

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

10 APRIL 2019

AGENDA ITEM 9 – PETITION – 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ACROSS FANT

Briefing Note

A petition in the following terms is to be presented at the Council meeting on 10 April 2019:

"We support the implementation of a 20mph speed limit across Fant in the roads bounded by Tonbridge Road and the River Medway. We believe that this will make our environment safer for all residents and people who travel through our communities."

The Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee (SPST) has looked at the possibility of implementing 20mph schemes on several previous occasions. Following discussion of the matter of 20mph speed limits and zones at Full Council in December 2015 it was resolved to "Request that the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee review all the available evidence; consider the implementation of 20mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone; and refer the findings to the Cabinet Member at Kent County Council." The most recent report to SPST was in March 2018. As part of this officers sought comprehensive advice from Kent County Council who, as the Highways Authority, would be responsible for identifying, assessing, funding and implementing any schemes. KCC has a clear policy regarding the funding of 20mph schemes and as there is no identified funding for these schemes at present, each location is assessed on evidence and potential benefit. The development of 20mph schemes is therefore primarily funded through the County's Casualty Reduction Strategy or the Combined Member Grant.

In November 2018, following additional published government research into the potential benefits of 20mph schemes, KCC's Cabinet Member for transport, Councillor Mike Whiting, committed to reviewing the Kent policy for the implementation of 20mph zones. This review will result in a draft policy being taken to the KCC Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee meeting in May 2019. An item will be brought to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board regarding the outcomes of the review and the potential consideration of schemes in Maidstone Borough once it has been produced.

The Kent County Council 20mph policy indicates that to introduce 20mph speed limits without providing additional traffic calming infrastructure the existing mean speed must be below 24mph. Therefore, a traffic speed survey will be required to ascertain the existing average vehicle speeds. This survey is to be funded by whoever is promoting the scheme. The cost of a traffic speed survey is likely to be around £300 per location although this can vary.