

Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths Meeting
Monday 19 April, 5.30 to 7.00pm
Zoom Meeting

Present:

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Ann Stewart Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith
Constance Newbould (CN)	Damhead
Peter Luke (PL)	Danderhall
Caroline Clyde (CC)	Howgate
Norrie Scott (NS)	Loanhead
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield and Easthouses
Fraser Jervis (FJ)	Moorfoot
Douglas West (DW)	Poltonhall and Hopefield
Mirabelle Maslin (MM)	Roslin and Bilston

In attendance:

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Communities and Lifelong Learning - Midlothian Council
Alan Heatley (AH)	Structures Manager - Midlothian Council

Apologies

Councillor Hackett, Louisa Wilson

1. PREVIOUS MINUTES – March 2021 MEETING

Amendment: Sum available for Roads budget should have been £16.6 million and not £15 million.

Proposed: Cath McGill

Seconded: Norrie Scott

2. MATTERS ARISING

Apart from amendments to previous notes, there were none raised.

3. RESPONSE FROM MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL RE DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY M MASLIN

- MM highlighted the details of the documents that had been forwarded, on behalf of the group, to Midlothian Council.
- The primary concerns raised in the document were about the condition of the B7003 Roslin Glen road and the need for safe crossing at the hairpin bend adjacent to Roslin Glen Country Park.

- Housing development in the settlements at each end of the B7003 Roslin Glen road has led to the route becoming increasingly congested and those motorists that use the road frequently travel at excessive speeds.
- Local residents are concerned that the condition of the road surfaces, verges and drainage channels are deteriorating. It is thought that the width of the road has been reduced by up to a metre at some points.
- Residents consider that the road is an essential link between the Rosewell and Roslin/Bilston and have been maintaining the route, (removing litter, clearing drainage channels on the road), themselves where they can.
- Whilst recognising that Council officers have increased responsibilities and have previously responded very quickly to MTRaP, those present highlighted their disappointment at the delay in responding to the documents forwarded on behalf of MTRaP.
- AH noted that unfortunately that the Roads team had not been at full strength during recent months and additionally, Midlothian Council had been providing 'critical services' only as result of the 'lockdown'.
- He is aware that proposals for maintenance of the B7003 are in the process of being developed. He will get in touch with Derek Oliver, (Chief Officer - Place), with a view to gathering information about the maintenance proposals.
- The group expressed their appreciation of the update from AH.

4. FORMATION OF ACTIVE TRAVEL GROUP / KNOWLEDGE HUB UPDATE

1. There had been a brief discussion at the March Federation of Community Councils meeting where there had been agreement that an Active Travel group could be formed as part of the work of the MTRaP group. Those present agreed that it should remain on the agenda for future meetings.
2. PJ had highlighted that there was an online Midlothian Active Travel forum. The group had been developed by a previous Midlothian Council Active Travel Officer but had not been used a great deal. A new Active Travel Marketing Officer (Rebecca Brotherstone) has been appointed and will be developing the forum before re-advertising it. Community Council and MTRaP members will be informed once the development of the Forum has been completed.
3. The formation of a Midlothian Cycle Forum is being considered.
4. There is a Midlothian SPOKES groups based in Dalkeith.

5. In order to support coordination of information about the range of aspects of work relating to active travel, those present noted that it was important that information be shared as widely as possible.
6. The first stage of a GO e-Bike, a regional e-bike sharing scheme developed and provided by SEStran (South East of Scotland Transport Partnership) and supported by Midlothian Council has been completed at Edinburgh College near Eskbank railway station. There have been delays in the completion of the next stages. There will be another Hub in Jarnac Court. They will be part of a network of four stations in the area with the other two hubs located at Brunton Hall and Rail station in Musselburgh.

5. 20 MPH URBAN SPEED LIMIT

1. PJ updated group members on the latest information about a potential reduction in Midlothian urban speed limits to 20mph. A colleague had provided the following information.
 - *'There will be a meeting with Sustrans, at a senior level, before the end of this month and the Council should get a decision on the success of the 20mph project bid at this meeting. If funding is secured, this would allow Midlothian Council to commence a public consultation to determine whether the public wants a lower urban speed limit in Midlothian'.*
 - CMcG intimated that she had been informed that the lowering of urban speed limits was going ahead.
 - There was a wide-ranging discussion about the merits of a reduction in speed limits, who would enforce the limit, would motorists obey the limit, the need for a range of measures such as street furniture.
2. Constance highlighted the efforts of Damhead Community Council to engage with Midlothian Council with regard to a reduction of speed limits on Pentland Road and Burnside Road. Motorists frequently drive at excessive speeds and the situation is exacerbated by the poor condition of footways, road surfaces, and poor drainage on these roads. Police Scotland has difficulty in setting up speed checks due to the requirement to be able stop motorists in a safe place.

6. CORE PATHS – ACCESS AND MAINTENANCE

Group members discussed a range of issues for concern.

1. Landowners are removing stiles on paths
2. Existence of and access to Paths, are under increasing pressure from Landowners, new housing and business developments.
3. RM has passed on information to Council Officers in Land and Resources. There is a perception that Midlothian Council is taking little or no action on resolving access issues.
4. The Midlothian Access Forum has not met for some time.
5. CN and RM highlighted that, although neighbouring Local Authorities have 'Access Officers', Midlothian Council does not.
6. NS noted that an application to the Loanhead elected member's environmental fund would be made to support the development of local paths. He also highlighted the deterioration of paths in the Loanhead, Roslin/Bilston area. CN highlighted that University of Edinburgh representative (Stuart Tooley), may be able to assist with repairs

Action:

- **CN will provide NS with contact details for Stuart Tooley**
- **RM to contact Midlothian Council to ascertain when the Midlothian Access Forum will meet and, in addition, the progress of the Core Paths consultation.**
- **MTRaP Members to contact Rhona with details of paths where access has been restricted by barriers or removal of gates etc.**

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cyclepath Proposal

CN noted that there is a proposal that once the A701 relief road has been completed the existing A701 (Gowkley Moss to Bilston) will become accessible to cyclists and buses only.

Proposed ALDI Development

NS highlighted concerns about the potential increase in traffic volumes if a proposed ALDI development goes ahead. It was noted however, that a Planning Application has not yet been submitted.

Link between Roads and Planning

AH was asked about the link between the provision of Roads & Paths and Planning and Development. AH noted that a member of the 'Roads' team is the link with the Planning department when planning applications are considered.

Parking Charges at Vogrie

CMcG would like to know why there are parking charges at Vogrie Country Park.

£2.00 per day is considered an excessive charge and on the weekend of 17 April, the ticket machine appeared to be broken.

Capital Works Plan

AH has provided an update of the Capital Works plan

Action:

- **CMcG to will contact Justin Venton about parking charges in Vogrie Country Park.**
- **PJ to circulate the Capital Works Plan to MTRaP members**

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

31st May 2021

[REDACTED]