

20MPH SPEED LIMITS REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Earlier this year, Transport Scotland provided an update on the support they are able to offer to progress the 20mph speed limit project. This is a national aspiration but is being managed through local powers to amend speed limits rather than changing the national legislation. This approach, which is different from that taken in the Welsh project, is expected to allow delivery of speed limits appropriate to local context. Transport Scotland have confirmed the implementation date remains by late-2025, however, this is not expected to be the permanent Speed Orders but could be the “trial” period using Temporary Orders under s14 of the RTRA84.
- 1.2 This report provides detail on the support offered by Transport Scotland and identifies the additional resource required by the Network and Standards Team within Roads and Infrastructure Service to deliver the project. It further provides a link to the Scottish Borders Trial (Appendix 1) which gives further details and examples of the work entailed.
- 1.3 Network and Standards have secured funding (£78,000) for an officer for 12 months, from Transport Scotland, to deliver the project

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee consider the detail contained within the report.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Earlier this year, Transport Scotland provided an update on the support they are able to offer to progress the 20mph speed limit project. This is a national aspiration but is being managed through local powers to amend speed limits rather than changing the national legislation. This approach, which is different from that taken in the Welsh project, is expected to allow delivery of speed limits appropriate to local context. Transport Scotland have confirmed the implementation date remains by late-2025, however, this is not expected to be the permanent Speed Orders but could be the “trial” period using Temporary Orders under s14 of the RTRA84.
- 2.2 This report provides detail on the support offered by Transport Scotland and identifies the additional resource required by the Network and Standards Team within Roads and Infrastructure Service to deliver the project. It further provides a link to the Scottish Borders Trial (Appendix 1) which gives further details and examples of the work entailed.
- 2.3 Network & Standards have secured funding (£78,000) for an officer for 12 months, from Transport Scotland, to deliver the project.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee consider the detail contained within the report.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1. The Scottish Government has committed to creating a healthier, greener and safer Scotland and, the introduction of 20 miles per hour (mph) restrictions can help to contribute to these objectives. By reducing speed on Scotland's roads it is anticipated that street space can be shared more equally between different road users and create a safer environment, encouraging people to make active travel choices.
- 4.2. Currently, the speed limit for restricted roads in Scotland defaults to 30mph (unless otherwise amended by a Speed Order). This is set out within Section 81 of the Roads Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/section/81>). A "restricted road" is defined within Section 82 of the Act; in Scotland this is where:
- "..there is provided on it a system of carriageway lighting furnished by means of lamps placed not more than 185 metres apart and the road is of a classification or type specified for the purposes of this subsection in regulations made by the Scottish Ministers"*.
- 4.3. In other words, the default speed limit applies, generally, where there is a system of street lighting present.
- 4.4. In order to deliver a National approach to the reduction of default speed limits to 20mph, the Scottish Government carried out a number of public consultations, including with local roads authorities. This has led to two options being developed for consideration, as:
- Option 1 – amend Section 81 of the RTRA 1984 to make the default speed limit on a restricted road 20mph (this power has been devolved to the Scottish Parliament);
 - Option 2 – amend speed limits locally via speed orders (traffic regulation orders). This would be carried out by individual local roads authorities.
- 4.5. Both approaches have merit but also have some disadvantages. Table 1 below sets out the pros and cons of the Options.

Table 1

<u>Option</u>	<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Amend Section 81 of the RTRA 1984 to make the default speed limit on a restricted road 20mph	Would deliver a national, simple approach with minimal burden on local authority staff resource and cost.	Limits the ability of local communities to voice their views.
	Limited physical traffic management required, largely only requiring the	Would still require local roads authorities to consider amending

	change of the posted speed limit signs.	speed limits from 20mph to 30 or 40mph limits, as appropriate.
		<p>The initial desktop assessment carried out by the external consultant, identified traffic calming measures to the value of £1.47 million.</p> <p>As the Scottish Government have not chosen this approach but instead opted to change the speed limits via local Order, Officers are of the view that this could lead to increased costs to ensure the outcomes are delivered.</p> <p>This cost does not take into account additional work promoting TROs in advertising as well as officer time in terms of measuring road lengths for schedules.</p>
Amend speed limits locally via speed orders	Allows statutory consultees (for example, public transport, emergency services etc.) and the public to object to proposals.	Has the potential to lead to an inconsistent coverage nationally, with each roads authority choosing to deliver what may be an unnecessarily wide range of approaches.
	Local roads authorities can design the proposals to best meet local needs and around local knowledge.	Police Scotland could object to any part of any proposed Order. Although, in theory, Elected Members could overrule such objections;

		<p>as the enforcing agency for moving traffic violations, Police Scotland may refuse to enforce restrictions.</p>
		<p>May demand a higher level of physical traffic management to achieve reduced speeds such as speed cushions, gateways, chicanes etc. This could lead to substantial cost increase over the initial estimate, the assessment of which was based in part on a change in the legislation from “default 30mph” to “default 20mph”. It is unclear if supplementary funding would be provided to the Council to support the desired speed reduction should additional traffic management measures be required.</p>
		<p>In addition to changing posted speed limit signs, repeater signs would also be required. This could potentially generate significant costs.</p>
		<p>This will require a significant specialist staff resource (much greater than current establishment) to manage the Order process.</p>

4.6. In December 2023, the Scottish Government, via Transport Scotland, advised that they are pursuing the 20mph speed limit project via Option 2. The Scottish

Government timeline for the implementation of 20mph limits is to complete the roll-out by 2025. This is an ambitious target.

- 4.7. The Council has previously completed and submitted the initial assessment of existing and proposed speed limits on its local roads. An external consultant (in consultation with local Traffic & Development Officers) carried out a desktop assessment on over 4,000 local streets across Argyll and Bute and the completed spreadsheet was submitted to the Scottish Government in summer 2023. The consultant post was funded by the Scottish Government (circa £35k) and the appraisal was carried out in accordance with the Place Criteria (Appendix 4 provides this detail) set out by the Scottish Government. Appendix 2 gives typical examples of four urban areas within Argyll and Bute where changes to speed limits are identified by colour coding. Similar assessments have been completed for all the 30mph limits across the council area. The final speed limits will be informed by consultation processed identified in this report under paragraph 4.12.
- 4.8. The initial desktop assessment carried out by the external consultant, identified traffic calming measures to the value of £1.47 million. This was based partly on the assumption that the default speed limit would be amended nationally. As the Scottish Government have not chosen this approach but instead opted to change the speed limits via local Order, Officers are of the view that this could lead to increased costs to ensure the outcomes are delivered.
- 4.9. In April 2024, Transport Scotland provided an update on the support they are able to offer and requested information on the Councils plan to progress 20mph speed limits within Argyll and Bute. Transport Scotland confirmed the implementation date remains by late-2025, however, this is not expected to be the permanent Speed Orders but could be the “trial” period using Temporary Orders under s14 of the RTRA84. The s14 Order should include **all roads in a built-up area**, as captured during the initial assessment exercise (examples as per Appendix 2). All bids were to be intimated to Transport Scotland by 11 October 2024.
- 4.10. The funding period is tied to the financial year April to March. Transport Scotland have previously intimated that the funding may be available for the following items (not exhaustive):
 - Funding for additional resource(s) to deliver the project. The officer will be limited to work on this project only.
 - Funding for communications (e.g. publications) can be bid for.
 - Funding available for the pre and post implementation surveys (traffic volume and speed collection). This is a large piece of work spanning the whole council road network but will be based on an ~10% sampling of streets to collect a representative benchmark. This is in accord with the national draft guidance and recognises the impracticability of surveying every street within any LA.
 - Funding may be available for software licences (for example, sign design, or traffic regulation order software). This would enhance our own software

systems working in tandem but also provide software for future use at no cost to the Council (for example, TRO software or sign design software).

- 4.11. The current Network and Standards Traffic and Development team consists of two central officers, four area-based officers, a shared admin officers and the team manager. The remit for the team generates a significant workload and leaves little scope for an increase in demand, which this project would impose. It was, therefore, proposed to secure an external resource for this project and a bid was submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration.
- 4.12. Transport Scotland confirmed on 14 October 2024 that they were offering funding for a project officer up to £78,000 for a period of 12 months with an option for a 6-month extension (the award letter is appended under Appendix 3). The award is made based on the following outcomes:
- Review the proposed speed limit plans across the network. This will include a review of and initial costings of signs, road markings and physical traffic management measures considered necessary to achieve the desired reduction in mean speeds (in accordance with the national criteria). This will identify any additional streets which should be included in the project but will also identify any other amendments (for example, 30 or 40 mph buffer zones).
 - Procure pre-implementation traffic and speed surveys. This will include a 10% sample of the identified streets (10% is the sample rate recommended by Transport Scotland). The same sites will be used for post-implementation surveys.
 - Produce schedules for the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to implement the 20mph trial period. These temporary 20mph limits will be promoted under s14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
 - Engagement:
 - Liaise with Community Councils and Elected Members.
 - Report the proposals to committee and, where appropriate, amend based on local information.
 - Amend the GIS mapping (completed through the previous desktop exercise) to reflect the agreed 20mph trial.
 - Assist the Traffic team in implementing the TTROs within 6 months of project commencing. This will include procurement of signs etc.
 - Analysis during the trial period, including feedback from communities, Members, business, and other relevant stakeholders. Where sufficient reductions in speed are not achieved, assessment of whether additional traffic management may be needed to highlight where speed limits should revert back to 30mph.
 - At the end of the 12 month trial period, produce the revised schedules for the permanent Traffic Regulation Order(s). Options for each road will be:
 - temporary 20mph speed limit is made permanent with existing signing and lining only

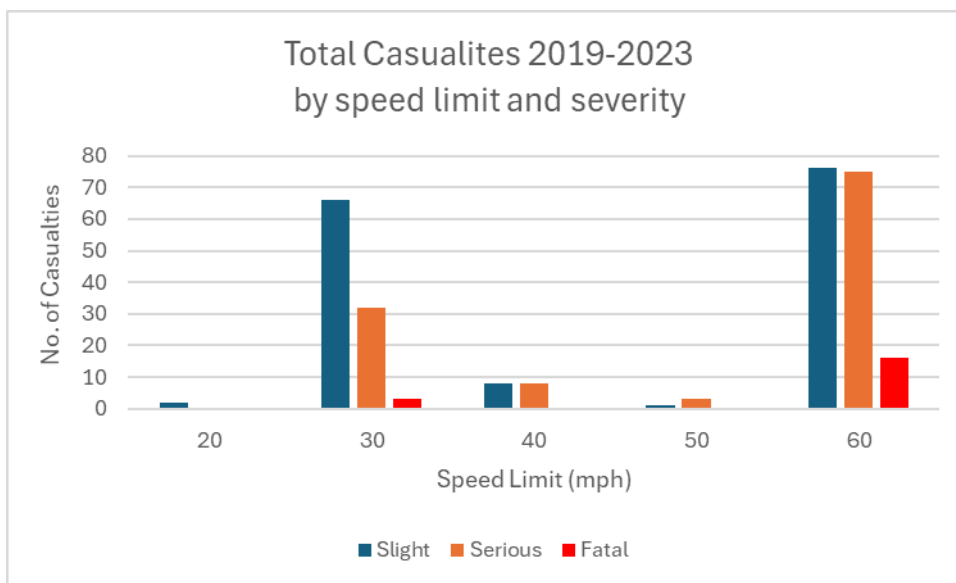
- temporary 20mph limit will require additional speed management features in order to become permanent as existing mean average speeds are too high
 - temporary 20mph limit reverts back to a 30mph limit as road is not appropriate for a permanent 20mph limit.
- 4.13. In addition to this, within the original assessment submission to Transport Scotland, the Council estimated that ~£1.5 million would be required to fund the proposed physical traffic management measures. Transport Scotland have indicated that this is expected to be provided to the Council. Beyond this, however, if there is a need identified for further traffic management measures to achieve the desired reduction, a further bid would need to be submitted. In the case where no further funding was possible, the speed limits may need to revert to the previous 30mph restrictions. This is a key observation and needs to be highlighted throughout any future reports to ensure expectations are managed appropriately.
- 4.14. Overall, the project is expected to take approximately twenty-two to twenty four months from commencement. The first four months will include the review, engagement, pre-start surveys and finalising of 20mph schedules. The following twelve months (once the TTRO is implemented) will be the trial period where analysis will be carried out and proposals for the permanent TRO developed. During this phase, it is intended that any local issues will be ironed out, minimising the likelihood of objections arising during the permanent TRO public consultation period. The final 6 months will progress the permanent TROs; there are a few caveats to the timing:
- If objections are submitted this may extend the six-month period. If this happens, we may need to apply to the Scottish Government for a six-month extension to the TTRO, or alternatively, revert to the 30mph speed limits.
 - If there are any objections submitted and not withdrawn (i.e. remain extant), then the TROs will be presented to the appropriate Area Committee for review and consideration as normal.
- 4.15. It may be of interest to note that in 2022, the majority of serious road casualties occurred on 30mph and 60mph roads. In built-up areas (“urban”), 51% of fatalities and 54.4% of serious casualties were pedestrians or pedal cyclists. Road Safety Scotland reports that hitting someone at 30mph rather than at 20mph increases the risk of fatality by seven times. Reducing speeds will protect some of the most vulnerable road users.
- 4.16. The proposed move to 20mph limits within urban areas is expected to deliver several benefits. Firstly, it may contribute to a reduction in incidents and their casualty severity. It may also create an environment which feels safer to those walking and wheeling and, subsequently, have a positive impact on Active Travel and the associated health benefits.
- 4.17. In regard to casualty severity, Members may wish to note that a pedestrian strike at 30mph is seven times more likely to result in a fatality than a strike at

20mph. In addition to this, on urban main roads and residential roads, every 1mph reduction in average speed results in an accident reduction of ~6%.

4.18. Further consideration should also be given to the costs of incidents to the economy. The Department for Transport estimate the values assigned to the cost of road casualties and collisions in Great Britain, for use in cost-benefit analysis of the prevention of road casualties and collisions in road schemes. The DfT has also developed average costs for Fatal, Serious and Slight casualties for both urban and rural settings. These calculations consider all levels of casualty severity and includes both the human cost and the direct economic cost. This includes:

- Human costs
 - Pain, grief and suffering to the casualty, relatives and friends
 - For fatal casualties, the loss of enjoyment of life.
- Direct economic costs
 - Consumption of goods and services
 - Loss of production due to injuries etc.
 - Medical costs
- Other costs
 - damage to vehicles and property
 - police and insurance

4.19. The graph below shows the number of casualties by severity and speed limit for the period 2019 – 2023. The highest number of casualties are for speed limits of 30mph and 60mph (National Speed Limit). There is a higher rate of Serious and Fatal casualties where incidents occur within 60mph limits, understandably, however, the number of casualties within the 30mph limits is also significant. Based on the DfT figures (adjusted for Scotland), for an urban setting, the average costs for Fatal, Serious and Slight casualties are £2,441,020, £286,708 and £28,203 respectively. As the graph below shows, there are very few incidents within 20mph limits (albeit there are less 20mph limits currently in place) and the severity is also reduced. It is possible that the introduction of 20mph limits within current 30mph speed restrictions, could lead to a reduced cost to the local economy, alongside the reduction in the human costs.



4.20. Notwithstanding the above, RIS does not have the available budget to fund widespread physical measures (signs, chicanes, humps etc.) to support speed limit reductions. In the event that proposed 20mph limits do not achieve appropriate reductions and the Scottish Government is unable to fund traffic management, the speed limits may revert to 30mph (or other existing limits). The flowchart in Appendix 5 provides an example of this assessment may work.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1. It is recommended that Members consider the detail contained within this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy – national aspiration but supports desired outputs of the Roads Safety Plan.

6.2 Financial – Funding is being provided by Transport Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government. No expectation of any impact on the Service Budgets.

- 6.3 Legal – Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and associated regulations.
- 6.4 HR – none
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – no impact identified
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – successful project may lead to safer streets.
 - 6.5.3 Islands – no impact identified
- 6.6 Climate Change – There is insufficient data to support a definitive statement but 20mph speed limits may reduce idling as traffic flows better but may also reduce particulates from braking as this is expected to reduce as result of slower speeds.
- 6.7 Risk – Not taking the project forward could lead to reputational damage to the Council as other LAs progress the changes.
- 6.8 Customer Service – Communications across the public domain will be an essential part of the project.
- 6.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – The reduction in speeds should make Roadspace safer for children, in regard to physical wellbeing (playing etc.) with lower speeds meaning they should be able to cross the carriageway more safely.

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Appendix 1 – Scottish Borders Trial

Appendix 2 – Initial speed assessment outputs - examples

Appendix 3 – Award letter

Appendix 4 – Place Criteria from the Scottish Governments 20mph speed limit Road Assessments v4

Appendix 5 – Example assessment flowchart