



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

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF SPEED LIMITS

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to inform the committee of the contents of the Scottish Government ETLCD CIRCULAR NO 1/2006: SETTING LOCAL SPEED LIMITS and to ask for approval of a procedure to carry out the assessments of speed limits in accordance with this new guidance.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the functions of the Council as Roads Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Committee is asked to note the contents of this report relating to the latest guidance on setting local speed limits and;**
- 2.2 **Approve the procedure set out in Appendix A for assessing speed limits in Moray.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In August 2006 the Scottish Government issued ETLCD circular no 1/2006: setting local speed limits which sets out new guidance for Road Authorities to assess speed limits on roads for which they are responsible.
- 3.2 In addition to the new guidance, the letter introducing this guidance also requested all local authorities to "review formally the speed limits on all Class A and B roads in your area by 2011, in accordance with the revised guidance".
- 3.3 The full guidance document is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/08/14134225/0>.
- 3.4 The Key Points in the guidance are as follows:

Speed limits should be evidence led, self-explaining, and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should

encourage self-compliance and not be seen by drivers as being a target speed at which to drive in all circumstances.

Traffic Authorities set 'local speed limits' in situations where local needs and considerations deem it desirable for drivers to adopt a speed which is different from the national speed limit.

This guidance is to be used for setting all local speed limits on single and dual carriageway roads, other than 20 mph limits, in both urban and rural areas.

This guidance should also be used as the basis for future assessments of local speed limits and for developing route management strategies.

Traffic Authorities are asked to review the speed limits on all of their A and B roads by 2011 in accordance with this guidance.

3.5 The key objectives set out in the guidance are:

- *the provision of up to date and consistent advice to Traffic Authorities*
- *improved clarity, which will aid greater consistency of speed limits across the country*
- *the setting of more appropriate local speed limits, including lower or higher limits where conditions dictate*
- *local speed limits which better reflect the needs of all road users, not just motorised vehicles*
- *improved quality of life for local communities and a better balance between road safety, accessibility and environmental objectives, especially in rural communities;*
- *improved recognition and understanding by road users of the risks involved on different types of road, the different speed limits that apply and the reasons why;*
- *improved respect for speed limits, and in turn improved self compliance*
- *continued reductions in the number of road traffic accidents, injuries and deaths in which excessive or inappropriate speed is a contributory factor.*
- *if a speed limit is set in isolation, or is unrealistically low, it is likely to be ineffective and to lead to possible disrespect for the speed limit. As well as requiring significant and avoidable enforcement costs, this may also result in substantial numbers of drivers continuing to travel at unacceptable speeds, thus increasing the risk of accidents and injuries.*

3.6 It is proposed that the review of Class A and B roads will be prioritised with Class A roads being undertaken first, then Class B roads. Further prioritisation within each Class will then be generally by accident history.

- 3.7 The review requires the collection of information, principally traffic flows and speeds. Where existing data is available and sufficiently up-to-date, this can be used to save double work.
- 3.8 It is not anticipated that this review will identify lots of changes to the existing speed limits but any changes identified will be reported back to this Committee through the normal process for Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 3.9 It is intended that any changes identified will be progressed immediately and not held up until the whole review is complete.
- 3.10 It is anticipated that this review will be completed by the end of 2010.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) **Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

This report is in accord with Single Outcome Agreement 9 – We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger. Road Safety is also a priority within Community Safety.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

This is National guidance which the Committee are being asked to adopt through the procedure contained in Appendix A. While there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, legal orders will be required for any changes identified to the existing speed limits.

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

This review can be accommodated within existing resources. It is anticipated that changes to speed limits arising from the review will be accommodated within existing budget headings.

(d) **Consultations**

The Traffic Inspector for Grampian Police has been consulted on this report and fully supports the recommendation within the report.

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

Lorraine Paisey, Principal Accountant has been consulted and is in agreement with the financial implications.


5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 **Committee are asked to note the contents of this report and to approve the procedure set out in Appendix A for assessing speed limits in Moray.**

Author of Report: A. R. Duff, Senior Engineer (Traffic)

Background Papers:

Ref:

Signature: 

Date : October 2009

Designation: Director of Environmental Services

Name: Robert A Stewart