

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Friday 27th January 2006

at 1.00 pm

in Committee Room B

*** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME***

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Cambridge, Cook, Cranney, Fenwick, Flintoff, Hall, Lauderdale, J Marshall, Richardson, Rogan and Tumilty

Resident Representatives:

Allan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17th January 2006 (*to follow*)

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No Items

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No Items

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No Items

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 Scrutiny Inquiry into 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools in Hartlepool:-

Draft Final Report - *Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum (to follow)*

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- i) Date of Next Meeting - Friday 17th February 2006, commencing at 1.00pm in Committee Room B**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

17th January 2006

Present:

Councillor Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Gerard Hall, Carl Richardson, Trevor Rogan and Victor Tumilty.

Resident

Reps: Steve Gibbon.

Officers: Peter Frost, Traffic Team Leader
John Lewer, Public Transport Co-ordinator
Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager
Rebecca Redman, Temporary Research Assistant (Scrutiny)
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also

Present: John Edwards, South Tyneside Council

38. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Cambridge and John Marshall. Also Allan Lloyd and Linda Shields.

39. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

40. Minutes of the meetings held on 9th December 2005 and 12th December 2005.

Confirmed.

41. Responses from the Council, the Executive to Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

No items.

42. Consideration of Request for Scrutiny Reviews for Council, Executive Members and Non Executive Members

No items.

43. Consideration of Progress Reports/Budget and Policy Framework Documents

No items.

44. Scrutiny Investigation into the Local Bus Service Provision: Feedback from the Visit to Darlington Borough Council on 16th January 2006 (*Scrutiny Manager/Research Assistant*)

Further to minute number 32 of the meeting held on the 9th December 2005, the Scrutiny Manager reported that as part of the Forums ongoing investigation into local bus service provision a site visit was undertaken to Darlington Borough Council on the 16th January 2006. The purpose of this visit was to enable Members to compare their local bus service provision and establish good practice in a neighbouring Local Authority.

In order to updating those members of the Forum who had been unable to attend the visit Members summarised what they felt were the outcomes of the day. Comments were made in relation the following:-

- i) The benefits of the visit and the extensive level of consultations undertaken by Darlington Borough Council.** Members were of the view that they had gained a considerable amount from the visit and that there were areas where Hartlepool could learn from Darlington i.e. the benefits of affective consultations. With service provides requiring a cast iron case for the reinstatement of services it was felt that in addition to planning for the future the information obtained through surveys could be used to support cases for the reinstatement.

It was noted that Darlington's use of Consultants and research had resulted in a high return rate for forms and that one of the findings of the survey was the high take up of services in disadvantaged wards.

- ii) **The considerable level of resources put into the bus service, including £355,000 in 2004/5 to support services (subsidies), and the authority's success in obtaining Department of Transport funding for research sustainable services.** It was noted that only three authorities in the country had been successful in obtaining this funding and Members queried if Hartlepool could apply for it in the future. Another pot of funding accessed by the authority was £1.5m of Cycle England funding for use to encourage cycling, although it was not known if this equated to an overall pot of £1.5m or if the authorities allocation was £1.5m. Members felt that these areas of possible funding should be explored further for Hartlepool in the future.

Some concern was expressed regarding the level of funding which Darlington seemed to be willing to put into the provision of bus services. A comparison was made between the £355,000 in subsidies provided by Darlington against the £219,000 provided by Hartlepool and it was noted that Darlington actually felt that when broken down to per head of population the amount they paid was reasonable. They would in fact be willing to spend more and Members were concerned that funding was in fact being used to enhance the service for the provider itself.

It was, however, highlighted by officers that although Hartlepool did not have the level of resources available to Darlington a survey had been undertaken regarding rural partnership needs and on the basis of results a transport map was being compiled.

- iii) **The removal of the No.5 service in Hartlepool.** It was accepted that the local authority could not stop Stagecoach from removing services; however, it appeared that the reinstatement of services was linked to the availability of subsidies. Darlington did not appear to have a problem with removal of services and was happy to pay whatever subsidy was necessary to ensure the continuation of services. It was felt that the issue of subsidies to facilitate the reinstatement or retention of services should be looked into further.

In relation to the No. 5 service Members indicated that an approach was to be made to the Culture, Housing and Transportation Portfolio Holder to look at the situation. It was also noted that officers from the Transport Division were in the process of talking to the PCT to ascertain if resources could be made available for the reinstatement of the service.

- iv) **Darlington's position as an authority with one of the highest levels of parking charges in the country.** Members expressed concern at the affect of raising parking charges, including the discouragement of shoppers from entering the town centre.

- v) **Park and Ride Schemes.** It was noted that Darlington were in the process of accessing the feasibility of a Park and Ride scheme, taking into consideration the rural nature of the area it covers.
- vi) **Partnership Working.** It was suggested that the issue of cross boundary travel needed to be looked into further.
- vii) **The existence of a Partnership/Forum, which residents attend to discuss problem.** The benefits of this were taken on board and it was noted that Hartlepool does already have a Bus Quality Partnership. Although the Partnership meetings were not open to the public the benefit of their involvement was recognised and it was noted that the public was involved through regular Bus Surgeries.
- viii) **The use of technology.** It was noted that Darlington were in the process of looking at SMS and text messaging, with each stop to have a number that could be called to get up to date timetable information. Member highlighted that Hartlepool was also working on the use of technology to improve services i.e. real time.
- ix) **Problems experienced by Darlington despite having more than one commercial operator.** Attention was drawn to the problems Darlington experienced negotiating with their providers and indications that they would prefer to have to deal with a single provider as Hartlepool does. Whilst Members agreed that there were benefits in having to deal with one provider only it was felt that Stagecoach needed to look at there service provision from the service users point of view and not on a purely commercial basis.
- x) **Alternatives for public transport provision.** Members reiterated concerns regarding the payment of subsidies to profit making companies and as part of a brief examination of possible alternatives discussed the provision of a service by the Council itself or an another provider, such as Leven Valley Coaches. Whilst it was acknowledged that it would not be possible for the Council to run its own service there was interest in seeking the involvement of Leven Valley Coaches. Officers agreed that Leven Valley Coaches was a very popular small company, which operates from North Yorkshire. Efforts had been made to engage with them in the past to encourage them to tender and although these had been unsuccessful Members suggested that the company should be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the matter further with the Forum. Officer indicated that an invitation would be extended.

Following consideration of the verbal updates provided by Members of the Forum the Chairman thanked all those present and confirmed that an additional meeting of the Forum was to be held on the 28th February 2006, commencing at 1pm.

Decision

- i) That the report and the issues discussed during the course of the meeting be noted for consideration during formulation of the Forums final report.
- ii) That an invitation be extended to Leven Valley Coaches to attend a future meeting of the Forum.

45. Scrutiny Investigation into 20mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools in Hartlepool – Local Authority Comparison: Evidence from South Tyneside Council *(Scrutiny Manager/Research Assistant)*

The Scrutiny Manger reported that as part of the Forums ongoing inquiry into 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools in Hartlepool Mr John Edwards from North Tyneside Council had agreed to give a presentation on the regional perspective of policy and provisions in relation to 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools. The Chairman welcomed John Edwards who went on to give a very detailed and informative presentation covering:

- Perceptions of Public Concern
- Policy Framework
- Provision and Effectiveness
- The Wider Perspective
- A Strategic Framework

During the course of the presentation John Edwards thanked the Forum for the opportunity to attend and indicated that he would do all he could to assist Hartlepool in challenging existing approaches. Attention was drawn to the ground swell in support for 20mph zones outside schools and the work being undertaken by government on the preparation of new guidance on speed limits.

John Edwards was of the view that the issue of 20mph zones outside schools would fit well into the Speed Strategy and acknowledged Members passion in the prevention of accidents and the changing of attitudes to speed. Attention was drawn to the work already undertaken by local authority engineers in the prevention of accidents and Hartlepool commended on it wish to make step changes to add to the good practice already in place.

Following consideration of the presentation Members discussed the following issues:-

- i) **Time limited 20mph zones outside schools and the use of traffic calming measures.** Issues for and against the imposition of permanent speed limits outside schools at risk times were discussed with expressed permanent limits with traffic calming measures.

John Edwards indicated that there was a regional perspective that 20mph zones work well and that with a combination of these zones and traffic calming measures a speed reduction of approximately 9mph could be achieved. With just signs, however, and no traffic calming measures this dropped to just 1mph. John Edwards expressed concern that the use of signs only would raise expectations and lead to disappointment and indicated that he had reservations regarding the use of signs outside schools without any other traffic calming measures. The preferred option at this time was for the provision of 20mph zones with soft traffic calming measures and it was highlighted that recent surveys had shown that 85% of people were in support of speed limits in residential areas.

Members were advised that a couple of local authorities were looking at possible pilot schemes with the visual nature of the front of schools would be changed and it was suggested that Hartlepool might like to explore the possibility of running a pilot scheme itself. John Edwards offered his and the Northern Engineers Groups help with this.

In relation to part time speed limits John Edwards indicated that they were difficult to enforce and that although they were being used in Scotland the issue of enforcement was a real problem with considerable costs associated with the provision of wardens with speed guns at the appropriate times. A considerable amount of funding to pay for this had been made available by the Scottish Executive for the provision of these special wardens. The approach favoured here was for the provision of safety zones outside schools as part of which speed limits and soft traffic calming measures would be used. These would be self enforcing and aside from the reduced cost implications would as previously indicated be expected to result in a speed reduction of approximately 9mph. This could save child's life.

- ii) **Police involvement.** John Edward highlighted that importance of the police when dealing with scheme that were not self enforcing, i.e. 20mph outside schools. It was, however, the case that with the use of soft traffic calming measures there was the scope for discussions with the police to see if pilot schemes were working and that as a last resort hard traffic calming measures could be used.

iii) Schemed in operation elsewhere in the country. John Edward gave more detail of the scheme currently in operation in Edinburgh and their proposal to have 20mph zones outside all primary schools by the end of March 2006. Attention was also drawn to the '20 is plenty' campaign being implanted and it was suggested that these could be things for Hartlepool, and the wider region, to look at.

iv) Attention was drawn to the need:

- To promote prevention rather than just deal with accidents.
- To look at how the Northern Region Road Safety Engineers Group could assist. John Edwards indicated that the issues of 20mph zones outside schools were now a high priority for the group.
- To explore the relevance and feasibility of the use of all possible measures, both hard and soft, i.e. speed activated signs. John Edwards indicated that speed activated signs had been tried by them and had worked well.

Following completion of discussions the Chairman thanked John Edwards on behalf of the Forum for one of the best presentations they had ever received. John Edwards reiterated his thanks for the opportunity to attend and indicated that whilst a lot of work had been done by the local authority engineers there was still a considerable amount to be done, this included further research. Members were also advised that the issue of 20mph zones outside schools was to be taken up by the Northern Region Road Safety Engineers Group and that a report would be brought back to the Forum with details of best practice and approach for use in the whole of the region.

Decision

The report and the issues discussed during the course of the meeting were noted for consideration during formulation of the Forums final report.

KEVIN CRANNEY

CHAIRMAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

27 January 2006



Report of: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: DRAFT FINAL REPORT – SCRUTINY ENQUIRY
INTO 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONES OUTSIDE OF
SCHOOLS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum following its enquiry into 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools within Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum, held on 12 August 2005, the issue of 20 mph speed limit zones outside of Schools within Hartlepool was referred to Scrutiny Coordinating Committee for further consideration (Minute 28 refers).
- 2.2 Subsequently, at the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 21 October 2005, Members agreed that, in order to determine the appropriateness of such a review, further information should be received on the Department for Transport guidelines for introducing 20 mph speed limits/zones.
- 2.3 Following consideration of this additional information, Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee agreed that this was an area worthy of further investigation and subsequently redirected the 'referral' to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum, with a three month prescribed timescale for its completion.

3. INTRODUCTION - SETTING THE SCENE

- 3.1 Road accidents can result in severe injury, long-term disability and death. However, many accidents are preventable and their severity could be reduced using appropriate traffic calming/road safety measures.

- 3.2 Despite improvements, road traffic accidents remain the single largest cause of accidental death among children and young people. Each year nearly 180 children die and approximately 4,800 are injured as pedestrians or cyclists. Over 15,000 children make the journey to and from school in Hartlepool each day.
- 3.3 20 mph speed limit zones can contribute to preventing road traffic accidents involving children. Findings from the Transport Research Laboratory into 20 mph zone pilot projects across England, Wales and Scotland, indicated that on average, speeds dropped by 9 mph, annual collision figures fell by 60% and the overall reduction in child casualties was 67%.
- 3.4 The first three 20 mph speed limit forming zones were implemented in Sheffield, Kingston upon Thames and Norwich, in January 1991. Since then, around 450 zones have been implemented in the UK.
- 3.4 Over the recent weeks, Rift House Primary School has become the first in Hartlepool to be approved for a new £10,000 traffic-calming scheme; with a further two zones being explored for Clavering Primary School and Kingsley Primary School.
- 3.5 It is local authorities who are responsible for setting local speed limits. However, a lack of funding prevents the wider use/implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones.

4. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY ENQUIRY

- 4.1 The overall aim of the scrutiny enquiry was to establish the appropriateness of the enforcement of 20 mph Speed Limit Zones outside of schools within Hartlepool.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY ENQUIRY

- 5.1 The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Enquiry were as outlined below:-
 - (a) To gain an understanding of the Government policy key areas relating to 20 mph Speed Limit Zones outside of schools;
 - (b) To review the Authority's current procedure of determining the appropriateness of enforcing 20 mph Speed Limit Zones outside of schools;
 - (c) To establish what traffic calming/road safety measures are already in place outside of schools within Hartlepool;

- (d) To consider the number of road casualties outside of schools within Hartlepool over the last 12 months;
- (e) To establish the financial implications of enforcing 20 mph Speed Limit Zones and any other traffic calming measures outside of schools in Hartlepool;
- (f) To seek the views of a sample of users and potential users of the zones in which the 20 mph Speed Limit could be enforced; and
- (g) To compare the good practice of neighbouring local authorities in relation to determining the appropriateness of enforcing 20 mph Speed Limit Zones outside of schools.

6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

6.1 The membership of the Scrutiny Forum was as detailed below:-

Councillors Cambridge, Cook, Cranney, Fenwick, Flintoff, Hall, Lauderdale, J Marshall, Richardson, Rogan and Tumilty.

Resident Representatives: Alan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon.

7. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

7.1 Members of the Scrutiny Forum met formally from 11 November 2005 to 27 January 2006 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this enquiry. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

7.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Detailed Officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from the Town's Member of Parliament;
- (c) Verbal evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor and the Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation;
- (d) Examination of good practice within neighbouring Local Authorities in relation to 20 mph Speed Limit Zones;
- (e) Presentation from the Projects Manager for South Tyneside Council (also Chair of the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group)
- (f) Site Visit to a number of schools and the surrounding areas within Hartlepool on 7 December 2005;

- (g) Verbal and written evidence from members of the public, School Crossing Wardens and the Head teacher of Clavering Primary School; and
- (h) Written evidence from Cleveland Casualty Reduction Group.

FINDINGS

8. GOVERNMENT POLICY RELATING TO 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONES

- 8.1 Evidence presented to the Forum allowed Members to establish that road safety is governed by the legislation outlined below:-
- 8.2 **Government White Paper-New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone (1998)** outlines a framework for the delivery of detailed transport /road safety policies with an emphasis upon Local Authorities utilising Local Transport Plans to address road safety/transport issues.
- 8.3 **Department for Transport (1999) Traffic Advisory Leaflet 9/99 'Use of 20mph Limits'** provides advice on how/where to implement 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones to help meet the objectives of the Government White Paper, 'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone' and the requirements for Local Transport Plans. Any Local Authority that does not adhere to these guidelines may be found partly liable in the event of an accident.
- 8.4 **Tomorrow's Roads: Safer for Everyone (2000)** sets targets to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured as a result of road traffic accidents by 40%, and a more stringent target for children (under 16 years of age). The child target is a 50% reduction compared with the average for 1994-1998. Both targets to be achieved by 2010.
- 8.5 **Department for Transport (2002) Child Road Safety: Achieving the 2010 Target** resulted from consultation undertaken to review the progress of the policies/initiatives outlined in 'Tomorrow's Roads: Safer for Everyone'. The report considered developments in road safety strategy and updated the actions deemed necessary to achieve the 2010 target.
- 8.6 **Local Transport Plans** locate road safety within an integrated transport strategy. Road safety is a high priority in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- 8.7 Within Hartlepool, the first Local Transport Plan (1999-2005) delivered a wide range of road safety related schemes and initiatives to address many of the key accident hotspot sites.
- 8.8 The Road Safety Strategy within the second Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) is currently being developed. The Strategy will include:-

- (a) Extensive road safety awareness schemes and initiatives;
- (b) A list of traffic calming measures that may be implemented where appropriate;
- (c) Schemes to encourage the involvement of parents in teaching road safety awareness/skills early in their child's development; and
- (d) Road safety good practice for older children and the provision of advice and support for older teenagers and young adults regarding their mode of transport choice.

9. ROAD CASUALTIES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS WITHIN HARTLEPOOL

9.1 Members considered the evidence presented by the Authority's Transportation Section in relation to the number of road casualties outside of schools within Hartlepool. During the past three years six child pedestrian accidents have occurred outside schools in Hartlepool at school times. The details of which are listed below:-

- (a) Rift House Primary School, Masefield Road – two casualties (scheme to be introduced in near future);
- (b) Manor College of Technology on Owton Manor Lane – two casualties;
- (c) Brierton School on Catcote Road – one casualty; and
- (d) St. Hilda's School on King Oswy Drive – one casualty.

9.2 Members learned that casualties are classified as fatal, serious and slight. All six casualties occurring outside of Schools within Hartlepool were categorised as slight.

10. HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CURRENT PROCEDURE FOR ENFORCING 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS

- 10.1 In light of Hartlepool's road casualty figures outside of schools, Members were alarmed to hear that the Authority did not have a written policy for determining the suitability of 20 mph Speed Limit Zones outside of schools within Hartlepool at the time of this enquiry.
- 10.2 The Forum did learn, however, that zones, in accordance with Department for Transport guidelines, were selected on a case by case basis, taking into account the number of casualties within a zone, its suitability for physical traffic calming measures and how beneficial it is in road safety and environmental terms.

- 10.3 The Forum also learned that 20 mph speed limits and speed limit zones are self enforcing by means of signs and physical traffic calming measures. Therefore not all roads are appropriate sites for such a scheme. For example, it was evident to Members that a 20mph limit on Catcote Road outside English Martyrs School in Hartlepool would lead to increased congestion and difficulties for emergency services, therefore other methods of improving road safety in these areas, without actually introducing a 20mph limit, would require consideration.
- 10.4 During this Forum's an evidence gathering session with the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation, Members were advised by the Cabinet Member of those schools within Hartlepool that were appropriate sites for 20 mph speed limit zones (at the time of the Forum's enquiry) as outlined below:-
- (a) Barnard Grove Primary School;
 - (b) Brougham Primary School;
 - (c) Clavering Primary School;
 - (d) Dyke House School, Mapleton Road;
 - (e) Eldon Grove Primary School;
 - (f) Greatham C of E Primary School;
 - (g) Hart Primary School;
 - (h) Holy Trinity CE;
 - (i) Jesmond Road Primary School, Percy Street;
 - (j) Kingsley Primary School;
 - (k) Lynnfield Primary School, Sheriff Street;
 - (l) Owton Manor Primary School, Eskdale Road;
 - (m) Rift House Primary School;
 - (n) Rossmere Primary School, Callander Road;
 - (o) St Aidan's CE Memorial Primary School;
 - (p) St Bega's RC Primary School;
 - (q) St Cuthbert's RC Primary School;
 - (r) St Hild's School;
 - (s) St John Vianney RC Primary School;
 - (t) St Josephs RC Primary School;
 - (u) St Teresa's RC Primary School, Callander Road;
 - (v) Stranton Primary School;
 - (w) Thorston Primary School;
 - (x) West Park Primary School; and
 - (y) West View Primary School.
- 10.5 With this in mind, the Forum attended a Site Visit on 7 December 2005 to a selection of schools to observe, first hand, traffic calming/road safety measures currently in place and the barriers that prevent the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones (Pictures shown overleaf of Panel on Site Visit and an example of a school frontage on school 'pick up' time).



Members of the Forum on the Site Visit held on 7 December 2005

Congestion/parking problems outside of a school within Hartlepool at the close of a school day

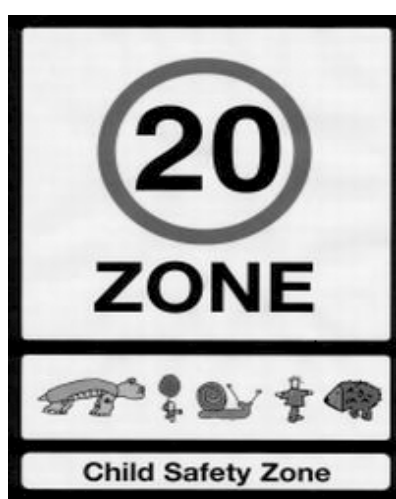


11. CURRENT TRAFFIC CALMING / ROAD SAFETY MEASURES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS WITHIN HARTLEPOOL

- 11.1 During the evidence gathering session with the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation, it was evident to this Forum that the Authority acknowledged the central role it continued to play in reducing the number of road accident casualties and in contributing to the achievement of national child road safety targets.
- 11.2 The Authority's commitment to this reduction was demonstrated in the provisional Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) which aims 'to improve the overall safety and security of the transport system for everyone'. Road safety is outlined as a key priority within the Local Transport Plan.
- 11.3 At the time of this enquiry, three 20mph speed limit schemes in Hartlepool were being considered by the Authority's Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation. These schemes were as outlined overleaf:-

- (a) **Rift House School, Masefield Road** – High speeds recorded during surveys added to road safety concerns near to the school. Two school time child pedestrian casualties had also occurred outside the school in the last 3 years. Consultation had taken place and the scheme was approved at Culture, Housing and Transportation Portfolio on 5 October 2005. The scheme will be implemented during the 2005/06 financial year;
 - (b) **Clavering School, Clavering Road** – High speeds also recorded during surveys. Proposed speed cushions and 20mph limit outside of school. No funding is available at present, but the scheme will be fed into the programme of potential schemes for the 2006/07 financial year; and
 - (c) **Kingsley School, Kingsley Avenue** – Traffic calming scheme was introduced last year, and a 20mph limit will be introduced to cover this area.
- 11.4 In addition to the physical traffic calming measures and signs that Members observed on the Site Visit held on 7 December 2005, the Authority's Road Safety Team Leader highlighted other traffic calming/road safety measures that are currently in place. The Forum learned that the Authority was pursuing a number of road safety schemes and initiatives that contributed to encouraging children to be safer road users.
- 11.5 Parents and teachers who parked illegally and inconsiderately were also being targeted with education and enforcement campaigns. With targeted enforcement the danger posed by this form of parking was gradually reducing.
- 11.6 Members were pleased to find that the Authority continued to develop regional links and to work in partnership to reduce casualties and achieve the aims and objectives outlined in the Road Safety Strategy. For example, working with the Cleveland Safety Camera Partnership had allowed speed limits to be enforced on roads that had a speed related casualty problem.
- 12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONES / TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS WITHIN HARTLEPOOL**
- 12.1 Having raised concern at the number of child pedestrian accidents and witnessing the lack of effective traffic calming measures outside of schools during a Site Visit of this Forum on 7 December 2005, Members sought evidence in relation to the financial implications of implementing 20 mph speed limit zones outside schools in Hartlepool.
- 12.2 Members consulted with the Authority's Road Safety Team and consequently found that:-

- (a) The Department for Transport provides funding to Local Authorities to implement safety schemes, traffic calming measures, traffic signal improvements, crossings, congestion measures, maintenance schemes, pedestrian/cycling/public transport improvements, parking schemes and the transport interchange outlined within the Local Transport Plan;
- (b) Funding is also awarded by the Department for Transport for travel planning work, which in turn attracts funding for schemes via the Safer Routes to Schools Programme;
- (c) For each 20mph limit or zone implemented, associated traffic calming measures must also be implemented. These measures are of a significant cost to the Authority. For example the scheme recently approved for Masefield Road in Hartlepool is expected to cost the Authority £10,000;
- (d) Sign only schemes are of a lower cost to the Authority, examples of which are shown below;



- (e) The cost of signs may potentially be met by the Authority's Traffic Management Budget. Members were encouraged to note that such signs were only appropriate on roads where recorded speeds were already low or traffic calming measures were already in place; and
- (f) With the number of people injured on roads in Hartlepool last year standing at 317, it is the sites with the highest number of casualties that receive the majority of the funding that is allocated to road safety schemes.

- 12.3 Whilst Members are aware of the Council's budgetary pressures and priorities, Members agreed that funding should be sought from every possible source to permit the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones and other appropriate traffic calming measures at all schools throughout Hartlepool.
- 12.4 Members are resolute in the belief that a child's life far outweighs any cost the Authority may incur in implementing 20 mph speed limit zones and/or traffic calming/road safety measures.
- 12.5 Equally the Authority's Elected Mayor and the town's Member of Parliament reinforced this message during an evidence gathering session with the Forum. Both the Elected Mayor and MP believe that a child's safety is paramount and that issues surrounding funding cannot be justified in this instance.

13. 20 MPH ZONES IN NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 13.1 As part of the Forum's enquiry, consideration was also given to comparing other Local Authorities' policies and practice in relation to 20 mph Zones. In doing so, Members sought evidence from South Tyneside Council due to their links with the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group.
- 13.2 The Forum learned that although Road Safety Engineers have been effective in helping to reduce speeds, especially in our neighbourhoods, helping to make these areas to become better/safer places to live, there is still much to be done to win the hearts and minds of those drivers who don't perceive the dangers of speeding.
- 13.3 National Campaigns have detailed how collisions at 40 mph and 30 mph involving a child can potentially kill, in comparison with collisions at 20 mph. Quite simply the higher the speed, the worse the injury to the pedestrian and the less reaction time that is available to the driver in the lead up to an accident to take evasive action.
- 13.4 Members were informed that a holistic approach to speed management has evolved in recent years in which Road Safety Leaders and Transport Managers look at the function, potential conflict and local characteristics of the road network to ensure that a consistent and comprehensive assessment is made of matching traffic speeds with the environment. The following examples illustrate how traffic calming measures can be adapted to suit the location concerned:-



Examples of speed cushions, road markings and signs



- 13.5 The Projects Manager from South Tyneside Council stated that whilst this approach is effective, Local Authorities should consider the schemes and initiatives within their Road Safety Strategy/Local Transport Plan to prevent casualties rather than implementing road safety measures to reduce the number of casualties.
- 13.6 Members were also encouraged to note that the Government will be setting new speed limits this year which should be consulted when considering how to implement 20 mph speed limit zones outside of schools and formulating road safety strategies.
- 13.7 In his capacity as Chair of the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group, the Projects Manager commended the efforts of the Forum in stimulating debate and challenging the Authority to ensure that road safety issues are addressed and resolved. It was also proposed to the Forum that the group could assist Hartlepool Borough Council by developing an assessment framework for the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones.

- 13.8 The Projects Manager outlined the importance of interacting with other Local Authorities throughout the country to establish best practice and aid one another in ensuring casualties are prevented outside of schools.
- 13.9 Consequently Members sought evidence from other Local Authorities who sit on the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group. Local Authorities that cover the geographical area from Northumberland down to North Yorkshire were invited to discuss their policies and practices relating to 20 mph speed limit zones outside of schools.
- 13.10 Responses from six Local Authorities were acquired and are summarised below:-
- (a) **Stockton Borough Council** – 20mph limits are only brought in with associated traffic calming measures. They won't be considered without limits, bringing them into disrepute. Schools are not specifically targeted as speeds are generally low due to congestion caused by parents parking, and accident levels are also very low;
 - (b) **Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council** – Generally in favour of 20mph limits outside schools and any requests are considered dependent on the suitability of the road;
 - (c) **Durham City Council** – Policy states “self enforcing 20mph zones shall be provided around schools with above average number of accidents, particularly where children are involved.” Have only one 20mph limit at present and do not have major problems outside of schools in terms of casualties;
 - (d) **Sunderland City Council** – Do not have 20mph limits without traffic calming as they have no significant effect. On main roads School Safety Zones are used instead, consisting of high visibility signing, road markings and coloured surfacing, to highlight the presence of a school;
 - (e) **North Tyneside Council** – Currently have around twenty 20mph zones, which have been concentrated in appropriate areas with high numbers of casualties. All zones are self enforcing with physical traffic calming measures outside of schools; and
 - (f) **Northumberland County Council** – No 20mph limits specifically on the section of road fronting a school. They do, however, have 44 20mph zones, 29 of which include a school within them.

14. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC, SCHOOL CROSSING WARDENS AND HEAD TEACHERS

- 14.1 Members invited the public, School Crossing Wardens and the Head teacher of Clavering Primary School to contribute to the enquiry at the meeting of the Forum held on 12 December 2005.
- 14.2 Members were pleased to find that the majority of the residents of Hartlepool would welcome the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones outside schools and advised that such measures should be implemented as soon as possible to prevent serious accidents occurring.
- 14.3 However, the Forum learned that members of the public had grown increasingly frustrated by the perceived lack of concern for road safety issues surrounding a number of schools within Hartlepool. A small number commented upon their correspondence with the Local Authority, local police and the local bus company who have failed to remedy the issues outlined to Members.
- 14.4 Members of the public requested that issues surrounding the enforcement of parking restrictions, speed limits and other traffic calming measures outside of schools within Hartlepool are addressed. Equally Members were encouraged to note that no objection to any 20 mph speed limit zone would be made providing that the zones would only be enforced at school drop off and pick up times.
- 14.5 Department for Transport legislation, however, does not currently permit part time speed limits. The fact that 20mph limits also require physical traffic calming measures would also prevent this. By their very nature, road humps, etc, are physical measures and once installed are permanent features of the road.
- 14.6 Members also found that the public encouraged the evaluation and review of any 20 mph speed limit zone or traffic calming measure that was put in place in order to determine how effective such measures are at each school.
- 14.7 The Head teacher of Clavering Primary School informed Members that the entrance to the school poses a serious threat to the safety of children, parents, teachers and school crossing wardens. Traffic calming measures in place outside Clavering Primary School include school crossing wardens and double crossing lights on the schools approach, the Head teacher feels these lights are ineffective.
- 14.8 The Head teacher went on to comment that he would support the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones at all schools in Hartlepool. However, he does appreciate that every school is unique and that there are financial and site implications/problems.
- 14.9 Members were encouraged to note that, from the perspective of the school crossing wardens, the most effective traffic calming measures outside of

schools are those that prevent and deter parking at, or close to, the crossing point which improves visibility and makes the crossing point safer. Members learned that footpaths built out and parking restrictions improve visibility for the warden and on the crossing site.

- 14.10 In addition to the above, Members supported the view that educating drivers and parents about child road safety is central to ensuring that roads are safe.

15. CONCLUSIONS

- 15.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That it is for the Local Authority to determine whether speed limits or zones should be implemented having considered whether such a scheme is appropriate to the area and beneficial in road safety and environmental terms;
- (b) That the Authority does not have a documented policy for determining the selection of schools/zones that could become 20 mph speed limits or zones;
- (c) That the use of 20 mph speed limit zones was initially intended to address the serious problem of child pedestrian accidents occurring in and around residential areas, although such zones are no longer confined to residential areas;
- (d) That research undertaken by the Traffic Advisory Unit has shown that the risk of a child being involved in an accident has reduced by about two-thirds where 20 mph zones have been installed;
- (e) That the long-term success of any 20 mph zone or limit will be the reduction and prevention of accidents to children outside of schools;
- (f) That any proposed schemes are likely to be subject to considerable opposition, both during and after implementation, therefore it is crucial a thorough consultation exercise is undertaken;
- (g) That the DfT guidelines state that 20mph limits should be self enforcing with physical traffic calming measures and may not be appropriate for main roads due to the impact on congestion, emergency services and bus routes, but other measures can be used to slow speeds and improve road safety;
- (h) That 20 mph limits can be provided by signs alone on roads where recorded speeds are low to start with, but these tend to be areas where the risk of casualties is also lower. A small number of schools in Hartlepool may fit into this category and speed surveys can be undertaken to determine this;

- (i) That in the three year period from April 2002- March 2005 there were six children injured going to and from school. Casualties are classified as fatal, serious or slight, and all six were slight casualties. Over 15,000 children make the journey to and from school in Hartlepool each day;
- (j) That Hartlepool's first 20mph limit will be introduced outside Rift House Primary School early in the New Year, which is where two of the six casualties occurred and that a 20 mph limit will also be added to the existing traffic calming scheme outside Kingsley Primary School;
- (k) That members of the public, whilst supporting the implementation of 20 mph speed limit zones outside of schools, are concerned with issues of enforcement and prosecution;
- (l) That educating parents, children and drivers in road safety awareness is vital;
- (m) That schemes and training initiatives regarding road safety awareness should be widely publicised and promoted;
- (n) That partnership working is imperative if zones are to be enforced properly and residents, parents, children and school crossing wardens are to be safe;
- (o) That many 20 mph speed limit zones are not implemented in appropriate sites due to the significant cost to the Authority;
- (p) That consultation with the police is a statutory requirement for both zones and limits, it is also good practice to consult the fire service and bus operators;
- (q) That the emergency services have been consulted on the provisional list of schools, outlined in Appendix A, via the Council's Traffic Liaison Group, regarding whether they feel that the roads designated as being appropriate for traffic calming measures are acceptable to them.
- (r) That two authorities in the North East are seeking to introduce sign only 20 mph speed limit pilot schemes;
- (s) That the Scottish Executive is strongly promoting 20 mph speed limits outside schools and committing a significant amount of funding to child road safety initiatives and schemes;
- (t) That within Scotland part time speed limits are being installed and are operational when flashing 20 mph signs are activated and amber flashes;
- (u) That Special Wardens are employed to monitor speeds in part time zones;

- (v) That the Department for Transport guidelines did not allow part time zones in England at the time of this enquiry;
- (w) That there should be a consistent approach to speed management;
- (x) That Authorities should consider schemes and initiatives in the Local Transport Plan that will allow the prevention of casualties rather than attempting to reduce the number of casualties;
- (y) That the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group are able to aid the Authority in compiling an assessment framework for implementing 20 mph speed limit zones and traffic calming measures; and
- (z) That working in partnership with other Local Authorities should be central to Road Safety Strategies within the Local Transport Plan.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are outlined below:-

- (a) That the Authority compiles a 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Policy upon completion of a thorough consultation exercise with members of the public and partners which includes:-
 - (i) An agreed criteria for the implementation of mph speed limit zones outside of schools within Hartlepool;
 - (ii) Alternative traffic calming/road safety measures that may be implemented at sites that are deemed inappropriate for 20 mph speed limit zones;
 - (iii) Proposals to tackle issues of enforcement and prosecution;
 - (iv) Schemes and initiatives to educate children, parents, teachers and residents about road safety; and a
 - (v) Commitment to partnership working.
- (b) That the Authority continues to strengthen links/working relationships with the emergency services, public transport operators, Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group, Cleveland Safety Camera Partnership and the Cleveland Casualty Reduction Group;
- (c) That the Authority monitors and evaluates any 20 mph speed limit zones that are implemented at regular intervals;

- (d) That the Authority considers a number of 20 mph speed limit zones pilot schemes outside of schools within Hartlepool;
- (e) That the Authority addresses road safety issues with a 'prevention is better than cure' approach; and
- (f) That the Authority submits a progress report on the recommendations contained within this report, within six months, to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

17. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 17.1 The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

Stuart Drummond – Elected Mayor

Councillor Robbie Payne – Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation

Peter Frost – Traffic Team Leader

Paul Watson – Road Safety Team Leader

Pam Robertson and Bev Wood - School Crossing Wardens

Mr Metcalfe – Head teacher of Clavering Primary School

External Representatives:

Iain Wright – Member of Parliament for Hartlepool

John Edwards from South Tyneside Council (and Chair of the Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group);

Members of the public (including Resident Representatives)

Cleveland Casualty Reduction Group

**COUNCILLOR KEVIN CRANNEY
CHAIR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

January 2006

Contact Officers: Charlotte Burnham - Scrutiny Manager
Rebecca Redman – Temp Research Assistant (Scrutiny)
Chief Executive's Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk
Email: rebecca.redman@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (a) Minutes of the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum, 12th August 2005
- (b) Hartlepool Borough Council (1999) Local Transport Plan 1999-2005, Hartlepool Borough Council
- (c) Hartlepool Borough Council (2005) Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (Provisional), Hartlepool Borough Council
- (d) Department for Transport (1998) Government White Paper- New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, Department for Transport
- (e) Department for Transport (2000) Tomorrow's Roads: Safer for Everyone, The Governments Road Safety Strategy and Casualty Road Safety Targets for 2010, Department for Transport
- (f) Department for Transport (2002) Child Road Safety: Achieving the 2010 Target, Department for Transport
- (g) Department for Transport (1999) Traffic Advisory Leaflet 9/99 'Use of 20mph Limits', Department for Transport
- (h) Report of the Scrutiny Manager entitled Scrutiny Topic Referral from South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum- '20 MPH Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools' to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 30th September 2005
- (i) Report of the Traffic Manager and Scrutiny Manager entitled '20 MPH Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools' to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 21st October 2005
- (j) Report of the Scrutiny Manager/Research Assistant entitled- 'Scrutiny Topic Referral from South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum- 20 MPH Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools presented to Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum 11th November 2005