

RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

[PUBLIC]

A Special Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in the Boardroom of the Town Hall on Monday, 7th September, 2020, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. A. G. Cowie, Mrs. M. B. Quayle, and Messrs' N. P. Howard, J. McGuinness, A. J. Oldham, L. Parker, F. B. R. Williams and W. Young.

Apologies: Mrs. J. Wedgwood, and Messrs' Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood and W. Hankin

The Town Clerk and Technical Services Manager were in attendance.

(2020/21:115) Ramsey Town Traffic Speed Limits:

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Nigel Downing, Highways Asset Engineer, and Mr. Andy Gray, from the Department of Infrastructure.

Mr. Downing provided an introduction stating that speed limits are not the exclusive means of managing road safety and that they cannot be relied upon in isolation. Limits do have a place in conjunction with other measures; other countries have seen success where limits have been introduced, and it is recognised that limits may become more important as technology moves forward, for instance for self-running cars, in some areas this might result in limits being amended both down and up where appropriate.

Mr. Downing is leading Governments 20mph zone initiative, the Department of Infrastructure is of the view that there is scope to introduce 20mph zones in certain locations and hopes the change the message to road users in town centres that they are entering areas shared with their users (pedestrians, mobility users, cyclists etc.). This initiative was introduced around 18 months ago by Minister Harmer, discussion has already taken place with Castletown, Port St Mary and Peel, and proposals are being progressed in those areas. The newly appointed Minister Baker has asked that the initiative be accelerated. From a technical perspective there is potential for a number of quick fixes both in Ramsey and other areas which the Department hopes to progress.

It was noted that new residential developments have 20mph zones which are designed as being self-enforcing. The Manual for Manx Road requires all new estate designs to meet that standard.

In relation to Ramsey initial consideration has taken place identifying 8 areas with scope for the introduction of 20mph zones. The approach is to avoid designation of individual roads so that users would enter a wider speed zone to avoid confusion. 20mph limits would not generally be introduced on "A" class roads or heavy goods routes.



(2020/21:115) Ramsey Town Traffic Speed Limits:

It was noted that the Commission has previously requested that consideration be given to designating Parliament Street as a 20mph area. It was also commented that the existing traffic calming table tops provided as part of the regeneration scheme are not considered to be well designed, and have been a source of concern for some time. Mr. Downing advised that the standard gradient for a traffic calming table top was 1:13 or 1:14, that generally a height of 75mm would be suitable to achieve 20mph speeds. The table top features would need to be reviewed and also data collected through speed counters to establish the existing user speeds as part of the zone design consideration.

Traffic data for West Quay and South Promenade was available which showed an 85% percentile for West Quay of around 25.6mph, and for Queen's Promenade of 30 mph; generally a 85% percentile speed of 24mph was expected to be experienced in 20mph zones. Members commented that they would not wish to see a 20mph restriction placed upon Queen's Promenade. It was noted that West Quay would be reviewed as part of the scheme presently being considered for that area.

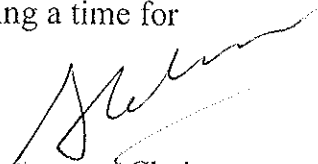
Mr. Cowie asked whether the environmental impact of traffic calming measures had been assessed. Mr. Downing advised that chicanes and priority traffic features take up space and take parking away; it was recognised that there are some environmental impacts related to emissions and speed humps but also that these will change over time i.e. increased use of electric vehicles, mobility scooters, electric scooters etc.

The meeting discussed the principle of establishing a 20mph zone in the town centre area being bounded by West Quay, Bowring Road, Albert Terrace/Road, Waterloo Road and Queen's Promenade, and agreed that this would be acceptable. It was noted that the Commission already supported a 20mph restriction for Parliament Street and that to the greatest extent it was neither practical to travel over 20mph on the remaining roads within that zone nor sensible to have variations in limits.

It was agreed that the Department would proceed to develop the proposal for the town centre area and report further, and that future consideration could be given to further zones within the town. Mr. Downing undertook to provide further updates and indicated that subject to design, traffic orders and signage, the zone might be expected to be put into effect during the course of the current financial year.

The Chairman thanked Messrs' Downing and Gray for their attendance.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7:55 p.m. giving a time for attendance of 1 hour.


Chairman