

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council
7 December 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Jackie Charlton
Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys

SUBJECT: Question from John Williams

Background

In Early October, a poll was carried out within 3 of the more popular community Facebook groups in Newtown, to determine how people felt about the imposition of 20mph zones on Pool Rd and Kerry Road in Newtown. In just 2 days, the overwhelming majority of recipients were in favour of returning both Pool and Kerry road to 30mph.

Given the evidence provided, and the overwhelming support for changing these 2 roads back to 30mph, when can this be implemented?

[Mr Williams undertook research on how both roads might qualify for exemption from 20mph and this is provided as supporting information]

The new legislation which changed the default speed limit on 'restricted roads' from 30mph to 20mph in Wales came into force on 17th September 2023. In advance of this date, all highway authorities, identified a number of locations where it was considered that the new 20mph speed limit should not apply and the current 30mph limit should remain in place.

The criteria, set by Welsh Government, was based on the density of adjacent residential and retail premises fronting a road and the proximity of facilities such as educational establishments, community centres and hospitals as well as active travel routes. Whilst this was not an explicit procedure and is open to interpretation it is acknowledged that some areas may require reassessing.

We are currently awaiting the publication of Welsh Government's update to the 'Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales' guidance document. This document is anticipated to be published in 2024 and will encompass updated guidance on what roads should be 30mph or 20mph.

Since the introduction of the new 20mph restrictions there has been considerable discussion amongst highway authorities across Wales about the process of

reviewing its exception sites. The consensus is that the new 20mph restrictions should be allowed to settle for around 12 months and in the meantime, authorities are collating all requests and comments received for consideration in the future. Those reviews will then be conducted after a period of 12 months has elapsed and the WG revised guidance has been produced.