

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 10 June 2021

Report of the Head of Service - Highways

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Chorley Rural West; Cleveleys
South & Carleton; Moss Side &
Farington; Ormskirk; Pendle
Rural; Preston East; Preston
Rural; Skelmersdale East;
South Ribble East; Thornton &
Hambleton; West Lancashire
East; West Lancashire West;
Wyre Rural East;

Lancashire County Council (Various Roads, Various Locations, Chorley, Pendle, Preston, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre) (Revocations, 20mph, 30mph, 40mph and 50mph Speed Limits, February 2020 (No1)) Order 202*

(Appendices 'A' - 'L' refer)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

Following investigations and a public consultation, it is proposed to make a Speed Limit Order to reduce a number of speed restrictions on various roads within Chorley, Pendle, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre to improve the safety and operation of the public highway network. The order further clarifies and simplifies a number of speed limit orders within Chorley, Pendle, Preston, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre which have been highlighted by Lancashire Constabulary as requiring amendment to allow for effective enforcement.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the proposals for speed restrictions on various lengths of road within the Chorley, Pendle, Preston, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre Districts as detailed within this report and as set out in the Modified Draft Order (Appendix 'J'), Plans (Appendices 'C' to 'I') and Statement of Reasons

(Appendices 'K' and 'L').

Background and Advice

It is proposed to clarify and simplify a number of Speed Limit Orders to improve the safety and operation of the public highway network as well as to allow for effective enforcement by Lancashire Constabulary. In addition, it is proposed to reduce the speed limit on a number of roads within the districts of Chorley, Pendle, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre. A detailed statement of reasons for each proposal is contained within Appendix 'K'.

Consultations

Formal consultation was carried out between 15 December 2020 to 14 January 2021, during which the proposed order was advertised in local newspapers and notices were displayed on site for all areas where new restrictions were proposed. The divisional county councillors were consulted alongside statutory consultees and the consultation documents posted on the council's website.

During the consultation period objections were received with regard to two elements of the proposal: those for Ulnes Walton Lane, Ulnes Walton and Moss Side; and Bluebell Way, Houghton. Details of this consultation are contained within the Notice of Proposal (Appendix 'A'), Plans (Appendices 'C' to 'H') and Statement of Reasons (Appendix 'K').

A second formal consultation was carried out between 2 March 2021 to 30 March 2021 to rectify an issue that had arisen as a result of an administrative error regarding the proposals on Ulnes Walton Lane, Ulnes Walton and Moss Side. This consultation also included the removal of the proposed reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on Ulnes Walton Lane, Ulnes Walton. Details of this consultation are contained within the Notice of Proposal (Appendix 'B'), Plan (Appendix 'I') and Statement of Reasons (Appendix 'L').

Objections

Ulnes Walton Lane, Ulnes Walton and Moss Side

Eight objections were received expressing concern and disagreement with the proposed increase in the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph. Particular concerns were raised with regard to the general safety of residents, a nearby 20mph speed limit and school, as well as concerns that the existing speed limits are not being complied with. An online petition was raised receiving a total of 344 signatures on the same grounds.

One respondent further commented that they believed the speed limit along the entire length of Ulnes Walton Lane should be reduced from 40mph to 30mph.

Officer comments on the objections

A response was sent to all objectors explaining that the proposal does not intend to increase the speed limit at any point on Ulnes Walton Lane and that the proposal to increase the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph was a result of an administrative error. The response also detailed how speed limits are reviewed and objectors were informed of where these types of enquiries should be made, as this was not within the scope of the proposal. Responses were received from three of the objectors withdrawing their objections as they were satisfied with the confirmation that there would be no increase to the speed limits on this road. No response was received from the remaining five objectors.

The online petition against the proposed speed limit increase has been updated by its creator informing signatories that the proposed speed limit increase was an error and that no such speed limit increase is to be introduced.

With consideration to the scope of this proposal, and that there is currently no safety data to indicate that the current speed limits are not appropriate, it is considered that the proposal to retain the existing speed limits present on Ulnes Walton Lane is correct.

Bluebell Way, Preston

The objection states that the existing speed limit at this location is too high. The objector states that traffic exiting the M6 motorway tends to travel at excessive speed and that currently there is a speeding problem along adjacent Longridge Road, with drivers being unable to stop in time for the nearby zebra crossing, and at the pelican crossing near Ribbleton Library. The objector also states that the Guild Wheel shared walking/cycle route passes along the footways of Bluebell Way and that a reduction from the current speed limit would be safer and less intimidating for vulnerable users.

Officer comments on the objections

The current speed limit on Bluebell Way is set in accordance with the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013: Setting local speed limits. A 40mph speed Limit on Bluebell Way, a primary distributor road linking traffic from the higher speed motorway, is a normal arrangement to assist drivers to reduce their speeds as they re-join the normal highway network that is repeated at many Motorway Junctions across the country.

To arrive at the areas on Longridge Road indicated by the objector, drivers leaving the M6 Motorway would have to travel from the exit slip road at the Fulwood Row roundabout, travel westwards along Bluebell Way, pass through 6 sets of traffic signal controls including one pedestrian crossing and a large multi-lane roundabout. At any or all of these, drivers may have to stop as required due to the signals or queuing traffic. This serves to effectively slow traffic down well before it reaches Longridge Road where there is a further roundabout. With consideration to this, hazards/collisions cannot be substantially linked to a speed limit some distance away, 2.80km to Gamull and 3.30km at Ribbleton Library.

The footpaths along Bluebell Way are sufficiently wide enough to offer ample refuge to those using these and who do not wish to be near the roadside. In addition, information supplied by the Police is that they have no reported incidents or complaints from pedestrians or cyclists using these footways.

The overall suggestion for a lower 30mph speed limit along Bluebell Way and Longridge Road was discussed with the Police Liaison Officer and he commented as follows:

"My opinion on behalf of the Constabulary is the speed limit for Bluebell Way is correctly set at 40mph. This follows DfT guidance with the look and feel of the road but also is reflected in the nature of the collision data. I'm also of the opinion the road acts as a buffer in acclimatising vehicles having left the motorway network to the local speed limit of the local roads. I believe the level of compliance for a lower speed limit would be significantly reduced. That would then put additional pressure on the highway authority for additional engineering work to gain compliance as the collision data at present does not support significant enforcement, which in the eyes of the public may be seen as nothing more than income generation.

The Constabulary would not support a reduction in speed limit on Bluebell Way. This would contradict the DfT Setting Local Speed Limits guidance and is not appropriate for a road of this nature."

It is considered that this work to clarify the 40mph speed limit is correct and that there is no justification to reduce the speed limit on this length of highway.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The cost of the Speed Limit Order will be funded from the 2021/22 Highways budget for new signs and lines at an estimated cost of £8,000.

Risk management

Road safety may be compromised should the proposed speed limit reductions not be approved.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		