

**Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths Meeting**  
**Monday 30 January, 2023, 6.00 to 7.30pm**  
**Zoom**

**Present:**

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith and District
Constance Newbould (CN)	Damhead and District
Brian Farrell (BF)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield and Easthouses
Mark Whitham (MW)	Tynewater and District

**In Attendance**

Wayne Clark (WC)	Midlothian Council - Operations & Asset Manager Roads
Alan Heatley (AH)	Midlothian Council - Network & Structures Manager
Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities and Lifelong Learning

**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

- Robert Hogg - Mayfield and Easthouses
- In the absence of Robert Hogg, Brian Farrell agreed to act as Chairperson for the meeting and welcomed those present to the meeting.

**1. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- Moved by Ann Stewart Kmicha, Seconded by Brian Farrell.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

**i Active Travel Event in Danderhall**

ASK highlighted that attendance at the event had been low.

**ii Staffing levels**

ASK sought clarification about levels of staffing within the 'roads' operation team and the team's capacity to operate the Pothole Pro machinery. WC (Midlothian Council) confirmed that there was an experienced member of staff available to operate the machinery. Additionally, other members of staff will undertake training. WC advised the group that the Pothole machinery is expected to arrive in week 3 or 4 of February.

### **3. CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME UPDATE & JOINT PRIORITIES SCHEME**

#### **i Residential Streets Programme (RSP)**

WC provided an update on the programme. Work for the coming year may depend on the level funding available as a result of decisions made by elected members at a meeting in February. He highlighted that £334,000 has been spent in the Mayfield and that work in the Easthouses area will commence in the coming year.

#### **ii Joint Priorities Scheme**

- AH, (Midlothian Council) has compiled 2 reports ('Capital Works Progress' and 'Completed Schemes'). He provided a summary of the content of the reports. The reports will be circulated with the notes of the January meeting. AH noted as a consequence of required budget savings, the accrued funds from the previous years *may* not be available in the coming financial year.
- ASK noted the work undertaken to improve footways and carriageways in the Woodburn area.
- MW (Tynewater) enquired whether the footways improvement currently being undertaken in Dewarton (up to Cranston crossroads), could be extended to the Nursery school. AH highlighted that traffic-calming measures are being installed in the area and anticipated that that improvement of the footway may be undertaken at the same time.

### **4. BEAR SCOTLAND – INFORMATION LEAFLET AND SURVEY**

- i. PJ (Midlothian Council) highlighted the information circulated by the organisation.
- ii. He drew attention to the survey that BEAR has circulated. The survey seeks the views on the way that the organisation communicates with local Community Councils. The link to the survey had been circulated within the MFCC January Minutes.

MTRaP members can select this link to complete the survey:

[Communication Survey for Community Councils](#)

## **5. ACTIVE TRAVEL (STRATEGY)**

- i. BF (ENCC) will be meeting members of the Active Travel Team. The publication of the Active Travel Strategy has been delayed.
- ii. AH noted that there will be a focus on the development / improvement of the cycle pathways and lanes in the county.
- iii. ASK noted that 'active travel' features highly in the Public Enquiry in to the Sheriffhall Grade Separation project.

### **A7 Urbanisation**

- i. An element of Midlothian Council's work to improve links to Sheriffhall Roundabout is the A7 urbanisation project.
- ii. AH reported that although it is a key project, progress has been slower than anticipated.

### **Barriers to Active Travel**

- i. Those present at the meeting observed that there are barriers to active travel in the county. They recognised that the availability of funds is restricted however the proposed closure of the public toilets, footways that are in poor condition or narrow, roads that are narrow and have no footways all serve to discourage and restrict the possibility of safe active travel for residents across the county.
- ii. Lighting is also a concern. Residents are reluctant to use paths that are poorly lit. WC informed group members that work is being undertaken to assess potential improve lighting improvement on the Bonnyrigg to Rosewell path. DE (Bonnyrigg) highlighted the use of 'cat's eyes' on the Grand Union Canal pathways to provide route guidance. WC noted that although they assist with marking of paths they do not provide lighting. WC highlighted the tension in the desire to improve lighting and increased cost to the Council. Although many lamps are being converted to LED's, the cost of lighting provision remains high.

## **6. CORE PATHS**

- i. CN (Damhead) highlighted that on maps many paths are poorly marked and in reality are not joined up.

- ii BF observed that there is a requirement to improve the linking of paths and that furthermore paths need to be linked to those in Edinburgh and East Lothian. This would require work to be undertaken by all authorities and not solely the responsibility of the Midlothian Council.
- iii BF highlighted that often, paths are in poor condition but as they are on private land, Midlothian Council cannot fund improvements; this is the responsibility of private landowners.
- iv CN once again, highlighted that there is no Access Officer post in Midlothian and that the Access Forum had not had a meeting.
- v Funding for the development of pathways may be accessed via Sustrans. ASK observed that development or reinstatement of path needs to have the support of communities that are adjacent to them.
- vi MW (Tynewater) drew attention to a positive development in the area. Prestonhall Estates are developing a 5.2km path from Pathhead to Vogrie Country Park. The project has been developed with funding support from the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP).
- vii MTRaP (and MFCC members) were advised that if they are aware of any access issues they could email Land and Countryside officers, Justin Venton [justin.venton@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:justin.venton@midlothian.gov.uk) or James Kinch, ([james.kinch@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:james.kinch@midlothian.gov.uk)).
- viii There was agreement that Steven Psihramis (Sustrans Senior Project Officer) and Madeline Bell (Sustainable Transport Officer – Midlothian Council) will be invited to the next MTRaP meeting.

**Action: PJ to invite Steven Psihramis (Sustrans Senior Project Officer) and Madeline Bell to the March Meeting**

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **i Gritting**

BF thanked WC and the roads team for the gritting work they had undertaken during the period of very cold weather.

WC noted that staff are on call 24/7 to respond when required. 1600 tonnes of salt had been used in an 8-day period.

### **ii Requests for additional Grit Bins or re-fills**

In order to request an additional grit bin or a refill of an existing bin, residents can access the web page on the Council website: [Grit Bin request or refill - Midlothian Council](#). Alternatively they can email, [wayne.clark@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:wayne.clark@midlothian.gov.uk)

iii **Requests for additional Litter Bins**

Requests for additional bins can be made here: [Litter/dog waste bin provision | Litter and street cleaning | Midlothian Council](#)

iv **Eskbank Toll Crossing Signs**

BF will email Gillian Bathgate to obtain an update on progress  
Multi-function signs are anticipated to be delivered by the end of February.

v **White Line Road Markings (Hardengreen & Beeslack)**

Although planned, due to inclement weather and poor lighting conditions at peak traffic times, the work will be undertaken when conditions are safer and the weather drier.

vi **Budget Considerations**

- Those present at the meeting discussed the impact of the budget proposals including the proposals to reduce the hours allotted to gritting of footways and the cutting support for the installation of Christmas Lights. In addition to the potential impact upon public safety (esp. to older people and those with limited mobility) and community spirit, there will also be an impact upon the income of roads and maintenance staff who rely on the extra payments received as result of carrying out the work.
- The proposed reduction of posts in the Ranger Service, in addition to job losses, will have an adverse impact upon the support to volunteers who provide 1000's of hours dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of paths, flora and fauna and bio-diversity in County's green spaces.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Monday 13 March 2023, 6.00 – 7.30**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82446343553?pwd=WUJmRHFZd3VUMDNPYzF6SkhmTFNvQT09>

**Meeting ID: 824 4634 3553**

**Passcode: 966621**