

Agenda item 6

For information - Speed Indicator Device update

For decision – Rodden Road discussion

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Summary

This report provides an update on the Speed Indicator Device (SID), how it is utilised throughout the town and the process for requesting a new location.

Following a recent serious collision on Rodden Road, the report recommends requesting the installation of double yellow lines and the siting of the SID the help reduce speeds along Rodden Road

Council last received a SID update report in April 2022, at that time there were six locations, where the SID was sited on a rota basis -

- Culverhill
- Styles Hill
- Warminster Road
- Marston Road
- North Parade – Incoming
- North Parade – Outgoing

Working with Frome’s Community Speed Watch and Somerset Council, we now have 15 approved locations –

- Styles Hill
- Warminster Road
- Marston Road
- Bridge Street
- Culverhill
- Whatcombe Road
- Lower Innox
- Clink Road - Outgoing
- Clink Road – Incoming
- Bath Street
- Locks Hill
- Christchurch Street East
- North Parade – Incoming
- North Parade – Outgoing
- Fromefield

The additional locations have been requested by residents, to help us manage these requests we have introduced a form for residents to complete. Applications are reviewed quarterly, in consultation with the ward Cllr. Details are on the FTC website [here](#).

To deal with the increase in the numbers of locations, we submitted a grant application to Avon and Somerset Police Community Trust, Road Safety Fund and have been awarded £5000. This will enable us to purchase an additional SID with Bluetooth data capture and solar power. We will continue to review the costs and look at the need to budget for purchasing additional SID’s.

At a recent meeting with Avon and Somerset Police, which Cllr Anita Collier attended, it was confirmed that SIDs are considered effective as a way of reducing speed; a Smiley face is preferred as it is always best to use a positive message.

- ▶ **Portable Speed Indicator Device (SID) with Smiley / Angry Face beneath, battery powered complete with spare Lead Acid battery, 'intelligent' charger, sign weatherproof cover and bracket set for a cost of £3,045.00 each excluding VAT.**



Weight: 12kg
Weight with Lead Acid: 23kg

The existing SID only shows the speed and advises to slow down if over the speed limit.



Both versions record data, the date, time and speed of all the vehicles is recorded, then analysed to identify concerns. The data is also sent to Speedwatch, the Road Safety Team at Somerset and the Police. Where the data identifies speeding, CSW and the Speed Enforcement team will target this area.

The current SID rota is set up so that the SID is at each location for 2 weeks. If we receive more requests, even with the additional SID, we may have to consider removing some of the locations where the data suggests that speeds are consistently within the limits. We also need to consider the additional work this will create for the Ranger Team, who move the SID around the town and download the data about driver numbers and speeds.

We have considered the use of Auto Speed Watch, which is designed to complement traditional Community Speedwatch schemes, AutoSpeedWatch automatically identifies speeding vehicles, the system does not issue fines or directly penalise a speeding motorist. The information is sent to the Police to follow up.

AutoSpeedWatch devices are not fully approved in Somerset yet and the police are no longer capturing the data, and they can only be deployed on existing approved Community Speed Watch sites. We may want to revisit the option to acquire Auto Speed Watch units once they are fully approved.

There have been very few studies on the effectiveness of SID's and we do not have any direct evidence of the impact they have in Frome, however the evidence that has been gathered suggests that speed indicator devices provide a benefit in reducing vehicle speeds over the short term; approximately 1-2 weeks.

The recommendation is a SID should be installed as part of a rotational programme for at least 2 weeks and a maximum of 3 weeks and returned after a 'reasonable gap' that allows drivers to forget about the previous installation.

Rodden Road discussion

Following the recent serious collision on Rodden Road, Cllr Anita Collier has met with residents of Rodden Road. It was agreed at that meeting, that it is imperative that FTC urge Somerset Council and the Police to take preventative action to improve the safety of what is known locally as a 'rat run'.

Residents will be forming a group called 'Rodden Road Speed & Safety Group' undertaking activities that will help reduce speed and support safer driving. Members of the group have already volunteered to become Community Speed Watch operatives.

Suggestions from the group on how to alleviate the situation are below, and it was proposed that FTC to talk to Somerset Council about: -

- Double yellow lines in appropriate locations
- 20mph zone
- Pedestrian crossing to the footpath for Rodden Meadow
- Planters

I have set out below the steps that would be required for the above suggestions to be implemented.

20 mph Zone & planters

The information below is taken from the Somerset Council website :-

Successful 20mph zones and speed limits should generally be self-enforcing. Such speed limits are unlikely to be complied with on roads where vehicle speeds are substantially higher than this unless accompanied by traffic calming measures.

Research by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) showed that where speed limits alone were introduced, speed reductions of only about 2mph were achieved. 20mph speed limits are therefore only recommended in areas where vehicle speeds are already low (24mph or below is recommended) or additional traffic calming measures are implemented.

Speed data would need to be taken along Rodden Road, if the average speed is currently 24mph or below, the road would be suitable for a 20mph zone without the need for additional traffic calming measures. Recent correspondence from Somerset Council set out that Parish/Town Councils can apply for 20mph speed limits, but the Town/Parish would have to pay for their implementation. It was advised that we would need to budget for £15,000 or more depending on the size of the zone.

If the speed data for Rodden Road shows the average speed is over 24mph, then a 20mph limit will require additional traffic calming measures to bring the speeds down. This could be through the use of planters and speed pumps etc. Somerset Council have been very clear that any highways schemes would have to be paid for by the Parish/Town Council. To give you an idea of the possible costs associated with this, School Streets which includes the introduction of 20mph zones using planters and signage, is costing £277,105 this does not include design costs.

Pedestrian Crossing

The area would need to be audited to make sure it is suitable for a pedestrian crossing, again the Parish/Town Council would be required to pay for the audit and any subsequent design and safety audit work and the installation of a crossing point. The cost for a Toucan crossing is around £70,000 this does not include design costs.

Double Yellow Lines

Requests for double yellow lines must be submitted by the Town Council, if Highways agree that double yellow lines can be installed, the request will be added to the list for Frome. The list is consulted on approximately every two years. So even if double yellow lines are approved, under the current process, they will not be installed straight away.

What else can we do

FTC can apply for a licence to site the SID along Rodden Road, the suggested locations are, near to the junction with Beechwood Avenue and the junction with St Johns Road. As soon as we get a licence the SID can be sited. We can also amend the SID rota to ensure it is sited here as soon as possible. The licences are usually turned around quickly.

We can also purchase some “Kill your speed” signs, these can be purchased for around £35 each plus the brackets. These will also require the permission of Highways to be attached to lampposts but again this should be relatively straight forward.

Cllr Collier recently met with Avon & Somerset Police to discuss speeding issues in Frome. The issue of safety along the Frome by-pass and the Junction with Asda was raised. It was confirmed the installation of a speed camera was unlikely to be considered regardless of fatalities. This is in line with the DFT Directive, that cameras should only be used as a final resort after every other avenue has been considered.

It was also noted that there is a public perception that all fatalities are speed related, when they could be caused by drink driving, tiredness, vehicle condition, no seat belt, carelessness etc.

LCWIP

The LCWIP has developed a comprehensive set of design recommendations which would improve conditions for walking and cycling across Frome, while also integrating with existing initiatives in the town.

The initiatives include 20mph zones, providing protected facilities for cyclists, improvement to junctions and segregated cycle facilities in various locations around the town. Unfortunately,

there is no funding available from Somerset Council towards the implementation of the LCWIP. This would have to be funded through Government grants or S106 money. To deliver all of the recommendations within the LCWIP would cost in the region of £6 million.

We have raised our concern with Somerset Council about how they respond to residents requesting highway works or traffic restrictions. The response from the traffic management team to members of the public and to Sarah Dyke MP has implied that Frome Town Council is responsible for approving and funding such requests. This not something FTC has the authority to approve or the funding to deal with and raises false expectations for residents.

Recommendations

1. To note the information on the locations and SID process
2. To write to Somerset Council Highways, expressing concern over the speed of traffic along Rodden Road.
3. Request the installation of double yellow lines in appropriate locations along Roden Road
4. Request a licence from Highways to site the SID along Roden Road, in the locations referred to in the report.