

REPORT TO GARIOCH AREA COMMITTEE – 22 JUNE 2021

SPEEDING ON FINTRAY ROAD, BLACKBURN

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to respond to a Member Promoted Issue (MPI) raised by Councillor Reid with regard to speeding traffic on Fintray Road, Blackburn.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 consider the MPI raised by Councillor Reid at Appendix 1;**
- 2.2 consider the Transportation Service's response to the issues raised in the MPI, as set out within the report;**
- 2.3 consider, comment and agree what recommendation should be made to Infrastructure Services Committee, as the Committee delegated powers to determine this policy issue; and**
- 2.4 agree that the MPI and the recommendation of the Committee be referred to Infrastructure Services Committee for determination.**

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Issues with regard to speeding traffic on Fintray Road was subject to a Ward 12 meeting on 29 October 2020. The outcome of this meeting was that Roads, Waste and Landscape service would install traffic management measures within the vicinity of the school on Fintray Road and that a traffic survey would be undertaken at the northern end of Fintray Road to determine the extent of any speeding issue.
- 3.2 The result of the traffic survey highlighted that the 85% speed of traffic travelling into Blackburn on Fintray Road was 32mph and that the 85% speed of traffic traveling out of Blackburn on Fintray Road was 35mph.
- 3.3 The policy that determines what action should be taken following a traffic survey is the Variable and Vehicle Activated Sign policy. The policy statement specifies that the Council will:
- “Only install or replace variable and vehicle-activated signs which comply with the criteria specified in Aberdeenshire Council's “Variable & Vehicle-Activated Signs Manual”
- 3.4 The criteria in the Manual states that an intervention in the form of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) or Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) shall be progressed if

the 85% speed recorded following a traffic survey is greater than a threshold of the speed limit + 10% +2. Within a 30mph limit the recorded 85% speed needs to be greater than 35mph to warrant action under the Policy.

- 3.5 Following further discussions with Councilor Reid whereby Officers advised that no further action would be taken in line with the Policy position, an MPI was submitted requesting that Officers suggest recommendations for interventions that can be introduced to reduce traffic speeds on Fintray Road that can be considered at Garioch Area Committee and that Garioch Area Committee consider recommending a departure from Policy to Infrastructure Services Committee to progress any such interventions.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 Application of Council Policy aims to achieve consistency in the provision of service across all the areas of Aberdeenshire. It furthermore seeks to achieve best value in providing services focusing on resource where it will be most effective and where appropriate. Any departure from Policy can create inconsistency in service provision and result in potentially ineffective measures being taken while diverting resource from areas where it may be more appropriate.
- 4.2 It can be valid to depart from Policy in some instances where there is justification to do so. A Member Promoted Issue is one such route where a departure from Policy can be considered by the relevant committee.
- 4.3 The MPI submitted by Councillor Reid highlights that a departure from Policy in this instance can be justified due to the following reasons:
- Accident history on Fintray Road;
 - Community and Police Support for interventions; and
 - The result of traffic survey being just below the threshold for intervention.

Accident History

- 4.4 The recorded accident history on Fintray Road consist of the following:
- 22/09/19 03.55AM Injury sustained arresting driver following Police pursuit.
 - 12/01/17 12.30PM 2 x Damage Only incidents with reversing vehicles in roadworks
- 4.5 Local Authorities are not normally informed of road traffic incidents that do not involve any injuries. When considering road safety measures, the main focus is on casualty reduction which is benchmarked against target and standards set at a national level.
- 4.6 Following discussion with the Road Policing Inspector with regard to the incident described in the MPI where a vehicle left the road and damaged a

garden fence, it can be confirmed that excessive speed was not a contributing factor to the incident.

- 4.7 Given the nature of the recorded incidents, it is not recommended to depart from policy to introduce traffic calming measures to reduce accidents caused by excessive speed as there is no evidence that excessive speed is a contributing factor to any recorded road traffic incidents.

Community and Police Support

- 4.8 Officers have consulted with the Chief Inspector for South Aberdeenshire with regard to the introduction of any measures to reduce traffic speeds on Fintray Road. The Chief Inspector confirmed that there is not a significant speeding issue on Fintray Road, albeit they would continue to monitor the situation.
- 4.9 With specific reference to comments made by a Police Officer on the traffic speeds on Fintray Road, the Chief Inspector has advised that the Officer did so without being aware of the full information of the area, including not being aware of traffic survey results and recorded accidents. Furthermore, the Chief Inspector advised that the Officer did not follow the correct protocol to consult with Council Officers to ensure all available information is considered when reviewing speeding complaints.
- 4.10 The Chief Inspector also confirmed that, following a search of their system, that no recent complaints have been received from members of the public with regard to speeding on Fintray Road.
- 4.11 Given the official response from Police Scotland, and while accepting that there may be support from the community for such measures, it is not recommended to depart from Policy to introduce traffic calming measures on Fintray Road as Police Scotland have confirmed that they do not support such a departure from Policy.

Traffic Survey Results

- 4.12 The result of the traffic survey show that the 85% speed heading in to Blackburn from Fintray is 32mph and 35mph heading from Fintray to Blackburn.
- 4.13 The difference in recorded speeds can perhaps be explained by the fact that on entering Blackburn from Fintray the road changes from a distinct rural road to a clearly urban road and is also uphill. Heading from Blackburn to Fintray the reverse is true and may account for the higher traffic speed.
- 4.14 Given that the results of the traffic survey are within the threshold criteria set within the Variable and Vehicle Activated Sign Policy, it is not recommended to depart from Policy to install traffic calming measures.

Officer Suggested Interventions

- 4.15 Notwithstanding the discussion above, the MPI has requested Officers provide the Committee with options for measures that could be installed to reduce the traffic speeds.
- 4.16 If the Committee recommended to depart from Policy in this instance, Officers would suggest that the next stages of the Variable and Vehicle Activated Sign Policy are followed as if the site did exceed the threshold for the recorded 85% speed and progress the installation of a trial speed indicator device (SID).
- 4.17 The trial of a SID will determine if a sign of this type has an impact in reducing the traffic speeds. The Policy has three “zones” for determining how to proceed with a trial SID and a calculation is carried out using traffic speeds, pedestrian count information and traffic count information as well as taking into account recorded injury accidents to determine what “zone” a specific site would fall under. Zone 1 sites are the lower risk sites, while Zone 3 is higher risk. The purpose of this calculation is to ensure that investment and resource are targeted at sites that require intervention and where such interventions will have a meaningful impact.
- 4.18 In this instance, as the 85% speed is below the threshold, the calculation can not be used to determine the “zone” as the result would be Zone 1 – which does not qualify for a SID. It is therefore suggested that the site at Fintray Road be treated as Zone 2 to allow a trial to proceed.
- 4.19 The data gathered during the trial will determine the next steps. If the trial results in a speed reduction of 3mph or more then the site will be added to the SID rotation program. Alternatively, the Committee may instruct officers to progress a permanently installed sign rather than having a sign installed at this location on a rotational basis.
- 4.20 If the outcome of the trial is that the SID has not reduced the 85% traffic speed by at least 3mph then other measures would be required to achieve a reduction in traffic speeds. In this instance a further report to Committee will be brought to consider in detail what these measures may be and the implications of progressing such measures.
- 4.21 As the decision to progress with a trial SID would be a departure from the Variable and Vehicle Activated Sign Policy the matter should be determined by Infrastructure Services Committee.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

5.1 Specify which of the Council's Priorities are relevant to the report.

| Pillar | Priority |
|-----------------|--|
| Our People | Education Health & Wellbeing |
| Our Environment | Infrastructure Resilient Communities |
| Our Economy | Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation |

This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority "Health and Wellbeing" within the Pillar "Our People", having a road and street-lighting network which keeps people safe, encourages active lifestyles and increases active travel opportunities.

This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority "Infrastructure" and "Resilient Communities" within the Pillar "Our Environment", having a road and street-lighting network which keeps people safe, encourages active lifestyles and increases active travel opportunities.

This report helps deliver the Strategic Priority "Economy and Enterprise" within the Pillar "Our Economy", by having responsible finances and allocation of resource in line with the Council's Priorities and Policy position.

5.2 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommendation of the report does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

5.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

| Subject | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| Financial | | X | |
| Staffing | | X | |
| Equalities | | X | |
| Fairer Scotland Duty | | X | |
| Town Centre First | | X | |
| Sustainability | | X | |
| Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing | | X | |

5.4 There are no Staffing or Financial risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

5.5 No Risks have been identified as relevant to the recommendation of the report on a Corporate or Strategic Level.

6 Scheme of Governance

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 The Committee is able to consider, comment and make a recommendation to Infrastructure Services Committee on this item in terms of Section B.1.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it is a policy matter which impacts on the Garioch Area.

6.3 The Service has considered the MPI proposal against Council Policy. The Service has confirmed that the MPI proposal does not comply with Council Policy.

Alan Wood
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Martin Hall, Strategy Manager
11 June 2021

Appendix 1 - 2021 04 21 MPI Cllr Glen Reid Blackburn Speeding Fintray Road

MEMBER PROMOTED ISSUE FORM

SUBMITTED BY MEMBER – Cllr Glen Reid, WARD 12

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| <p>1. Full description of the issue to be promoted (include evidence of research undertaken and need for the MPI)</p> | <p>There is a persistent speeding problem along Fintray Road in Blackburn. I had been contacted re speeding issues near the school and had requested a traffic speed assessment there. This segment of the road is a part time 20 mph zone, and the results of the assessment revealed a serious speeding issue. Officers will now put in place traffic calming measures at the school and are looking to make the speed limit a permanent 20 mph.</p> <p><u>Accidents</u></p> <p>Whilst this work was going on, a near miss accident, which could have been fatal, occurred at the other end of the road when a car completely lost control, left the road and ended up in the back garden of one of my constituents. Three minutes earlier their little child had been playing in the same spot.</p> <p>I spoke to residents and discovered a further three accidents within the last two years:</p> <p>A car left the road, mounted the pavement and knocked a lamp post horizontal before careering back onto the road mounting the pavement on the other side hitting a second lamp post and stopping after going through a garden fence.</p> <p>A car hit the small traffic island in the middle of the road demolishing the bollard.</p> <p>A car left the road and went up a small embankment demolishing a garden fence.</p> <p>All of these accidents are within 200 metres of the main school bus stop where every weekday children gather for their busses to Kemnay Academy and Inverurie Academy.</p> <p><u>Community and Police Support</u></p> <p>It has got so bad that parents have raised money for two safety signs and they are on a rota to put the signs out on school days.</p> <p>All of the ward councillors were contacted by a police officer who, after attending the location on numerous occasions, is in support of traffic interventions. He stated that he supported; extending the 20mph area, installing speed</p> |
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| | <p>bumps and a crossing.</p> <p>The police officer stated, “There is a clear issue of speeding in the area, particularly coming from the Fintray Road into Blackburn/Kinellar and several cars just on the days I have been present have approached the area at speed, at times at or near to 50mph (this is a 30 mph). It is clear to me that several cars have no intention of decreasing their speed and only do so dramatically when they see the 'high vis' which is of great concern to me.”</p> <p>He went on to say, “I am also aware that parents out of their own pocket have purchased signs to be placed roadside in the area to try and encourage more responsible driving and I do not think they would be offended with me saying that it is not working or enough of a measure in place to address the issue.”</p> <p>The police will continue to attend when they have the opportunity, but such opportunities are limited.</p> <p><u>Traffic Speed Assessment</u></p> <p>In support of the residents and the police, I asked for a traffic speed assessment to take place. The results of which are very interesting. Vehicles entering Blackburn, from Fintray, do so at an 85th percentile of 32mph and those exiting Blackburn do so at an 85th percentile of 35mph. Current policy states that speeds have to be above 35mph before interventions can take place in a 30mph speed limit area (speed limit + 10% + 2mph). Exiting Blackburn is 0.1 mph away from policy.</p> |
| <p>2. Is this issue connected or related to any other project currently being progressed? Please outline</p> | <p>The issue was discussed at a Ward 12 meeting on 29 October 2020 and officers agreed to progress an intervention in the vicinity of the school. Officers also agreed to undertake a traffic survey on the B979 near Badger Rise, the results of which indicated that no action would be taken in line with the Variable and Vehicle Activated Signs Policy.</p> |
| <p>3. Has this issue arisen as the result of any representation by constituents or other parties? Please identify any interested</p> | <p>Residents of Blackburn and a Police Scotland officer.</p> |

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| parties | |
| 4. Has this issue been considered in the past and if so, when and by whom (Officer or Committee)? | <p>Not considered by Committee.</p> <p>Officers agreed to conduct the speed assessment.</p> |
| 5. If an issue particular to a service or area, has the Head of Service or Area Manager been consulted, if so when and what was the outcome? | <p>Roads and Transportation Officers have been consulted and have advised that no further action will be taken on the B979 at Badger Rise in line with Variable and Vehicle Activated Signs Policy</p> <p>Speed Assessment carried out.</p> <p>Garioch Area Manager has been consulted and considers that the MPI should be considered by Garioch Area Committee.</p> <p>Legal were consulted and were satisfied with the terms of the MPI.</p> |
| 6. Summarise the preferred outcome of the Member Promoted Issue | <p>That Roads and Transportation Officers recommend appropriate measures, such as traffic calming and/or speed limit reduction, to tackle the speeding issue and that Garioch Area Committee consider the recommendations and request that ISC depart from Council Policy and implement them.</p> |
| Dated 29.04.21 | Signed Cllr. Glen Reid |