



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Streetscene and Engineering Cabinet**

**24<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

### **Report of the Head of Engineering and Transport David W Griffiths**

#### **Welsh Government proposed 20mph default speed limit across Wales**

#### **Matter for Information**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To advise members of the current position regarding the Welsh Government proposed 20mph default speed limit for Wales.

#### **Executive Summary:**

##### **The Welsh Government case for change:**

In 2018 the number of Personal Injury Collisions recorded in Wales had fallen to a total of 4000, of which 1137 were killed or seriously injured, and 80 of them were children. The largest proportion of these serious or fatal casualties occurred on roads with a 30 mph speed limit.

It is well known that even small reductions in speed lead to casualty savings. For example, research undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) concluded that 1 mph drop in speed can typically lead to 6% reduction in casualties.

Road safety however is more than about the avoidance of being injured. We need to deliver a healthier, safer society, so the perception of risk of harm also needs to be addressed.

The traditional approach to road safety is led by a focus on casualty reduction, and a 20mph speed limit can play an important part in this, and the alternative, which is to reduce road danger.

This reduction in road danger, real or perceived, encourages active travel and a healthier society, which is key to delivering the aspirations of the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The other benefit from more active travel is a reduction in traffic, which may also improve air quality and reduce road noise.

With years of funding to local authorities by WG for 20 mph Zones, the roads with a 20 mph speed limit still only form a very small part of the road network. WG believe that the only real way to accelerate this is by introducing a default 20 mph national speed limit on restricted roads.

WG are currently out for consultation on the proposed legislative changes, with all Council staff being encouraged to respond via SWAY and all members being sent a direct email link to the consultation from democratic services. Please see consultation link below:

[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-08/consultation-document\\_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-08/consultation-document_0.pdf)

## **Background:**

In order to deliver change the default residential speed limit of 20mph was a commitment in the First Minister's manifesto and has become a priority for Welsh Government (WG).

On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 Mark Drakeford AM, First Minister made a statement in the Senedd where he said:

*'We know that 20mph zones reduce speed of traffic, reduce accidents – particularly accidents to children – and we want to see that become the default position right across Wales.'*

Following this on the direction of Lee Waters, the now Deputy Minister for Climate Change, a Welsh 20mph Taskforce Group was formed, to identify the outcomes which would be expected from changing the default speed limit for restricted roads in Wales to 20mph; and the practical actions needed to implement this change in the law.

The 20mph Taskforce Group published a report in October 2020, which made 21 recommendations as to what needs to be done to change the default speed limit on restricted roads to 20mph in Wales, and set out the practical actions needed to implement this change in the law. Its findings are available on the link below;

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/20mph-task-force-group-report.pdf>

The WG accepted all the recommendations, and held a debate in the Senedd, which resolved in a vote to: “Support the Welsh Government’s intention to commence the process “.

This received cross party support with 45 of the 53 MSs in favour.

During July 2021, WG publicly announced plans to reduce the national default speed limit in Wales from 30mph to 20mph on residential roads and busy pedestrian streets; and on the 8<sup>th</sup> July a twelve week public consultation to seek views commenced, with a deadline of the 1<sup>st</sup> October; this consultation has been widely circulated to all staff via Sway and Members independently.

[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-07/consultation-document\\_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-07/consultation-document_0.pdf)

WG state that the rationale for reducing speed limits on restricted roads to 20mph is much wider than simply to reduce traffic speeds. It is intended to be a major behaviour change programme which improves our communities and therefore the well-being of people in Wales.

Introducing a lower speed limit will reduce the likelihood of road traffic collisions, the severity of those collisions and therefore the number and severity of injuries. By reducing the number of injuries on our roads, encouraging a change to more active travel behaviours, and reducing the negative externalities of car use, the change to 20mph is anticipated to have wide-reaching benefits.

Reducing the speed limit could:

- reduce the number and severity of road collisions
- increase opportunities to walk and cycle in our communities
- help improve health and wellbeing for all
- make our streets safer and help safeguard the environment for future generations.

Working alongside Transport for Wales (TfW) and WG, Officers will be required too:

- Make a County wide inventory of all TROs and signs
- Agree and finalise exception maps provided by TfW
- Be part of the extensive communications and behaviour change campaign
- Design and erect/remove all signage, gateways and any other requirements
- Produce necessary TROs for the exceptions of 20mph: (All 30mph unclassified roads are assumed to default automatically to 20mph)

It should be noted that exceptions will not be allowed for the place criteria on A/B 30mph roads:

- Within 100 metres walk of any educational setting (e.g. primary, secondary, FE & HE)
- Within 100 metres walk of any community centre
- Within 100 metres walk of any hospital
- Where number of residential and/or retail premises fronting a road exceeds a defined density (20 properties per km equivalent)

Prior to the national default speed limit on restricted roads in Wales coming into force the following key points should be noted:

- Ongoing rollout of Phase 1 until end of 2021 (Cilfrew is one of eight pilot settlements in Wales)
- Pass Statutory Instrument in the Senedd
- Changes to the Highway Code, and driving tests to be made
- Extensive Communications Campaign
- The Enforcement Strategy will be tested
- Exceptions to the 20mph to be agreed
- Local Authorities will consult and prepare Traffic Orders on roads to remain 30 mph

- Statutory Instrument comes into force in 2023

## **Current position:**

In January this year, Cilfrew was selected as one of eight pilot settlements to trial 20mph across Wales. WG Capital funding followed and since April Officers have been active in the Community, with public 'street' meetings arranged, and consultation on the scheme proposals carried out.

Baseline speed traffic surveys are ongoing at five sites within Cilfrew, with control point surveys to act as a comparator to the Cilfrew intervention, being undertaken at five sites within the village of Bryncoch.

Detailed design showing 'gateway' features are ready to issue for construction dependant on the decision of the Streetscene and Engineering Cabinet Board on the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Focus groups overseeing both the 20mph Design and Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation have been formed, with members from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), TfW and local Authority representatives feeding in progress reports on a monthly basis.

One of the most recent outcomes has seen TfW and WG request that bus corridor routes be considered when the 20mph maps are devised.

## **Financial Impacts:**

The financial impacts are unknown at present however, it is likely that there will be a significant demand on officer time in facilitating any legislative change in terms of the legal requirements necessary in amending TRO's, significant erection and removal of signs and lines on the Highway County wide, alongside Community engagement.

It should be noted that the Council have very limited resources in the services that will be affected.

The costs are likely to be significant and there is no indication at present how these costs will be borne.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes’.

It is noted that this is a WG legislative change.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

This is an Authority wide initiative.

### **Workforce Impacts:**

Workforce impacts are currently unknown.

For example, staff time is currently being given to the WG funded 20mph Cilfrew scheme, with the design, legislative processes, build costs alongside the community engagement delivered by Road Safety all requiring staff time.

There will also be an impact on Legal services in terms of the process and on Streetcare services who will be undertaking the physical works involved.

### **Legal Impacts:**

The Council will have to comply with any legislative change brought forward by the Welsh Government.

### **Risk Management Impacts:**

At present it is unclear at what stage the Legislative change will take place; the WG consultation exercise is being run in parallel with the Wales wide pilot schemes and the full cost implication and human resources required to deliver the programme are unfixed.

### **Consultation:**

The WG consultation is ongoing and is scheduled to end on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

### **List of Background Papers:**

20mph Taskforce Group Report:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/20mph-task-force-group-report.pdf>

Consultation to reduce speed limit to 20mph on residential streets

[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-07/consultation-document\\_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-07/consultation-document_0.pdf)

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