

Agenda Item	12
Report No	ECI/62/2023

The Highland Council

Committee: Economy and Infrastructure

Date: 16 November 2023

Report Title: Early Adoption of 20mph Speed Limits in Highland Update

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Committee re the progress of the implementation of the 20mph speed limit programme and the plans and timescales re the next stages of this trial roll-out including moving forward towards full public consultation.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **note** the contents of this report.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** – No financial implications as Transport Scotland are fully funding the delivery of this project as they approached Highland Council to be their early adopter pilot Council for 20mph speed limit implementation in Scotland.

3.2 **Legal** – Highland Council will adhere to relevant legal requirements for the use of Road Traffic Regulation Orders, including the preparation of Temporary and Permanent Road Traffic Regulation Orders.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – There are no direct equality, poverty, rural or island implications arising from this report.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – Reduced traffic speed has a positive effect on the street environment which in turn can lead to a reduction in emissions. Reduced speed limits also support a modal shift from cars to walking, cycling and wheeling which has a positive contribution to reducing emissions.

3.5 **Risk** – The timescales and the volume of work required to deliver the Highland wide 20mph speed limit programme by Summer 2023 has been challenging and the roll out of signage has taken longer than originally anticipated due to the significant number of signage changes required. Work is ongoing at pace to complete the roll out.

3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No implications arising from this report.

3.7 **Gaelic** – No implications arising from this report.

4 Highland Council Early Adoption of 20mph Speed Limits – Update on Progress and Next Steps

4.1 The National Strategy for 20mph speed limits in Scotland aims to expand 20mph speed limits across the country and ensure all appropriate roads in built-up areas have a safer speed limit of 20mph by 2025. The strategy seeks to introduce a consistency for 20mph speed limits across the country, simplifying speed limits for drivers. It seeks to reduce perceptions of road danger, encourage people to walk and wheel, and create more pleasant streets and neighbourhoods by providing a more equitable balance between different road users and will also contribute to the implementation of the safe system.

4.2 Highland Council are Transport Scotland's pilot Authority for the introduction of 20mph limits, which means the reduced speed limits have been introduced around the entire council area during the Summer / Autumn of 2023, earlier than the national roll out date of 2025. This roll out has initially been delivered using a Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) which is valid for a period of 18 months.

4.4 The Highland Council's Road Safety Team assessed around 211 settlements in Highland using Transport Scotland's criteria (**see Appendix 1**) and, to date, 125 settlements have been included in the 20mph limit roll out under this TTRO.

4.5 This assessment process is under constant review and there have been requests from certain communities for the scheme to be extended in their areas. This will be assessed during the period of the TTRO in order to establish criteria and suitability for inclusion in the final permanent Road Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

4.6 In accordance with the initial briefings on this programme and following the initial roll out of the temporary 20mph speed limits in Highland communities, there has been feedback regarding the suitability of some roads for this new limit. As the new limit is under a TTRO there has always been a recognition that several roads will return to their original 30mph speed limit. The assessment and decision-making process for this is ongoing and it is anticipated that this will happen from the start of 2024 onwards. Local communities will be informed as changes are moved forward.

4.7 Full details of settlements, background information, TTRO and the road to permanence are detailed on the Highland Council Webpages www.highland.gov.uk/20mph.

4.8 Implementation Timeline is detailed in **Appendix 2**.

4.9 Simplified Early Adoption Implementation timeline:-

- Collection of 'before' speed count data at 250 sites around Highland – complete.
- Assessment of existing 30mph road network – complete.
- Recommendations to Transport Scotland as to those settlements to change to 20mph – complete.

- The current settlement list is not exhaustive, the process of review is ongoing as and requests for any new settlements to be assessed come into the Council – ongoing.
- New 20mph scheme extents uploaded to 20mph website – complete.
- Writing of a Highland Wide Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Order which is valid for 18 months – complete.
- Go Live of Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Order – 31 July 2023.
- Limits introduced on ground signing only – Summer/Autumn 2023 – approaching completion.
- Trunk Road inclusion programme – Transport Scotland leading – ongoing with estimated completion date of 1 November 2023
- After speed count data collected – Autumn 2023 – ongoing.
- Return of selected roads to original speed limits – assessment begins November 2023 with the start of roads reverting back beginning start of 2024.
- Further measures that require no statutory consultation introduced on ground, e.g., further signing, lining, speed indication devices signage where appropriate – Winter/Spring 2024.
- Further speed count data collected – Spring/Summer 2024.
- Discussions with members and local communities with regards to speed count results and appropriate decisions made as to whether additional measures, e.g., traffic calming, are appropriate and what will go forward into final Permanent Road Traffic Regulation Order – Summer 2024.
- Statutory Consultation for permanent Road Traffic Regulation Order – Summer / Autumn 2024.
- Implementation of any additional traffic calming including statutory consultation – Autumn 2024.
- Making of Permanent Highland Wide 20mph Road Traffic Regulation Order – late 2024/early 2025.

4.10 Full consultation with elected members, communities and statutory bodies will take place prior to the introduction of any permanent Road Traffic Regulation Order for the new 20mph speed limits.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

Date: 23 October 2023

Author: Lisa MacKellaich, Road Safety Manager

Background Papers: [ECI/29/22 Early Adoption of 20mph Speed Limits in Highland](#)
[EC1/29/23 Culture and Speed Limit Compliance – Item 15](#)

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Assessment Criteria
Appendix 2 – Implementation Timeline

Assessment Criteria

Place Criteria

The process includes the assessment of the road against the following 'Place Criteria' which will indicate which 30mph roads are considered appropriate for potential alteration to 20mph:-

"A minimum road length for the speed limit is suggested between 400-600m. The length adopted will depend on the conditions at or beyond the end points."

Place Criteria:-

- Is the road within 100m walk of any educational setting (e.g., primary, secondary, further & higher education)?
- Does the number of residential and/ or retail premises fronting the road (on one or both sides) exceed 20 over a continuous road length of between 400–600m? Other key buildings should also be considered such as a church, shop or school.
- Is the road within 100m walk of any community centre, church, place of worship, sports facility, any hospital, GP or health centre?
- Does the composition of road users imply a lower speed of 20mph which will improve the conditions and facilities for vulnerable road users and other mode shift (reflect on future plans such as active and sustainable travel, places for people, consider existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)?
- Will the road environment, surrounding environment, community and quality of life impact (e.g., severance, noise, or air quality) be improved by implementing 20mph speed limits?

Implementation Timeline

Highland 20mph Programme – Timeline and Public Consultation Process



