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**Congleton Town Council response to the Speed Management Strategy**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond as a Town Council to the recent Speed Management Strategy Consultation. This was discussed by Congleton Town Council at a special council meeting held on the 3rd February.

The Council has opted not to answer the consultation questions which are very prescriptive but wanted to take the opportunity to give some feedback on this important area of work. Some l councillors may have chosen to respond as individuals.

As a large Town Council, Congleton Town Council would expect to be treated as a partner in making sure that the speed limits are appropriate and safe in our area, yet this document offers little in the way of support for town and parishes and if anything is off-putting to Town and Parishes. It threatens fines and costs to towns and parishes if we do not install educational equipment correctly or leave Speed Indication Devices for more than 3 weeks in a location. Not a way to encourage a spirit of working together to improve our communities! We would like to have seen more about the art of what is possible, rather than focussing on what isn’t allowed.

As a Town Council we are aware of several schools, residents and local organisations that are interested in reducing speed limits in some areas of the town and implementing the vision in the Local Transport Delivery Plan to encourage more cycling and walking for local journeys. We had hoped that this Speed Management Strategy would help make it clearer how we as a Town Council could help residents with this ambition and would set out a vision and route map for more appropriate speeds in Cheshire East Borough area.

Instead the document sets out an approach which is very prescriptive and doesn’t appear to do much to galvanise any change in speed management.

Although the document is about speed limits across the borough, there seems little in the document that would help to make changes. In recent years there have been several sensible proposals put forward by our residents who are concerned about safety and speed on certain routes. The information contained in the speed management strategy help to explain why the change cannot be made (ahead of any KSI affecting the status) but not how local intelligence and knowledge can be used to help create safer routes before a serious accident happens.

We were hoping that this document would be a catalyst for change and for sparking a serious discussion on how Cheshire East could show leadership on changing the mindset on speeds as many boroughs have done up and down the country.

On reading the Speed Management Strategy document is

Our main comments on the consultation are:

The document seems very prescriptive and is all about what Cheshire East Council will and won’t do/ can and can’t do with regards to speed management.

There is little reference to a vision for speed management across the borough – on page 7 there is a reference to the Local Transport Plan and requirement for 20mph – but reading the document it doesn’t feel as if the Council is minded to make any changes.

**Section 5 on Education** – is not encouraging for Town and Parish Councils – very prescriptive and then CEC will fine and charge us if we get it wrong. It doesn’t feel like it was written in the spirit of partnership or in a way that would encourage town and parishes to get more involved. Getting a licence for sites that must be changed every 3 weeks or CEC will remove and charge us is unreasonable.

**Section 6 on Enforcement** – just states what the situation is, how busy the Police are and what happens following a road traffic personal injury collision, rather than a more preventative approach.

**Section 7 Engineering -** following National guidance on speed management **7.4 refers to a DfT circular which is almost 10 years old** – missed out on the opportunity to look at the innovative speed management work that is going on across the country.

Yours sincerely

David McGifford

Deputy Chief Officer

Congleton Town Council

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