# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Supporting highway authorities with the implementation of 20mph** |
| **DATE**  | **25 October 2023** |
| **BY** | **Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change** |

On Tuesday, along with the Minister for Climate Change, I met with leaders, cabinet members and transport officers from across Wales to discuss the implementation of 20mph in their areas.

This was an opportunity to reflect on the nationwide roll-out, share good practice, and explore opportunities for collaboration. I also placed on record my heartfelt thanks to our partners in local government for their continued support.

They have dealt with a colossal task: the culmination of years of debate and discussion, extensive trials, and many months of intensive preparatory work ahead of the Wales-wide launch on 17 September.

This is an important change, and it will take some time to bed in.

That is partly a logistical challenge. Changing road signs at this pace and scale is an unprecedented undertaking and that has been compounded by the totally unacceptable vandalism of signs we have seen in some places.

This action will not lead to a change in the policy and the default speed limit but is a waste of scarce resources and officer time when councils are contending with a range of different pressures.

Despite calls from some, the message from highway authorities in Wales has been very clear – we want to allow time for the new speeds to settle before making changes to the exceptions guidance.

We will respect that feedback and have agreed to work collaboratively with local highway authorities to reflect on the application of the guidance in different parts of Wales. We will also look at the approach taken to roads on the threshold between 20mph and 30mph, as well as supporting councils where they are keen to rapidly address obvious anomalies.

This work, and our wider dialogue with local authorities on the implementation of 20mph, will help establish whether clarifications are needed to encourage greater consistency across Wales, and we will aim to share learnings and feedback by the end of the year.

I’m also grateful for the continued support of Phil Jones - and the expert panel he leads - for their offer to provide advice and support directly to local authorities, over this post-implementation period.

Finally, we have agreed to be flexible with the funding available to councils this financial year, and the next, so that they have the resources they need to continue supporting the delivery of this important change.