



REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 13 OCTOBER 2009

SUBJECT: INVESTIGATION OF 20 MPH SPEED RESTRICTIONS AROUND SCHOOLS

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to consider a report outlining the 20mph speed restriction schemes which have been implemented around schools in Moray and reasons why the same have not been promoted at all schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to traffic management functions, including the preparation and implementation of traffic management schemes.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Committee is asked to agree the proposal to report back to a future meeting of this Committee on the three schools where a 20mph limit is appropriate for future implementation and the school where new vehicle activated signing is proposed and to agree that others should have no treatment or alternative measures introduced.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following a previous report to this committee on 26 May 2009, Committee requested a further report detailing specific information on each school which does not currently have a 20mph limit (para 8 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 Scottish Government guidance ETLCD Circular1/2004 states that "The Executive believes that a 20mph speed limit should be the norm outside schools". This is not mandatory and information available at 31st March 2008, when government funding ended for implementing these 20mph limits, indicated that only five local authorities in Scotland have implemented 20mph limits at all their schools with Aberdeenshire being the only rural authority.
- 3.3 In Moray, there are currently 17 schools which do not have a 20mph limit. 8 are within 30mph limits (Elgin and Speyside High Schools, Dallas, Greenwards, Newmill, Portknockie, St Peter's and Tomintoul Primary Schools), 3 are within 40mph limits (Alves, Botriphnie and Mosstowie Primary Schools) and 6 are on unrestricted roads (Cabrach, Crossroads, Glenlivet, Inveravon, Knockando and Logie Primary Schools). However both Alves and

Inveravon are on trunk roads, which are the responsibility of Transport Scotland.

- 3.4 **Appendix A** gives the details of each school and is grouped into the two secondary schools, the primary schools in 30mph limits, the primary schools within other speed limits and the schools which are on unrestricted roads. This will allow for comparison between each of the school types.
- 3.5 The two secondary schools have different characteristics with Elgin High School having consistently over two thirds (over 400) of pupils walking or cycling, at least part of the way to school, with a further 90 or so being transported by school buses and another 100 or so being driven.
- 3.6 Speyside High School on the other hand has 468 of its pupils bussed to school and approximately 70 pupils walking to school. There are only about 10 pupils driven to school. Foot access is used significantly at lunchtime and therefore there is benefit in extending the footway on the school side of Mary Avenue and introducing a 20mph part-time speed limit on Mary Avenue. The bus access to the school is separate from the pedestrian access and so there is already good segregation between the modes of travel.
- 3.7 The access to Elgin High School is likely to change in the next year or so with the proposed sports centre and extension to Edgar Road. The bus and vehicle access is also likely to move from High School Drive to Edgar Road and this will significantly change travel patterns for pupils and will give greater segregation between those vehicles going to the school and those walking and cycling there.
- 3.8 Greenwards Primary is inextricably linked to this development and the access to it will also alter with the extension to Edgar Road. It will, for the first time, give vehicle access adjacent to the school, not just from residential cul-de sacs. It is likely that the vehicular travel patterns to Greenwards will also change and the extension to Edgar Road will also give greater segregation between those who drive to the school and the children who walk and cycle. For most of the children who walk and cycle to Greenwards their main interaction with vehicles is on Glen Lossie Drive at the School Crossing Patroller as walking routes are remote from the adjacent cul-de-sacs.
- 3.9 As part of the extension to Edgar Road it would be proposed to introduce a part time 20mph limit past the two schools on the new road, in much the same way as Morrision Road has at present for Elgin Academy and Bishopmill Primary School.
- 3.10 These three schools are the only ones it is recommended where future part time 20mph limits should be introduced. The funding for Greenwards Primary and Elgin High Schools would need to be included in the funding for the extension to Edgar Road whilst the footway and speed limit on Mary Avenue would need to be funded from the Road Safety Capital plan and would compete for priority along with other schemes in the next financial year.

- 3.11 Other schools within 30mph limits are Dallas, Newmill, Portknockie, St Peter's and Tomintoul Primary Schools.
- 3.12 Dallas and Portknockie Primary Schools are situated very close to the existing speed limits and this causes a problem for signing any reduced speed limit as in both cases the speed limit would have to be signed by a variable sign and would require advanced warning of the speed limit within the still unrestricted approach to it. The majority of children at both these schools walk to school and pedestrian improvements have been made to both with the available funding. This has aided the walk to school significantly and this has been the main focus of the issues at these schools. Vehicle activated warning signs, which are active only for the same period as a part time speed limit would be, have been installed at both due to the problem with signing a reduced speed limit and there appears to be a positive effect on speeds. This signing is considered to be sufficient and so no further signing is proposed. It is not considered that any further reduction in speed could be achieved by introducing part time 20mph limits.
- 3.13 Newmill, St Peters and Tomintoul Primary Schools are all on narrow streets which have single figure traffic volumes passing the school at the peak school time and very low speeds (all under 20mph). Due to the narrowness of the streets there is no room to erect part time speed limit and it is very unlikely that the erecting of these large and obtrusive signs would have any affect whatsoever on speeds. As speeds are already lower than the guide speed of 20mph, then the cost of further signing cannot be justified.
- 3.14 The schools in 40mph limits are Alves, Botriphnie and Mosstowie Primary Schools. The 40mph limit in each case has been determined as appropriate due to the extent of the development in the village and the existing speeds. All the schools have had vehicle activated warning signs installed and each appears to be having a speed reducing effect on the targeted vehicles. The vast majority of children at each of these three schools are bussed or driven to school. This is a reflection of the catchment areas in some instances and for Mosstowie that there are a significant number of out of catchment children attending.
- 3.15 Alves Primary has the added issue of being alongside the A96 Trunk Road which carries the greatest amount of traffic and although the children do not enter the school via the A96, children walking from the village do have to use the footway alongside it.
- 3.16 In order to introduce part time speed limits at any of these schools, like Dallas and Portknockie there would need to be additional advanced warning signs for the speed limit and this would mean a minimum of 6 signs be installed at each school. It is not be anticipated that any further reduction in speed could be achieved by introducing part time 20mph limits at any of these schools and therefore the costs associated with the necessary signing cannot be justified.
- 3.17 The schools on derestricted roads are Cabrach, Crossroads, Glenlivet, Inveravon, Knockando and Logie Primary Schools.

- 3.18 Of these schools Cabrach, Glenlivet, Inveravon and Knockando have the vast majority of their children taken by School transport to school and there are no children who walk to Cabrach, Glenlivet, Inveravon and Logie Schools. This is because of the distance to the school and the rural nature of the schools.
- 3.19 If a part time 20mph limit were to be introduced at any of the six schools mentioned, because the road is derestricted then there would require to be electronic advanced warning signs of the speed limit and would therefore mean a minimum of 6 signs at each school.
- 3.20 Speeds measured at Cabrach, Glenlivet and Knockando are already between 20 and 25mph and any signing would be out of character with their rural setting and would not have any significant effect on the already low speeds.
- 3.21 Inveravon School is accessed from a minor road off the A95. Speeds were only measured on the A95, but the width and the nature of the minor road would make it virtually impossible to install any signs as there is no verge and the road itself is less than 3metres wide. Any speed limit on the trunk road would need to be discussed with Transport Scotland.
- 3.22 Logie School has a few fare paying children from Forres who also use the school bus as they do not live within the Logie catchment area. The school is located on a private road off the A940 which would not justify the implementation of a speed limit.
- 3.23 Crossroads School is also accessed off the minor road however some of the children who do walk to this school cross the B9018 to get to the school. The school has flashing school warning signs associated with the school, but it would be proposed to change these to vehicle activated signs to be consistent with Alves, Botriphnie, Dallas, Mosstowie and Portknockie Schools. There may also be some merit in carrying out some footway works around the school and work to improve the school bus drop off area on the side road. These signs are likely to cost in the region of £3,000 each, but as they would replace the existing signs there would be no additional power supply cost.
- 3.24 If a part-time 20mph limit were to be introduced at this school it would require 10 electronic signs to be installed.
- 3.25 The signs which would be installed for the speed limits above 30mph cost in the region of £3,000 each plus any additional costs associated with obtaining a power supply to the signs.
- 3.26 These signs would have to be funded from a future Road Safety budget. The schemes funded from this budget are currently evidence-based and any implementation of a speed limit which would be unlikely to produce significant reductions in speed would take budget away from schemes with a real potential for saving casualties.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) **Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

This report is consistent with Outcome 9 - We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger, in so far as it relates to Road Safety which is also a local priority under Community Safety

(b) **Policy and Legal**

There is a national policy that there should be 20mph limits at schools. It does not specify all schools and it is up to each local authority to set and implement this policy based on the circumstances of each school.

There are no statutory or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

There are no staffing or policy implications from this report.

Any costs associated with the future implementation of a 20mph limit on Edgar Road would form part of the budget for the whole scheme. Any future implementation of a speed limit for Speyside High School would be carried out in conjunction with securing funding for improved footway provision along Mary Avenue.

In either of these cases this would be the subject of another report to this committee at the appropriate time.

Funding for the new signing and possible footway improvements would need to be funded from a future Road Safety budget. However, as indicated throughout the report, the costs associated with introducing further 20mph signing cannot be justified from the evidence gathered.

(d) **Consultations**

Kathryn Macpherson, Senior Solicitor has been consulted on this report and is in agreement.

Lorraine Paisey (Principal Accountant) has been consulted on this report and is in agreement with the financial implications.

Discussions have taken place with Grampian Police and they have no additional comments to make to their previous response to 26 May Committee. A copy of this response is included in Appendix B.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The guidance issued on 20mph speed limits does not indicate that these are a mandatory requirement. All school sites have been investigated, with the majority benefiting from the introduction of part-time limits. For those remaining, three schools should be progressed into a further programme for 20mph speed limits, however this report sets out a number of reasons why the others should remain as present, or have other speed reducing features introduced.

Author of Report: Elaine Penny, Engineer (Traffic)

Background Papers:

Ref:

Signature:



Date: October 2009

Designation: Director of Environmental Services

Name: Robert A Stewart