

Midlothian Council Speed Policy and Roads Hierarchy Review

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- i) Approves the Midlothian Council Speed Policy;
- ii) Approves the Hierarchy Review report as a reference for improving safety on Midlothian roads; and
- iii) Approves Officers to undertake public consultation on local road safety issues in line with these documents; 20mph speed restrictions within towns and settlements; speed reductions across identified sections of the network; and return to a future Council meeting with findings and proposals.

2 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to implement policy to improve road safety and seek to implement appropriate speed limits across Midlothian, its towns and settlements.

Date: 15 June 2022
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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 a Speed Policy document. This sets out the Council's objectives, guidance which has been used to inform the policies, and how these will be implemented.
- 3.5 The setting of national speed limits for different road types, and the identification of which exceptions to the general limits can be applied, is the responsibility of the UK Government. The three national speed limits for cars, motorcycles and light vans are:
 - The 30mph speed limit on Class A, B or C or unclassified roads with street lighting.
 - The speed limit of 60mph on single carriageway roads.
 - The 70mph limit on dual carriageways and motorways.

- 3.6 National limits are not, however, appropriate to all roads. The responsibility for determining local speed limits lies with Roads Authorities having regard to guidance issued by the Scottish Government together with relevant advice from the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 3.7 The setting of speed limits can be a sensitive issue for communities as residents and businesses can have conflicting views dependent upon their own experiences and how they primarily use the road space, i.e. a safe speed for drivers may differ from pedestrians or cyclists.
- 3.8 It is necessary to set appropriate and effective speed limits, which support the underlying principles, and achieve a reasonable level of driver compliance within those limits.
- 3.9 Where there is strong community support to lower the speed limit, this request will be considered in line with the procedure outlined within the Policy.
- 3.10 Road Safety systems involve those who design and are responsible for the road network as well as those who use them. They are responsible for reducing road casualties, particularly serious and fatal incidents, and all road users have a role to play in achieving this by using roads safely and complying with the rules.
- 3.11 The Policy and Hierarchy Review report provides local direction and consistency for Roads Services, together with reference for our communities, as to what comprises an appropriate speed and safety measures for various types of road and environment.
- 3.12 Public consultation on local road safety issues in line with the Policy and Hierarchy Review; 20mph speed restrictions within towns and settlements; and speed reductions across identified sections of the network will permit targeted and prioritised interventions, assessed on a consistent basis and established baseline in order to allocate budget and funding for necessary infrastructure improvements.

4 Report Implications

4.1 Resource

The finances for the production of the Hierarchy Review report and Speed Policy have been met from existing resources. The next stage of public consultation will require resource, which will be met within existing establishment and budgets. Resulting capital costs for infrastructure interventions will be subject to relevant funding applications and future Council reports.

4.2 Digital

Public consultation will require digital support through existing platforms.

4.3 Risk

The risk of not implementing a local Speed Policy results in national speed limits being in place across the network which may not be suitable for local issues. Approving the Policy can help to reduce road safety concerns.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities

The subject of this report does not have a significant impact on equality.

4.5 Additional Report Implications

See Appendix A

Appendices

Midlothian Council Speed Policy
Midlothian Roads Hierarchy 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. Prior to any new or altered speed limits being introduced, Police Scotland will be formally consulted to gather their views on the appropriateness of the measures, and adapt the proposals where necessary.

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 improvement and enhancement of our environment.