

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23RD JANUARY 2023

WELSH GOVERNMENT 20MPH SPEED LIMIT LEGISLATION

Purpose:

To provide an update on legislative change being introduced by Welsh Government in September 2023 which will reduce the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted (streetlit) roads in residential areas to 20mph.

The Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee has asked for an update report to be presented to their meeting of the 23rd January 2023.

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-

Review and assess the information contained in Report and provide any recommendations, comments, or advice.

Reason

To formulate views for submission to the Cabinet / Council for consideration

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Edward Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services.

Directorate

Name of Head of Service:

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Report Author:

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Designations:

Head of Transportation & Highways

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Traffic & Road Safety Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
23RD JANUARY 2023

WELSH GOVERNMENT 20MPH SPEED LIMIT LEGISLATION

1. SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

Introduction

National speed limits on Britain's roads have been in place for a great many years and are well understood by the travelling public.

At present, unless there are other speed limits in place, there are default speed limits on motorways and dual carriageways (70mph), single lane roads without streetlighting (60mph) and single lane roads with streetlighting (30mph) unless other limits have been put in place.

Legislation in Wales will change in September 2023 and reduce the default speed limit on streetlit single lane roads from 30mph to 20mph unless there is a specific exception put in place.

The successful implementation of this will bring significant road safety benefits and create safer environments to encourage more walking and cycling.

Speed Limit Changes

Many restricted urban roads will automatically default to the new 20mph limit with simple changes to the speed limit signs on the settlement boundary. However, in implementing the new legislation there is a need to ensure continuity for motorists and a need to meet the expectations of local communities. This will result in supplementary measures in the following areas:

- a. Residential roads which do not have a system of streetlighting require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to be subject to a 20mph limit.
- b. Residential roads where the streetlighting does not extend as far as the settlement boundary will require a TRO to extend the 20mph limit.
- c. There are approximately 80 existing TROs for 20mph limits which will need to be revoked.
- d. There are many sections of strategic roads (A and B class roads) which are restricted but facilitate longer distance journeys and are considered safe to stay at 30mph. These will also require a TRO.

It is currently estimated that TROs will be required for 420 separate lengths of 20mph limit and 220 lengths of 30mph limit.

In addition to the significant number of speed limit Order changes there will also be a logistical challenge to implement the many thousands of new or replacement traffic signs and post for the coming into force date for the legislation. Quantities of new signs and posts have already been procured and are in store at the Council's Highway Depots.

Funding

Funding for the implementation of the legislation is being provided by Welsh Government and the County Council has been awarded a grant of £797,074 in 2022/23 to take the project forward.

It is estimated that a further £2.16M will be required in 2023/24 for further preparation and implementation work. This will include works around TROs, traffic signs and road markings, traffic surveys and monitoring and public liaison. The project is expected to extend into further financial years to address legacy issues.

Consultation

The changes in speed limits will largely be introduced through a legislative change which will not require the normal TRO process. However, there will still be a significant number of speed limit changes as outlined above which will require formal TROs and the importance of consulting on these is acknowledged.

The consultation comprises two main stages, an initial consultation to aid the development of proposals and gather views on the supplementary measures, which is then followed by the formal TRO process. The aim is to address as many concerns at the informal stage ahead of the TRO process.

Consultation commenced with elected Members in October 2022 with a series of Member workshops which explained the background to the legislative change and set out the proposed supplementary measures which were presented via a map-based website.

The consultation was expanded to Town and Community Councils at a Forum meeting held on the 9th November with access provided to the map-based website illustrating draft proposals.

The consultation is programmed to be available for public comment in January and the formal TRO process commenced in February / March.

In parallel with this Officers have also been liaising with key stakeholder groups such as Dyfed Powys Police, neighbouring authorities and Welsh Government's Trunk Road Team.

Project Governance

A Project Team has been set up to deliver this challenging project and the Team report to a Project Board who have strategic oversight of the work. The Project Board comprises Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure, The Director of Place and Infrastructure and Service Heads for Highways and Transport, Legal, Finance Marketing & Media and Education.

Communications

Changing the well-established speed limit regime will require a fundamental change in driver behaviour throughout Wales and achieving a reasonable level of compliance will be a challenge requiring sustained messaging over a longer time-frame.

Welsh Government's communication and general messaging is expected to start in March 2023, and this will be supported by the Project Team at the local level. This will include working with schools and local communities to raise awareness and support.

Monitoring and Compliance

The change of speed limits will require a behavioural change for motorists and experience of other national motoring campaigns, such as the mandatory wearing of seatbelts, suggests that this change will happen over a period of time.

A sample framework of survey sites will be implemented to monitor 'before' and 'after' traffic speeds on selected roads so that driver compliance can be assessed.

It should be noted that whilst the County Council has the powers to set and implement speed limits the enforcement of those limits rests with Dyfed Powys Police and their Go Safe partnership. It is intended that the Project Team will work closely with the police to support enforcement and community operations to encourage compliance.

Sustainable Travel

The new speed limit regime is intended to improve road safety and to also create safer environments for more sustainable modes of travel and particularly walking and cycling and funding applications to Welsh Government will be developed to take this forward. This will include working with schools to develop their School Travel Plans to promote walking, cycling and scooting instead of car journeys for shorter trips.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	NO
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Transportation and Highways

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Dyfed Powys Police and the Go Safe partnership will be responsible for the enforcement of the new speed limits. The Project and Road Safety Team will support this will local campaigns and initiatives to encourage compliance.

Legal

To supplement the new legislation Traffic Regulation Orders will be required for a significant number of streets. The statutory process for creating TROs will be followed.

Finance

Welsh Government grant funding is available in 2022/23 of £797,074. Further bid submissions will be made for following years and it is anticipated that this will be in the order of £2.16M in 2023/24.

ICT

Speed limit proposals are being presented for consultation on TraffWeb, a hosted map-based website.

Risk Management Issues

This is a high-profile project identified within the Directorate Risk Register which will involve a high level of public engagement and consultation. There is a reputational risk to the authority if the project is not delivered to the legislative timetable and if proposals are incompatible with local community or transport operator views.

A Project Board is in place to oversee delivery of the project.

Physical Assets

The new legislation, and supporting measures, will change the speed limits on the majority of residential roads in Carmarthenshire. This will require a considerable amount of work changing traffic signs and road markings.

Staffing Implications

A Project Team has been established from existing staff and an additional Project Technician has being recruited on a 2 year fixed-term contract to help deliver the project.

This significant workload has reduced the Team's ability to investigate other service requests.

Staff costs associated with the project are being reclaimed from the grant provided by Welsh Government.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE