



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

7 December 2023

Report of the Executive Director - Place

Green Towns Consultation Outcome

(Cabinet Member for Highways, Assets and Transport)

1. Divisions Affected

- 1.1 Buxton North and East, Buxton West, Long Eaton, Petersham, and Sawley.

2. Key Decision

- 2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 To inform Cabinet of the findings of the public consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in areas surrounding the town centres of Buxton and Long Eaton and recommend the next steps based upon these findings.

4. Information and Analysis

- 4.1 At the meeting on 12 January 2023, Cabinet approved the carrying out of a consultation and public engagement exercise for the introduction of 20mph speed limits under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 on roads in areas surrounding the town centres of Buxton and Long Eaton (Minute No. 8/23 refers).

- 4.2 A public exhibition was carried out in Buxton on 23 and 24 January 2023 at the Pump Room in the town centre, and in Long Eaton on 31 January and 1 February 2023 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. This coincided with the launch of an on-line questionnaire which was open for a period of 12 weeks (19 January 2023 to 13 April 2023).
- 4.3 The statutory advertisement of the speed limit proposals, which forms part of the Speed Limit Order making process, was carried out from 18 May to 9 June 2023. Eighty seven street notices were erected in Buxton and 179 in Long Eaton to coincide with the Notice being advertised in the local press (Buxton Advertiser and Derby Evening Telegraph).
- 4.4 Further evening exhibitions were held to coincide with the statutory Speed Limit Order consultation. These were both from 3.00pm until 8.30pm at Long Eaton Town Hall on Wednesday 24 May and Buxton Pump Room on Thursday 25 May 2023. Twenty seven people attended the Buxton event with 7 being in favour of the proposals, 19 not in favour and 1 unsure. Twenty-three people attended the Long Eaton event with the majority not being in favour of the proposals, albeit some did appreciate the scheme intentions but had significant reservations about the application of a 20mph speed limit to the A and B classified roads within the scheme extents.
- 4.5 The on-line consultation yielded 142 respondents from Buxton and 218 respondents from Long Eaton.
- 4.6 The Council carried out extensive media communications on the two proposed schemes, with a media release on 19 January 2023, which went to 17 separate media outlets. This was in addition to social media posts via the Council's media respective channels and e-newsletter. A further media release was carried out on 15 May 2023 for the Buxton event on 25 May which went to 18 different media outlets, whilst the media release for the Long Eaton event on 24 May, went out to 10 different media outlets on the same day.
- 4.7 Statutory and stakeholder consultation was also carried out. The Police raised "*grave concerns*" about the blanket implementation of 20mph speed limits without any physical traffic calming measures (or similar) to aid compliance. There were concerns about the strategic routes that the 20mph speed limit affected. The Police view is that the speed limit proposals would present them with an unreasonable enforcement task. The lower speed limit would raise the expectations of the public and generate a high level of calls for enforcement for perceived non-compliance which they would not be able to react to with their current

resources. This could create further issues with public confidence in the Police authority.

- 4.8 High Peak Buses lodged an objection to the proposal as it considers that it will have significant negative consequences for its business and the overall efficiency of its services. No comments were received from Public Transport operators in relation to Long Eaton.
- 4.9 Based on consultation outcomes of Buxton and Long Eaton, the Council has no further proposals to trial 20mph Speed Limits at other locations within the County. Any future requests will be considered in line with the guidance provided in the Speed Management Protocol Policy.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Buxton Response: A total of 205 responses with 104 in favour and 100 against (1 blank response). The MP for the High Peak, Robert Lorgan, also carried out his own consultation on the proposal which yielded 409 responses with 70 agreeing with the proposals, 201 disagreeing with them and 138 suggesting that 20mph should only apply in residential areas and around schools and not on main roads.
- 5.2 Long Eaton Response: A total of 306 responses with 63 in favour and 184 against (59 blank responses). Several responses were supportive of the scheme in Long Eaton if the Council was to remove the A-Road and B-Road network from the scheme, as they felt this proposal would only add further congestion to an already congested road network with vehicles driving at or below 20mph.

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 Option 1 – Implement the proposed Green Towns 20mph speed limit trial in Long Eaton and Buxton as proposed within the consultation. While the pilot scheme has significant merits, it relies on both public support and pro-active police enforcement to work effectively. The police response set out that enforcement would be very difficult without engineering measures being taken – which are not contained within the proposal. It is clear from the consultation feedback that we would not be able to rely on public support in either area, thus undermining the objectives of the pilot. This option is therefore rejected.
- 6.2 Option 2 – Do not implement the trial schemes, for the reasons set out in this report. This is the recommended option.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 The County Council's Highway Network Management Plan
<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/transport-roads/roads-traffic/highway-network-management-plan.pdf>
- 8.2 The County Council's Speed Management Plan
<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/council/meetings-decisions/meetings/cabinet/2017-11-16-speed-management-plan.pdf>
- 8.3 The Traffic Signs and General Directions Regulations 2016
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-regulations-and-general-directions-2016-an-overview>
- 8.4 Report to Cabinet 20mph Speed Limits in Derbyshire, dated 31 January 2019 (Minute No. 03/19 refers).
- 8.5 Department for Transport commissioned study on 20mph speed limits on roads – 22 November 2018
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/20-mph-speed-limits-on-roads?utm_source=4a35f8cc-0f02-429c-b984-0a590e326628&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate
- 8.6 Report to Cabinet, Council Plan Refresh 2023-23, dated 10 March 2022 (Minute No. 58/22 refers).
[Council Plan Refresh 2022-23](#)
- 8.7 Report to Cabinet 20mph Speed Limits in Derbyshire, dated 3 May 2016 (Minute No. 132/16 refers).
- 8.8 Report to Cabinet, Green Towns, dated 12 January 2023 (Minute No. 8/23 refers).

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

10. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the findings of the public consultation on the introduction of 20mph speed limits in areas surrounding the town centres of Buxton and Long Eaton.
- b) Approves that the Council does not proceed with the introduction of 20mph speed limits in areas surrounding the town centres of Buxton and Long Eaton.

11. Reasons for Recommendations

- 11.1 Following the extensive consultation exercises carried out as approved by Cabinet on 12 January 2023, the feedback received does not demonstrate a majority in favour of such a scheme being introduced. The point of the exercise was to gauge public opinion and not taking the proposals forward will accord with that public opinion in both Buxton and Long Eaton.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

- 12.1 No.

Report Author: Steven Alcock

Contact details: Steven.Alcock@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications

Financial

1.1 There are no financial implications for the Council.

Legal

2.1 The County Council has powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make such Orders, following The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, as it deems necessary for the purpose of controlling traffic on any highway for which it is the highway authority.

Human Resources

3.1 None.

Information Technology

4.1 None.

Equalities Impact

5.1 Not required.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

6.1 None.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 None.