

Is York's transport cabinet member's idea to raise residential limits 50% from 20mph to 30mph desirable, deliverable or even legal? - It disadvantages the disabled, elderly and children

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release July 2015

www.20splentyforus.org.uk/PRel/York.pdf

Setting speed limits may not be done at the whim of an individual councillor and must follow due process democratically and in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and national DfT guidance. The idea of raising speeds by 50% from 20mph to 30mph is contrary to elected representative duties under child protection, public sector equality and disability discrimination. In our opinion it would be illegal.

20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

York's Transport Cabinet member, Councillor Ian Gillies has said he wishes to remove 20mph limits and thereby raise speeds 50% to 30mph. Such an action would endorse driving at 30mph on such roads and make York's roads more dangerous. This is contrary to his responsibility to protect the disabled, elderly and others. It is expected to be challenged as illegal and not compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

With government guidance advising 20mph limits for residential areas and those with high vulnerable road user numbers it would also appear to be not following best practice and hence would constitute an "unreasonable" decision if it ever got that far.

Vulnerable people lose most from higher speeds – those who walk slowly, with a visual impairment or who are young or with mobility aids. Picture an 8 year old cyclist, or a parent with a pushchair, or someone with a walking stick or dementia. Raising speeds isn't fair, legally or morally right for them.

Research says 20mph limits are proven to improve public health through 20% fewer casualties, as a foundation for active travel and towards tackling obesity. 20mph is supported by Public Health England, NICE, the World Health Organisation, Play England, Sustrans, Living Streets, Brake and many more health and sustainable transport entities. 20mph speed limits offer huge danger reduction benefits (pedestrians are seven times more likely to survive a crash at 20mph than 30mph) and improve the environment and people's quality of life as they are less fearful.

No other city worldwide is removing 20mph limits. Many are implementing 20mph (30kph) including Paris, Milan, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, most of inner London. For the current administration to propose increasing vehicle speeds will look backward and irresponsible. York prides itself on being a cycling city yet cyclists, especially novice ones, are not recommended to mix with 30mph traffic.

Rod King MBE, Founder and Campaign Director for 20's Plenty for us commented :

"This proposal is ill-considered and expected to be challenged on several democratic and legal counts. It could become a subject for a judicial review. Given the heavy responsibility that would go with any increase in speed limit and endorsement of higher speeds, we do not see it as practical, desirable, legal or deliverable. It is a sad reflection on the current York administration that they consider this at all."

20's Plenty For Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in built up areas without physical calming.

Web www.20splentyforus.org.uk Twitter @20splentyforus

Rod King MBE
Founder & Campaign Director
rod.k@20splentyforus.org.uk
07973 639781 @20splentyforus

Anna Semlyen 20's Plenty for York
Campaign Manager
anna.s@20splentyforus.org.uk
07572 120439 @AnnaSemlyen1

Jeremy Leach
London Campaign Co-ordinator
jeremy.l@20splentyforus.org.uk
07415 243015