

NOTES OF PRESENTATION UPDATE FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL ON PROPOSED TRIAL 20 M.P.H. SCHEME FOR NEWTON ABBOT, HELD ON TUESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 2.15 P.M. VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

PRESENT:

Councillors M Joyce (Deputy Mayor) Presiding

Councillors Mrs C Bunday M Hocking
Mrs K Crout C Parker
R Hayes Mrs Lesley Sheffield

By Invitation: County Councillor Mrs Jackie Hook
County Councillor Gordon Hook
Simon Garner – Project Manager County Transport Review
Christopher Rook – Devon County Council
Chris Parkes – Devon County Council

In attendance: P Rowe – Town Clerk
A Robinson – Principal Administrator

549. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular County and District Councillors Gordon Hook and Mrs Jackie Hook along with representatives from the County Wide Review Team looking at Traffic Management, namely Simon Garner, Christopher Rook and Chris Parkes.

550. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Colin Davieson, Chris Jenks, Richard Jenks, Mrs Ann Jones and Mike Ryan and Mrs Sally Henley Town Development Manager.

551. INTERESTS

None declared.

552. 20 M.P.H. SPEED RESTRICTION IN NEWTON ABBOT

The Chairman reminded Members of the background to the proposed scheme, that the Policy and Resources Committee had received a presentation from Councillor Mrs Jackie Hook in October 2019. There had been further discussion at a Special Meeting of the Council in February 2020 at which the Council sought clarity and further information from Devon County Council.

The presentation was intended to clarify those queries and outline the proposals in more detail, where upon the Chairman invited Simon Garner to update Members.

Mr Garner updated Members on the proposed trial 20 mph scheme for Newton Abbot with the aid of presentation slides and raised the following key points:

- The County Council Scrutiny Committee sought a potential town for the trial scheme and Newton Abbot was considered suitable;
- Schemes across the UK were provided as examples on which to review the implementation and outcomes, Portsmouth, Brighton, Bristol, and Edinburgh;
- Portsmouth concentrated on residential roads intentionally avoiding main roads which would require engineering works to redesign the layout – the outcome was for each 1mph reduction in speed it resulted in approximately 6% reduction in injury related accidents;
- Brighton, Bristol, and Edinburgh applied the 20 mph reduction to the whole area including the main A and B roads into the city;
- This resulted in a more dramatic reduction in speed and the greatest positive impact on injury related accidents;
- The schemes highlighted that faster drivers dropped their speed significantly – from 40mph to 30mph and whilst still outside of the 20mph it was a significant improvement;
- Based upon collision data for the last three years, 75% of collisions involving injury were on A and B roads in Newton Abbot; this was the highest rate across Devon and also identified that the most vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) were most at risk;
- A reduction in traffic speed would reduce the likelihood and severity of collisions;
- Residents would benefit from the assurance that roads would feel safer to walk or cycle due to the reduced traffic speed;
- A Draft zone around Newton Abbot included the main A and B roads into the town along with the residential areas;
- Signage would be installed at the 14 or 15 entry points which is easier than the number needed to distinguish between residential and main roads if the zone was reduced or omitted the main roads.

Mr Garner outlined the approach to consultation and implementation of a trial scheme for Newton Abbot, highlighting the following key points:

- Explain the benefits to the community at the outset;
- Engage with the public to communicate the advantages and benefits;
- Conduct technical surveys to gather data on speed, traffic counts to review the wider impacts and benefits of the scheme;
- Whilst three out of four residents are in favour in principle they are dubious about the outcome and the results;
- Councillors have important role in communicating the benefits and positive message, allaying concerns and promoting the scheme;
- The community bring greater benefits by their own improved driving habits, slower speeds amplifies the reduction across the roads; and
- Newton Abbot is also the heart of the district cycle network and a traffic scheme of 20mph would greatly support and improve the safety across the road network for cyclists.

Mr Garner concluded his presentation but stating that the zone for the trial scheme would need defined but once designed could go out to consultation and there was nothing to lose from trying the implementation across the town.

The Chairman thanked Mr Garner for his presentation and update and invited questions and comments from Members who raised the following points:

- The area defined as including the A & B roads as well as residential went far beyond initial discussions and concern expressed at the scope of the trial programme;
- Necessity to enforce current speed restrictions of 30mph which would assist in collision reduction and injuries;
- Current traffic flow through town centre prevented any driver exceeding 10-15mph;
- Pollution levels affected by variation in speed of traffic;
- Accident hot-spots in the town, Buckland and Milber Ward;
- Necessity for repeater signs throughout the zone not just on entry points;
- Valuable project, particularly if prevents loss of life;
- A trial across the whole of the town would provide more quantifiable data for the programme;
- Pollution levels appear to not change significantly either way based upon existing data;
- Overall improvements to the town, reassurance to community safer to walk and cycle, more confidence in driving through the town;
- Police lack resources to enforce existing speed restrictions without expansion of speed restriction zone;
- Main roads, A and B routes are needed to amplify the benefits of the programme;
- Data available applies to much larger conurbations little or no data to compare to market town size of Newton Abbot;
- Need for physical interventions on the roads as well as signs to ensure reduction in speed; and
- Overall improvement in car design and manufacture since 30 mph limit introduced.

Mr Garner summarised the points made by Councillors and outlined an intended timeline. Further design was needed followed by consultation in the autumn with a view to implementation from spring next year. The trial would need to run for at least 12 months unless there were significant reasons to halt the programme. Conversely it may be possible to extend the trial based upon its impact and the data collected.

The Chairman thanked Councillors for their valuable contribution to the points raised by Mr Garner and reminded those present that the matter would be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Council on 23rd September 2020.

Deputy Mayor