

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
**TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM**  
**A72 ACTION SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of the MEETING of the  
TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM A72  
Action Sub-Committee held in the  
Council Chamber, Rosetta Road,  
Peebles on 6 September 2016 at 6.00  
p.m.

Present:- Councillors K. Cockburn (Chairman), S. Bell.  
Community Councillor I. Lamb (Lamancha, Newlands and Kirkurd)  
Community Councillor J. Crawley, (Royal Burgh of Peebles and District),  
Community Councillor G. Thornton (Walkerburn Community Council),  
Community Councillor J. Waddell (Manor, Stobo and Lyne), PC D. Sorrell,  
(Police Scotland).

Apologies:- Community Councillors M. Douglas, R. Tatler. Inspector M. Bennett.

In Attendance:- Asset Manager (D. Richardson), Network Manager (B. Young),  
Neighbourhood Assistant Area Manager (E. Nicol), Democratic Services  
Officer (K. Mason).

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**WELCOME**

1. The Chairman welcomed PC Dianne Sorrell, John Crawley, and George Thornton to their first meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**MINUTE**

2. The Minute of meeting of the Tweeddale Area Forum A72 Action Sub-Committee held on 24 March 2016 had been circulated.

**DECISION  
APPROVED.**

**A72**

3. There had been circulated copies of a briefing note prepared by the Asset Manager and the Network Manager. The note summarised the matters discussed by the Sub-Committee at their meetings held on 24 March and 16 May 2016. The note advised that the Council's Asset Management section was responsible for Revenue and Capital maintenance works in connection with all adopted Roads, Bridges and St Lighting assets. In undertaking this role Officers used inspection and condition information to evaluate assets which had been identified as being in need of treatment or repair. This evaluation process allowed an annual planned programme of works to be compiled for completion within the level of budgets allocated. The asset types / treatments were detailed in the report together with the projects which had been included in the planned programme of works on the A72 between Galashiels and Skirling for the year 2016/17.
4. A report on the A72 had been presented to the Tweeddale Area Forum on 2 September 2015 which advised on the position regarding the condition of the A72 and on the identified sections highlighted for Surface treatment. The report advised that the Council participated in a national assessment of road conditions, Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Surveys (SRMCS). This information produced a road condition indicator consistently across all roads in Scotland. The survey measured a number of condition criteria, namely:- (a) texture (roughness of the road); (b) rutting (wheel tracking); (c) longitudinal profile (smoothness of ride); and (d) cracking. The Statutory

Performance Indicator for the condition of the Scottish Local Authority road network was defined as “the percentage of the road network which should be considered for maintenance treatment”. Information on the overall results from the SRMCS and the RCI were detailed in the report.

5. In relation to the Capital Scheme the report advised that over the years as well as implemented improvements such as Clovenfords to the Nest potential schemes had been identified on certain locations on the A72 and these were detailed in the report. However only a revised Dirtpot Corner scheme was currently in the Council’s 10 year financial plan and the prospects for future major schemes were very limited in the current economic climate.
6. A list of specific topics and issues raised at previous meetings of the sub-committee together with Officers’ comments is detailed in the Appendix to this Minute.
7. Iain Lamb referred to speed limit where the A72 joined the A701 and referred to the centre of Blyth Bridge off the A72 and the dangers when children got on and off schools buses where there was no speed limit. Officers confirmed that a review of this speed limit was on their list. In regard to flooding issues in the Blyth Bridge Area, David Richardson advised he would take these issues back to his team and advised that SEPA would be involved. George Thornton and Councillor Bell expressed concerns regarding the two sections of the A72 between Clovenfords and Walkerburn as detailed in para 10 of the appendix and it was agreed that Officers would look at this again and meet with Councillor Bell so he could show the areas of concern. John Crawley referred to road markings at Lyne Station and advised they were very faint and you could not rely on them on a misty night. David Richardson would check this out. Members then went on to discuss cycling and Brian Young undertook to liaise with Graeme Johnstone regarding alternative signs for cycle paths. It was noted that although Tweedlove was growing every year there was not a great deal to promote the safety of cyclists and it was felt that the Council needed to concentrate more on cyclists and cycling tourism. A comment was also made that that there should be an audit or review of signage on the A72 and Brian Young advised he would look into this request. In regard to paragraph 7 of the appendix John Waddell advised that the bushes had been cut back at Lyne Station and referred to lack of warning signs in the area. Brian Young advised he would check this out but thought there would be a warning sign in place. Elaine Nicol advised that Jason Hedley was making arrangements with Neighbourhood Services to cut back foliage west of Peebles; the turnoff signs at Drochill were obscured with foliage. A similar exercise would be organised to cut back foliage overhanging any of the advance warnings signs from Peebles to the Nest. Elaine Nicol also referred to the footpath between Eshiels depot and Peebles which was overgrown with branches and foliage this would be being cut back although land belonged to the Council it was maintained by Borders Forestry Trust and she hoped they would contribute towards the work.
8. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Appendix, Councillor Bell asked that the anti-skid surfacing, particularly the one at Clovenfords, be put on the list of recommendations to ensure this work would be considered within the future programmes of work.
9. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Appendix, Councillor Bell asked that central white lines which were disappearing at the section near the entrance to Holylee House and at the entrance to the Torwoodlee Forest plus the addition of the A72 out towards Neidpath Castle, be put on the list of recommendations to ensure this work would be considered within the future programmes of work.

10. Councillor Bell asked Officers to look at the entrance at Caerlee Estate. Turning to the left from the estate was okay but if you were turning right the visibility was not good because of the position of a wall in that area. Brian Young advised he had spoken to a Mr Morris about this, he was unsure how this could be resolved and advised perhaps the owners should take their wall down. Councillor Bell would send an email to Brian Young giving details of the situation to date.
11. With reference to paragraph 12 of the Appendix, George Thornton advised that he felt that the 30 mph sign at Clovenfords was too close to the roundabout.
12. A paper prepared by the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council was tabled at the meeting. This gave information in relation to conditions of the roads etc. relating to (a) Peebles Town limit to Peebles Old Parish Church, (b) Peebles Old Parish Church to the 30mph signs on the Innerleithen Road, (c) Peebles Town limit (east) to Glentress junction; and (d) A72 from the Glentress junction to Dirt Pot Corner. John Crawley gave background information relating to the report and passed on several photographs to Officials. Officers would pass on the full survey to Neighbourhood Services to enable them to check the items listed.
13. Iain Lamb commented that the A72 West of Peebles was in a terrible state, and he felt that more consideration was given to repair and work on the Peebles and the Eastern sections of the A72, the Chairman advised that Officers did their best with the budget available and David Richardson also referred to the sums of money and repairs recently spent on the Western section of the A72, but Iain Lamb still felt there was an issue. Councillor Cockburn advised that Iain Lamb might wish to consider putting this forward to the group as a potential recommendation.
14. The Chairman reminded Members that he would be asking them to bring forward suggestions for recommendations to the Area Forum, at the next meeting. Up until this point the Sub-Group had mainly concentrated on current issues, and short term issues of a smaller nature, these discussions had been excellent, and might allow the Sub-Committee to realise some quick wins, but discussion of such matters would now draw to a close, as the Sub-Committee needed to be strategic in its thinking, and attempt to make valid and relevant recommendations in the time still available, bearing in mind that the Council term was drawing to a close and there were only 2 more meetings of the Tweeddale Area Forum to which a report could be considered.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED that Members bring with them to the next meeting suggestions for recommendations to the Tweeddale Area Forum, thinking along the lines of what could be improved in the short term, mid to long term and long term as follows – (a) Short Term - as previous minutes and papers described; Old town crossing discussions; Caerlee Corner; Neidpath Corner; (b) Mid to Long Term - Caerlee Corner; Dirtpot Corner; Scrutiny Committee investigation into Timber Transport and other similar vehicles; Woodend – Tighnuilt; Decriminalised Parking Enforcement; Road related accidents and investigations; Possibility of continuing the action group; and (c) Long Term: Possible 2<sup>nd</sup> Tweed bridge in/near Peebles; Development of Peebles and other urban areas; Future flood mitigation plans for the Tweed Valley; Use of different and new materials for road repairs.**

## **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 20 October 2016 at 6.00 p.m. in the Council Offices, Rosetta Road, Peebles.

*The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.*

**TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM – A72 ACTION SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**16 MAY 2016**  
**APPENDIX**

1. The Asset Manager undertook to ascertain if the A72 had received any unexpected benefits from the Bellwin Scheme and advise members accordingly.

Response - There were no repairs undertaken on the A72 which were related to the Bellwin Scheme.

2. The red gateways of road at the entrance to the town & villages at the 30mph signs ... both ends of Clovenfords, both ends of Walkerburn and the East end of Innerleithen are all worn and need refreshing.

Response - the replacement of red gateways compete against the planned surface treatment programme being undertaken each year. Unfortunately, when a decision has to be taken on an area of deteriorating carriageway and an area which has more of an aesthetic value, the deteriorating carriageway is currently always going to come out on top.

3. The anti-skid surfacing at the following locations are unduly worn a) the approach onto the Nest Roundabout from Clovenfords [the other two approaches are not as worn] and b) the section just before the entrance to Holylee House.

Response - these high friction areas also compete against the planned surface treatment programmes. This type of friction treatment has been placed for a specific reason, i.e. to assist road users when approaching a junction, or at a location which has been identified for treatment due to carriageway deterioration or clusters of injury related accident. However, an added burden in replacing these proprietary surfaces, (and this also applies to the red gateway areas), is that the existing carriageway surface must first be removed and replaced to a depth of 40mm, before the supplementary friction/red treatment is then applied. This means that the cost/square metre to replace these areas is higher than normal re-surfacing, which again puts pressure on limited budgets. We are currently investigating the use of a surfacing material which has a high Polished Stone Value (PSV), which would eliminate the need for the supplementary high friction surface on the top. Hopefully trials may be undertaken later this year depending on the outcome of a cost comparison exercise.

4. The central white line is disappearing a) at the section near the entrance to Holylee House and b) at the entrance to the Torwoodlee Forest.

Response - the Council's lining programme is based and prioritised on a reflectivity survey which in 2016/17 was commissioned to an external consultant. This survey information was then rated using scoring criteria which included, traffic flows; road alignment; accidents. Whilst there are some localised sections of the A72, between The Nest and Peebles, which have been identified as requiring re-lining, overall this section of carriageway has not been placed within the top nine sections of the A Class network which have been listed to be re-lined during 2016/17. It should be noted, however, that the sections of the A72, just to the west of Galashiels and between Peebles and Hallyne, are priorities 1 & 3 within this year's white lining programme and should be undertaken during the next few months.

5. Community Council representatives identified a number of sections of the A72 which were in a poor state of repair. Much of the road between Peebles and the entrance to Castle Craig hospital was characterised by corroded edges and patched potholes. The overall impression of the road was that the surface was generally poor, rough and uneven. It was not possible to list particular points in the road as there were potholes and damaged edges on most parts of the road. Potholes were often in groups and although they had been patched, were still rough and uneven. Further towards Skirling, the road continued to be damaged and patched in many places.

Response - Identified surface defects will initially be dealt with by Neighbourhood Services as part of the Council's cyclic inspection and repair process. The permanent repair of these areas would be undertaken as part of the Council's planned Revenue and Capital Works Programme for the Tweeddale area. In 2016/17 permanent patching works will be undertaken on the A72 between Thornielee and Walkerburn, later this year.

6. The area at the bend near Mountbog was under water for large parts of the winter and subject to temporary traffic lights for a long period. This remained an area of risk from flooding and the road remained damaged and uneven

Response – earlier this year officers of the Council met with the landowner of the field adjacent to the flooded section of road and a representative of SEPA. The meeting was to discuss why the road was becoming more prone to flooding and to find possible solutions to resolve future flooding. At the meeting the landowner produced an old drainage drawing of his field which showed a network of pipes in the fields that could be investigated. There is also the consideration of clearing some of the silt and accumulated debris within the manmade ditch/burn that runs parallel with the road. This work, however, would need to be undertaken in accordance with SEPA guidelines and permissions.

7. Concerns were raised relating to the sight lines coming out of Lyne Station because of bushes and small trees not being cut.

Response – Neighbourhood Services staff have since cut back the visibility splay referred to. There are still two bushes in the adjacent field which, if removed, would further improve visibility. Area staff continue to deal with this by contacting the landowner, Wemyss and March Estates.

8. The junction of the A72 and the A701 remained problematic due to its position on the side of a hill and there were still regular near misses. It would be useful to have a speed limit there and it could be incorporated into a limit which would also cover the village of Blyth Bridge.

Response - This request has been added to, and will be considered at the next speed limit review

9. Community Councillor Douglas submitted that something needed to be done regarding Caerlee Corner, Innerleithen and he referred to the speed of traffic coming into Innerleithen.

Response - The previously ordered additional signing and lining work has now been completed at the location and agreement has been reached, with Police Scotland, to promote a new 40 mph speed limit over this section of road. A detailed briefing paper

on the background to the Caerlee Corner and further proposals went to the August Tweeddale Area Forum.

10. Councillor Bell remains of the view that there are two sections of the A72 between Clovenfords & Walkerburn that need crash barriers on the river (southern) side of the road. a) At and round the first corner (on a downhill slope) following the Thornielee Forest entrance as you travel west bound.

Response - The route will have been assessed in the past but the guidance has changed considerably since then. The old rule of thumb was if it was > a 6m drop (or other inherent danger) then a safety barrier was required but is now more complex with multiple factors under headings such as location, road classification, collision data, and consequential effect. It also has to be recognised that at some locations it can be safer to allow vehicles to leave the road rather than potentially deflect them into oncoming vehicles. A very preliminary look on site at the two locations described would suggest that they are sufficiently back from the river course to make it unlikely that errant drivers would end up there.

11. Clovenfords CC (via Cllr Bell) asked why the foot-path on the south side of the A72 which runs from Clovenfords to the Caddonlee entrance stops there and does not run on until the Nest roundabout.

Response - This would have been decided at the design stage of the bypass and been consulted on at that time. No documented detail could be found but it is suspected a decision was based on a lack of demand/need basis at that time.

12. Clovenfords CC (via Cllr Bell) still wonder why both Innerleithen and Walkerburn merit 'count-down' signs leading up to the 30mph on both sides of their town/village. But this is not seen as necessary for Clovenfords.

Response - Nationally the use of Countdown boards is no longer encouraged. The Department of Transport traffic Advisory leaflet 1/04 notes "As a general rule the department does not authorise the use of countdown signs. This is primarily because they have been shown to have little effect on vehicle speeds. Only in exceptional circumstances where both written and photographic evidence shows insurmountable visibility problems associated with speed limit terminal signs might consideration be given to their installation."

The department's own before and after studies on the subject illustrated that speed reduction, even at the point of the limit, was minimal and the internal report concluded:

The results are mixed, but by using the data for the traffic exiting the settlement as a control for the effects of weather etc. The average & 85th%ile speeds show a drop of 0.7mph and a reduction of 5.5% in the number of vehicles exceeding the limit. Given the cost of producing the signs and erecting the poles they do not seem to offer good value for money.

This has led to an "unwritten policy" of retaining the existing countdown boards within the area, but for subsequent requests to look to alternative speed reducing measures