

# Report to Cabinet Member for Transport

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**Decision to be taken on or after 18 January 2010**

**Decision can normally be implemented at least  
3 working days after decision has been signed.**

**Cabinet Member Report No. T01.10**

**Title:** Countywide Speed Limit Review: Area 10 Speed  
Limit Changes

**Date:** 8 January 2010

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**Electoral divisions affected:**

- Amersham
- Beaconsfield
- Chalfont St Peter
- The Chalfonts and Seer Green
- Chesham East
- Chess Valley
- Gerrards Cross & Denham North

## Summary

This report recommends implementation of changes to the existing speed limits arising from the Countywide Speed Limit review for Area 10.

It describes the process by which these changes were determined, including details of consultation undertaken. It also describes how the effectiveness of these speed limits will be monitored and measured.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Transport is invited to:

1. **APPROVE** the implementation of the new speed restrictions within Area 10 of the Countywide Speed Limit Review, as recommended by the Area 10 Speed Limit Review Working Group at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009 . These proposed speed limits are indicated in the Plan (*Appendix A*) entitled 'Area 10 Speed Limit Review Recommendations for Implementation November 2009' Drawing Ref. SLR/10/PC/09/CMD and are listed on the document (*Appendix B*) entitled 'Area 10 speed limit review-Summary of Public Consultation proposals & Working Group recommendations 2009' . It is intended that these speed limits should be in place by end of March 2010.
2. **APPROVE** the further Public Consultation on a 30mph speed limit for the eastern end of the MC63 Latimer Road ,between Milk Hall Barns and Bois Mill, (part of proposal ref. 10) and the resultant delay to implementation of the recommended 40mph limits on adjacent stretches of Latimer Road and the MC34 Latimer village (proposals refs. 10 & 11). (The outcome of this additional consultation will be the subject of a future Report.)
3. **APPROVE** a 40mph limit on the central section of the B4442 Nightingales Lane. The Working Group failed to agree on a recommendation. The Head of Transport's recommendation is however that the 40mph limit should proceed.
4. **NOTE** the recommended modifications to be implemented (as described within *Appendices B and C*) to the advertised proposals for the following proposed speed limits. Legal Services have advised that as these are very minor changes they will not require further public consultation :-
  - **Ref 12, Latimer village-** potential short increase in length northwards, to include junction with bridleway ( subject to landowner's permission for terminal sign location on private land)
  - **Ref. 30: Narcot Lane-** potential short reduction in length ( less than 100 metres) of the 40 mph limit at its southern end. (This may be necessary to provide an extension to the current 30 mph limit in Chalfont St Peter, in conjunction with a cycle route scheme which is currently at consultation).
  - **Refs. 32/33: Mill Lane-** extension of the advertised 30 mph limit ( ref.32) to its junction with the A413. (for a distance of about 100 metres), instead of providing a short length of 50mph limit ( ref 33) on this length of road.
  - **Refs. 41/42 :Bottom Lane, Seer Green –** Extend the proposed 30mph limit ( ref. 41) to the village gateway ( to replace the majority of the proposed 40 mph limit in ref. 42)
5. **NOTE** the comments received as a result of the consultation. These are shown on the spreadsheet (*Appendix C*) entitled 'Area 10 speed limit review: Public Consultation responses & Working Group recommendations'. (A summary of the consultation process is given in *Appendix D*.)

6. **NOTE that due to comments received, the proposed speed limits for the service road off Lycrome Road at Lye Green ( part of ref 2) and Wilton Lane, Jordans ( part of ref 36), will not be implemented until further legal clarification of the status of these roads has been confirmed.**
7. **NOTE that monitoring will take place, within 12 months of implementation, to assess the effectiveness of the new speed limits. This will include speed measurements at selected locations, a residents' survey by telephone, (carried out by an independent market research company) and public perception questionnaires.**
8. **NOTE that the outcome of this monitoring will be used to decide whether further speed limit changes should be considered within Area 10. (This follow up review is unlikely to take place until 2011, when the initial review of Area 14 has been done)**

## **A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision**

### **Introduction**

1. This report recommends implementation of changes to existing speed limits within Area 10 of the Countywide Speed Limit Review. It describes the process by which the changes were determined, including details of consultation. It also describes how the effectiveness of these new speed limits will be influenced and measured.
2. The Countywide Speed Limit Review (SLR) commenced in March 2003. Its aim is to provide appropriate and consistent speed limits throughout Buckinghamshire. The County is divided into 14 areas for the review, (*see Background Paper 4*), prioritised according to the casualty rates on roads within them. Work on Area 10 commenced in 2004.
3. Area 10 extends from the county boundary north of Ashley Green southwards through the Chalfonts and parts of Amersham & Chesham. The southern boundary is the A40. In the east it extends to the County & Denham Parish boundaries and westwards to the A355/A404/A4154 and A416. Most of Area 10 is within Chiltern District, with a small part within South Bucks District. The following local community areas have roads within Area 10: Amersham, Beaconsfield, Chesham, Gerrards Cross, and The Chalfonts,
4. The local guidelines initially used in the review for setting speed limits took a more flexible approach than national guidance in place at that time (Circular Roads 1/93). The emphasis was more on community needs and less on the existing driven speeds on the roads, although a wide range of factors were taken into account. New National guidelines, (Circular 01/2006 'Setting Local Speed Limits'), were issued in August, 2006 (*Background Paper 1*), and earlier Area 10 proposals were reassessed against this latest guidance. This includes the recommendation that all villages should be considered for a 30mph speed limit and also that speed limits on rural roads should take crash rates into consideration.

## Consultation and the decision making process

5. Lengths of road where a change in speed limit could be appropriate were identified. This took place after site visits, analysis of data on vehicle speeds, flows and collisions, and consideration of requests received from local councils and the general public.
6. The Area 10 Working Group met on 13 October 2004 to discuss and revise these initial proposals. The group comprised several local County/District Councillors, the Thames Valley Police Traffic Management Officer and various Buckinghamshire County Council Officers.
7. The revised proposals, (See *Appendix E*), were submitted for consultation to over 50 consultees. Those consulted included district/ parish/town councils, community groups, the emergency services and representatives of all types of road user. This took place in December 2004.
8. The Working Group met on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2005 to discuss feedback from this formal consultation and to revise the speed limit proposals, where appropriate, in the light of comments received. (See *Appendix F: Proposals after consultation- February 2005*)
9. Progress in Area 10 then ceased temporarily, in order to concentrate on completion of review areas 6-9.
10. In September 2008 parish, town, district and county councillors were invited to an 'Area Briefing meeting' where they received information about the review process, the national guidance, legal and practical aspects of speed limits.
11. In 2008, revised proposals were drawn up, to take into account of both the DfT Circular 01/2006 guidance and public feedback on previously introduced limits in earlier speed limit areas. These proposals were discussed with the Head of Transport prior to a Working Group meeting, held on 28th January 2009, where it was agreed which proposals would go to public consultation. ( *Appendix G: Working Group outcome January 2009*)
12. The modified proposals were advertised in the Public Notices section of The Buckinghamshire Examiner on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009. (See *Appendix H*). This was supplemented by a press release circulated to local media; Public Notices placed ( for local residents) on lengths of roads subject to the proposals; information packs deposited at County Hall, Aylesbury, Council Offices, King George V Rd Amersham and in 6 local libraries. Large posters, (to alert drivers to the proposals), were erected at 14 points beside key roads within Area 10. The proposals were also placed on the County Council's webpages. The closing date for representations was 12th June 2009.
13. The proposals consisted mainly of 30mph and 40mph speed limits. Most limits proposed were for communities. A few speed limit reductions were proposed for roads

with high crash rates. The map in *Appendix I* shows all the proposed changes.

14. Over 300 responses were received from individuals or organisations in response to the public consultation.
15. Of the proposed new speed limits, the majority attracted a mixture of support and objections. The feedback for each proposal can be seen in *Appendix C*. In addition about one quarter of respondents made general observations about speed limit changes or enforcement. A number of requests were also made for additional changes to speed limits to be considered. These requests will be kept on file until the 'follow up' review for Area 10 takes place.
16. The Working Group met on 1<sup>th</sup> September 2009 to discuss the Public Consultation responses and to make its recommendations. ( See *Appendices A, B and C* ) . The recommendation from this meeting was to proceed with the proposals as advertised and consulted upon in April –June 2009 , apart from the following exceptions and /or amendments:-

- **Reference 2 (part):** Lye Green: (Proposed 30mph limit for **service road off eastern end of Lycrome Road** ). **On hold**, pending further investigations and mutually acceptable resolution of legal issue in relation to Chesham Town Council's existing, unsigned, 'advisory' 15mph limit in connection with its Deed of Grant of Right of Way . The 30 mph limit for Lycrome Road itself is to proceed.

- **Reference 10: MC63 Latimer Road** between Chesham and Chenies. Existing National speed limit, proposed for a 40mph speed limit at public consultation.

- **A 30mph limit was recommended for the western end, from Milk Hall Barns to Bois Mill.** Legal Services have advised that this is a 'substantial change' from the advertised 40mph limit ,due to the length of affected road and that therefore a further public consultation will be needed to obtain further comments and fulfil the legal requirements, before this 30mph limit could be approved and implemented.

-**A 40mph limit is recommended for the eastern end, between Bois Mill and Chenies,** ( as advertised ) , but its implementation to be **delayed** pending the outcome of the above consultation on the proposed 30 mph limit between Milk Hall Barns and Bois Mill.

- **Reference 11: MC34 Latimer village** ( between Latimer village name plate and Latimer crossroads) **Proposed 40mph limit agreed**, but **installation** to be **delayed** (to be put in place at the same time as the adjacent 40 mph length between Bois Mill and Chenies.)
- **Reference 12: MC34 Latimer village proposed 30mph limit. The northern endpoint of the advertised 30mph limit may be extended** by a short distance, to include a popular bridleway .This may depend on at least one of the terminal signs being erected on a post on private land ,with the landowner's formal agreement . Legal Services advice is that as the distance involved is so short, it will not be necessary to re-advertise this revised proposal.
- **Reference 20: B4442 Nightingales Lane ,Little Chalfont to Chalfont St Giles (proposed 40mph limit on the central section) Decision** to be **deferred to Cabinet Member** The Working Group failed to agree on a recommendation, other than it should either remain at National speed limit or be reduced to 40mph as advertised . The Head

of Transport's recommendation prior to the working group meeting was to proceed with the 40 mph limit, as this road length is more residential than perceived by many drivers.

- **Reference 30: Narcot Lane, Chalfont St Giles to Chalfont St Peter Proposed 40mph limit agreed and also a potential short reduction in length of the 40 mph limit at its southern( Chalfont St Peter) end.** This may be necessary to provide an extension to the current 30 mph limit in Chalfont St Peter, in conjunction with a zebra crossing/ cycle route scheme which is currently at consultation.
- **References 32/33: Mill Lane, Chalfont St Giles – Ref. 32 (proposed 30 limit) was recommended, but not Ref 33, the adjacent short 50mph limit, ( approximately 100metres) to the A413.The proposed 30 limit should instead be extended all the way to the A413.** Legal Services advice is that as the distance involved is so short, it will not be necessary to re- advertise this revised proposal.
- **Reference 36 : ( Wilton Lane only)** proceed with the proposed 30mph limit subject to further enquiries confirming the legal status of the advertised length as being appropriate for a speed limit, following comments made during consultation. The proposed 30mph limit for the rest of Ref. 36 through Jordans is to go ahead.
- **References 41/42 :Bottom Lane, Seer Green –** Extend the proposed 30mph limit ( ref. 41)southwards to the village gateway ( thus replacing the majority of the proposed 40 mph limit in ref. 42) Legal Services advice is that as the distance involved is so short, it will not be necessary to re- advertise this revised proposal.

17. The recommended speed limit changes for the approval of the Cabinet Member are specified on the plan ( *Appendix A*), summarised in the document 'Summary of proposals and working group recommendations2009' ( *Appendix B*) and stated with details of consultation feedback in the document 'Public consultation responses and working group recommendations' ( *Appendix C*).

### **Implementation, compliance and monitoring**

18. It is intended that the new speed limits should be in place by the end of March 2010.
19. Drivers need to be encouraged to keep within speed limits.The Police have limited resources to carry out enforcement countywide and there are strict restrictions on the use of safety cameras.
20. To raise drivers' awareness of speed limits within Area 10, speed limit 'roundel' markings will be provided on the road surface at each point where a driver passes from a higher limit to a lower speed limit (except where a Parish Council have specifically requested them not to be provided, or where it is not practical to install them ).
21. Where appropriate locations can be identified, a vehicle activated sign(VAS) will be installed, on a temporary basis (for 1-2 weeks at a time) ,on each road where a new speed limit has been provided. This process will be repeated until the 2 signs available are required for new speed limits introduced within Area 11.
22. Where a 30mph limits is extended on roads with a system of street lighting, it is not permitted to provide 30mph repeater signs. To alert drivers to the new limit, signs stating 'New 30mph speed limits in force' will be provided on such roads. These signs have be

located as near as possible to the point where the original 30mph limit ended.

23. In addition, Speed Indicating Devices or other vehicle-activated signs as available can be used by local communities/neighbourhood police officers to remind drivers of their speed and alert those who are unintentionally exceeding the posted limit. The 'Make the Commitment' campaign operated by the Road Safety team is already underway, to encourage drivers to make a conscious commitment to keep within all speed limits. The Community Speedwatch scheme also operates within Buckinghamshire. *Background Paper 5* lists ways of dealing with speeding which can be used by local communities.

24. The effectiveness of the changes to speed limits will be assessed by: -

a) Quantitative monitoring:

- Comparison of 'before' and 'after' speeds at sample sites will take place after the new speed limits are installed
- Monitoring of crash records. (At least 3 years 'after' data will be required for most road lengths for any meaningful comparison of 'before' & 'after' crash rates to be made, but data collection will commence before this)

b) Qualitative monitoring:

- by an independent telephone survey;
- an on-line self completion survey;
- a questionnaire for local councils

and also through informal feedback, to establish whether communities and the general public perceive that the speed limit review has been effective in Area 10.

## **B. Other options available, and their pros and cons**

25. Area 10 is an integral part of the Countywide Speed Limit Review. Consistency of approach is important and therefore in this context consideration of other options for speed management and review in Area 10, beyond those already referred to elsewhere in this report, is not applicable.

## **C. Resource implications**

26. It is anticipated that a cost in the region of £70,000 will be necessary to complete the review for Area 10, which has been included within this year's Capital Programme. A further £30,000 is estimated to carry out post implementation monitoring, evaluation and possible future modifications. (in 2010/11) The following costs are estimated to implement the new limits in Area 10.

- Advertising the final Traffic Regulation Orders (£5,000).
- Installing the required signing to give lawful effect to the new speed limits and to remedy anomalies in the existing signing (£60,000).
- Providing roundel markings at the speed limit entry points (£5,000)
- Monitoring and evaluation, estimated at £10,000 is scheduled for 2010/11. A further estimated £20,000 for post implementation modifications will need to be accommodated post implementation of Area 14 (currently anticipated by the end of 2010).

27. There will be longer-term sign maintenance costs arising from the additional speed limits being provided and road marking costs for the renewal of carriageway roundel markings. Sign replacement costs are hard to estimate but could be in the region of £5- 10,000 over

a ten year period and roundel replacement up to £8000. These costs will have an impact upon the maintenance budget.

#### **D. Value for Money Self Assessment**

28. Effectiveness: This activity will produce outcomes for residents and stakeholders which they have indicated through consultations that they regard as important. There are means of measuring effectiveness. This therefore attracts a level A rating.
29. Efficiency: The approach will ensure that the Council will be externally assessed as being a regional leader in this field in terms of the way the activity is carried out. This therefore attracts a B rating.
30. Economy: There are currently no national comparisons available for this activity. Therefore a rating could not be applied for economy.

#### **E. Legal implications**

31. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services will arrange for the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders to be sealed and brought into operation.
32. Those persons who have made representations against the implementation of some of these speed limits will be informed of the outcome of the Public Consultation and the decision taken from this Report.
33. The opportunity has also been taken during the Area 10 review to check existing signs and Traffic Regulation Orders for all existing speed limits (where changes are not proposed), to ensure that all are legally enforceable. The Department for Transport has issued an instruction to all highway authorities to confirm that action is to be taken on this matter. Any anomalies will thus be dealt with as part of the review - if carried out in isolation this work would have been a significant project in its own right with resource implications, especially for staff/consultant time.

#### **F. Property implications**

34. No known implications.

#### **G. Other implications/issues**

35. The speed limit review process for Area 10 has followed the policy laid down in the Executive Summary of the Buckinghamshire Speed Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in December 2002 (*Background Paper 2*) and the updated policy and procedure for the countywide speed limit review applying from December 2008 (*Background Paper 3*)
36. In September 2005, the Cabinet Member for Transport approved an extension of the Speed Limit Review completion date, to the effect that speed limits would be installed throughout Areas 1 to 14 by the end of 2008. Subsequent budget restrictions have

precluded this being achieved. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006 it was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Community and Environmental Services that a completion date of 2012 was provisionally forecast for revised speed limits (including post implementation reviews) in all fourteen areas.

37. It is anticipated that the proposed speed limits will have the effect of reducing vehicle speeds, which in turn reduces the risk of collisions and/or their severity. Reduced speed limits may encourage vulnerable road users to walk; cycle and horse ride for local journeys and leisure. This could assist with activities such as promotion of walking or cycling to school and could make a contribution to congestion reduction if car use is reduced for some journeys.
38. The quality of life should be improved for those in communities that currently are subject to the National Speed Limit. The effectiveness of many of the speed limits will, however be directly related to on-going activities undertaken by the Road Safety team and the Police in relation to speed awareness and enforcement, including activities such as use of vehicle activated signs and initiatives developed by local Neighbourhood Action Groups.
39. Potential Quiet Lanes were initially identified as part of the Area 10 Speed Limit Review. In February 2007 the Cabinet Member for Transport approved that work on potential Quiet Lane schemes be discontinued and that areas previously considered for such schemes be re-reviewed as part of the Speed Limit Review. Such lanes in Area 10 were investigated and no appropriate lower speed limits were identified for roads previously designated as Potential Quiet Lanes.
40. An Equality Impact Assessment, (*Background Paper 6*), has been carried out for the Countywide Speed Limit Review. No adverse equality impact within Area 10 requires specific action.

## **H. Feedback from consultation Local Area Forums and Local Member views**

41. Details of the consultation process are given in earlier paragraphs.( paras 5 to 17 )
42. A key element of the review has been the extent of involvement with parish councils, Local Members and the public. Much interaction has taken place, both formal and through unsolicited emails, letters and phone calls from councillors and members of the public.
43. Parish Councils were asked at the start of the review for their initial requests for speed limit changes. They were given opportunities to submit views at the Formal and Public Consultation stages. Updates on the Speed Limit Review were also given to Local Committees.
44. All Local Members within Area 10 were invited to be directly involved in the decision making process, in the capacity of voting members on the Area 10 Working Group. Proposals were circulated in advance of meetings and any member being unable to attend was invited to submit comments and observations to be taken into account by those present at the meetings. District Councils' representatives were also invited to Working Group meetings.

## **I. Communication issues**

45. A letter will be sent by Legal Services to each person/organisation who responded to the Public Consultation to inform them of the decision of the Cabinet Member with reference to implementation of the advertised speed limits. In addition, a copy of this Report and its appendices will be made available on the County Council's public website
46. Local Members, Parish, Town and District Councils will be informed by a standard letter/email of the outcome of this Report and directed to the website for further information.

#### **J. Progress Monitoring**

47. Measurements will be taken of the speeds and collisions in the Area of the review following implementation and compared with data obtained prior to the new speed limits being in place. This will be used as part of the post-implementation 'follow –up' review for Area 10, scheduled in the Casualty Reduction business plan to take place in 2011.

#### **Appendices**

- A - Plan entitled 'Area 10 Speed Limit Review Recommendations for Implementation ( Nov 2009 )' Drawing Ref. SLR/10/PC/09/CMD
  - B - Area 10 speed limit review: Summary of Public Consultation Proposals and Working Group Recommendations 2009.
  - C - Area 10 speed limit review: Public Consultation responses & Working Group recommendations 2009
  - D - Summary of the consultation process.
  - E - Outcome of Working Group meeting October 2004
  - F - Proposals after consultation February 2005
  - G - Working Group meeting outcome January 2009
  - H - Public consultation Proposals ( TRO Notice) April 2009
  - I - Map of public consultation proposals April 2009.
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#### **Background Papers**

1. Department for Transport Circular 01/2006 'Setting local speed limits'
2. Speed Management Strategy December 2002

3. Speed limit review policy and procedure December 2008
  4. Map showing the 14 Speed Limit Review Areas
  5. Methods of encouraging compliance with speed limits
  6. Equality Impact Assessment on speed limit review process
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***Your questions and views***

***If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.***

***If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 18 January 2010. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 383610), Fax (to 01296 382538), or e-mail to [cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk)***