
To: The Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 30 August 2017

Report by: Director of Community Resources

**Heading: Proposed Restricted Roads (20mph Limit) (Scotland) Bill
Consultation Response**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Mark Ruskell MSP has issued a consultation on a proposal for a Bill to replace the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted roads within built up areas with a 20mph limit.
 - 1.2 The proposal introduces 20 mph speed limits in built up areas through a small national legislative change.
 - 1.3 In a report of 7 June 2017, the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board was recommended to delegate authority to the Director of Community Resources, in conjunction with the Convener of the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board, to submit a response on behalf of Renfrewshire Council to the consultation by the 7 August 2017, stating that the response was subject to approval by the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board at its meeting on 30 August 2017.
 - 1.4 On the 15 May the Scottish Government announced that the consultation period had been extended to 15 September. This was to allow organisations such as local authorities time to respond formally to the consultation.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board approve the Renfrewshire Council response to the consultation on the Proposed Restricted Roads (20mph Limit) (Scotland) Bill, for submission to the Scottish Government thereafter, attached at Appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 This consultation relates to a draft proposal lodged by Mark Ruskell MSP as the first stage in the process of introducing a Member's Bill in the Scottish Parliament. The purpose of this consultation is to provide a range of views on the subject matter of the proposed Bill, highlighting potential problems, suggesting improvements, and generally refining and developing the policy. The consultation process is being supported by the Scottish Parliament's Non-Government Bills Unit.
- 3.2 The national 30mph speed limit for urban areas was set back in the 1930s, at a time when our understanding of road safety was very different, and has never been changed.
- 3.3 Under current legislation the speed limit on restricted roads is 30mph. Restricted roads are defined as C class or unclassified roads which are lit by street lights that are no more than 185m apart. In effect this accounts for all the local roads in a built-up area. Currently local authorities are only able to set speed limits of 20mph by promoting specific Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
- 3.4 In June 2009 the Scottish Government set out its framework for road safety to 2020 in Go Safe on Scotland's Roads – It's Everyone's Responsibility. In the framework it sets out its vision as being:

“A steady reduction in the numbers of those killed and those seriously injured, with the ultimate vision of a future where no-one is killed on Scotland's roads, and the injury rate is much reduced.”

This framework was reviewed in 2015-16 with speed, age and vulnerable road users identified as key priority areas of action.

- 3.5 The Scottish Government supports 20mph speed limits in residential areas and in January 2015 published its Good Practice Guide on 20mph Speed Restriction, where it states that 20mph is the ideal speed limit for residential and built up areas in Scotland. Furthermore the document states that “The

Scottish Government is committed to encourage initiatives that cut speed, particularly near schools, in residential areas and in other areas of our towns and cities where there is a significant volume of pedestrian or cyclist activity. Renfrewshire Council has implemented 20 mph speed limits outside all its schools since 2005.

- 3.6 The roll out of 20mph areas in Scotland has been limited and piecemeal so far. The process for creating them within the current 30mph urban areas is complex and expensive for councils to administer.
- 3.7 Dropping the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph in residential areas delivers benefits from making it easier to cross the road to cutting air pollution. 20mph speed limits have been shown to reduce vehicle speed and that reducing speed saves lives. A Transport Research Laboratory study found that the number of accidents could be expected to fall by between 4% and 6% for each 1mph reduction in average speed.
- 3.8 While the creation of 20mph speed limits is achievable through TROs this is a very time consuming and expensive process for local authorities to take forward to cover all the relevant streets and areas. In practice some local authorities have taken this forward more than others and this has led to a patchwork collection of 20mph streets across Scotland which is potentially confusing for all road users.
- 3.9 The proposal is to change the default speed limit from 30mph to 20mph on restricted roads (covering the vast majority of residential and built-up areas). The proposals allow local authorities to maintain a 30mph speed limit where appropriate for through-roads.
- 3.10 The Bill intends to make it easier for local authorities to pursue and implement that 20mph policy for the benefit and safety of all road users. Lower speeds reduce the likelihood of accidents being fatal. Transport Scotland research indicates that a pedestrian hit by a car at 20mph has only a 1% chance of dying compared to a 5.5% chance for a pedestrian hit at 30mph.
- 3.11 Local authorities will continue to have the option to put in place additional traffic calming features to newly designated 20mph roads, particularly to tackle places where they judge there is a high risk to pedestrians. Roads currently forming 20mph zones will be unaffected by this Bill and their traffic calming features will remain in place.
- 3.12 The Bill will not make any changes to enforcement or the penalties for speeding. The range of sanctions for breach of the new 20mph limit will remain the same as currently provided for breaching the 30mph limit.

Enforcement will continue to remain a matter of operational discretion for the police.

- 3.13 The proposal recommends that a national 20mph awareness campaign is rolled out by the Scottish Government to coincide with the transition to a default 20mph limit. A national campaign should highlight the benefits of 20mph outlined above and help to bring about a cultural shift where 20mph becomes the new norm.

4 Consultation Response – Summary

- 4.1 Renfrewshire Council is fully supportive of the proposal to replace the current 30 mph default speed limit on restricted roads, with a 20 mph limit. It considers the following consequences of the proposal to be of particular benefit:

- accident savings,
- the creation of a more attractive street environment for pedestrians and cyclists,
- the consistency of a national message to avoid driver confusion,
- meeting the public's increasingly frequent aspirations for lower traffic speeds,
- fuel and maintenance savings for drivers.

- 4.2 It is important that a Scottish Government backed national advertising campaign should accompany the proposal and that Police enforcement is appropriately allocated at the outset.

- 4.3 It should be noted that the bill does not cover A and B roads because they are not restricted roads. The bill allows local authorities the ability to designate a restricted road as 30 mph, if appropriate, rather than the default 20 mph limit.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There are no financial implications. However, if the bill does progress there may be a cost associated with implementing this on restricted roads. At this stage of the bill there is no detail as to how this change would be funded.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning**

Children and Young People – The young are more likely to be able to find an acceptable gap in the traffic to cross the road more easily

Community Care, Health & Well-being - Pedestrians walking alongside the traffic and cyclists are less likely to be intimidated and more people may be attracted to these modes of travel

Empowering our Communities - The proposal meets the increasingly frequent aspirations of the public for 20 mph speed limits, and the attendant reduction in road accidents, and will provide benefits for everyone through a consistent nationwide approach

Greener - The free flowing traffic conditions likely to be created by a 20 mph limit will help prevent stop/start motoring which increases emissions. A more pleasant street atmosphere may advantage pedestrians

Jobs and the Economy – None

Safer and Stronger - Road accidents are likely to reduce or be less severe.

4. **Legal** - None.
5. **Property/Assets** - None.
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - Road accidents are likely to reduce or be less severe.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – The proposal has potential for abuse if not advertised thoroughly. There may be a need for more police enforcement at the start.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – None.

List of Background Papers - none

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RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL'S RESPONSES ARE SHOWN IN CAPITALS BELOW

QUESTIONS

SECTION 1 - ABOUT YOU

1. Are you responding as:

- ☐ an individual – in which case go to Q2A
- ☒ on behalf of an organisation? – in which case go to Q2B

2A. Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic whose experience or expertise is not relevant to the proposal, please choose "Member of the public")

- ☐ Politician (MSP/MP/Peer/MEP/Councillor)
- ☐ Professional with experience in a relevant subject
- ☐ Academic with expertise in a relevant subject
- ☐ Member of the public

2B. Please select the category which best describes your organisation:

- ☒ Public sector body (Scottish/UK Government/Government agency, local authority, NDPB)
- ☐ Commercial organisation (company, business)
- ☐ Representative organisation (trade union, professional association)
- ☐ Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)
- ☐ Other (e.g. club, local group, group of individuals, etc.)

3. Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

- ☒ I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation
- ☐ I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)
- ☐ I would like this response to be confidential (no part of the response to be published)

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published. Name/organisation:

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

4. Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. (Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.)

Contact details:

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SECTION 2 - YOUR VIEWS ON THE PROPOSAL**Aim and approach**

1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to replace the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted roads with a 20mph limit?

- ☒ Fully supportive
☐ Partially supportive
☐ Neutral (neither support nor oppose)
☐ Partially opposed
☐ Fully opposed
☐ Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The following points express our support for the proposal:

- Studies have shown reducing speeds reduces accidents and their severity;
- It promote sustainable travel modes;
- It promotes a positive street atmosphere amongst residents;
- It provides national and local consistency with regard to speed limits and promote cultural change amongst drivers and other road users.

2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

- ☐ Yes (if so, please explain below)
☒ No
☐ Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The national coverage and consistency can only be achieved using a bill in the Scottish parliament. Individual traffic regulation orders for each roads authority have been inconsistently taken forward and are unattractive because of the resource requirements in terms of cost, people and time taken to implement.

3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of the proposal?

- Studies have shown reducing speeds reduces accidents and their severity;
- Promote sustainable travel modes;
- Promotes a positive street atmosphere amongst residents;

- Provides national and local consistency and cultural change;
- Aligns with the public's desire for 20 mph speed limits in residential areas.

4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of the proposal?

No disadvantages. However, it is a cultural change for Scotland and would require support to enable the change through advertising and enforcement. Bus companies and commuters if travelling for a period of time through restricted roads may feel impacted through longer journey times

5. What measures do you think would be needed to maximise compliance with the new national 20mph speed limit on restricted roads? (Examples might include advertising, signage or police enforcement.)

Collectively measures would be:

- A national advertising campaign;
- Police enforcement;
- Signage;
- Driver support.

Financial implications

6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

(a) the Scottish Government

- ☐ Significant increase in cost
- ✓ ☒ Some increase in cost
- ☐ Broadly cost-neutral
- ☐ Some reduction in cost
- ☐ Significant reduction in cost
- ☐ Unsure

(b) Local authorities

- ☐ Significant increase in cost
- ✓ ☒ Some increase in cost
- ☐ Broadly cost-neutral
- ☐ Some reduction in cost
- ☐ Significant reduction in cost
- ☐ Unsure

(c) Motorists

- ☐ Significant increase in cost
- ☐ Some increase in cost
- ✓ ☒ Broadly cost-neutral
- ✓ ☒ Some reduction in cost
- ☐ Significant reduction in cost
- ☐ Unsure

(d) Other road users and members of the public

- ☐ Significant increase in cost
- ☐ Some increase in cost
- ☒ Broadly cost-neutral
- ☐ Some reduction in cost
- ☐ Significant reduction in cost
- ☐ Unsure

(e) Other public services (e.g. NHS, Fire and Rescue Services etc)

- ☐ Significant increase in cost
- ☐ Some increase in cost
- ☐ Broadly cost-neutral
- ☒ Some reduction in cost
- ☐ Significant reduction in cost
- ☐ Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

To introduce 20 mph limits on restricted roads will require financial resource to plan, promote, develop and implement the change. Costs will include signs, order preparation, advertising and promotion. These costs will apply to both and, or either Scottish Government or local authorities depending on how transition from 30 mph to 20 mph is taken forward. Motorists, other road users and members of the public are not likely to increase costs and may decrease costs due to less fuel and wear and tear on cars through reduced speeds.

For public services the NHS should see a reduction in the amount and severity of road accidents they require to support. The costs for Police Scotland should be broadly neutral as they are implementing the speed limit as they do at the moment. There may be an additional cost of introduction if there is an enforcement push to support the change.

7. Do you believe there will be any other benefits to reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph?

- Pedestrians walking alongside the traffic and cyclists are less likely to be intimidated and more people may be attracted to these modes of travel.
- It supports the attractiveness of place and its development.

Equalities

8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

- ☒ Positive

- ☐ Slightly positive
- ☐ Neutral (neither positive nor negative)
- ☐ Slightly negative
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The aged, young and disabled are more likely to be able to find an acceptable gap in the traffic to cross the road more easily.

9. Could any negative impact of the Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

Sustainability of the proposal

10. Do you consider that the proposed bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Environmental

- Free flowing traffic conditions, likely to be created by a 20 mph limit, will help prevent stop/start motoring which increases emissions.
- Slower speeds create fewer emissions from diesel engines.

Social

- A more pleasant street atmosphere will advantage pedestrians and cyclists.

Economic

- The potential negative impact of slower speeds on public transport, deliveries and the journey to work are offset by not implementing the 20 mph limit on major A & B roads.

General

11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to establish a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads?

None.