Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee
7 December 2016

Proposed 20mph speed limits - Consultation results
Report by Head of Environment.

Purpose
To consider the results of the public consultation on the possible introduction of a 20mph speed limit across all residential roads in Surbiton Neighbourhood area, excluding Ewell Road, Upper Brighton Road, Portsmouth Road and Hook Road, within the Surbiton Neighbourhood.

Recommendation
That the Committee notes and comments on the consultation results, as set out in Annexes 1 to 10, ahead of their consideration by the Residents Committee on 8 December 2016.

Key Points
A. Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee passed a resolution on 6 February 2016 to consult on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit to cover the Surbiton Neighbourhood area, excluding Ewell Road, Upper Brighton Road, Portsmouth Road and Hook Road.

B. This report presents the results of the consultation, as shown in Annexes 1 to 10 of this report, and asks the Neighbourhood Committee to provide their views on the results, so that they can be passed on to the Residents Committee, which will consider the scheme on 8 December 2016.

Context
1. In 2014 a consultation was undertaken on introducing a 20mph speed limit to cover the Surbiton Town Centre area. The consultation took the form of a letter to all affected households and business premises, which invited them to comment on the proposal. It did not include a questionnaire.

2. The proposed scheme was approved by the Neighbourhood Committee in September 2014. The matter was then requisitioned under the provisions of Paragraphs (A) (2) (i) (a) and (b) of the General References and Delegations to Committees for consideration at a full Council meeting.

3. At Council, a revised scheme was approved, with 20mph speed limits to be introduced within 100 metres of accesses to schools (including pre-schools and nurseries) within the original scheme consultation area. A revised scheme, based on these caveats was approved by both the relevant Lead Members (for Environment and Transport and Capital, Projects and Contracts), and the Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee at its meeting in January 2015. The scheme was implemented in March 2015.
4. Additionally, the full Council meeting gave its approval to carry out a further consultation, this time including a questionnaire, on a scheme covering the whole town centre, after the review of the Council’s consultation processes and policies was completed in November 2015.

5. In December 2015, Officers were approached by the Chair of the Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee, requesting that consideration be given to introducing a 20mph speed limit in all residential roads across the Neighbourhood, excluding primary routes - that is ‘A’ and ‘B’ roads. In February 2016, a Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee resolution gave authority to consult on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit covering the Surbiton Neighbourhood area, excluding Ewell Road, Upper Brighton Road, Portsmouth Road and Hook Road. The Committee also agreed the wording of the consultation which just comprised a single question.

6. In September 2016, the consultation was distributed to the whole of the Surbiton Neighbourhood area, on the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit for the whole area, as shown in Annex 1. This report outlines the results of the consultation.

Proposal and Options

7. A Public consultation was undertaken on proposals to introduce a 20mph speed limit for the whole of the Surbiton Neighbourhood, excluding the ‘A’ and ‘B’ roads, to seek the views of the public.

8. Accident records were checked over a 3 year period, up to January 2016, and are shown in Annex 2. Existing recent speed surveys were checked to assess the level of compliance, and new ones were carried out where needed.

Consultation

9. Letters were delivered to 18,300 addresses, covering the whole of the Surbiton Neighbourhood area, to encourage Surbiton residents and business to take part and have their say on the proposals.

10. In addition to the letters, adverts were placed in local newspapers, magazines and the Surrey Comet. Bus stop adverts were put up throughout the Surbiton and Kingston area to raise awareness and encourage a higher response rate.

11. The online consultation questionnaire went live from 5 September 2016, and closed on 3 October 2016, allowing a 4 week response period. Hard copies of the consultation material were available at Surbiton library and Guildhall offices for those with no internet access.

12. The consultation posed one specific question that was agreed by the Neighbourhood Committee in February 2016: “To what extent do you support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in all residential roads across Surbiton Neighbourhood (excluding Ewell Road, Upper Brighton Road, Portsmouth Road and Hook Road)?”
Results

13. The results of the consultation, along with a break down, heat map and analysis of the results, are all shown in Annexes 1 to 10. In terms of the results a number of key points have been set out below.

14. A total of 1,125 questionnaires were completed, including hard copy and online. Out of the 1,125 responses, 964 were from residents within the borough of Kingston, of which 828 were residents of the Surbiton neighbourhood.

15. Of the total of 1,125 who responded, 57% supported the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, while 43% opposed it and 1% felt neutral about it. It should be noted that these results are rounded, so add up to more than 100%.

16. Of the 964 Kingston borough residents who responded, 54% supported the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, while 45% opposed it and 1% were neutral.

17. Of the 828 Surbiton residents who responded, 53% supported the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, while 47% opposed it and 1% were neutral. It should be noted that these results are rounded, so add up to more than 100%.

18. A response of 828 of Surbiton residents corresponds to 4.5% of the 18,300 Surbiton addresses, which is a low response rate.

19. From the Surbiton Neighbourhood area:
  - Berrylands Ward got the highest response rate of 6%, compared to a 5% response rate for both Alexandra Ward and Surbiton Hill Ward, while St Mark’s Ward got the lowest response rate of 3%.
  - St Marks Ward which currently has a 20mph speed limit on most of its roads received the highest support for the proposed 20mph speed limit of 73%, compared to 26% who did not support the proposal.
  - Berrylands Ward received the second highest support of 56% compared to 44% who did not support.
  - Surbiton Hill Ward had the highest level of opposition to the proposed 20mph speed limit of 57%, compared to 42% in support.
  - Alexandra Ward had the second highest opposition to the proposed 20mph speed limit of 54%, compared to 44% in support.

20. Kingston Cycle Campaign (KCC) was consulted and they strongly support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Surbiton Neighbourhood. Their full response is shown within Annex 8.

21. The Emergency Services were consulted, and only the Metropolitan Police responded back. Their full response is shown in Annex 9.

22. In summary, the Metropolitan Police raised concerns about some roads where the mean speeds of vehicles are higher than 24mph and hence do not comply with the DfT threshold for implementing a 20mph speed limit, nor would they create a self enforcing 20 mph scheme. Another concern raised was that, even where roads had an average speed of 24mph or less, there are numerous hour-long periods within the data, where the mean speed exceeds this threshold. Officer response:
  The Metropolitan Police concerns are noted, and it is accepted that some roads have existing average traffic speeds over 24mph. If a 20mph speed limit is to be approved, the DfT criteria suggests that traffic speeds should be monitored for a period of a year to review the effect of the proposed speed limit. The introduction
of other traffic calming measures could be considered as an option to reduce
speeds to less than 24mph, and so achieve a more self enforcing 20mph
scheme.

Support and Opposition Comments Received

23. In total, 55 people provided further comments. This is a small number in relation
to the total number of respondents but the views are considered important, and
are discussed below.

24. There were 27 comments supporting the proposal, 24 opposing and four that
were either neutral or related to a criticism of the survey.

25. These comments were categorised into broad themes. A detailed chart is shown
in annex 10 summarising these categories with the number of respondents for
each one. (Note that in some cases respondents’ comments covered more than
one category). Below are the main issues raised, together with officer responses:

26. Survey criticism
23 comments criticising the survey questionnaire, were made by those who either
support, oppose or felt neutral about the scheme:
“ I logged in online to complete the ‘survey’ only to find there was just one
question in it... Where is my chance to express my views”
Officer response:
The wording of the one specific consultation question was agreed by the
Neighbourhood Committee in February 2016.
An email address to facilitate further liaison about the scheme was provided on
the letters. This email address was used by some of those who commented.

27. Enforcement
This theme was mentioned by 21 respondents who either support, oppose or feel
neutral about the scheme:
“… Whatever the speed limits is set they cannot be enforced as there are no
police to monitor this and speed cameras on every road is not viable.”
Officer response:
20mph zones and 20mph speed limits are generally self-enforcing schemes,
however, where introduced, traffic speed will be monitored for one year and
reviewed to see if other measures should be introduced to reduce traffic speed
further.
In addition, as stated by the Police in their comments on this scheme, there could
be police enforcement in exceptional circumstances in a complying 20mph speed
limit road, and where there ‘is a collision problem and/or a particular risk to
vulnerable road users and evidence of persistent high harm speeding motorists’.

28. Extending the 20mph area
11 comments from scheme supporters were received. The suggested roads or
areas to be covered were Upper Brighton Road, Ewell Road, Portsmouth Road,
Hook Road and everywhere in Kingston.
Officer response:
The scope of this proposal involves consulting on introducing 20mph speed limits
in Surbiton Neighbourhood area, excluding some of the ‘A’ and ‘B’ roads
mentioned above. Any additional roads to be included within a 20mph speed
limit would be subject to the approval of this proposal. This would also require
further consultation, following on from further investigation, to decide if it would
suitable to introduce a 20mph speed limit for these roads.
29. **Against a ‘one size fits all’ approach**

Five comments were made by those who oppose the scheme, arguing that each road needs to be considered on its own merits.

**Officer response:**

The scheme has excluded the ‘A’ and ‘B’ roads as they were not considered appropriate for a 20mph speed limit. For implementing a 20mph speed limit, TfL guidance shows that a 20mph speed limit is more effective when applied 'over an area consisting of several roads and not just an individual road. There may be exceptions to this but it is doubtful that a single road 20mph speed limit would have any significant effect on speeds or accidents unless it was at least 500m in length.'

However, each road would still be assessed to decide if any traffic management measures should be introduced in that road.

30. **Will make traffic worse**

Three respondents say that the proposal will increase congestion: ‘Roads were constructed to get from ‘a’ to ‘b’ and lower speed limits will cause unnecessary road congestion and make people’s journeys longer.’

**Officer response:**

A majority of these roads are residential where mean traffic speeds are already below 30mph, so a change in limit from 30mph to 20mph would have a limited impact on journey times, but it would help contribute to road safety.

31. **Pollution**

Two comments were made that driving at 20mph is less fuel efficient, and creates more pollution.

**Officer response:**

Generally, fuel efficiency is maximised when acceleration and braking are minimised. So a fuel-efficient strategy is to anticipate what is happening ahead, and drive in such a way so as to minimise acceleration and braking. This also helps to reduce particulates and other emissions, since these are increased by braking and accelerating. Also, travelling at a lower speed gives the driver more time to read the road and adjust speed accordingly, minimising the reduction in fuel efficiency. Optimal fuel efficiency can be expected while cruising with no stops, at minimal throttle and with the transmission in the highest gear at a speed of 45-55mph (although the actual figures will vary by engine and vehicle), which is not applicable to the roads in the study area.

The average speed recorded for the majority of the roads in the proposed 20mph speed limit area is already below 30mph so, although a change in limit from 30 to 20mph could have a limited negative impact on fuel efficiency in this case, reductions in emissions are expected to offset this to some degree. Also, a 20mph speed limit should encourage an increase the use of environmentally friendly transport modes like cycling and walking.

32. **Exclude bus routes**

Some respondents think the 20mph speed limit should exclude roads used as part of bus routes.

**Officer response:**

Some of the K bus routes are on residential roads. A change in speed limit to exclude residential bus route roads could be confusing to drivers and would require additional signing, thus increasing street clutter and scheme costs.

33. **Apply during certain hours**

Two respondents asked if the speed limit could be varied by time of day.

**Officer response:**
This proposal would result in a substantial number of new road signs being needed to indicate speed limit operational times. This would increase street clutter and would be expensive to implement and maintain.

**Officer's views**

34. A response of 828 corresponds to 4.5% of the 18,300 Surbiton addresses, which is a low response rate. Given that the Surbiton wards' results were both low and inconsistent, with two wards supporting and two wards opposing, this indicates that there is no overall support for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit for the whole of Surbiton Neighbourhood area. However, it should be noted that there is significant support in both St Marks and Berrylands wards. Therefore, members may consider extending the current 20 mph speed limit in St Marks ward in order to include some or all of the remaining roads which are not in the existing limit, and may also consider the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in some parts of the Berrylands ward.

**Conclusion**

35. The report summarises the responses to the consultation on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in the Surbiton Neighbourhood area.

36. The Neighbourhood Committee can provide comments and views for consideration by the Residents Committee, where a decision will be made on the outcome of the scheme on 8 December 2016. If approved, the scheme would proceed to the statutory consultation process.

**Timescale**

37. If the Residents Committee approves the scheme on 8 December 2016, a time frame would be agreed to start working on the scheme.

**Resource Implications**

38. The complete scheme would cover around 163 roads (excluding private roads and roads less than 80 metres long), and is estimated to cost £45,000 and would be funded from LIP.

**Legal Implications**

39. If the Residents Committee approves the scheme on 8 December 2016, a traffic management order (TMO) would be required.

**Risk Assessment**

40. The introduction of 20mph speed limits will promote road safety in residential roads. The scheme does not involve any additional physical speed reducing
features, but should help reduce the risk and severity of accidents to the benefit of the whole community.

Equalities Impact Assessment

41. There is an overarching EQIA in place that covers local implementation plan (LIP) schemes, and as such individual assessments are not required. This proposal has the potential to benefit both pedestrians and cyclists, as they can both travel in a safer, more low speed environment.

Environmental Implications

42. The introduction of a new 20mph speed limit would help encourage more sustainable modes of transport in the area.

Background papers held by author/other - Younes Hamade, Senior Professional Traffic Engineer, tel 020 8547 5922 email: younes.hamade@kingston.gov.uk

- Letters to residents.
- emails/letters of objection.
- emails/letters of support.

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