

Midlothian Active Travel Strategy

Report by Kevin Anderson, Acting Director, Resources

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the adoption of the Midlothian Active Travel Strategy.

2 Background

- 2.1** Increasing the number of journeys made by foot or by bicycle helps achieve many local and national outcomes and aligns well with policy objectives for improving health, creating better places for people, tackling congestion and pollution, and increasing access to jobs and services. National, regional and local plans provide a framework to work towards achieving these outcomes and increasing active travel levels. These include the National Walking Strategy and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), as well as the Single Midlothian Plan and the Midlothian Local Development Plan, all of which this strategy aims to support.
- 2.2** A pre-draft consultation was conducted for 5 weeks from 26 September 2016 until 30 October 2016. 82 responses were received from the online survey from the general public and other stakeholders. A workshop took place at Lasswade Centre on 13 December 2016 giving an opportunity to community councils to share their views on active travel in Midlothian. Plans and feedback forms were provided and responses from 12 members representing 8 community councils were recorded. A further 412 responses from an earlier cycling consultation from 2014 have been taken into account for the development of the strategy.
- 2.3** A draft document was published and a further consultation was held for six weeks between 7 August 2018 and 18 September 2018. Copies of the strategy were also available for viewing at local libraries and Midlothian House. 55 responses from members of the public and stakeholders were received.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The funding for this project came from various sources as part of a larger sustainable travel project. Future resources associated with the strategy will include the preparation of funding applications, feasibility studies and management of construction projects relating to the strategy.

3.2 Risk

There is no risk associated with this policy.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Increase sustainable travel, improve children and young people's health and wellbeing, reduce health inequalities.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

A positive impact on traffic levels, pollution and health.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Ensuring active travel measure are in place reduces future local health and care service demand, as well as future carriageway congestion.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Two rounds of public and stakeholder consultation which shaped the development of the strategy were held. The nature of responses received included:

- Support for the action plan set in the strategy and the proposed and aspirational routes.
- Comments regarding the need for more segregated cycling infrastructure and the need to improve particular junctions.
- Review of speed limits, specifically the introduction of 20mph in town centres.
- Segregated cycling infrastructure should be in place along main roads as opposed to advisory cycle lanes.
- Working collaboratively with neighbouring local authorities especially City of Edinburgh Council on improving cross-county routes.
- The need to maintain active travel routes regularly, especially in autumn and winter months.
- The need for active travel paths to be fully accessible by mobility scooters, wheelchairs and buggies.
- Many comments about the need for segregated cycling infrastructure along the A701, A702, A703 and improvements to the Hillend and Straiton junctions.
- The need for segregated active travel routes in the vicinity of Sheriffhall roundabout.

- Eskbank Toll regarded as a barrier to cycling and the call for active travel infrastructure along the A7.
- Safe cycling routes from Gorebridge, Newtongrange to Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg and Edinburgh.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the strategy.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Walking and cycling are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

3.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues associated with this report.

4 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to adopt the Midlothian Active Travel Strategy.

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Background Papers:

- **Appendix 1: Midlothian Active Travel Strategy (attached)**
- **Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (attached)**