

Midlothian Council Speed Policy Review

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- i. Approves the development towards implementation of the proposed 20mph and 30mph speed limits across Midlothian and the associated action plan; and
- ii. Requests the Chief Officer – Place to return to Council with a proposal for roads with other speed limits and an associated action plan for implementation.

2 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the speed limits review for 20mph and 30mph roads in order to improve road safety. An action plan for the implementation of these speed limits across Midlothian, its towns and settlements is provided as an appendix.

Date: 20th April 2023
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3 Background

- 3.1 The Midlothian road network needs to support a local transport system that is safe for all road users and improves the quality of life in our communities with the potential to encourage social and economic activity.
- 3.2 Effective vehicle speed management involves many components designed to encourage, help and require drivers to adopt appropriate and safe speeds. Speed limits are a key source of information and play a fundamental role in indicating the nature of, and risks posed by, a road to both motorised and non-motorised road users.
- 3.3 Scotland's National Transport Strategy (NTS2) sets out a vision of the country's transport system for the next 20 years to address the key challenges we face. There are a number of overarching strategies and delivery plans being produced to support this at a national level, including the Road Safety Framework (2021), together with Regional and Local Transport Strategies.
- 3.4 To support the aims of these documents, Midlothian Council has undertaken a road safety and hierarchy review of its network which has led to the production of an approved Speed Policy. This sets out the Council's objectives, the guidance which has been used to inform the policies, and how these will be implemented.
- 3.5 Public consultation on existing speed limits, implementation of 20mph speed restrictions within towns, villages and smaller settlements, and speed limits on higher speeds roads and how these impact road safety and access to active travel, has been undertaken.
- 3.6 The public consultation was open from 1st November to 29th November 2022. This included direct engagement sessions with Council Officers, Community Councils, key stakeholders and Councillors.
- 3.7 In order to target and prioritise interventions, assessed on a consistent basis and an established baseline, and to allocate budget and funding for necessary infrastructure improvements, an action plan has been devised and is appended for Council approval prior to implementation.
- 3.8 In December 2022, Midlothian Council noted the AECOM Midlothian Speed Policy Consultation Summary Report and requested that the Chief Officer – Place return to Council in early 2023 with an Action Plan to implement appropriate schemes.
- 3.9 The underlying principles of Midlothian Council's Speed Limit Policy include:
 - Determining the function of the road and its characteristics in terms of movement and place when examining and considering the speed limit
 - The needs of all road users to be fully taken into account when considering the implications of speed limits.
- 3.10 20mph streets within towns are mostly residential, or see high

pedestrian and cyclist movements and tend to be areas where motor vehicle movement is not deemed the primary function. The policy sets out the following guidance on characteristics for the application of 20mph speed limits:

- A clearly defined core, such as a central shopping area or community facility;
- Several facilities generating active travel movements;
- Notable development depth;
- Almost continuous frontage;
- Numerous junctions; and
- Significant pedestrian activity throughout the day.

- 3.11 Of the streets which were reviewed, there are approximately 850 instances of streets where currently a 30mph speed limit are proposed to reduce to a 20mph speed limit. There are approximately 70 instances of streets which are currently a 30mph speed limit which are proposed to remain at a 30mph speed limit.
- 3.12 The results are presented in the appended report by Council Ward in order to highlight the changes that are proposed on a local basis.
- 3.13 If Council approve the development towards implementation of speed limit changes, the formal Traffic Regulation Order process will commence and implementation of the action plan shall follow.

4 Action Plan

- 4.1 With Council approval, the formal statutory process to amend speed limits and introduce any traffic calming measures will commence. Taking account of time to consider objections, it should be anticipated that the full process would be finalised over a nine month period.
- 4.2 Any significant objections to the proposed speed limits, relative to specific locations, will require the Council's Cabinet to consider and make a decision on whether it proceeds, is amended or is abandoned.
- 4.3 Iteratively, respective speed signage will be temporarily covered utilising adhesive speed signs to coincide with the new speed limit ahead of the installation of permanent signage.
- 4.4 Due to statutory and consultation process dependencies, it is not feasible to provide a detailed action plan as to delivery datelines. As the process progresses, the installation of gateways, exiting signage, countdown signs and roundels will be prioritised in accordance with the speed limit policy and consultation report. Update reports will be provided to Council.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Resource

Implementation of gateways, signage and associated lining will be approximately £275,000. This will be borne from existing road safety and street lighting capital budgets, over a three year period.

5.2 Digital

Information on the approved actions will be displayed on the Council's website and social media channels.

5.3 Risk

Not implementing a local Speed Policy and consultation outcomes may expose the Council to financial and reputational risk. Approving the recommendations can help to reduce road safety concerns.

5.4 Ensuring Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment will be necessary on the implementation of the action plan and will be factored into future reports.

5.5 Additional Report Implications

See Appendix A

Appendix 1.

AECOM Midlothian 20mph Speed Limit Review Report

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The route map outlines the phases of service recovery and transformation which will underpin the Single Midlothian Plan.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The report aims to deliver best value.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Extensive public consultation is imperative and has been undertaken as per the Consultation Summary Report.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report aims to measure progress through outcomes.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The report is based on the creation of a wellbeing economy which prioritises prevention, fairness for people, the economy and the environment.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The actions aim for improvement and enhancement of our environment.