policy including practical measures to maximise road safety for all road users.

- 3.2 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel first considered progress against this council motion at their meeting in October 2013. However, the Panel requested further data be collected that responded to the motion and provided proposals for taking forward 20mph zones/limits in the borough. This was requested to be reported back to the Panel for pre decision scrutiny in due course.

- 3.3 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel received an update on this issue at their meeting on 26th February 2014. Members expressed dissatisfaction that this work had not progressed as expected. Members were advised of the timescales over which evidence needed to be collected and that when looking at the impact of highways changes a 5 year period since implementation is an appropriate period to capture accident data. This has limited the data that can be brought back to Members in the time available.

- 3.4 Members wished to make the following recommendations for Cabinet consideration to ensure that the Panel could consider how the council motion would be addressed and comment on proposals for case by case or blanket 20mph zones/limits in the borough in due course, subject to further data collection:
- a) That Cabinet undertake research, data gathering and analysis to establish if 20mph zones/limits or 'Homezones' should be implemented borough wide, on a case by case basis, or not at all, in Merton;
 - b) That Cabinet undertake benchmarking looking at other councils in London that have rolled out 20mph schemes borough wide to determine what lessons can be learned, what considerations need to be made and if there would be similar success if a similar scheme was rolled out in Merton;
 - c) That Cabinet establish the financial implications of rolling out a borough wide 20mph zones/limit scheme and identify what benefits could be accrued;
 - d) That Cabinet report back the findings of their feasibility study and associated proposals on 20mph zones/limits or 'Homezones' in the borough to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel to consider as part of their 2014/15 work programme.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet is required under the terms of the Constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny.

5. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

6. TIMETABLE

- 6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None for the purposes of this report.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None for the purposes of this report.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None for the purposes of this report.

12. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

12.1 None for the purposes of this report.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 Minutes of the meeting of Council – November 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 16 October 2013

Report to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 20mph zones/limits presented at the 26th February 2014 meeting.