

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL – UPPER MEON VALLEY WARD

Parish update for January 2024

Traffic management policy update: 20mph speed limits & zones

In January 2024 HCC issued an update on the 20mph speed limits and zones which included a mechanism for Parish and Town Councils to request 20mph speed restrictions.

The revised policy moves away from considering 20mph speed limits and zones from a purely casualty reduction perspective to one that considers the strategic function of the road, encouraging active and sustainable transport options, an improved road environment and better compliance.

20mph speed limits on roads that have a strategic function, where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function, will only be permitted where stringent technical requirements need to be met. On the other hand, there are less requirements needed to be met on minor roads such as residential roads which are well suited to the introduction of 20mph speed limits.

The revised policy position sets out the “before” mean speed thresholds for the different hierarchy of roads where 20mph limits can be considered without the need for additional traffic management measures.

The thresholds will be 24mph on the Primary and Secondary Strategic Road Network and also those parts of the Primary Distributor Road Network that have a strategic function and 26mph on the Secondary Distributor Road Network and Local and Minor Road Network which do not have a strategic function.

Where “before” mean speeds are above the relevant threshold, supporting measures will need to be explored to enable a 20mph speed limit to be progressed/introduced.

Speed Limit Reminder/Speed Indicator Device (SLR/SID) ‘before’ mean speed data can be used as evidence for consideration of a 20mph speed limit on those roads that do not have a strategic function.

A relaxation of the current requirement to move SLR and SID signs every 2-3 weeks is proposed to allow devices to remain and be re-deployed at locations giving more flexibility to address key locations of community concern.

It is anticipated that wider use of electronic speed signs will play an important part in helping manage traffic speeds, particularly on strategic routes that would not be suited to a 20mph limit.

The proposed revised policy position seeks to enable wider use of 20mph restrictions in appropriate locations where drivers are most likely to respect a lower speed limit. However, this will only be considered on a full cost recovery basis, but it was agreed that section 106 and CIL funding could be considered to support applications.

A very interesting fact from the HCC report that does make you question the cost/benefits of 20 mph speed limits is that the Task-and-Finish Working Group were presented with updated 'before' and 'after' speed data for the Winchester City Centre which showed that 'before' speeds were 21.4 mph and the latest 'after' speeds recorded in 2022 were 20.9 mph resulting in a 0.5 mph reduction and there were no further changes from the earlier 'after' speed data.

This probably reinforces the theory that rather than 20 mph speed limit signage, other traffic management measures that makes a motorist feel they are entering an area that requires slower speeds to navigate, such as a sense of the road narrowing by the introduction of gateways for example, will ultimately achieve better results and could be considerably cheaper.

Southern Water - Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force

Councillors recently received a briefing where Southern Water explained their ongoing work to reduce storm overflow releases by finding new and innovative solutions to deliver infrastructure that's more resilient and adaptable. Southern Water established a Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force in November 2021, and the team has ambitious targets to meet.

The Task Force is responsible for delivering six pathfinder projects over the next two years with £35m of accelerated funding agreed with Offwat, as well as delivering a regional plan to reduce storm overflows between now and 2030.

If you would like to understand the problem more and some of the solutions being explored please follow this link: <https://youtu.be/WtCyMY9G3ug>

Waste and Recycling update

In response to the Council's 'go greener faster' priority, the Environment Act 2021 and the government's 'Simpler Recycling' announcement in October 2023, the council proposes to, and must by law, introduce changes to the waste and recycling service that allow residents to recycle more, including food waste, and wishes to do so in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

A recent consultation exercise provided strong evidence that our residents care about recycling, want to recycle more, and want to keep it simple. In response to this and the government's latest guidance, and following an options appraisal, it is being recommended that the council introduce a co-mingled recycling collection and a separate weekly food waste collection by 31st March 2026.

Further consultation and engagement detailing these proposed changes and how they impact residents will be completed before any change is implemented. Discussion of all these changes is ongoing and includes consideration of financial and carbon costs, infrastructure, and timescales for implementation, as well as changes to the service offered

by our waste disposal authority, Hampshire County Council. Further updates on HCC's county wide decision is likely in March 2024.

Kind Regards

Jerry Pett
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Winchester City Council Ward Members for Upper Meon Valley