

Report title: Speed Strategy

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 04 July 2023

From: Executive Director of Place and Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2023/053

Outcome: This report seeks the endorsement of the Vision Zero Speed Management Strategy. It also outlines the County Council's approach to the integration of speed buffer zones.

Recommendations:

- a) To endorse the Vision Zero Speed Management Strategy
- b) To note the process to progress Speed Buffer Zones in Cambridgeshire, in response to the County Council motion of July 2022.
- c) To delegate authority to make amendments to the Local Highway Improvements scoring criteria, to better accommodate buffer zones, to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability, taking account of comments from the cross-party Members Working Group

Officer contact:

Name: David Allatt
Post: Assistant Director: Transport Strategy & Network Management
Email: david.allatt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 699923

Member contacts:

Names: Councillor Alex Beckett and Councillor Neil Shailer
Post: Chair/Vice-Chair of H&T Committee
Email: alex.beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk neil.shailer@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 706398

1. Background

- 1.1 This report presents the Vision Zero Speed Management Strategy, developed with Vision Zero partners, with the aim of informing safe speeds, as part of a systems-based approach to road safety.
- 1.2 The report also sets out the County Council's approach to speed buffer zones, in response to a Full Council Motion of July 2022 on the matter.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 Cambridgeshire County Council is a member of the Vision Zero Partnership
- 2.2 The Speed Strategy is attached as Appendix 1. The document is intended to be a high-level summary of the principles of speed management as well as a practical guide for officers, politicians, and communities to provide consistency in dealing with common speed-related issues.
- 2.3 The document sets out the key aspects of speed management in terms of 'safe speed', 'credible speed' and 'posted speed'
- 2.4 The intention of the Speed Management Strategy is not to replace or directly change current policies, it is to outline what actions can be considered if safe, credible, and posted speed limits do not align.

Buffer Zones

- 2.5 In July 2022, the County Council passed a motion

'a report be produced for a future meeting of the Highways and Transport Committee on principles for the location of buffer zones, on how the process for local applications can be simplified and promoted to applicants, and on options for facilitating the installation of buffer zones where locally supported, whether through the LHI process or by other means. Meanwhile the current LHI Working Group be asked to consider how requests for buffer zones could be more effectively met within the LHI process'.

- 2.6 The positive safety impacts of speed reductions are recognised. As set out in the Vision Zero Speed Management Strategy referred to earlier, appropriate speeds are informed by the context of the surrounding highway so making sure that people comply with lower speed limits may require changes to the highways.
- 2.7 Due to limitations in the accuracy of commercially available data it was decided to gather speed limit data, based upon the original Traffic Regulation Orders, the legal record, and to digitise it to a much higher degree of accuracy. This data will be added to the Council's Local Street Gazetteer and will be maintained by the Highway Maintenance Highway Records Team as part of that process going forward.

- 2.8 Currently, data has been collected and digitised for all recorded speed limit orders made up to March 2022. We are aware that there have been amendments to the network since this time, and these will be captured and recorded. Quality checking will be undertaken on the data collected. The maps attached are examples of the speed limit data collected across the network, as it is difficult to provide a clear Countywide representation of the speed limits on a single plan. This data will continue to be updated periodically to reflect the changes in speed limits and will provide an overview of locations where National Speed Limit access roads lead into 30pmh road inhabited areas.
- 2.9 A buffer zone is a complementary speed reduction feature; however, it requires the making of a legal order to render it enforceable. The speed limit procedure is a statutory consultation process that requires the Highway Authority to advertise, in the local press and on-street, a public notice stating the proposal and the reasons for it. The advert invites the public to formally support or object to the proposals in writing within a twenty-one-day notice period. The Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Constabulary is a statutory consultee and has, to date, been supportive of buffer zones albeit with a caveat that it is unlikely that they would receive targeted enforcement in isolation. Example maps are provided as Appendix 2.

Local Highway Improvements

- 2.10 The County Council already accepts applications for buffer zones 'village wide' through the established Local Highway Improvement (LHI) process. A cross party Member Working Group was established through the Highways and Transport Committee to review this process and recommended a new way of working that delivers the objectives of the programme more efficiently. This process was concluded in October 2022 and has been used to invite and progress the latest round of applications (a report on the LHI programme forms part of this meeting's agenda).
- 2.11 Currently, for any speed scheme delivered through the process, consideration and inclusion of buffer zones will be part of the design and delivery process where funding allows.

20mph Zones

- 2.12 As part of the Joint Administration Agreement, the County Council set out a priority to make the option of 20mph zones more widely available, and easier to obtain.
- 2.13 The County Council made funding available to introduce more 20mph zones. A Member Working Group was established through the Highways and Transport Committee to consider the priorities and opportunities for the introduction of 20mph zones/limits.
- 2.14 All new 20mph coming from a 60mph include a 40mph buffer zone as part of the design – including all the 22/23 20mphs drawn from the LHI programme submissions. With the additional £800k secured from the Transforming Cities Fund to implement more such zones, these will also include such buffer zones as standard. Examples of current projects where this process has been followed and are due to be installed shortly include 20mph limits, with 40mph buffer zones included in Stilton, Woodhurst, Somersham and Great Gransden.

Additional Funding

- 2.15 In addition to the above, the introduction of blanket buffer zones in villages would require additional resources.
- 2.16 An approximate cost for installing a buffer zone on one road is £5,000. This includes the additional terminal and repeater signs / posts only. Considering that most parishes countywide have multiple approaches into their parish, the cost for a village wide approach is usually in the region of £15-20,000.

Buffer Zone Mechanisms

- 2.17 Since the motion was approved by Full Council, officers have enhanced our speed data, to provide more granular route profiles, and facilitated the implementation of new buffer zones as a default design principle. New funding opportunities have been drawn in where appropriate (i.e., the Transforming Cities Funding), and officers will continue to identify new funding opportunities as they emerge.
- 2.18 The LHI process remains the most appropriate ongoing mechanism for the call for and evaluation of applications for buffer zones leading into a 30mph area.
- 2.19 Modification of the existing scoring and prioritisation process will be required in advance of the next round of LHIs to better accommodate buffer zones and a recommendation is sought with this specific focus.

3. Alignment with ambitions

- 3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

- 3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

Safe speeds are a key component of the road safety system.

- 3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

The effect of 20 mph zones on socioeconomic differentials has been substantial, reducing the gap in the number of casualties between the most and least deprived quintiles of deprivation by approximately 14% compared with what it would otherwise have been.

- 3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

Safe speeds are a key component of the road safety system.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

Safe speeds are a key component of the road safety system, with potential to reduce collisions, improving the safety of all road users, including the most vulnerable.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant procurement implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

Safe speeds are a key component of the road safety system, with potential to reduce collisions, improving the safety of all road users, including the most vulnerable.

4.8 Climate Change and Environment Implications on Priority Areas:

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Positive

Explanation: Speed management will make the roads safer and therefore potentially encourage active travel.

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: David Parcell

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Emma Duncan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User? Yes

Name of Officer: David Allatt

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Christine Birchall

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: David Allatt

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Climate Change and Environment implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents guidance

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Vision Zero Speed Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Sample maps