

## **REPORT TO BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 18 MARCH 2025**

### **SPEED LIMIT ORDERS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL 20MPH STRATEGY - BUCHAN**

#### **1 Executive Summary/Recommendations**

**1.1** This report asks the Committee to approve the commencement of the statutory procedures required to implement the national 20mph strategy in Buchan.

#### **1.2 The Committee is recommended to:**

**1.2.1 Approve the commencement of the statutory procedure for the making of The Aberdeenshire Council (Buchan)(Speed Limits Revocation) Order 2025;**

**1.2.2 Approve in principle the subsequent making of The Aberdeenshire Council (Buchan)(Speed Limits Revocation) Order 2025 where no valid objections are received or where any received are resolved and withdrawn;**

**1.2.3 Approve the commencement of the statutory procedure for the making of The Aberdeenshire Council (Buchan)(Speed Limits) Order 2025; and**

**1.2.4 Approve in principle the subsequent making of The Aberdeenshire Council (Buchan)(Speed Limits) Order 2025 where no valid objections are received or where any received are resolved and withdrawn.**

#### **2 Decision Making Route**

**2.1** The Infrastructure Services Committee at its meeting on [26 November 2020](#) (Item 9) approved a new Speed Limits Policy for Aberdeenshire. This included commitments to:

- In urban areas, move towards 20 mph speed restrictions being the norm while maintaining a network of strategic routes with 30 mph speed restrictions; and
- Rationalise our Speed Limit Orders into a new set of 6 orders (1 per Area) and regularly update these through the consolidation process.

**2.2** Following the Bute House Agreement of August 2021, the Scottish Government adopted a National Strategy for 20mph with the aim that “all appropriate roads in built up areas will have a safer speed of 20mph by 2025.” Funding was provided to local authorities to undertake initial assessments of all roads with speed limits of 20mph or 30mph within their areas and more recently, further

funding has been offered to cover the costs of implementing the National Strategy locally. This funding allows Aberdeenshire Council to now deliver its policy commitments listed in paragraph 2.1, and obtaining Area Committee approval to commence the statutory consultation is a necessary procedural step in doing so.

- 2.3 If the Committee agree to the recommendations, a four-week statutory consultation with interested parties will be undertaken. This would be followed by a 21-day public consultation, giving anyone who wishes to object to the making of the orders the opportunity to do so. Any valid objections received and not withdrawn or resolved will be reported back to the Area Committee.
- 2.4 Police Scotland are supportive of the proposed changes, viewing the widespread introduction of 20mph limits as beneficial in helping reduce road casualties.

### 3 Discussion

- 3.1 The proposed changes will be implemented through the use of two separate speed limit orders. The first order will revoke the elements of current orders which have varied the speed limit from the default National Speed Limit or the General Speed Limit for Restricted Roads. These are listed in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 The proposed second order would bring into effect the speed limits of 20mph, 30mph, 40mph and 50mph shown in the plans in **Appendix 2**. The proposed 40mph and 50mph limits are identical to those currently in place however a large number of roads which presently are restricted to 30mph are now proposed to have new reduced limits of 20mph in line with Aberdeenshire Councils Speed Limits Policy and the National Strategy.
- 3.3 The proposed changes have been deliberately limited to those arising from the 20mph programme – other proposed changes to speed limits have been held back so they can be subject to appropriate scrutiny and consideration by the Area Committee on their own merits (rather than being put through under cover of the larger programme), and also to avoid any risk of the funded 20mph works being delayed or jeopardised by objections to an unrelated proposal.

### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 By introducing lower speed limits in urban areas, this report can help deliver the [Strategic Priorities](#) “Connected Communities” and “Living Well Locally” by encouraging active travel and reducing the frequency and severity of traffic accidents.
- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	X		
Staffing	X		
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X

Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			<b>X</b>
Climate Change and Sustainability			<b>X</b>
Health and Wellbeing			<b>X</b>
Town Centre First			<b>X</b>

- 4.3 Implementing the National Strategy for 20mph in Aberdeenshire has demanded and, throughout the spring, will continue to demand a significant commitment in time from officers in the Roads and Infrastructure teams. Prioritising this workstream has in the short term impacted on the Service's capacity to deliver some elements of their routine workload within normally expected timescales. Completing the necessary physical tasks for the project will however provide additional work for the service's operational teams. This work will be programmed as a priority taking account of current capacity within the in-house maintenance teams.
- 4.4 Financially, all reasonable costs incurred in the project can be reclaimed from the Scottish Government through Transport Scotland. Transport Scotland confirms funding on a year-to-year basis and, while the current formal offer of funding is for the current financial year only, it is fully expected that a similar arrangement will be in place for 2025/26 to cover the remaining costs. Costs have already been incurred in staff time and, driven by the tight timescale, in procuring in advance some of the materials and signs which will be required. Any decision by the Committee to reject the recommendations in this report would jeopardise the Council's ability to achieve compliance with the national strategy within the required timeframe and potentially leave the Council liable for the abortive costs incurred.
- 4.5 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken for this committee report as it relates to a procedural stage in implementing an already-approved Aberdeenshire Council policy.
- 4.6 The following Risk in the [Corporate Risk Register](#) has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
- ACORP001 Budget Pressures
  - ACORP006 Reputation management (including social media).

## **5 Scheme of Governance**

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the [Scheme of Governance](#) and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.10.1 of the [List of Committee Powers in Part 2A](#) of the Scheme of

Governance as it relates to approval of the commencement of the required statutory consultation process for a traffic order.

- 5.3 In terms of Section B.10.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance, if the Area Committee wish to depart from Council Policy then the request with the reasons must be referred to the Policy Committee responsible for Roads. The Policy Committee will determine whether to support the departure from Council Policy and this binding decision will be reported to the Area Committee.

**Alan Wood**  
**Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by John Bruce, Specialist Officer Roads Policy & Asset Management  
3 March 2025

**List of Appendices –**

- Appendix 1 – Schedule of orders to be revoked in part or in full
- Appendix 2 – Plans showing extents of proposed speed limits