

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	13th September 2011
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Notice of Motion from Councillor Boulton – “That consideration is given to reducing the speed limit on the road from Countesswells to Kingswells due to the high level of accidents.”
REPORT NUMBER	EPI/11/132

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information to members of the Committee in relation to Councillor Boulton’s motion regarding the implementation of a 40mph speed limit on the currently derestricted section of the C128C road between its junction with the A944 at Kingswells Roundabout and the existing 40mph restriction to the north of Cults.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
1. Note the content of this report and the measures that have recently been implemented;
 2. Agree that no further action should be taken with regard to the implementation of a lower speed limit and therefore to remove from the Motions List; and
 3. Instruct officers to report back to a future committee meeting (after a minimum period of one year) outlining the effect that the installation of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) and the retexturing of the carriageway have made on accident numbers and severity on the C128C.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report. Members should note that the cost of the recently installed VAS signs and the retexturing of the C128C amounted to £28,973.00 which was funded from the 2010/11 Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Non-Housing Capital Grant.
- 3.2 The implementation of a 40mph speed limit on the C128C between its junction with the A944 at Kingswells Roundabout and the existing 40mph limit north of Cults is estimated to cost in the region of £5,000 at today's prices.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 4.1 The content of the report meets with the local Community Plan objectives to continually improve road safety and maximize accessibility for pedestrians and all modes of transport.
- 4.2 The proposals are in line with the Council's Transportation Strategy to improve safety for all road users by continuing to reduce the number of casualties in traffic collisions.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Grampian Police are responsible for the enforcement of speed limits across the city. They have stated that they are in agreement with the recommendations outlined in the content of this report and that the implementation of a reduced speed limit would not be effective without supplementary traffic management measures along the entire route. Grampian Police believe that the setting of a 40mph speed limit would set an unwelcome precedent on this type of route.

The cost of any supplementary measures cannot be accommodated within the 2011/12 Non Housing Capital Budget allocation or the Cycling Walking Safer Streets budget.

6. REPORT

- 6.1 At its meeting on 15 March 2011 the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure committee considered a motion raised by Councillor Boulton "That consideration is given to reducing the speed limit on the road from Countesswells to Kingswells due to the high level of accidents".
- 6.2 The C128C is a busy route to the west of Aberdeen linking Cults in the south to Kingswells in the north. The route is subject to a 30mph speed limit through the southern residential section from its junction with the

A93 to a point approximately 45 metres northwest of Kirkbrae Avenue. From this point a 40mph speed limit “buffer zone” is in force for approximately 325m to the northwest. The remainder of the route north through the rural section to Kingswells Roundabout is derestricted (60 mph).

6.3 Two speed surveys have been carried out on the straight section of the C128C to the south of Nether Kingshill, the first in November 2009 and the latest in February 2011. Both of these surveys indicated that the 85th percentile speeds at this location were 48mph. The 85th percentile speed being the speed at or below which 85 percent of all vehicles are travelling.

6.4 Accident analysis since the beginning of 2005 indicates that there are a number of sites that are giving officers cause for concern along the route. From north to south these are: (see Appendix 1)

- Upper Kingshill bend (1 serious injury accident, 1 slight injury accident and 6 damage only accidents since January 2005);
- Bend south of Kingshill Cottage (4 slight injury accidents and 8 damage only accidents since January 2005);
- Newton of Countesswells bend (1 fatal accident, 1 serious injury accident, 1 slight injury accident and 3 damage only accidents since January 2005);
- Bend north of Foggieton Woods (1 serious injury accident, 3 slight injury accidents and 2 damage only accidents since January 2005).

6.4 In total there have been 65 reported accidents on the derestricted section of the C128C since 2005. The breakdown of accidents are as follows:

- 1 fatal accident;
- 5 accidents resulting in serious injury;
- 12 accidents resulting in slight injuries;
- 47 damage only accidents

The current values produced by the Department for Transport (Dft) for the cost of injury accidents are as follows:

Fatal accident -£1.8 million

Serious accident - £205K

Slight accident- £21K

These costs to society are the average assessed for each individual category based in relation to emergency services costs, medical treatment costs, lost economic output, social benefits and in personal pain, grief and suffering.

- 6.5 Of the accidents described above, 19 of the damage only, 4 of the slight injury and 1 of the serious injury accidents can be attributed fully or in part to excessive speed, or to drivers travelling too quickly for the conditions and taking little heed of the nature of the road.
- 6.6 In 2009/10 officers were concerned over the number of reported accidents at these sites. As a result, funding was identified within the 2010/11 Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Non-Housing Capital Budget for engineering measures to be implemented at each of the sites.
- 6.7 During March to May 2011 road safety engineering measures were undertaken at the four sites. The measures consisted of the retexturing of the carriageway, undertaken by a specialist contractor and this work improves the skid resistance of the carriageway surface. The treatment can extend the life of the existing surface by around five years whilst maintaining skid resistance values. Additionally, five vehicle activated warning signs have been installed along the route to warn motorists of a hazard ahead. These signs will be activated by vehicles travelling above a specified speed and advise motorists to slow down. The threshold speed for the signs has been set at between 35 and 40mph i.e. any vehicle travelling in excess of the speed triggers the warning sign.
- 6.8 To demonstrate the effectiveness of similar solutions, in 2009 similar measures were implemented on the B997 Scotstown Road at the Shielhill junction. Since the retexturing work and installation of the vehicle activated signs at this location the number of recorded accidents attributed to excessive speed has reduced from 7 'damage only' accidents, 1 slight injury accident and 1 serious injury accident in 2009 to no recorded accidents during 2010.
- 6.9 A full assessment of the success of these measures cannot be provided until at least one year after their installation at the earliest and it is recommended that any adjustment to the speed limit should not be considered until such time as this assessment has taken place.
- 6.10 In addition the Department for Transport Circular 01/2006 – "Setting Local Speed Limits" provides guidance to local authorities on the setting of speed limits. Paragraph 21 of this document states:-

<http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/speedmanagement/dftcircular106/dftcircular106.pdf>

"Speed limits are, however, only one element of speed management. They should be part of a package along with other measures to manage speeds which includes engineering and landscaping standards that respect the needs of all road users and raise the driver's awareness of the environment, together with education, driver information, training and publicity. Within their overall network management responsibilities, these measures should enable traffic authorities to deliver speed limits and driven speeds that are safe and appropriate for the road and its

surroundings, as well as help drivers to be more readily aware of the road environment and assess their own appropriate speeds at all times”.

Furthermore, paragraph 22 of the same document states:-

“If a speed limit is set in isolation, or is unrealistically low, it is likely to be ineffective and lead to 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 collisions and injuries”.

Paragraph 41 goes on to state:-

“Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, for example a single road junction or reduced forward visibility such as a bend, since speed limits are difficult to enforce over such a short length. Other measures such as warning signs, carriageway markings, junction improvements, superelevation of bends and new or improved street lighting are likely to be more effective”.

- 6.11 If a reduced speed limit were to be introduced on the C128C, the responsibility of enforcing traffic speeds lies with Grampian Police. They have stated that the implementation of a reduced speed limit would not be effective without supplementary traffic management measures along the entire route. Grampian Police believe that the setting of a 40mph speed limit would set an unwelcome precedent on this type of route. They are therefore in agreement with the recommendations outlined in the content of this report.

Consultees comments

Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

Convener: Councillor Kate Dean - email sent 27/07/11

Vice Convener: Councillor John Corall - email sent 27/07/11

Local Members

Councillor Marie Boulton	email sent 27/07/11
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Councillor Alan Milne	email sent 27/07/11
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Councillor Aileen Malone	email sent 27/07/11
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Council Officers

Barry Jenkins, Head of Finance, *has been consulted and has no comments related to finance.*

Jane MacEachran, City Solicitor, Continuous Improvement has been consulted
Ciaran Monaghan, Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive has been consulted
Gordon McIntosh, Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure has been consulted
Hugh Murdoch, Head of Service, Shelter and Environment – has been consulted
Margaret Bochel, Head of Planning & Infrastructure, Strategic Leadership – *has been consulted and agrees with the recommendations*
Mike Cheyne, Roads Manager has been consulted
Colin Walker, Community Safety Manager has been consulted
Dave Young, Account Manager, Service, Design and Development has been consulted
Kathryn McFarlane, Service Co-ordinator
Allison Swanson, Committee Services

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Department for Transport: DfT Circular 01/2006 – “Setting Local Speed Limits”, 8 August 2006.

Minute of Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee meeting, 15 March 2011.