

Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths Meeting
Monday 31 May, 5.30 to 7.00pm
Zoom Meeting

Present:

Rhona Matthews (RM)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Dianne Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Ann Stewart Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith
Constance Newbould (CN)	Damhead
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:

Derek Oliver (DO)	Chief Officer, Place - Midlothian Council
Alan Heatley (AH)	Structures Manager - Midlothian Council
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield and Easthouses Community Council

Apologies

Paul Johnson (PJ) Communities and Lifelong Learning -
Midlothian Council

1. PREVIOUS MINUTES – APRIL MEETING

CN has forwarded information to NS.

Item 6.1 of the April Notes is incorrect and will be amended.

Proposed: Douglas West

Seconded: Diane Easton

2. DEREK OLIVER – CHIEF OFFICER – PLACE, MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL.

1. DO highlighted that, because of Covid restrictions, Midlothian Council has been delivering Critical Services, and more recently, Essential Services to the community. This has had an impact on delivery of some work streams.

2. There has been an announcement of additional funding to improve residential streets and the unclassified roads network.

There is an ongoing restructuring of the Roads Operational team and this will support effective delivery of services.

There have been a range of activities and development of initiatives 'behind' the scenes. Although the response to recent requests for

information from the group has been slower than it would have wished the Council recognised the importance and value of the work that MTRaP is doing and is committed to working with it and other relevant groups.

3. The Council's 'Roads', 'Waste', 'Transport' and 'Fleet' operational teams are coming under the banner of 'Neighbourhood Services'. This will provide an opportunity to review and strengthen delivery of these services, providing a much more 'joined up' approach to service delivery. It is anticipated that within this new service, new opportunities for young people leaving school to enter training and employment will be provided. The intention is also to create a service that will be able seek external contracts and provide another source of income for Midlothian Council. This new approach will involve consultation and dialogue with the local community to seek their views on effective delivery. Derek intends to join a meeting of the Federation of Community Councils to discuss these proposals.
4. Capital Roads expenditure is currently being reviewed for this and the next financial year, £5m in total to accelerate resurfacing in residential streets, on top of the existing annual programme for classified network. The intention of service provision is to be on a 'hub and spoke' model where service provision is more locally based. Engagement with local organisations such as Community Councils will be undertaken to ascertain how services can be effectively delivered. DO will be contact Neil Johnstone (Damhead Community Council) to set dates for a meeting to discuss roads and footways in the Damhead area.
5. On behalf of the group, RH thanked DO for joining the meeting and for the detailed responses and information provided.

Action DO to contact Neil Johnstone with dates to meet in Damhead

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

1. These documents have been reviewed and will be included for consideration in spending plans in the future

4. FORMATION OF AN ACTIVE TRAVEL GROUP

1. This is an agenda item raised by Eskbank and Newbattle members and was agreed that it would remain on the agenda. Alan Symon was not present at the meeting but the following items were discussed.

2. MM highlighted the number of cyclists in the West side of the county and suggested a group focussing on that side of the county could be created.
3. CN expressed concerns about the proposal to create cycle paths on the A703. The road is perceived to be too narrow to be able to accommodate cycle lanes on both carriageways. Design of new developments could facilitate improved active travel.
4. ASK highlighted that the 'Midlothian Active Travel Forum' Knowledge Hub group is getting a lot of activity and participation.
(<https://khub.net/group/midlothian-active-travel-forum>).
5. ASK noted that a new member of staff, Rebecca Brotherstone, (rebecca.brotherstone@midlothian.gov.uk), has been appointed to the position of Active Travel Marketing Officer and can be approached to answer appropriate requests for information.

5. UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1. **Dalkeith** - work due to commence on Jean Armour Drive is likely to be rescheduled. Once work has been completed on South Street the next project will be Whitehill Drive. DW praised the quality of the work and the surface of the road in South Street. He wondered whether the material used at this location is used in all the Council's resurfacing work. AH indicated that the material used in resurfacing work in Midlothian is 'Hot Rolled Asphalt'. This material has been used successfully for many years. DW asked about the use of 'surface dressing' as a method to make repairs to worn surfaces. AH noted that this method of road resurfacing has not been used in recent years. Improvements in technology may make it a method for consideration in the future.
2. **Roslin, Powdermill Brae** – MM noted that work had been undertaken and that it had been a good job. However, MM added that if the work had been extended, a more successful repair of that section of the road would have been achieved. She noted that erosion, caused by water from the embankment is an issue.

3. **Mayfield and Easthouses, Bogwood Road** – AH confirmed that as it is quite a long road, maintenance would be completed section by section over a period of successive years.
4. AH was thanked for the work undertaken to produce the report, his contribution to the meeting and the ongoing work of the group. RH indicated that the detail and information contained within the report is appreciated by members of the group. It is useful information that enables Community Councils to update their local communities on progress of ongoing maintenance work. He noted that this was another element of the successful communication and partnership work between MTRaP and the Council, particularly with the Roads team.

6. 20 MPH URBAN SPEED LIMIT

1. DO highlighted that, although Midlothian Council generally follow national policy, one that reflects the needs of Midlothian is being considered. It is anticipated that such a policy would include consideration of a reduction in urban speed limits to 20 mph and reduction in speed limits on some rural roads. DO is writing a report to be presented to Elected members.
2. Sustrans have not made a final decision about funding the 20 mph village gateway and infrastructure consultation.

7. CORE PATHS – ACCESS

1. Access Officer in Midlothian – RM highlighted that currently, there is not an Access Officer in the county. Local people are noting that access to paths is being blocked and there appears to be a range of responses from not being able to do anything about it, to the Council taking Legal action. There was a strong perception that requirements of Horse riders and those with limited mobility need more consideration in term of access to local paths, particularly when people are being encouraged to exercise more for the benefit of their mental and physical health and general well-being.
2. DO emphasised that Land and Resources staff have detailed, extensive knowledge and experience in addressing access issues. He requested that, in the first instance, any queries be sent to James Kinch in order that James has the opportunity to address any concerns.

On behalf of the Federation of Community Councils, RM is in the process of collating a list of paths to provide information where access has been blocked or restricted. Once complete, this document will be forwarded to James Kinch for his consideration.

Action RM to collate responses from MTRaP and MFCC members and forward to James Kinch for his consideration

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Penicuik Recycling Centre** - Mirabelle congratulated and thanked Midlothian Council for the work that had been undertaken to get the Penicuik Recycling Centre operational again. She highlighted that it had been an excellent piece of work and that many local residents had made favourable comments about the way the Centre is now operating.
2. **Ironmills Park** - ASK requested that a group be formed to look at a management plan for use of the park and encourage responsible behaviour.

Action DO will take this proposal forward for consideration.

3. **Damhead, Giant Hogweed** - CN highlighted the growth of Giant Hogweed on the old Pentland Road. DO noted that if it is on Council land it will be sprayed but if on private land it is the responsibility of the Landowner. Initially the Council will make informal requests for Hogweed to be removed but will take formal action if necessary. DO highlighted that the Council will prioritise action if members of the public could be exposed to it (next to roads or footways etc).
4. Planning development and road design – RH highlighted the issue of large housing developments and their impact upon local road networks. DO noted that transport infrastructure requirements will be considered at the planning application stage. If further discussion on specific developments would be beneficial, he is happy to engage with members of the group.
5. PJ will ensure that Fraser Jervis is included in the mailing list for MTRaP meetings and future information.
6. DW noted that more information about the A7 urbanisation is required. RH suggested that DW contact AH (alan.heatley@midlothian.gov.uk).

Action DW to contact Alan Heatley for information about A7 urbanisation plans

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (CONT.)

7. NS highlighted road safety and mobility issues arising from a very narrow footway at Hawthorn Gardens, Loanhead. There is also an issue relating to a missing keep left bollard on a nearby traffic island, where drivers regularly overtake on the wrong side of the island when buses are waiting at a bus stop.

Action NS to contact Alan Heatley

8. Sheriffhall Roundabout – ASK raised concerns about the volume of traffic. The traffic light sequence has been changed and this has led to several near misses. There was a discussion about possible alternative layouts.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12 July 2021, 5.30 – 7.00

Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88369099220?pwd=QTFtMk5FOWNXSXFaeTJLaWNRT3dEUT09>

Meeting ID: 883 6909 9220

Passcode: 164699

Dial by your location

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