

ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 23 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT ON: 20MPH SPEED LIMITS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 369-2015

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for a city wide consultation exercise on potential areas where 20mph speed limits could be implemented within the City of Dundee. These areas are primarily in residential areas of the city, but exclude the city's principal road network on the basis that a 20mph speed limit on these routes would not be feasible or appropriate.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposals contained in this report for a city wide consultation exercise; these include potential areas that could be suitable for 20mph speed limits and a principal road network which would be excluded from any 20mph proposals.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct funding implications associated with this report as the cost of the consultation exercise will be contained within the City Development Department Revenue Budget; however, any extensive introduction of 20mph zones and mandatory limits within the city would have capital and revenue costs for the Council and these will be reported when the results of the consultation are brought back to Committee.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council is committed to making the roads in the city safer whilst encouraging people to use more sustainable modes of transport. Road accidents in the city are at an all time low, however, the Council still needs to focus on reducing road casualties to support the national targets set by the Scottish Government. At present the majority of residential areas are set at the national speed limit for urban roads which is 30mph, some areas have been reduced to a 20mph speed limit but this normally requires extensive traffic calming measures to be introduced at considerable capital cost to the Council.
- 4.2 The introduction of 20mph speed limits in residential areas could have benefits for the local community and can improve road safety and assist the encouragement of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling. The introduction of a 20mph limit can indicate that there is a commitment to ensure vulnerable road users are prioritised over motor vehicles and this may support the creation of shared spaces and social streets to encourage active travel and create places that people can enjoy. The Council also supports the principle of 20 mph speed limits within new residential developments such as Western Gateway, Lothian Crescent and the new schools on Harestane Road where appropriate road design and traffic calming measures have been incorporated at the initial design stage.
- 4.3 Normally any decision to lower speed limits to 20mph takes into account the need to avoid relying on extensive police enforcement; 20mph limits are not routinely enforced by the police unless specifically justified in the interest of casualty reduction. The only exception to this is the enforcement of 20mph speed limits outside schools. The Scottish Government has recently published updated guidance for local authorities to use in promoting 20mph speed

limits and officers have used this guidance following approval of Report 43-2015 to the City Development Committee on 23 February 2015.

- 4.4 It is acknowledged that there are societal pressures to reduce traffic speed on many roads as there are concerns that many vehicles exceed the current 30mph speed limit for most roads within the city. Therefore, the Council wishes to undertake a consultation on the potential for 20mph speed limits within existing residential areas in order to fully gauge public opinion on such a policy change. Any new limits will impact on everyone in the city, both residents and businesses and it is important for the Council to consult widely and impartially on this important matter. These areas under consideration are mainly residential areas in the city and have been identified on the Plan in Appendix A.
- 4.5 While there are many roads in the city where a 20mph limit may be acceptable and appropriate, there are other more strategic roads where a higher speed limit is more appropriate as the road network also needs to serve residents and visitors who need to make longer distance journeys through and around the city. These more strategic roads are vitally important as they facilitate movement to/from key areas of the city so that people can access a variety of services such as employment, healthcare, leisure and retail areas. The city requires a reliable and efficient principal road network so goods and people can move relatively easily throughout the city. These roads need to allow larger vehicles such as HGVs, Public Transport and Emergency Vehicles to travel through and around the city. The principal road network is based on the 'classified road' network together with other strategically important roads within the city and these have also been identified on the Plan in Appendix A.

Initial Consultations With Key Agencies

- 4.6 The Council is aware that while it has the power to change road speed limits using Traffic Regulation Orders it is still important to realise that by doing so it will have direct impact on other key agencies and organisations such as the emergency services and public transport operators; and so, the Council has had initial discussions with these organisations regarding the implementation of 20mph speed limits in residential areas.
- a The Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) understand and agree with principles of introducing 20mph as it possibly could help in improving road safety and encouraging sustainable modes of transport. While they supported 20mph limits in residential areas they recognised that 20mph and associated traffic calming could impact their operations quite significantly if it was applied to the main principal roads throughout the city as this would hinder ambulances attending urgent emergencies where rapid responses are essential to reach potential life threatening situations. The SAS highlighted the need for a strategic road network, which has higher speed limits, to allow their vehicles making longer journeys within the city to do so more quickly and efficiently as emergency response times were critical. The SAS indicated that the introduction of 20mph limits requires very careful consideration and while they understand the principles of 20mph speed limits they requested that they are consulted on all future 20mph limits/traffic calming projects so that any issues can be addressed at the earliest stages of the design process.
- b The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) again understand the principles of 20mph speed limits for residential areas and how it can support road safety objectives and promote the uptake of more sustainable forms of Transport. In a similar manner to comments made by the SAS the Fire Service indicated that 20mph limits in the majority of residential areas will have a small degree of impact on SFRS operations. They indicated that a principal road network would be required to allow faster journeys throughout the city although they could not give specific comments until more information of the 20mph limits and traffic calming proposals were available. Again, the SFRS requested to be consulted on all 20mph/traffic calming proposals that are progressed by Dundee City Council.

- c The Council has also had initial discussions with Police Scotland (PS) on proposed 20mph limits and they indicated that the introduction of these new lower speed limits will have a direct impact on PS as they are the only organisation that undertakes traffic speed enforcement. PS position on 20mph speed limits is detailed in the new Scottish Government 20mph guidance published in January 2015 and this reflects their position on the introduction of 20mph limits in Dundee.
- d Initial consultations have been undertaken with both National Express and Stagecoach as the main bus operators in the city. Both companies acknowledged that there could be benefits in road safety terms from the implementation of 20mph speed limits by the reduction of accidents in residential areas. However, as commercial organisations they informed the Council that 20mph limits on bus corridors would likely have a direct impact on bus journey times and bus timetables. This could require additional resources to maintain the existing timetables or they may have to reduce bus frequency and this would impact both passengers and the viability of some service operations. Overall they considered that 20mph would have to be implemented in a very careful manner so not to affect bus operations significantly.

Traffic Calming to Support New 20mph Speed Limits

- 4.7 Any new 20mph limits should not require additional or rely upon extensive police enforcement as the new limits should essentially be self-enforcing due to the existing road geometry. Scottish Government guidance indicates that any roads with average speeds above 24mph would require speed reducing measures as signage alone will not reduce traffic speeds sufficiently. Given the number and size of areas where 20mph could be installed in Dundee, this guidance would normally mean that extensive traffic calming would be required right across the city to reduce traffic speeds.
- 4.8 It is estimated that citywide traffic calming would require significant capital resources.. Traffic calming and signage also have long term maintenance issues and road narrowing and speed humps/cushions can impact on Road Maintenance operations both in traffic management terms and increased maintenance costs. Traffic Calming will also likely affect the time required to deliver the current Winter Maintenance service and potentially increase the overall cost for this core service; clearance of snow at locations of speed cushions and humps can be an issue and while this is relatively limited at present a significant increase would have direct impact on current treatment processes. The installation of traffic calming by vertical deflection (speed humps) can on occasion have negative impact on neighbourhoods in terms of increased vehicle noise (engine noise and braking) and vibration transfer to adjacent buildings.
- 4.9 For the above reasons, it is not proposed that any widespread implementation of 20mph limits is accompanied by extensive traffic calming measures. The consultation exercise will be based upon a proposal which involves the minimum necessary signage only along with a public information campaign seeking public recognition and self-enforcement of the 20mph scheme throughout Dundee. If implemented, this position will be monitored and necessary follow-up traffic calming measures will be brought to Committee as and when required and justified.

5 CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that the proposed consultation exercise will use a web based approach with an online questionnaire although the questionnaire will also be available by hard copy direct from the Council. All of the information will be available online so that interested parties can familiarise themselves with the proposals before commenting.
- 5.2 It is further proposed that the public's attention will be drawn to a number of streets where it is anticipated that there will be a diverse range of opinions and/or where there is likely to be a call from residents for a strategic route to be included within the 20mph scheme. The

purpose of this is to alert the public to these potentially controversial cases and to encourage as many people as possible to express their opinion either for or against. Examples of such cases could be Johnston Avenue, Perth Road, Tullideph Road and Elmwood Road.

- 5.3 The consultation will start late November 2015 and run until late January 2016. A report will be brought back in early 2016 to City Development Committee.

6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major adverse issues.

7 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report. The Emergency Services and Public Transport operators have also been consulted in preparing this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

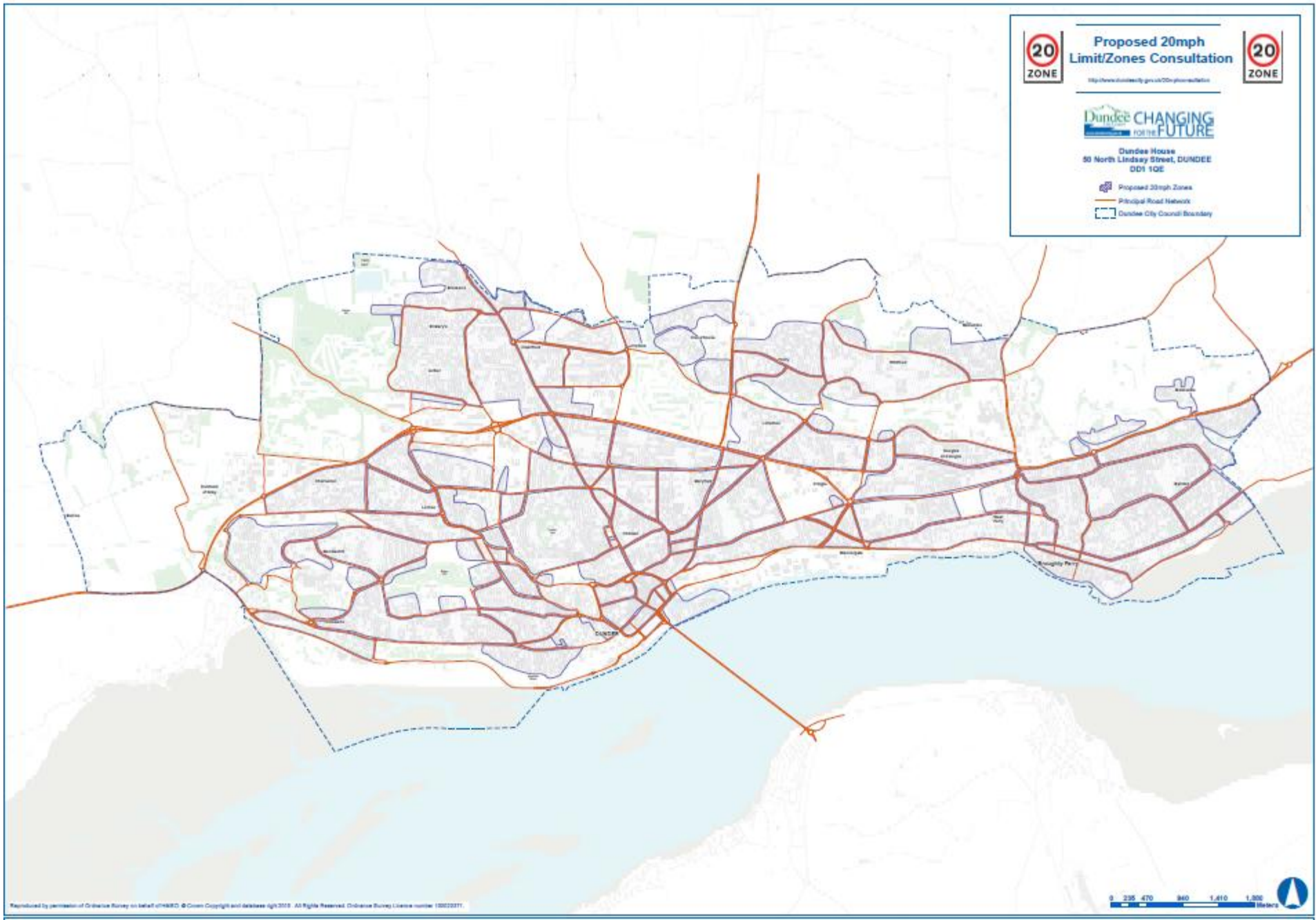
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NHG/EG/KM

10 November 2015

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**Proposed 20mph
Limit/Zones Consultation**

<http://www.dundee.gov.uk/20mphconsultation>



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-  Proposed 20mph Zones
-  Principal Road Network
-  Dundee City Council Boundary

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