

## NET ZERO, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 21 January 2025. Minute of Meeting of the NET ZERO, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Radley, Convener; and Councillors Ali, Blake, Greig (as substitute for Councillor Yuill), Henrickson, Hutchison, Massey, McLellan and van Sweeden.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

**Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.**

### DEPUTATIONS

1. The Committee heard from Mr Duncan Milne, who advised that he was Chairperson of Glashieburn Primary School Parent Council, and wished to address Members in support of School Streets (Item 10.1 on the agenda). He explained that in the last couple of years, there had been two children injured going to and from Glashieburn, one on Jesmond Drive at the crossing and the other on Newburgh Road. The Parent Council had asked the Council, via local Councillors, about various road safety improvements, and Mr Milne explained that double yellow lines had been added; there were 'keep clear' markings near the back of the school; and the smiley face speed control signs had been added, but these were only temporary. The school had asked for an increase to the size of the Newburgh Road barrier, where the last accident had occurred, but were still waiting for that to be done. They had also asked for the crossing on Jesmond Drive where the first accident happened to be raised into a speed bump, however Mr Milne advised that had not been done, which he thought was due to the fact it was a major thoroughfare and so might impact on the traffic, particularly emergency vehicles.

Mr Milne advised that he had looked at the travel plan in the report, and noted the mention of 20mph zones. He noted that while these were welcomed, and did reduce speeds, they were not being enforced, and so it would only take one driver speeding for an accident to occur. He referred to the Aberdeen Cycle Map, and said that he felt the cycling infrastructure in the city was very poor and unconnected. The cycle paths around Glashieburn were just pavements with blue signs on them to make them dual use, but he advised that they were quite narrow and were therefore putting people who wheeled in conflict with pedestrians. He noted that the pavement parking ban was another welcome initiative, but that it was also not being enforced, adding that by the time city wardens were called, the people parking on the pavement were long gone.

Mr Milne stated that in his opinion, the car was king in Aberdeen and it was going to take a generational shift to change the attitude of people. He advised that when he had challenged parents outside the school, they replied with comments such as "I'll only be two minutes", "I'm not doing any harm", or "I'm in a rush". He added that to remove cars from the surrounding school area for a short period of time in the morning and afternoon would make a massive improvement to the experience of getting to and from work, and would also improve the quality of life of residents in the local area.

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Members asked questions of Mr Milne and the Convener thanked him for his deputation.

The Committee then heard from Catherine Campbell and Anna Fulop, on behalf of Ferryhill Primary School parents, also in respect of item 10.1 on the agenda.

Ms Campbell explained that the proposal was not about stopping people when they needed to drive, but that first and foremost it was about the safety of 350 children in Ferryhill School, and 40 children in the nursery, every one of whom walked out of the school gate every day. She advised that according to ROSPA, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, the legal obligation of a school to consider safety extended beyond its immediate boundaries and included safety, and drop off and pick up times. She explained that near misses were a daily occurrence, and without action, it was only a matter of time before a child was seriously hurt.

Ms Campbell therefore asked how such behaviour could be changed. She noted that the report before Committee spoke about infrastructure and behaviour change, however it seemed to suggest that these were independent of each other. Ms Campbell stated that in fact infrastructure led to behaviour change. She added that therefore that physical or legal infrastructure needed to be used to prevent the problems and prevent the traffic, and so she asked Members to enable that to happen at Ferryhill by letting the school pilot School Streets before the next school summer holidays.

Ms Campbell explained that School Streets involved temporarily restricting vehicle access to roads outside schools during drop off and pick up times. She noted that Edinburgh had been a pioneer of School Streets and the scheme had now been implemented in almost all Scottish cities and many larger towns. Ms Campbell advised that the parent body at Ferryhill had undertaken a survey in May 2024 and 80% of responding parents were supportive of a School Streets trial on Caledonian Place. She added that they had been engaging with the Council's Road Safety team since June 2024, including having a walkabout at school whilst discussing the results of the survey, and so she was somewhat surprised to read in the report that no schools were currently interested in the School Streets scheme. She explained that the parent body, Parent Council and the teachers at Ferryhill had spent a long time considering what might help and they were interested in the pilot.

Ms Campbell advised that Caledonian Place was extremely well situated for a School Streets programme, as it was the central rung on a figure of eight streets around the school. She noted that closing Caledonian Place, even if it was just between Bon Accord Street and Albury Place, would only impact six tenement blocks on that street, and it would not impede access to any other surrounding streets, only to the school. She noted that the school's ambitions for active travel and the health and environmental benefits that would result were not possible while journeys to school were unsafe.

Ms Campbell added that in the same 2024 survey, 48% of parents had identified a lack of safe road crossings as a barrier to walking and cycling, and this had been the most

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frequent reason given. She stated that a School Streets programme, even just between Bon Accord Street and Albury Place, would give that safe crossing to the south. Due to the existing pelican crossings at Fonthill Road, it would more than double the catchment area which could reach the school gates with a safe route to school. This would not only mean that all children were safer to walk and cycle to school, but would enable independent active travel for older children to become possible which would remove the need for those children to be driven to school, which would therefore remove more cars from the road around the school. Having been able to walk to school while at primary school, this would make walking to secondary school a more natural choice. If children were able to travel independently to school, Ms Campbell suggested this might even give parents the extra time needed to use public transport or cycle to their workplaces.

Ms Campbell stated that it would not be possible to achieve Net Zero with a single 'big bang', but would require thousands of individuals changing their behaviour, and she suggested that School Streets was a small nudge towards the right path.

She explained that the school needed to quickly undertake a trial of School Streets, as it was about to undergo a £17 million improvement project, to address the challenges of its Victorian structure with modernised facilities and energy efficient upgrades. Ms Campbell advised that the school would close from July 2025 until August 2026, with pupils decanting to Walker Road School, however she noted that the funding and plans for those improvement works only extended to the edge of the school grounds and did not consider access routes or the surrounding roads. Ms Campbell said she believed that spending over £17 million on improving a Victorian school without any spend or thought to update the surrounding Victorian street design would therefore be a missed opportunity. She added that the improvement works presented a unique opportunity to pilot School Streets properly; evaluate the impact; raise awareness locally; apply for funds; and then incorporate findings into the redevelopment of the surrounding infrastructure. This could include a rethink of access points into the playground or the main entrance of the school, and so Ms Campbell stated that it was important that the scheme could be trialled before the building works, as if the upcoming window was missed, a trial could not even be undertaken until Autumn 2026 at the earliest, once the children returned to the school.

Ms Campbell noted that the report recommended that officers report back within 12 months with a list of interested schools, and suggested that this seemed to be unambitious. She added that the section on infrastructure only considered 20mph zones, which she considered were useful but hardly ground-breaking; the Aberdeen Cycle Map, which was very out of date and did not address access to schools; and the Active Travel Network, which, despite its ambitions, routed cycling along busy roads and did not connect to Ferryhill School. She stated that behaviour change only covered active travel plan guidance - which she considered was not great, noting that the school had really struggled writing their plan - and Bikeability. She noted that road safety magic shows were lovely, but that the Scottish Government had allocated and was allocating hundreds of millions of pounds per year to various local authorities, and she felt Aberdeen had yet to fully grasp that opportunity. She concluded by stating that the School Streets scheme

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was an easy way to improve safety at Ferryhill, and that there was willingness from the school executive team and the parent body, with minimal impact on local residents. There was the school improvement work on the horizon, and the scheme aligned perfectly with the city's Net Zero goals, reducing emissions, improving air quality and supporting active travel. They stated therefore that the time to implement the scheme was now.

Members asked several questions of Ms Campbell and Ms Fulop.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

to thank Mr Milne, Ms Campbell and Ms Fulop for their deputations.

### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 12 November 2024 for approval.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to article 7 of the minute (Climate Change Report 2023-24), to note that the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning had undertaken to seek an update from the Energy Board in relation to the provision of information to Members outwith the meeting in respect of the location of the photovoltaic installation which had been installed to generate solar power, as well as any plans for solar panels in other buildings; and
- (ii) to approve the minute as a correct record.

### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER**

3. The Committee had before it the business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to agree to remove item 4 (Road Safety Plan Annual Update towards 2030 casualty reduction targets) as a service update would be provided instead, but to note that Members could ask questions of officers outwith the meeting or at the next Committee if required;
- (ii) in relation to the above service update, to note that officers would ascertain whether this had already been circulated and would issue to Members if not;
- (iii) in relation to item 15 (Den Burn Restoration Project), to note that the report might not be available for the March Committee due to the timing of the announcement on Heritage Lottery funding and committee reporting deadlines, but that officers had undertaken to provide a verbal update at that meeting if information was available;
- (iv) in relation to item 18 (Strategic Car Parking Review), to note that it was expected that this would be reported in March 2025 as planned;

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- (v) in relation to item 45 (Draft Local Transport Strategy), to note that it was anticipated that this would be reported to Committee in Autumn 2025; and
- (vi) to otherwise note the business planner.

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4. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which presented the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to the services falling within the Committee remit.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in Appendix A to the report.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would ascertain whether there was evidence of the small hatches on communal recycling bins having an effect on the amount that was being recycled, and if so, that officers would circulate that to Members outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

### **ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL FROM THE SCOTTISH ROADWORKS COMMISSIONER - CR&E/25/012**

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – City Regeneration and Environment which provided an update on the performance of Aberdeen City Council’s Roads Maintenance and Roadworks Coordination teams following the publication of the annual performance report by the Scottish Roadworks Commissioner.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the contents of the Roads Commissioner’s report (appendix 1); and
- (b) note that officers had been in communication with the Road Works Commissioner’s office who had clarified noticing requirements and that they were satisfied that Aberdeen City Council had acted appropriately to improve procedures and performance with regards to noticing.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

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### ACTIVE TRAVEL TO SCHOOL - CR&E/25/008

6. With reference to article 6 of the minute of its meeting of 31 October 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – City Regeneration and Environment which provided information on the work that was underway and / or planned within Aberdeen to promote and encourage more and safer active travel to school and sought approval to launch a School Streets pilot in Aberdeen.

#### **The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note that work to identify an aspirational Regional Active Travel Network had recently been completed and would be reported to NESTRANS Board in February 2025;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to ensure safe routes to school were taken into account when developing proposals for active travel network prioritisation within Aberdeen City;
- (c) note the range of work that was currently ongoing to support and enable active travel to school in Aberdeen;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to ensure that any travel behaviour change programme for 2025/26 continued to support healthy, active and safe travel amongst children and young people; and
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning and the Chief Officer - Operations, to invite applications from suitable schools for a School Streets pilot, and to report back to this Committee within twelve months with the level of interest received, and any proposed next steps.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would provide information to Members outwith the meeting on when the updated Aberdeen Cycle Map would be available;
- (ii) to note that work to identify an aspirational Regional Active Travel Network had recently been completed and would be reported to NESTRANS Board in February 2025, noting that this was a multi-decade project;
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to ensure safe routes to school were taken into account when developing proposals for active travel network prioritisation within Aberdeen City;
- (iv) to note that parents and Parent Councils across the city were concerned about the safety of children and young people travelling to school, in particular on the streets close to the school. This concern was reflected in national traffic data which showed that 28% of children killed or injured on Scotland’s roads happened in two time periods 8am – 9am and 3pm – 4pm (Transport Scotland);
- (v) to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning and Chief Officer – Operations, to write to chairs of Parent Councils and Head Teachers across the city offering support with the development of a School Travel Plan, with priority given to those

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- schools who had recorded road safety incidents and near misses on nearby roads in the last two years;
- (vi) to note the range of work that was currently ongoing to support and enable active travel to school in Aberdeen;
  - (vii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to ensure that any travel behaviour change programme for 2025/26 continued to support healthy, active and safe travel amongst children and young people and report back to this Committee within six months on what steps could be taken to increase uptake of under-utilised interventions such as walking buses or bike trains; and
  - (viii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning and the Chief Officer - Operations, to write to chairs of Parent Councils and Head Teachers to invite applications from suitable schools including secondary schools for a School Streets pilot, and to report back to this Committee within twelve months with the level of interest received, and any proposed next step.

### **VARIOUS SMALL-SCALE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED PROPOSALS (STAGE 3 – PUBLIC ADVERT) - CR&E/25/006**

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – City Regeneration and Environment which set out objections and comments received as part of the statutory consultation process with respect to proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).

#### **The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) acknowledge the objections received as a result of the public advertisement of proposed Traffic Regulation Orders;
- (b) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Braehead Way, Aberdeen) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 202\_”, overrule the objections received and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (c) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Elm Place, Aberdeen) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 202(X)”, overrule the objections received and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (d) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Froghall Avenue/Froghall Place, Aberdeen) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 202\_”, overrule the objection received and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (e) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Grandhome Area, Aberdeen) (20mph speed limit) Order 202\_”, overrule the objection received and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (f) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Greyhope School, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 202\_”, with revisions as set out in 3.6.4 as per officers’ recommendations; and

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- (g) in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (Kirk Brae Area, Cults, Aberdeen) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 202X”, overrule the objection received and approve this order be made as originally advertised.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

### **20MPH SPEED LIMIT PROPOSAL (NORTH) - CR&E/25/002**

8. With reference to article 12 of the minute of its meeting of 11 June 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – City Regeneration and Environment which set out the areas within the city where a 20mph speed limit was proposed and advised of the objections and comments received during the statutory consultation period on the proposals.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the Council wards where the 20mph speed limit was proposed;
- (b) note the benefits of introducing a 20mph speed limit highlighted, to date, for example, improved road safety, reduced collision risk, improved carbon emissions etc;
- (c) note the comments received at Section 3.8 in relation to the proposed Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO), however, to continue to approve the making of the TTRO for all the roads highlighted at section 3.5.6 and their specified lengths in the plans at Appendix 1 of the report;
- (d) note the objections received to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) as a result of the public advertisement of the 20mph speed limit proposal (North) at section 3.6 of the report;
- (e) overrules the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.1) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (f) to overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.2) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (g) overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.3) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (h) overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.4) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised;
- (i) overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.5) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised; and



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- (j) overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.6) ORDER 202X” and approve this order be made as originally advertised.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would circulate estimated costs for the implementation of the scheme to Members outwith the meeting;
- (ii) to note that if a response had been received from the correspondence sent by the Convener to the Scottish Government, the Chief Constable, and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal in relation to the Council’s concerns about enforcement of the 20mph speed limit, this would be circulated to Members outwith the meeting;
- (iii) to request that officers include the 20mph webpage which had been set up to provide background and reasoning for the scheme (including improved fuel efficiency, better air quality and safety benefits) in communications being issued to the public in respect of the scheme and ensure there was clarity in any communication issued about the reasoning for the proposals;
- (iv) in relation to the query from Members about the data in respect of accidents involving children and the impact on the NHS, to note that there was data available on this in the Road Safety Plan Annual Update service update which was to be issued to Members; and
- (v) to approve the recommendations as set out in the report, with the exception of recommendation (e) which was replaced with “overrule the objections received in relation to “THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITYWIDE (PART OF)) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) (NO.1) ORDER 202X” and *approve this order be made in part, abandoning the following street from the order; Fairview Street*”.

- **COUNCILLOR MIRANDA RADLEY, Convener**