

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Report**

Committee:	Environment and Transportation Select Committee
Date of meeting:	5 November 2013
Report Title:	Traffic Management Policy & Guidance (TMPG)
Reference:	5351
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Select Committee to review the proposed Traffic Management Policy and Guidance document and to advise the Committee of the comments that were received during public consultation. Views expressed by the Committee on the document will be reported to the Executive Member when it is formally considered for adoption as County Council policy in 2014.

2. Contextual Information

2.1. The Traffic Management Policy and Guidance (TMPG) is a new document that clarifies the County Council's position on the use of traffic management measures. It splits traffic management into eight policy areas, ranging from Traffic Regulation Orders (Policy TM1) through to traffic calming (Policy TM8).

2.2. There is a need for a traffic management policy so that traffic issues are treated consistently. The policy also enables resources for traffic management measures to be used where they are most needed and where they have the most beneficial impact.

2.3. The policy document is based on statutory requirements, national guidance and good practice that reflects Hampshire's requirements. The TMPG updates a number of current traffic management policies and introduces new policies where none previously existed. The document will require approval by the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment.

2.1. The concept of the TMPG provides two levels of information:

Level 1 – Appendix 1 provides a background to the traffic management policies. The document explains why the policies are necessary whilst stating the statutory requirements and providing links to relevant legislation and the

good practice that informs them. It is intended that the document will be available through the County Council's web site.

Level 2 – provides guidance for staff and Members and is essentially operational information. It provides a wide range of information from detailed process and procedure to policy guidance on specific issue and forms. Some of this information will be accessible to the public directly from the Level 1 document (such as application forms for tourist direction signs). Level 2 documents, which will only be necessary for certain parts of the policy (such as the assessment of pedestrian crossings), will be developed at a later date.

2.2. The Level 1 document (Appendix 1) is split into three sections. The first part introduces traffic management and how it fits within the County Council's highways, traffic and transport framework. Part Two provides a policy statement on each of eight traffic management topics, and Part Three explains how those policies are applied in greater detail.

3. Consultation

3.1. The public and relevant interest groups were invited to comment on the document by using an online web survey. The consultation ran from 23 August to 6 October 2013. It was promoted in the news items of the County Council's home web page and supported by a press release. An email with information on the consultation was also sent to 57 interest groups, ranging from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils to bus operators, disability and older people groups, and the emergency services.

3.2. Thirty three responses were submitted using the online survey. A further four responses were received separately. The respondents can be classified into the following groups:

Local resident	25
County Member	3
District Council/National Park Auth.	3
Parish/Town Council	2
Non motorised user group	3
Other	1

3.3. The survey included questions on each of the eight traffic management policy areas. The questions asked whether respondents agreed with particular parts of the policy, if they agreed subject to amendments being made, or if they did not agree at all. Some of the policy areas included several questions. Respondents could choose to answer all questions or only those that related to policy areas that were of interest to them.

3.4. Full details of all the questions and a summary of the answers that were given are provided in Appendix 2. Significant comments, or similar comments that were made by a number of respondents, are summarised below. Some respondents

submitted comments about issues at specific locations which have not been included. Suggested additions to the policy document in Appendix 1 as a result of the consultation are highlighted, and text recommended for deletion is shown with a line through it.

4. TM1 Traffic Regulation Orders

- 4.1. This section covers the main situations where a TRO can be considered, the County Council's procedure for making a TRO and dealing with objections.

Main changes to previous policy

- 4.2. A procedure has been added for dealing with Experimental TROs since none previously existed. The new policy also clarifies that the Executive Member will consider the need for a proposed TRO should the local County Member not be in support.

Comments from the consultation

- 4.3. One respondent stated that more urgency should be given to implementing TROs, especially where pedestrians are at risk. However, the time it takes to implement TROs is largely governed by the statutory process and the County Council's own procedure has already been reviewed so that it can be undertaken as quickly as possible.

Proposed changes to the document

- 4.4. No changes to the proposed policy are recommended.

5. TM2 Speed limits

Main changes to previous policy

- 5.1. This policy is identical to the previous version which stated that speed limits shall be assessed in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT). The main change in the proposed policy relates to the use of a pilot scheme of signed only 20 mph limits, and that the outcome of this shall be awaited before any further 20 mph limits are considered. The policy also enables advisory part time 20 mph limits to be used near certain school locations.

Comments from the consultation

- 5.2. The consultation question on speed limits resulted in more responses than any of the others. Several respondents raised concerns about what they considered to be inappropriate use of 30 mph limits in villages, and speed limits being too low on some 'A' and 'B' class roads or limits that change too frequently along the length of a route. A couple of respondents also gave opinions that the national speed limit is not appropriate in rural single carriageway roads, which the policy does not propose to change.

- 5.3. Some of the organisations that responded raised concerns that the proposed policy does not take into account how lower limits and lower speeds can be used

to encourage walking, cycling and riding. There were three comments that there should be greater use of 20 mph speed limits.

- 5.4. The setting of speed limits can be a controversial subject and there are many varying views. It is important that the County Council assesses them in a consistent manner to avoid setting them unrealistically low and so that they are respected by drivers.
- 5.5. It is necessary to determine whether 20 mph limits are effective in terms of vehicle speeds and local support before they are used on a wider basis. The pilot schemes across the county are being implemented now and will be re-assessed in nine to twelve months time. The County Council's position on the further use of these limits can then be reviewed.

Proposed changes to the document

- 5.6. The document could be amended to acknowledge that it is important for there to be lower speed to encourage walking and cycling, but lower speed limits on their own are unlikely to achieve significant reductions in speed.

6. TM3 Traffic signs and road markings

Main changes to previous policy

- 6.1. This is a new policy covering various aspects of signs and markings. Previously there were only policies on tourist signs and Neighbourhood Watch signing.
- 6.2. The policy places significant emphasis on the need to minimise sign clutter and that the impact of signs and markings on the street scene should be taken into account. It also provides some detailed guidance for staff (and those working on behalf of the County Council) on the use of signing in certain circumstances/locations.
- 6.3. The approach to the use of tourist signing remains the same as previously, although it now states that if there are several qualifying tourist establishments in a single area that there may be a need for a comprehensive signing system rather than sign each establishment separately.

Comments from the consultation

- 6.4. There were relatively few responses to the questions about signing (nine in total). There was general acknowledgement that there are currently too many signs and road markings.

Additional suggestion

- 6.5. The County Council's Economic Development Team, suggested that direction signs be provided to sole village shops in rural areas. The purpose would effectively be to help such shops attract passing trade and to maintain the viability of such shops, which are an important part of the rural infrastructure.

Proposed changes to the document

- 6.6. Traffic signs cannot be provided for advertising purposes. However, a village shop could be considered to be a community facility in a similar way to public car parks or libraries. The concern about allowing signs for village shops is the potential increase in the amount of signing in rural areas. It would therefore be necessary to limit signing village shops to rural communities where there is only one shop selling general goods. In addition to this, it is recommended that the sign “village shop” is only provided at locations where there is already a direction sign to the village, as this will limit the extent to which the signing can be provided. Other criteria will need to be applied, which are specified in the amended policy document (Appendix 1) in Policy TM3. Due to the unknown number of shops that could qualify for such signing it would be necessary for each shop to apply and pay for the cost of signing.
- 6.7. Finally on this section, one respondent noted there was no reference to horse riders within the section on signing, therefore this should be included, where relevant.

7. TM4 Parking restrictions

Main changes to previous policy

- 7.1. Previously there have only been policies on disabled parking bays and residents parking schemes. The new policy covers the majority of other parking controls that are available for use and provides information on when restrictions such as yellow lines, loading restrictions and bus stop clearways can be used.
- 7.2. The previous policy on residents’ parking schemes applied strict criteria and stated that a specific percentage of kerb space had to be occupied for a certain amount of time by non-residential vehicles before a permit scheme could be considered. The proposed policy is more flexible to take account of local circumstances, although there is still a requirement to demonstrate that residents experience parking difficulties or that it would be foreseeable should such a scheme be introduced in neighbouring roads.

Comments from the consultation

- 7.3. The main theme of responses was that existing restrictions should be enforced before more are provided, that residents should not be charged for permits, and that in residential areas residents should be given priority over non residents for parking. A further comment was that permit schemes should be introduced if non resident vehicle parking is common, particularly if controls or charges are introduced in an off-street parking area which then causes neighbouring residents problems.
- 7.4. All the district councils except for Gosport operative Civil Parking Enforcement on behalf of the County Council, whereby they are responsible for enforcing parking restrictions. Restrictions cannot be enforced continuously, especially in rural or suburban areas, but enforcement officers will generally be deployed by the district councils to known problem areas.

7.5. It would not be possible to introduce residents' parking schemes in all roads where there are reports of non residential vehicles parking. The schemes are expensive to install, administer and enforce, which means there has to be evidence that residents have regular difficulty finding parking near their homes. The level of charge for permits is generally a decision for the district council, and the charge is usually applied to contribute towards costs of running the permit scheme.

Proposed changes to the document

7.6. No changes to the proposed policy are recommended.

8. TM5 Movement restrictions

8.1. Movement restrictions relate to banned turns, one way streets, HGV controls, bus lanes, width limits, pedestrian zones, Home Zones, Quiet Lanes and restricted access roads.

Main changes to previous policy

8.2. There has not been a policy covering all movement restrictions before, other than separate policies on HGV access restrictions, Gating Orders and bus priority measures. The approach to Powered Two Wheelers in bus lanes has been changed to allow their entry if there are no safety issues and if they will not cause operational problems for buses. The use of bus gates is also clarified in the document so that they will be less favoured outside of town centre locations unless there would be major advantages for buses.

8.3. The possibility of using HGV access restrictions would require there to be a minimum of 30 through HGV movements a day in the proposed policy compared to the previous criteria of 20 movements. This will prioritise use of the restriction to locations where HGVs are causing the most significant problems.

8.4. The policy relating to all the other movement restrictions applies certain criteria for their use so that they are only considered when a problem has been identified and investigated.

Comments from the consultation

8.5. Most of the responses related to bus lanes and HGV restrictions. Two respondents commented that they cause delays for other drivers and that there is no need for them to apply all day. The reply to this is that giving priority to buses will inevitably delay other drivers. The policy does allow the use of part time bus lanes, but all day restrictions are stated as the default position because they are simpler for drivers to understand.

8.6. One respondent requested that consideration should be given to the needs of cyclists in one way systems and when roads are permanently closed.

Proposed changes to the document

- 8.7. The document should be clarified to state that where possible, cyclists should be provided with contraflow facilities in one way streets, and if a road is permanently closed to through traffic that cyclists should still be able to use it.

9. TM6 Road classifications

- 9.1. This is a new policy and has been included in the document because the function of determining road classifications has now largely been passed onto local highway authorities from the Secretary of State.
- 9.2. The document sets out some basic considerations to be taken into account when assessing whether the classification of a road should be changed. On the face of it, downgrading a road's classification may appear to be a simple means of encouraging drivers to use other routes. The likelihood of changes in driver behaviour is low though, and there are a number of implications that arise if a road's classification is changed.

Comments from the consultation

- 9.3. Only one of the nine respondents commenting on this section agreed with the policy's approach, although six said they may agree if changes were made. The comments submitted included a variety of suggestions, such as stating that classifications need to take account of the number of vehicles using the road and that main roads linking significant towns should be classed as 'A' roads, with higher speed limits and restrictions to keep traffic moving.
- 9.4. The proposed policy generally does take these points into account in its advice on assessing road classifications. It may not be possible to place restrictions on 'A' roads in some locations if they pass through populated areas, although controls to limit parking and loading can be used where necessary.
- 9.5. Two non motorised user group organisations suggested that greater priority should be given to promoting 'C' class and unclassified roads for non motorised users, and that the importance of unclassified roads to cyclists should be acknowledged. The reply to this is that there is a wide variation in the quality and character of these roads and therefore it is not possible to take a blanket approach to promoting them to such users.

Proposed changes to the document

- 9.6. There is a need for the policy to address measures for cyclists, and this should be undertaken in a future review of the document. The section on road classifications can be amended now to ensure that non-motorised users are taken into account when road classifications are assessed.

10. TM7 Pedestrian and cycle crossings

Main changes to previous policy

- 10.1. The overall approach to assessing the need for crossings remains the same, although the numerical assessment for controlled and zebra crossings has been changed. More weight is now given to vulnerable pedestrians such as children or the elderly, and factors such as accidents and road width would also be taken into account in the numerical evaluation.
- 10.2. The numerical criteria for zebra crossings is also proposed to be lower than at present. These crossings are much cheaper to install and maintain than signal controlled crossings, although they are only suitable in street lit roads with lower speeds and where pedestrian volumes are not too high.
- 10.3. The policy now includes guidance on how informal crossings should be considered and assessed.

Comments from the consultation

- 10.4. There were no consistent comments about the proposed policy on crossings. One respondent stated there should be more zebra crossings, and another stated that the document needs to make more reference to the needs of cyclists and horse riders.
- 10.5. An important comment to address is a response that referred to “number crunching” being an inappropriate way to promote safety and accessibility. This refers to the numerical assessment used as the initial means of determining whether a signal controlled crossing is justified. The assessment, known as PV^2 , is an important and useful means of establishing the level of difficulty in crossing a road. Even if this assessment shows that a signalised crossing is not justified, other measures to help pedestrians cross can be considered. The PV^2 assessment is only a starting point.

Proposed changes to the document

- 10.6. A number of minor changes to the document have been suggested in response to some of the comments received, and these are highlighted in Appendix 1.

11. TM8 Traffic calming

Main changes to previous policy

- 11.1. There are a variety of traffic calming measures available and it is important to retain flexibility in the type that can be used in order to cater for the various situations they can be applied to. The proposed policy states round top humps should not usually be provided because they are generally the least favoured measure by the public. Flat top humps and speed cushions are preferred because they are less likely to cause issues for buses and the emergency services.
- 11.2. The proposed policy also includes a new requirement for staff to consider the design of traffic calming and the impact of coloured surfacings upon the street scene or landscape.

Comments from the consultation

- 11.3. This section produced the second largest number of responses in the survey, and also the least number of respondents agreeing with the approach outlined in the document. There were 19 replies to this section of the survey; two agreed with the approach, eight said they may agree if there were amendments, and nine did not agree at all with the approach to traffic calming.
- 11.4. There were some responses expressing views against traffic calming in general, with one respondent stating it is an outdated method and three others making similar comments that it forces drivers onto other roads and that it presents a hazard. Three respondents stated that traffic calming can be hazardous for cyclists and that even if cyclist 'bypass' gaps are provided they are not well maintained and are often full of debris.
- 11.5. Three respondents were specifically against the use of road humps.
- 11.6. In response to these comments, it is important to point out that the County Council receives many requests for traffic calming measures from residents each year. There is often a perception that some traffic calming is hazardous, but all schemes that involve an element of reducing the width of the carriageway, or placing humps, are safety audited by others who are not involved in the design of the scheme. The audit considers the safety of all road users.
- 11.7. Where gaps for cyclists at traffic calming features have been provided, they should be maintained as with any other part of the highway. Problems with the road surface should be reported to the Highways teams and this can be done through the County Council's web site:
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/index/transport/roadproblems.htm>
- 11.8. The district councils are responsible for street cleansing, including cycle gaps that are covering in debris. If such gaps are regularly becoming blocked it may be necessary for the County Council to investigate these further to determine whether modifications can be made to reduce the occurrence of such debris collecting.

Proposed changes to the document

- 11.9. The document can be amended to make it clear that road humps should only be used after other measures have been considered and ruled out as inappropriate or not effective to solve the particular problem.
- 11.10. An amendment is also recommended to emphasize that cyclists should be taken into account when considering the use of traffic calming measures.

12. Any other comments

- 12.1. The final question of the consultation asked respondents if they had any other comments. There were a range of comments submitted, which are summarised in Appendix 2 (see "question 9").
- 12.2. All the comments were different so they cannot be summarised here, although both National Parks did suggest that the document should make reference to the

need for having special regards to highways in their areas. Changes to the proposed document have been made in response to these comments.

- 12.3. Some comments touched upon working relationships and common approaches. These will be considered as and when policies and procedures are reviewed in future.

13. Conclusions

- 13.1. A policy document relating to traffic management measures is required in order to provide consistency and to ensure the measures are used appropriately.
- 13.2. The public consultation resulted in a small number of responses, but useful suggestions were made, and it is recommended that many are included, as shown in the highlighted areas of the document in Appendix 1.
- 13.3. It is recommended that the policy document be taken forward to the Executive Member for adoption. The policy will then apply to the implementation of new traffic management measures.

14. Recommendations

- 14.1. That the Committee note the report, including the results from the consultation and the proposed amendments to the Traffic Management Policy and Guidance document.
- 14.2. The proposed Traffic Management Policy and Guidance document is commended for approval by the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment in January 2014.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. The proposal in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the County Council's equality objectives.
- 1.2. The Highways Traffic and Transport service has an up to date Equalities Impact Assessment for Objective 1.2 – Safe and well managed highways in Hampshire and Objective 1.4 – Develop Hampshire's highway network and transport systems. The proposed Traffic Management Policy and Guidance (TMPG) has been checked against these assessments and no amendments are necessary.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The proposed policy document includes the County Council's approach to the use of Gating Orders, which can be used in limited circumstances where the presence of a highway is facilitating crime and anti social behaviour. The previous approach to Gating Orders is to be retained.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The proposed policy document potentially improves Hampshire's carbon footprint / energy consumption because it places further emphasis on using traffic management measures that assist non-car modes of transport, and that greater consideration of non-motorised users should be taken into account in the use of other traffic management measures.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Climate change does not have a direct impact upon the proposed policy document.