
**SPACES FOR PEOPLE SUSTRANS FULLY FUNDED ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRAMME:
EXPERIMENTAL ROLL OUT OF 20MPH THROUGHOUT BORDERS SETTLEMENTS**

Report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

27 August 2020

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report proposes, as part of the fully funded Spaces for People programme, the roll out of an experimental trial of 20mph schemes in 80 settlements where the existing speed limit is 30mph.**
- 1.2 The Council successfully bid for £1,200,000 from the Scottish Government's £30,000,000 Covid-19 related Spaces for People fund which is a, *'temporary infrastructure programme in Scotland which offers funding and support to make it safer for people who choose to walk, cycle or wheel for essential trips and exercise during Covid-19'* administered by Sustrans.
- 1.3 A number of temporary measures are planned using Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders such as temporarily reducing speed limits to 40mph on selected national speed limit roads, reviewing a number of town centres to improve cycling opportunities, temporary closure of certain roads and the most significant measure being the proposal to change all Council adopted 30mph roads to 20mph as a trial for a temporary period of up to 18 months.
- 1.4 SBC has identified a total of 80 settlements with Council adopted roads with existing 30mph speed limits and the proposal is to convert all of these to 20mph for a trial period of up to 18 months, with the exception of Trunk Roads as Transport Scotland are carrying out their own research into the introduction of 20mph schemes on trunk routes.
- 1.5 During the trial period the Council will invite further comment and feedback from Elected Members, the public and other partners such as Police Scotland, Borders Buses, Community Councils, Access Groups, etc.
- 1.6 To gauge driver compliance with the 20mph pilot it is the intention to appoint Edinburgh Napier University's Transport Research Department to carry out an independent rigorous, academic evaluation of the pilot scheme, ensuring a consistent and impartial approach to the evaluation.

- 1.7 The trial will be rolled out in a systematic manner with an incremental approach to the implementation of traffic calming measures; initially baseline data will be collected and signing erected, followed by post survey data collection and analysis and then, where necessary the introduction of traffic calming interventions followed by further surveys and analysis. All surveys and traffic calming will be carried out as part of the pilot and funded by the programme.
- 1.8 A report will be brought back to Council 12 months from the commencement of the pilot with suggestions on which schemes if any to retain, and which to remove, again, if any. The remainder of the trial will be used to implement any permanent changes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that, as part of the fully funded Spaces for People programme, the Council agrees to the experimental trial of 20mph schemes in 80 settlements**

3 BACKGROUND & CURRENT POLICY

- 3.1 The Council has previously, in the main, reserved 20mph speed limits to roads around schools on the premise that drivers are more likely to adhere to the reduced speed limit when the restrictions are more concentrated and where children are likely to be more visible.
- 3.2 Despite the policy approach outlined above, the Council is habitually asked by residents and community groups on a regular basis to introduce more wide-spread speed restrictions in built up areas.
- 3.3 Communities believe that vehicles they perceive to be speeding, create an increased risk and greater severity of injury to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. They understand that if speed limits were to be lowered then this perceived risk would be substantially reduced.
- 3.4 Throughout the UK the culture around 20mph speed limits is changing towards more extensive and default coverage. In the last six weeks Wales has mandated to make all streets in built up areas to default to 20mph and 30mph will be the exception. East Lothian Council in recent weeks have also extended their 20mph coverage as part of the Spaces for People in more towns.
- 3.5 The Council has previously been unable to expand the use of 20mph speed limits for two reasons. Firstly that there has been no opportunity to conduct a trial as a result of restricted access to funding, and secondly that in order to access funding the business case in support of any request was not made as no trials had been undertaken to prove the benefits of the investment.

4.0 BID DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Scottish Government announced the initiative on 28 April, with a closing date for submissions on 3 July. This restricted the level of engagement that could be undertaken by the Council in working up an application as all but one of the traffic and road safety team were redeployed supporting the Covid-19 effort.
- 4.2 In developing the application, an online public engagement was launched through SBC Citizen Space. The consultation inviting suitable and specific suggestions for schemes for the Sustrans Spaces for People bid ran from 17 June to the 8 July and received 270 responses. Of these, 70 proposed to reduce speed limits in built up areas. Sample responses from the survey can be found in appendix 3.
- 4.3 Officers also engaged with Elected Members to gauge their views on the application and specifically the 20mph roll out. There was generally positive support for the pilot. However some concerns were voiced about the blanket approach preferring a more nuanced and targeted approach instead. Members were reassured that the pilot program will elicit feedback from Elected Members, Police Scotland and wider communities and that it will be possible to moderate the trial and devise a more nuanced output at the end, if it is decided that any streets should continue with a form of

20mph scheme. Full public consultation must form part of any permanent changes as part of a Traffic Regulation Order.

- 4.4 Discussions have taken place with local representatives of Police Scotland Roads Policing section. Police Scotland have their own policy/guidance dating back to 2013 and when it comes to enforcement of 20mph limits it states that *'...there is a need to prioritise the deployment of resources to those sites which represent the greatest risk. As a result, 20mph limits will not routinely be enforced unless it is considered absolutely necessary and in the interest of casualty reduction. The only exception to this will be the enforcement of 20mph speed limits outside schools which should continue on a regular basis'*. Guidance also states that *'...any lowered limit should be self-enforcing and sustainable, either as a result of the current road layout, existing speed data or through the addition of appropriate physical speed reduction'*. The understanding is that this same approach will be taken by other Police Scotland officers such as the Community Action Team. Although Police Scotland are not fully supportive of a region wide blanket roll out they will continue to monitor and enforce as and where necessary as already happens within 30mph speed limits and where observed non-compliance occurs on 20mph speed limit roads they will take action, but are unlikely to undertake routine checks. It is worth noting that in the Scottish Borders most injury accidents happen in the national speed limit (rural) areas.

5 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The aims of introducing the ambitious extensive 20mph speed limits for the trial period include:
- Working in partnership with Police Scotland, Edinburgh Napier University and Sustrans to determine outcome of the experimental roll out of more extensive 20mph schemes in regard to driver behaviour and public reaction.
 - Determine if a more tailored or nuanced regime is required for the implementation of 20mph schemes longer term.
 - Reduce the risk and severity of injuries as a result of collisions between vehicles and vulnerable road users.
 - Encourage more active travel and make active travel easier and more appealing by lowering speed limits, especially important considering links between obesity and Covid-19.
 - Make the Borders a more attractive place to visit.
 - Alter the driver culture within the Scottish Borders to having 20mph as the default when entering built up areas.
- 5.2 Edinburgh Napier University are already partnered with the Council on the Eddleston Rural Traffic Calming Study and will be appointed to carry out independent evaluation of the project; which will provide significant confidence in any findings as they are world leaders in transport research. Findings from the Eddleston study on the success of appropriate traffic calming features will be considered as part of the traffic calming implementation phase of the experiment. Early indications have shown that electronic signs (smiley faced or reward messages) along with other interventions as a joint approach appear to have a positive influence on driver behaviour speed reduction and provide communities with significant

levels of 'comfort'. The Council installed 14 of these signs last year and as a result have seen a reduction in complaints over speeding, but the demand from communities for 20mph remains.

- 5.3 Although a street by street audit is not required to introduce 20mph schemes, extensive traffic data collection and analysis will be carried out predominantly on the main through routes in towns. This analysis over the trial period will likely be a significant determining factor in which roads may revert back to 30mph.
- 5.4 As one of the aims is to change the culture of drivers to slow down, a formal communications and marketing strategy is being developed. The intention is to use Council internet, social media and advertising, in conjunction with the in-house communications team to keep the public updated and aware of the trial as it progresses and to canvass feedback.
- 5.5 In anticipation of the policy not being universally welcomed by all sections of the travelling public it is worth noting that the effect of drivers being asked to slow down from 30mph to 20mph when travelling through built up areas equates to an additional 1 minute per mile on journeys through towns, assuming that it was possible to maintain constant 30mph for the length of the journey previously.
- 5.6 Appendix 1 contains the list of communities to benefit from the introduction of 20mph schemes, appendix 2 details the other measures proposed as part of the £1.2M spend and appendix 3 has sample responses from the recent Citizen Space consultation.

6 PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF PILOT

Dates	Actions
Sep 20	Data collection to provide baseline speed/traffic data
Sep 20 to Dec 20	Roll out of 20mph signing across all settlements
Nov 20 to Jan 21	Initial post traffic survey collection and analysis
Jan 21 to Mar 21	Implementation of temp traffic calming features such as electronic signs with longer term legacy for communities
Apr 21 to May 21	Post intervention traffic survey collection and analysis
May 21 to Sep 21	Citizen Space survey of views of public
Sep 21	Return to Council with 'wash-up' report on previous 12 month trial with recommendations on how to proceed with any modifications identified as a result of analysis, partner input and public comments/concerns.
Oct 21 to Mar 22	Either decommissioning back to 30mph or Traffic Regulation Order process with statutory consultation with tailored/nuanced schemes.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

- (a) This project is 100% externally funded, and although in theory works should be of a temporary nature, Officers will consider any interventions that would have a welcomed longer term legacy with minimal ongoing revenue costs, such as electronic signs which are widely welcomed by communities and can be programmed to activate at a variety of speeds.
- (b) Of the £1.2M it is anticipated that the 20mph project works will cost approximately £600K, with staff time, monitoring, evaluation and associated marketing as an add on from the remaining balance for other measures.
- (c) Funding is secured from Sustrans until mid-May 2021, and any necessary traffic calming features will have been completed by then. If it is decided to proceed with an amended/tailored/nuanced scheme then Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets monies can be used to fund the necessary advertising costs for a Traffic Regulation Order and the decommissioning of any schemes to revert back to 30mph can be funded through revenue budgets. Smarter Choices funding is also available in future years if there is a desire to add to traffic calming.

7.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) There is a risk that there will be a vocal minority who believe that being asked to slow down by 10mph is unacceptable and social media will likely be busy initially, however as schemes bed-in acceptance is expected to be generally forthcoming. To mitigate such a response the roll out will be initially with communities that Officers have worked extensively with previously who are keen to trial new measures, and those communities who have been proponents of reducing speed limits in their areas, such as Eddleston, Stow, Coldingham, Sprouston and Newcastleton.
- (b) There will likely be an increase in complaints of speeding as the schemes are rolled out, either perceived or real and Police Scotland will likely follow their 2013 policy and they will not carry out enforcement where there is a belief that compliance cannot be reached. As the project progresses there will be monitoring and evaluation and where possible and realistic, traffic calming can be introduced as part of the Spaces for People funding or the speed limit revised back to 30mph. Cycling, walking safer streets budget and Smarter Choices funding is also available for further traffic calming beyond the 18 month trial period.
- (c) There is a risk that by introducing extensive schemes from the outset, as opposed to a tailored approach the Council may be open to criticism of not being able to make up their mind if/when adjustments are required, however this approach will allow the public to see that their historic concerns have been listened to and that a scientific approach is

being taken that is evidence driven and evaluated by external academic experts, with an outcome that is realistic.

- (d) As this is a trial it will be possible to be flexible as the period progresses by amending the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order where necessary.

7.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications. On the contrary it is anticipated that the measures will have a positive impact on more vulnerable such as the elderly, infirm and those with mobility issues.

7.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant economic, social or environmental issues associated with this report.

7.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant impacts on the Council's carbon emissions that are additional to current operation.

7.6 Rural Proofing

There are no rural proofing impacts resulting from this report.

7.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated in the final report.

Approved by

Martin Joyce

Service Director Assets & Infrastructure Signature

Author(s)

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Background Papers: None

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitelaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jacqueline Whitelaw, PLACE, Business Support, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 0300 100 1800, email JWhitelaw@scotborders.gov.uk.

Appendix 1

List of Settlements:

EILDON	BERWICKSHIRE	T&L	TWEEDDALE	CHEVIOT
Town	Town	Town	Town	Town
STOW	COLDINGHAM	NEWCASTLETON	EDDLESTON	SPROUSTON
HERIOT	ST ABBS	CHESTERS	BLYTH BRIDGE	EDNAM
FOUNTAINHALL	RESTON	B'CHESTER BRIG	ROMMANO	KELSO
CLOVENFORDS	COCKBURNSPATH	DENHOLM	SKIRLING	STICHILL
NEWTOWN STBOSWELLS	COVE	HAWICK (inc Bfoot)	BROUGHTON	BIRGHAM
BOWDEN	GRANTSHOUSE		CARDRONA	SMAILHOLM
MIDLEM	AYTON		INNERLEITHEN	YETHOLM
LILLIESLEAF	EYEMOUTH		WALKERBURN	MOREBATTLE
MELROSE	BURNMOUTH		PEEBLES	HEITON
GATTONSIDE	CHIRNSIDE		KIRKHOUSE	ECKFORD
DARNICK	FOULDEN		TRAQUAIR	ROXBURGH
NEWSTEAD	PAXTON		WEST LINTON	MAXTON
GALASHIELS	WHITSOME			NISBET
OXTON	ALLANTON			ANCRUM
LAUDER	DUNS			LEMPITLAW
ETTRICKBRIDGE	PRESTON			ULSTON
ASHKIRK	LONGFORMACUS			JEDBURGH
SELKIRK	GAVINTON			ST BOSWELLS
REDPATH	GREENLAW			
EARLSTON	GORDON			
	WESTRUTHER			
	SWINTON			
	COLDSTREAM			
	LEITHOLM			
	ECCLES			
	LENNEL			

Appendix 2

Other Spaces for People Works:

- Temporary closure of B710 Clovenfords to Caddonfoot
- Temporary 40mph schemes:
- Lauder to Earlston backroad 11kms
- Peebles to Peel backroad 23kms
- Heriot to Clovenfords via Stow backroad 25kms

Sustrans to design proposals for:

- Chiefswood Melrose One Way to allow shared section of road for pedestrians and cyclists
- Peebles High Street to be more bike friendly
- Newtown St Duns more pedestrian and cycle friendly
- Tweedbank Drive, review of road layout to be more cycle friendly.

Appendix 3

Sample responses from Spaces for People citizen space public consultation:

Reduce the speed limit in Stow to 20 mph for a temporary period to give us a chance to understand the impact on life in Stow.

I believe a relatively low cost measure in relation to road safety that could be implemented throughout the Scottish Borders could be a blanket 20mph zone i.e. replacing existing 30 mph zones with 20 mph zones.

Just get on and put 20s in the Borders. Other Councils have them and they are popular. Stop dragging your heels and get it done. Want kids to walk to school? Get drivers to slow down by reducing speed limit.

I'd like to see the following: 20 mph on residential streets

20mph limit in all towns and villages

I'd like to see the heart of the villages reduced to 20 mph

Make villages 20 miles an hour (Stow and others)

.....I am commenting on behalf of Peebles Community Council. In conjunction with the Peebles Community trust we have run a consultation process with the public, we have received about 130 responses. The majority of people feel that there is a need to look at how we move around the town and there should be more facilities provided for pedestrians and cyclists. Some respondents feel that road safety is jeopardised by speeding vehicles and that more 20MPH limits should be in place with enforcement by speed cameras.