

# North Yorkshire Council

## Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee

08 July 2024

### 20mph Schemes and Active Travel Update Report

#### Report of the Corporate Director – Environment

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on actions from its previous meeting on 18 January 2024.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the committee meeting held on 18 January 2024 when considering items 4 'Public Participation' and 5 'Questions referred from Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee', a series of questions were raised by members of the public and Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (TEE&E O&S) Members on the subjects of 20mph schemes and active travel. These were agreed as a set of action points for officers to respond to and feed back to the Committee.

#### 3.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 3.1 Six action points were agreed, and their responses are set out below:

3.2 **Mr Conlan:** Langton and Welburn 20mph requests turned down – why?

- 3.2.1 **Response for Langton:** North Yorkshire Council (NYC) received a request to introduce a 20mph speed limit outside the school, which is located at the western end of the village. Ideally, an eastbound 20 mph speed limit would commence from the same location as the existing 30mph speed limit. It would, therefore, be necessary to relocate the 30mph speed limit further into the countryside, which would not be appropriate, as it is further away from the commencement of the built-up area. This view is also shared by North Yorkshire Police. In addition, properties are well set back from the edge of the road and mean speeds are such that physical traffic calming would be necessary, to engineer speeds down to a compliant level.

- 3.2.2 **Response for Welburn:** Mean speeds are such that physical features would be required to engineer speeds down, but given the proximity of properties to the roadside, vertical traffic calming features would be prohibitive due to potential noise intrusion and horizontal features would not fit, given the lack of space. Signed only 20mph limits would not be supported, given the risks around non-compliance.

- 3.2.3 Nevertheless, following a report to the Council's Executive in July 2023, NYC will be undertaking a more proactive approach towards the assessment of all speed limits as part of a new Speed Management Strategy across the County. There will, therefore, be a further opportunity to consider the existing speed limits as part of that more planned programme of speed limit reviews.

- 3.3 **Cllr Haslam:** set out pros and cons of part-time 20mph speed limits.
- 3.3.1 **Pros:** The benefits of part-time 20mph speed limits are broadly consistent with their permanent equivalents, e.g. lower speeds, fewer and less severe personal injury collisions, improved local environment and potential for active modes.
- 3.3.2 **Cons:** Part-time 20mph speed limits are advisory only; they cannot be enforced.
- 3.3.3 Sign types are either the standard/fixed arrangement or electronically activated, see Appendix A for further details. Outside of school term time, there may be some confusion with the standard fixed display as to the prevailing speed limit, given the existence of the sign, unless the sign was electronically variable.
- 3.3.4 Signs with electronic activation are large and expensive, plus substantial posts are required to accommodate and install. In addition, mains power connection is required and there are concerns about reliability and complaints when not working. Similarly, maintenance costs outside of warranty period are high and equipment, such as digital timers need to be calibrated.
- 3.3.5 Assembly and 'flashing lights' may not be appropriate in some environments or welcomed by residents.
- 3.3.6 Though the principle appears sound and other authorities have introduced part-time 20mph speed limits, there is little in the way of formal evidence to support their benefit.
- 3.3.7 Typically, at school times, which is when the 20mph speed limit is in operation, speeds tend to be low anyway, through congestion, so their implementation tends to do little to achieve a shift in driver behaviour.
- 3.3.8 The then Transport, Economy, Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its in depth review of 20mph speed limits, concluded that "...*The possibility of including these (part time 20mph speed limit) signs in this policy was considered as part of the review however, it was deemed unsuitable as they can be confusing to drivers and therefore the County Council does not support their use on the network, which continues the previous policy position*" (Paragraph 4.5 of the revised 20mph Speed Limit and Policy, January 2022).
- 3.4 **Cllr Warnekin:** latest on Cllr Duncan's earlier comments that it would be easy to introduce a 20mph speed limit on Station Parade.
- 3.4.1 Currently, the road would not support a 20mph speed limit. Following introduction of the Transforming Cities Fund project though and improved public realm, a lower speed limit on this road would be worthy of further consideration.
- 3.5 **Cllr Crane:** cycling plans, where are they and what priority is attached to them?
- 3.5.1 NYC is in the process of developing and adopting Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). This is a strategic approach to identify cycling and walking improvements required at a local level, enabling a long-term planning approach to developing cycling and walking networks. Having adopted LCWIPs enables NYC to have a series of bid ready projects ready to submit should government funding become available. Additionally, LCWIPs also allow the Council to be in a much better position to request Section 106 funding from developers towards new infrastructure.

- 3.5.2 NYC has LCWIPs for all population centres above 20,000 (Harrogate and Knaresborough and Scarborough) and all phase one documents are published. NYC has also published phase one LCWIPs for Selby/Tadcaster/Sherburn in Elmet (population 19.5k), Skipton (population 15k) and Northallerton (population 13.5k). An LCWIP for Malton/Norton (population 14k) is also complete but not yet published.
- 3.5.3 From the aforementioned LCWIPs, 35 priority corridors have been identified at an estimated delivery cost of £95M. Phase two reports for the above LCWIPs including design and economic evaluations of corridors have also been completed. LCWIP development is at an advanced stage for Ripon (population 16.5k) and Catterick (population 14k). LCWIPs in Whitby (population 12.5k) and Thirsk (population 7k) are underway.
- 3.5.4 The published LCWIPs can be found here: [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans \(LCWIPs\) | North Yorkshire Council](#)
- 3.6 **Cllr Mason:** Malton to Pickering cycle route, last mile under mud – can it be completed, so is fit for purpose?
- 3.6.1 This was a Ryedale District Council project and officers were aware of issues with the stone surface and poor drainage following the original contract works on off-road sections of the route. Remedial works were undertaken in 2023 to address the issues, including regrading of the surface to improve the camber. The section of the route in question is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) and a working farm track, so it will likely always be a challenge to keep it and other sections completely free of mud. Nevertheless, officers will continue to investigate the issues and consider what further action might be appropriate.
- 3.7 **Cllr Staveley (Chair):** establish working group later in the year, following MCA, to consider more proactive approach to active travel, linked to Local Plan and Local Transport Plan, including green travel plans and wider development process. Await February LTP update.
- 3.7.1 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) has essentially been on hold for a few months now, whilst we are still awaiting the updated DfT LTP guidance. The statutory responsibility for publishing the LTP now sits with the Combined Authority. Officers at NYC will still be involved in the development of the document, but the way forward has not yet been agreed and as such the timescales for the final document are not yet determined. In the meantime, constructive dialogue with City of York Council and the new MCA continues with respect to collaborative working on transport matters, e.g. the development of a Key Route Network (KRN) and a Strategic Transport Plan.
- 3.7.2 More generally, NYC is in the process of establishing an active travel delivery team. There is currently no guaranteed and sustained funding stream from government for active travel and, as a result, the development if the team will be proportionate to the limited available funding for improvement projects. Whilst the Department for Transport has given an indication of a potential future Local Transport Fund, any certainty on quantum or timescales will not be known until after the General Election.

#### 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications as the report is an update.

#### 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications resulting from the action points put forward.

## **6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications resulting from the action points put forward.

## **7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no direct climate change implications resulting from the action points put forward.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- i) For the TEE&E O&S Committee to note the responses to the action points set out in Section 4 of this report.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Examples of part-time 20mph signs

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19 June 2024

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Presenter of Report – Allan McVeigh

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

PART-TIME 20 MPH SIGNS

Examples of standard/fixed display signs



Examples of electronically activated signs

