

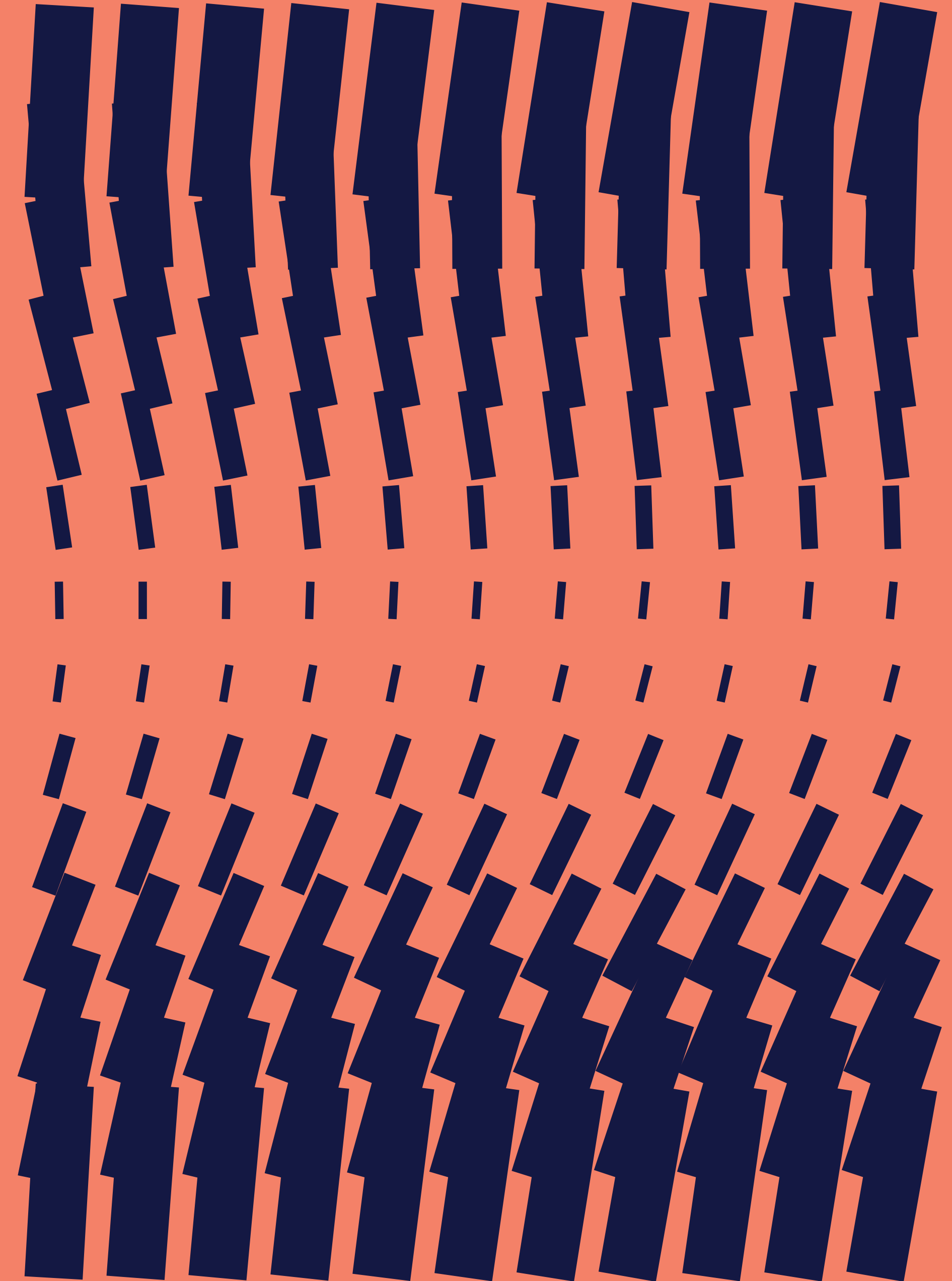
Whitepaper

ReThink Urban Traffic Control (UTC)

How UK Local Authorities can move from legacy traffic control to smarter network management

TRL Shaping
transport

|||||UTC Powered by
SCOOT® 8AI





Executive summary

Urban Traffic Control is more important than ever, yet it is still often misunderstood. Today's networks demand more than signal coordination. They require a more proactive approach to support public transport, active travel, resilience, and smarter network management.

TRL UTC powered by **SCOOT® 8AI** is designed to support that shift. It combines adaptive, policy-driven control with enhanced optimisation, dynamic priority for buses, pedestrians and cyclists, open APIs, cloud delivery and UTMC compliance.

With the right platform and partner, UTC can provide a practical path from legacy traffic control to more resilient, future-ready network management. TRL brings the credible expertise, practical innovation and proven **SCOOT®** heritage to help Local Authorities make that move.

In this whitepaper, you'll:

- / ReThink what UTC should deliver today
- / See why many local authorities are reassessing legacy approaches
- / Understand how to evaluate your current UTC capability
- / Explore a practical approach to smarter network management
- / Learn how TRL UTC powered by **SCOOT® 8AI** can support a more proactive, policy-led future



Why it's time to ReThink UTC

UTC has evolved, but many Local Authorities still view it as a legacy operational system. That is no longer enough.

Today's networks are more complex, more multi-modal and under greater pressure to perform. Local Authorities are balancing public transport reliability, active travel, resilience and changing network demands... often with limited time and resources.

That means UTC should no longer be seen only as a back-office tool for running signals. It should be treated as a strategic capability for managing the network more effectively.

“ UTC should no longer be seen as a back-office tool. It should be treated as a strategic network management capability ”

ReThinking what UTC should do today

Modern UTC should do more than respond to traffic at individual junctions. It should help authorities proactively manage the wider network, align operational decisions with policy goals, and support multiple modes in real time.

That is the approach behind UTC powered by SCOOT® 8AI. It is designed as an adaptive, policy-driven system for networks of any size, helping authorities make faster and more informed traffic management decisions.

It also reflects the fact that authorities are not simply trying to move general traffic. They are balancing bus performance, pedestrian and cyclist movement, safety, journey-time reliability, and wider network outcomes..





ReThinking network management for modern Local Authorities

Local Authorities are being asked to do more with less. They need to respond faster to disruption, improve network resilience and make better use of existing infrastructure.

That means UTC needs to support a broader set of outcomes. It should help improve reliability, strengthen bus performance, support active travel more dynamically and provide a stronger foundation for long-term scalability

A modern UTC approach should also fit into a wider digital transport environment. Open access to data, better integration and stronger visibility across the network all matter more now than ever.

What modern UTC should support

Better journey time reliability. Stronger bus performance. More balanced multi-modal control. Faster response to disruption. Greater resilience. Long-term scalability..



ReThinking your current UTC capability

For many authorities, the question is not whether the system is still running... it's whether the current UTC approach is helping manage the network in the way it needs to be managed today.

A rethink starts with an honest assessment of whether the current approach still matches current operational needs and future ambitions.

A practical evaluation starts with six questions:

1/ Are we operating reactively or proactively?

If UTC is primarily responding after issues arise, it suggests an opportunity to mature. A more advanced platform would enable earlier, more intelligent intervention.

2/ Is control aligned with policy?

Authorities should consider whether their UTC approach reflects current priorities, or is it still shaped by legacy traffic engineering assumptions.



3/ Can we support multi-modal priorities in real time?

If buses, pedestrians and cyclists are not meaningfully reflected in control decisions, the operating model may be falling behind current needs.

4/ Is the platform scalable?

Authorities should ask whether the current approach can grow with the network and adapt to changing operational and policy demands.

5/ Is the operating model efficient?

A heavy maintenance burden, hardware dependency, limited remote access, and a high manual workload are all signs that the model may be holding back the authority.

6/ Is control aligned with policy?

Authorities should consider whether their UTC approach reflects current priorities, or if it is still shaped by legacy traffic engineering assumptions.



A simple maturity view can help frame this assessment:

- / **Reactive:** signals are controlled, but performance depends heavily on manual intervention or fixed assumptions
- / **Developing:** some adaptive capability exists, but visibility, integration, or scalability are limited
- / **Connected:** UTC is supporting more joined-up, real-time network control
- / **Strategic:** UTC is treated as a policy-aligned, future-ready network management platform



A practical path to ReThinking legacy traffic control

Authorities do not need vague transformation language. They need a practical route forward.

The first step is to move the conversation from maintenance to performance. Instead of asking whether the system still works, authorities should ask whether it is helping them manage the network effectively.

The next step is to define what success looks like. That may mean better journey time reliability, stronger bus performance, improved disruption response, lower operator burden, more balanced multi-modal control, or greater resilience and scalability.

From there, authorities can assess what is limiting performance today. That may include legacy assumptions, limited openness, hardware dependence, high ongoing cost, weak policy alignment or limited modal flexibility.

Improvement does not always need to begin with full replacement. But legacy capability should not be assumed to remain good enough indefinitely. The right next step is the one that improves performance and future readiness without unnecessary disruption.

TRL UTC powered by **SCOOT® 8AI** offers that practical route. It is positioned as adaptive, policy-driven, cloud-based, hardware-independent, open-access, scalable and future-ready.

“ The goal is not change for its own sake. It is practical progress towards smarter, more future-ready network management ”



Why ReThink with TRL and SCOOT® 8AI

Credibility matters.

TRL is not simply entering the UTC conversation as a software vendor. It brings long-standing transport expertise, a deep understanding of real-world network operations and the heritage of being the original developers of SCOOT®.

That matters because UTC decisions are not only about functionality. They are about trust, implementation confidence and choosing a platform that can support both operational performance and wider policy goals.

TRL combines proven sector knowledge, practical innovation and the continuing evolution of SCOOT® 8AI to give Local Authorities a credible path from legacy traffic control to smarter network management.





Conclusion

It's time to rethink Urban Traffic Control.

For UK Local Authorities, UTC should no longer be treated as a legacy system. Today's networks require a more proactive, policy-led, and multi-modal approach, supported by open, scalable, and practical-to-operate platforms.

TRL UTC powered by **SCOOT® 8AI** is designed for that challenge. It combines adaptive control, dynamic priority, cloud delivery, openness and proven transport expertise to help authorities move from legacy traffic control to smarter, more resilient network management.



ReThink what your UTC can do

Discover more on TRL's UTC powered by SCOOT® 8AI:

<https://trlsoftware.com/demo/utc/>





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