

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment and Infrastructure Committee

23 May 2018

VEHICLE-ACTIVATED SIGN (VAS) PROGRAMME

Report by Executive Director (Housing & Environment) (Report No. 18/174)

This report details the development and implementation of the vehicle-activated sign (VAS) programme in 2017/18. It also seeks Committee approval for an expansion of the VAS programme through 2018/19 and 2019/20.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Over the past few years, the Traffic & Network Team has received many requests from local communities for vehicle-activated signs (VAS). These signs have been installed to encourage compliance with reduced speed limits in urban areas or to advise drivers of a road hazard ahead in rural areas.
- 1.2 The provision in 2017/18 of additional staff resources and a dedicated budget has enabled Traffic & Network to develop and implement a VAS programme across the Council area. Priority was directed to those communities where a commitment has already been given to install a new, or replace an existing, VAS.
- 1.3 Historically, there have been a number of different signs deployed in Perth and Kinross, displaying a variety of road safety messages. It was recognised that, where practical, drivers could benefit from a consistent road safety message across the road network.
- 1.4 Based on national survey data, driver-feedback signs which display the vehicle speeds along with a road safety message were recommended by the Traffic & Network Team. The speed display reading would change as the approaching vehicle increased or decreased speed. Speeds would be shown in red with a “Slow Down” message if vehicles were exceeding the speed limit and speeds would be shown in green with a “Thank You” message if vehicles were recorded below the speed limit. An example of both these sign displays is shown below. The positive recognition of drivers travelling below the speed threshold encourages greater compliance with the lower limit.



- 1.5 Killiecrankie & Findcastle Community Council and Glenfarg Community Council requested a smiley face/frowning face display panel below the speed reading rather than a Thank you/Slow down message. The sign displays are built into the sign face and are inter-changeable so can be adjusted on site, in response to requests from community representatives.
- 1.6 Using the same sign design at most locations provides for greater consistency across the Council area, as well as facilitating procurement and maintenance. However, it is recognised that it may still be necessary to design a sign that will address site-specific issues, such as a junction or crossroads warning sign.
- 1.7 In 2017/18, 30 new VAS sites were installed (see Appendix 1) and 10 existing VAS upgraded as part of the new VAS programme across the local road network (see Appendix 2). In addition, four sites where signs had been temporarily deployed for short periods of time as part of a rotating programme were made permanent.
- 1.8 The sites included a mixture of electrical and solar connections depending on the available power supply. Overall cost of the project was £160.5K, with £107K spent on the manufacture and installation of the signs by the approved contractor, Coeval Ltd. Contained within the contract was a three-year maintenance agreement. A further £50K was spent on civils work by Tayside Contracts and £3.5K for power supply connections by the Street Lighting Partnership.
- 1.9 In addition, eight existing permanent VAS were upgraded in the villages along the A977, as part of the A977 Mitigation Measures project. Funding for these signs has come from a separate budget, approved by Council in February 2017.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 As the project has progressed, requests for additional VAS have been submitted from local elected members and Community Councils. A total of 41 new VAS sites have been requested so far (see Appendix 3). In addition, it is planned to upgrade ten existing permanent VAS and make 14 temporary VAS permanent (see Appendix 4).
- 2.2 The project is scheduled over two financial years. Any underspend in the budget would allow additional VAS sites to be included in the programme.
- 2.3 It is anticipated that most of the new signs will have a driver-feedback display. At sites, such as Tibbermore crossroads, junction warning signs may also be included. The traffic sensors at Tibbermore would be located on the minor road but the display units would face oncoming traffic on the major road. This is similar to the existing VAS on the A827 at Fearnan and the A926 near Alyth.

- 2.4 In order to assess the effectiveness of the new VAS programme, it is proposed to undertake pre- and post- installation traffic surveys at selected locations. This will identify any changes in driver behaviour and vehicle speeds. It will also help to determine whether the VAS project can be expanded further or whether alternative traffic calming measures are necessary. £3K has been allocated from the Revenue budget to monitor ten sites representing a mixture of residential, school, commercial and rural locations across the Council area.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This report provides an update on the vehicle-activated signs installed in 2017/18. It details the potential VAS locations for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- 3.2 Greater compliance with reduced speed limits helps reduce the risk of collision between the various road users, and helps lessen the severity of any casualties in the event of a collision. Implementation of the VAS programme enables Perth & Kinross Council to contribute to the national casualty reduction targets for 2020.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) Notes the list of new VAS installed in 2017/18 as detailed in Appendix 1.
 - (ii) Notes the list of existing VAS replaced or upgraded in 2017/18 as detailed in Appendix 2.
 - (iii) Approves the list of new VAS sites to be installed, starting in 2018/19 as detailed in Appendix 3.
 - (iv) Approves the list of existing VAS to be replaced or upgraded, starting in 2018/19 as detailed in Appendix 4.
 - (v) Notes that the implementation of the VAS programme is scheduled over the next two financial years (2018/19 and 2019/20).

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Approved

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Barbara Renton	Executive Director (Housing & Environment)	10 April 2018

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/No
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (CPP) brings together organisations to plan and deliver services for the people of Perth and Kinross. Together the CPP has developed the Perth and Kinross Community Plan which outlines the key things we think are important for Perth and Kinross.

- i) Giving every child the best start in life
- ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

- 1.2 It is considered that the actions contained within this report contribute to all of the above objectives.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 outlines the same five objectives as those detailed above in the Community Plan. These objectives provide a clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resource allocation. It is considered that the actions contained in the

report contribute to the objectives as outlined in paragraph 1.2 above. These objectives are met by implementing schemes which promote road safety.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

Capital

- 2.1 The 2017/18 budget was fully utilised. There are no Capital implications arising from this report.

Revenue

- 2.2 £150K has been made available each year for the next two years in the Traffic & Network revenue budget for the implementation of the ongoing VAS programme. The list of works recommended in this report should fully utilise this finance although any underspend would facilitate additional VAS sites to be included. It is estimated that the revenue commitments arising from the routine maintenance of the vehicle-activated signs, following conclusion of the maintenance contract, will be met from the Roads Maintenance budget. These costs will require to be prioritised within the existing revenue budgets.

Workforce

- 2.3 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.4 There are no land and property, or information technology implications arising from the contents of this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- i) Assessed as **relevant** and no actions are required to be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts:
- ii) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation:
 - a) The measures, for example improved crossing facilities, footways and traffic calming features, will provide improved access for communities, and will particularly improve travel opportunities for disabled people with mobility issues, sight or hearing impairment, children, elderly people & parent/carers walking with children in pushchairs/buggies.
 - b) The measures will provide improvements for road users of all ages, but particularly for children and elderly people. This will include facilities to enable them to cross roads safely.
 - c) The measures will also encourage children to walk or cycle to school, thus bringing health benefits.
 - d) The measures will provide opportunities for increased travel by foot and cycle for all age groups.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).
- 3.4 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.

Legal and Governance

- 3.6 The Order will be promoted in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

Risk

- 3.7 There are no significant risks associated with the implementation of this project.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance, the Head of Democratic Services, the Head of Finance and Police Scotland have been consulted in the preparation of this report.
- 4.2 As part of the scheme design, consultation will be carried out with the relevant parties where appropriate, including the local elected members.

5. Communication

- 5.1 All works are contained within the road boundary and are recognized as permitted development. No approvals or statutory consultations are required.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 There are no background papers relating to the above Report

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – VAS sites installed in 2017/18
Appendix 2 – VAS sites upgraded in 2017/18
Appendix 3 – VAS sites proposed from 2018/19
Appendix 4 – VAS sites upgraded from 2018/19