

## **Application for 20 mph speed limit in New Street**

**WSCC Highways Department has forwarded a detailed letter explaining the reasons why, on this occasion, this proposal was not accepted under the Community Highways Scheme.**

**Originally WSCC Highways planned to introduce the scheme under the County Local Committee approved Community Traffic Order Scheme but the cost of the signs took it over the £3000 threshold. WSCC Highways looked at various ways in which to reduce the cost, reducing number of signs and limiting the area, none of which were viable. This meant that it could only be delivered through the Community Highway Scheme Process.**

### **Quoting directly from Highways Response:**

“Essentially the proposal as it stands is viable, in that it does meet the speed criteria and we know what we want delivered. Unfortunately all schemes that pass through the CHS process must be scored on equal terms regardless of whether they would have been approved through the TRO route. This is to ensure the resources available are fairly distributed.

In the last assessment period we received 36 applications for Community Highway Schemes across West Sussex. It has been determined that a minimum score of 40 points is required for a scheme to meet the criteria to deliver a sustainable and beneficial highways improvement that aligns with the County Council’s priorities. Of the 36 schemes requested, 14 have been selected for progression to feasibility and design, having achieved the 40 points. This proposal scored 37 and therefore failed to meet the minimum threshold.

So, I then turned my attention back to the CHS assessment process and what scope there is to increase the score above the minimum threshold. As I have stated, the threshold is 40 points and this proposal scored 37 post moderation (the process we follow to ensure consistency in application of the assessment criteria). The assessment process looks at the following categories:

- Transport and public space – this includes assessment of impact on journey times, mobility and access, costs to transport infrastructure, safety and the public realm.
- Economic Growth – includes generating employment, business development, housing or regeneration opportunities.
- Environmental Impacts – includes reduction of pollution, encouraging sustainable transport and other environmental impacts such as noise pollution or visual intrusion.
- Feasibility and deliverability – includes needs analysis, is land available, levels of stakeholder support, funding availability / cost analysis and how deliverable a scheme is.
- Policy and support – how does the proposal meet WSCC core policies and plans and any local policies and plans (such as neighbourhood plans).

Each category is assessed against predetermined levels and a score between 1 and 5 issued for a range of sentences depending whether the project provides no or negative impact up to a substantial impact. The moderation process ensures the scores are fairly applied across all schemes and no one scheme is biased.

The scheme scored well in the feasibility and deliverability and policy and support categories but unfortunately it did not fair so well in the other three categories. The panel believed the scheme is unlikely to encourage modal shift or have any positive impact on the environment, so scored the minimum in this category. If it can be proven that the scheme would encourage more walking or cycling or reduce pollution the score here could be increased.

The panel also determined the scheme would have no impact on economic growth and I see no element of the scheme that would change this.

Finally the panel assessed that as traffic speeds are already in a range commensurate with a 20 mph speed limit there would be no improvement to the public realm or to safety. The latter is supported by analysis of the current road traffic collision records, which do not show any speed related collisions in the affected roads. Although perception of safety is a concern for the community, it cannot be corroborated by data and therefore the scheme could only be attributed a limited benefit. This is not to say we are waiting for an accident to happen."

**Forest Neighbourhood Council is disappointed that the Scheme will definitely not proceed in this round. This does not mean that the proposal will be shelved and there will be further discussions with Highways.**