

EAST LoTHIAN CYCLE FORUM

Notes from meeting held on Thursday 23rd May 2024

14.00 – 16.00

In person attendance at John Muir House, Haddington

Online attendance on Microsoft Teams

Present:

Cllr Shona McIntosh (SMc) – Chair
Cllr John McMillan (JMc) – Provost and Cabinet Spokesperson for Environment, Economic Development and Tourism
Chris Milne (CM) – ELC Sustainable Transport Officer – Active Travel Infrastructure (Note taker)
Niall Deans (ND) – ELC Sustrans Embedded Officer
Morag Haddow (MH) – ELC Transport Planning Officer
Brett Walker (BW) – North Berwick Coastal On the Move
Derek Williams (DW) – Musselburgh area active travel
Mark James (MJ) – Sustaining Dunbar
Philippa Barber (PB) – ELC Associate Instructor Outdoor Learning / Bikeability Scotland lead
Nick Morgan (NM) – ELC Access Officer
Ralph Averbuch (RA) – Pencaitland area member
Beth Harley-Jepson (BHJ) – SEStran
Steve Wands (SW) – ELC Club & Community Sports Development Officer
Cheyne Hamm (CH) – ELC Sustainability & Climate Change Officer
Yeswanth Patsa (YP) – ELC Active and Sustainable Travel Assistant
Rhodri Thomas (RT) – Sustrans Network Development Team
Angie Kinghorn (AK) – Cycling UK Development Officer East Lothian
Gordon Webber (GW) – Cycling UK
Paul Ince (PI) – Longniddry area member
Gordon Hall (GH) – U3A
Suzanne Forup (SF) – Cycling UK Head of Development (Scotland)
Steven Nelson (SN) – Beyond Boundaries East Lothian
Alastair Seagrott (AS)

Apologies:

Liz Hunter, Simon Law, Simon Bradshaw, Katherine Henebry, Nicola McNeill, Tim Holling, Kristian Woodesend, Mark Holling

		Action
1.	Welcome & Apologies Councillor McIntosh welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.	
2.	Notes of Previous Meeting held on 29th February 2024 Meeting notes had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were accepted as an accurate record.	
3.	Matters Arising BW refers to the Local Development Plan presentation provided by Robin Edgar at the last meeting and asks if there is any update on the Gate Check process that was due to commence in May. CM has confirmed with Robin since this meeting that timescales have changed as a result of the UK election being called. The Evidence Report is now likely to go to Council in August before proceeding to the Gatecheck process.	
4.	Active Travel Improvement Plan refresh ND provides an update on East Lothian's Active Travel Improvement Plan, which was published in 2018 and covers the period to 2024. A refresh of this document is required, in part to take account of broader changes to the national active travel landscape. It is also clear that up-to-date strategies will be required by Local Authorities to enable them to access future capital funding for active travel. ELC Officers are considering how this can be taken forward, with the Cycle Forum likely to have a reviewing capacity as the refresh progresses.	

MJ notes recent work carried out by Planning Aid Scotland to develop a plan for the North Berwick Coastal area and comments that the content of this plan should be considered as part of the refresh. ND confirms that all plans like that will be taken into consideration.

SMc comments that this work should piggyback as much as possible on existing events, such as the North Berwick and Musselburgh on the Move groups, in order to reach as wide an audience as possible.

CM clarifies that this refresh will only cover the Active Travel Improvement Plan and not the wider Local Transport Strategy, as that is out with the remit of the Active Travel team.

5. Active travel funding update

CM provides an update on the levels of external grant funding being provided to ELC for active travel, as follows:

External grant funding in 2023/24:

Funding source	Work covered	Value
Cycling Walking Safer Routes (Transport Scotland)	Ring-fenced capital funding for cycling, walking and wheeling improvements.	£730,000
Network Development Fund (Sustrans)	Improvements to the National Cycle Network	£176,000
Road Safety Improvement Fund (Transport Scotland)	Delivering commitments in the national Road Safety Framework	£203,000
Places for Everyone (Sustrans)	Musselburgh Active Toun	£533,800
NCN Accessibility Fund (Sustrans)	Removing barriers to use of the National Cycle Network	£24,000
Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (Paths 4 All)	Staffing costs and revenue projects	£105,000
Cycling Scotland School Cycle Parking fund	New school cycle and scooter storage	£148,000

Confirmed external grant funding in 2024/25 (at 5th June 2024):

Funding source	Work covered	Value
Cycling Walking Safer Routes - Tier 1 (Transport Scotland)	Ring-fenced capital funding for cycling, walking and wheeling improvements	Awaiting award
Cycling Walking Safer Routes – Tier 2 (Transport Scotland)	Construction of major new active travel improvements	Awaiting decision
Network Development Fund (Sustrans)	Improvements to the National Cycle Network	Awaiting decision
20mph Implementation Fund (Transport Scotland)	Additional signage and monitoring	£50,000
Places for Everyone (Sustrans)	Musselburgh Active Toun	£596,418
NCN Accessibility Fund (Sustrans)	Removing barriers to use of the National Cycle Network	Awaiting decision
SEStran – capital award	Cycle storage, town centre audits, access to bikes and minor works	£163,000
SEStran – revenue award	Staff costs and project pilots (including Active Prescriptions)	£74,000

CM notes that previous funds, including Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Local Authority Fund no longer exist, with this and some other earlier sources of funding replaced by new capital and revenue funding from SEStran.

ELC are hopeful of receiving decisions soon on the remaining 2024/25 funding, however CM noted that the delay in awarding these will impact the ability of Local Authorities to deliver, given the

	<p>timescales required for procurement and the risks to planning construction works during late winter months.</p> <p>MJ asks what ELC bid for from SEStran. CM explains that this fund did not follow an application process, rather a larger sum was provided by Transport Scotland to SEStran, who worked out an appropriate method for dividing this up across all of its Local Authorities (8 in total - Fife, City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, West Lothian, Midlothian, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and the Scottish Borders), with some input from individual LA's on their priorities.</p> <p>DW asks, with funding pressures in mind, whether future funding for construction of MAT is safeguarded within Places for Everyone. ND explains that funding is year-on-year, but that ongoing projects are generally flagged for future funding. Local Authorities cannot submit new applications to this fund, which will further protect ongoing projects.</p> <p>RA asks what ELC contribute towards active travel from its own budget, including maintenance costs, which SMC notes aren't always clear. CM confirms that there is funding, which is managed by the Roads Engineering department. CM will clarify this with relevant colleagues and look to provide an update in future.</p>	CM
6.	<p>Town centre accessibility audits</p> <p>ND talks about new funding from SEStran which will allow ELC to carry out active travel accessibility audits, initially focused on minor improvements that can be made across the 6 largest town centres. ND and YP will lead on this with support from colleagues. The focus will be on improvements for pedestrians and wheelchair users, looking at the need for dropped kerbs, ramps in place of steps, surface improvements, tactile paving, signage or amended chicanes / barriers. ELC will adopt a map-based approach to build a log that can be acted on over future years.</p> <p>This work started at Tranent, which was completed in April, and is next due to focus on Prestonpans.</p> <p>ELC are interested in receiving input from Cycle Forum members, to gain local knowledge on the improvements that are needed. This could mean members providing information through a system such as Google maps, in a similar way to how Pencaitland Community Council currently use this tool.</p> <p>Members interested in contributing to this work should contact Niall Deans or Yeswanth Patsa: ndeans@eastlothian.gov.uk / ypatsa@eastlothian.gov.uk</p> <p>RA asks if a tool like this could be used to log where shared residential bike hangars are required, as well as highlighting that a useful approach to this would be ELC purchasing such equipment on behalf of communities in order to lower the price. CM makes a note of this and will explore feasibility with procurement in future.</p>	CM
7.	<p>Cross East Lothian Active Freeway update</p> <p>MH confirms that full technical designs are complete for some parts of this route, but delays to funding decisions will impact delivery going forward. This project has deliberately been developed in stages which will allow ELC to deliver appropriate sections of it as funding allows.</p> <p>ELC are potentially looking to progress the East Linton and Haddington to Macmerry sections to construction first, with plans to look at design options for Macmerry and Gladsmuir, which will require further consultation.</p> <p>DW notes that the concept of the Active Freeway is fine, but that the settlements themselves will be difficult as people will need to go back on the road. MH confirms that it's ELC's intention to deliver high-quality improvements through the settlements, such as Tranent and Haddington, but designs have not been progressed yet to show what these would look like. The intention is for traffic-free routes through settlements, but this does present challenges which will be explored more fully during the design stage.</p> <p>MH confirms it is ELC's current intention to focus on East Linton first as there is more available road width. Final designs have not been shared as these are very technical and the file sizes are large, but MH is happy to email those out on request where people are interested in reviewing them: mhaddow@eastlothian.gov.uk.</p>	

	<p>SMc references comments submitted by from Mark Holling before the meeting, regarding possible reductions in the speed limit along the A199. MH notes that ELC are aware of the concerns raised, however the national standards, set out in Cycling by Design and generally required by Sustrans and Transport Scotland, need a sufficient buffer for the speed limit. These buffers will be difficult to achieve in sections, which has led to the discussion around reducing speed limits. MH acknowledges that this could be a difficult case to make.</p> <p>BW hopes that ELC do reduce the speed limit as the section of the A199 at Lauder Place is very unpleasant to cross or walk next to due to the speed of vehicles. A reduction in speed limit here would reduce the level of noise being experienced by nearby homes. MH comments that one of the main difficulties will be compliance. In locations such as that ELC may also need to look at changing the nature of the road.</p> <p>Further comments are offered regarding an alternative route through East Linton, however SMc asks that individual feedback like this is sent directly to Morag Haddow (see email address above).</p> <p>JMc talks about concerns that bus operators have around proposed reductions in speed limit on the A199. MH notes that ELC have engaged with bus operators on this.</p> <p>MH clarifies that ELC do not plan to progress with any speed limit changes until construction is scheduled and notes that the same issue will apply to other Local Authorities where there is limited road width for an appropriate buffer. Maintenance will be a key consideration where wider buffers are required, as existing vehicles can only cut a 1m wide buffer. SMc asks about planting in buffers. MH confirms that landscaping designs are being delivered alongside technical designs, with wildflower and tree planting under consideration.</p>	
8.	<p>Cycling UK Development Officer update</p> <p>SF introduces this new role, which will be filled by AK. The focus of the role will be on community engagement, including led rides and workshops that support people to cycle within their own communities.</p> <p>AK talks about delivery of work in this role and notes that they are keen to work with groups across the county to support with confidence building, tailoring services to what people in each community need. A key part of this will be working with partner organisations such as Beyond Boundaries East Lothian. AK's recent background is working with schools in East Lothian as an instructor, including Bikeability.</p> <p>JMc congratulates AK on the new post and asks how we promote active travel to make it accessible to everybody. AK confirms that they start in post week commencing May 27th and that their initial focus will be on parents, who can be engaged through children that are trained and engaged via school initiatives such as Bikeability.</p> <p>PI asks if a new cycling leaflet could be prepared for East Lothian as part of this new role. AS notes hill walking maps that were produced in the past at low cost, while SMc highlights the Spokes map and a network of local area maps that were produced by Area Partnerships. Local cycling maps were previously on the ELC website but are no longer accessible there. ELC will investigate this.</p> <p>SN asks that accessibility for disabled users is considered in any new maps as well as the work of the Development Officer. Could maps have different keys in future to denote accessibility? AK confirms that they have experience of relevant work via the All Ability Bike centre.</p> <p>BW raises the issue of traffic outside school campuses. Can we get teachers on ebikes? CM confirms that ebikes were provided as a free loan to some teachers around 2 years ago – perhaps this could be repeated? Feedback from that work highlighted the challenge that many teachers themselves face, often commuting from outside the county after they have dropped their own children off.</p> <p>CM talks briefly about Sustrans annual Hands Up Scotland Survey, with national results due to be published the day of the Cycle Forum meeting. ELC intend to present something at the next meeting which shows how East Lothian schools compare with the national averages for modes chosen when children travel to school.</p>	ELC

9.	<p>Women Don't Cycle</p> <p>SMc asks MJ to introduce this item, a film called Women Don't Cycle which explores what it means to be a woman cycling in different parts of the world. MJ is keen to have a social event where this could be screened and feels that it is an important topic for this forum given previous discussions around attendance and gender balance. CM agrees and thinks that events that are led by communities would be more impactful. SMc suggests a tie-in with the new Climate Hub, while MJ suggests working with Area Partnerships. PI notes the active Sustainability or On the Move sub-groups that support Area Partnerships.</p> <p>SMc, MJ and ELC staff will explore this idea. Any members wishing to support screening events can do so by contacting activetravel@eastlothian.gov.uk.</p>	SMc, MJ & ELC
10.	<p>AOB</p> <p>BW asks for an update on the earlier Journey Hubs consultation. MH notes that a report has been produced through the Edinburgh and South East City Region Deal. Now in its final form, this report will be presented to Councillors in the near future. The report identifies 40 potential locations for Journey Hubs, most of which are main public transport interchanges. The intention is to make those more prominent and improve facilities at each, including signage. MH is hopeful that this work will form part of the Local Development Plan, in order to secure developer contributions. MH also notes that ELC are partner to another funding award which will design a modular approach to Journey Hub infrastructure, such as shelters. The lead party to this funding award is a private firm, who intend to engage local people in future. This work should result in ELC receiving one prototype, which could then be a catalyst for future funding applications. MH talks about new branded Journey Hub totems which are in place at Wallyford Park and Ride. Signposts have been installed at Musselburgh and Dunbar</p> <p>MJ again raises the issue of active travel maps vanishing from ELC's website, which leads to a broader discussion about maps. JMc wonders whether there are locations that could play maps on a loop. MJ highlights the quality of signed routes in the Scottish Borders. SMc suggests that someone from Scottish Borders Council attends a future meeting to talk about work like this.</p> <p>JMc notes that St Mary's church needs bike parking. CM asks JMc to provide details to him, to ensure that this location is added to ELC's waiting list of locations.</p> <p>SMc talks about the new pavement parking legislation and notes that a list of potential exemptions has been shared by ELC Roads with Community Councils and Area Partnerships. SMc suggests that members contact their local Area Partnership or Community Council if they would like to comment or feed into a response.</p> <p><u>Bikeability update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all primary schools in East Lothian will have taken part in on road cycle training by June 2024, with just a handful of the smallest schools doing the programme on a biennial timetable. • East Lothian Council will find out over the summer if successful in funding further on road cycle training in 2024-25. • Sport Scotland funded 5 trikes to support Bikeability Scotland and other Outdoor Learning programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all have been used consistently since they arrived this year and Outdoor Learning will investigate widening the pool of adapted equipment to be able to meet a wider range of ability needs. 	
11.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 22nd August 2024. A time will be confirmed shortly, but is likely to be in the evening, to allow more opportunity for other members to attend.</p>	