

Conservative Group Amendment to Liberal Democrat Motion
Item 11, Oldham Council Meeting of Wednesday 13th December 2023

Proposed: Cllr. Luke Lancaster

Seconded: Cllr. Pam Byrne

Council notes that:

- Speed limits on ~~many of our Borough's~~ ~~Britain's roads~~ are 60% higher than in Europe, residential and otherwise, are inappropriately high, and permit excessive speeds.
- Issues with speeding are not limited to residential roads, but all roads across the highway network.
- More than half of all accident casualties occur on roads with 30mph limits.
- A pedestrian is 7 times more likely to die if they are hit by a vehicle travelling at 30mph than they are at 20mph, rising to 10 times more likely if aged 60 or older.
- There are benefits to ~~R~~reducing speed limits on residential roads, including ~~has been found to~~ reductions in air pollution, the incidents of accidents, and the numbers of fatalities and serious injuries that result.
- Over 20 million citizens live in local authorities in the UK which have adopted or are adopting a default speed limit of 20mph on residential roads.
- The default ~~s~~Speed limits of 20mph has been adopted by other local authorities without the need for ~~require~~ the implementation of physical calming measures, and active enforcement, namely permanent cameras, otherwise they are largely permissive and general speeds still exceed the limit.
- Road safety experts from 130 countries adopted the 'Stockholm Declaration' recommending 20mph as the preferred default speed limit on residential roads in February 2020, and this was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in August 2020.
- The recent Welsh Government action to introduce default 20mph speed limits across their nation has resulted in great public opposition, with October 2023 polling conducted by Redfield & Wilton Strategies showing that 59% were against the change (only 29% in favour), and more than 450,000 people having signed a petition to the Senedd calling for the new policy to be reversed.
- Default 20mph limits risk the perception of arbitrary restrictions being applied on responsible motorists, and widespread disobedience with the speed limit; as well as longer-standing traffic generating greater emissions.
- 20mph zones are most appropriate and effective when implemented around schools, town and village centres, and locations of high pedestrian traffic and strong, local road safety concerns.

Council further recognise that:

- Covid-19 and the challenges that have come with building back from it demonstrate that one of our key concerns must be to address all aspects of public health.
- This should include lowering the default speed of motor vehicles on residential roads to reduce the danger they pose to residents and the pollution they emit.
- Such a measure should be comprehensive and cover all residential roads in the Council Area — unless there are specific and unique exceptions that necessitate a faster speed limit.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Establish an all-group working party to seek to implement a Council-wide 20mph

~~speed limit on residential roads as soon as possible. This should include identifying roads where the lower speed limit may not be appropriate and exploring enforcement measures such as average speed cameras and Community Speedwatch initiatives.~~

~~• Ask the Chief Executive to write to the leaders of all other Councils in the region that haven't already implemented 20mph speed limits as the default in their authority area, and to write to Highways England requesting that speeds are reduced on sections of the motorway network in our Council area to tackle pollution.~~

- Engage with residents in all communities across the Borough to establish locations which may be suitable for lower speed limits, including more 20mph zones which cover residential roads, and roads which are presently of higher and even national speed limits.
- Urgently review the effectiveness of existing 20mph zones, with a view to strengthening through physical traffic-calming measures and enforcement actions.
- Demonstrate flexibility in responding to requests for permanent speed cameras, rather than refusing simply on the grounds of rigid criteria.
- Utilise the recent £544,000 funding award from HM Government to perform a programme of pothole repairs and road improvements, which in turn deliver road safety benefit.

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- Issues with speeding are not limited to residential roads, but all roads across the highway network.
- There are benefits to reducing speed limits on residential roads, including reductions in the incidents of accidents, and the numbers of fatalities and serious injuries that result.
- Speed limits require the implementation of physical calming measure and active enforcement, namely permanent cameras, otherwise they are largely permissive and general speeds still exceed the limit.
- The recent Welsh Government action to introduce default 20mph speed limits across their nation has resulted in great public opposition, with October 2023 polling conducted by Redfield & Wilton Strategies showing that 59% were against the change (only 29% in favour), and more than 450,000 people having signed a petition to the Senedd calling for the new policy to be reversed.
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