

Public to be consulted in East Lothian on Spaces for People

Plans to keep 20mph speed limits in place in towns and villages across East Lothian are to be put before the public next month.

East Lothian Council wants to make temporary restrictions introduced during lockdown in place permanently.

And it plans to introduce the restriction to some communities which were not included in the changes the first time round.

It will mean speed limits of 20mph in towns and 40mph restrictions on some roads which had been the national speed limits will remain in place.

The proposals are being put out to public consultation next month with steps to gain statutory approval for the changes already underway.

A report to elected councillors said the speed limits were introduced as part of the Spaces for People initiative which looked at ways to make towns and communities more accessible during the pandemic.

East Lothian Council received £1.4million of Scottish Government funding for a range of changes including introducing parking restrictions in some town centres, creating new walkways and segregated cycle paths and speed limits.

The report looks back at the work carried out and public response as well as proposing making some of the changes permanent.

It says the council has £180,000 from the funds which it has been allowed to carry over to use to manage its exit strategy from the initiative and look at plans moving forward.

The main change would be keeping the speed restrictions and expanding them if approved.

The report said: "It is recognised that some community aspirations conflict with national guidance and East Lothian Council speed limit policies and consequently a review of the policy will consider the introduction of appropriate departures from the standards and/or the introduction of engineering solutions to change the road characteristics to encourage slower speeds.

"Subject to appropriate outcome of the consultation exercise this work will be twin tracked to be presented before Council and included in the 2022/23 budget setting process."

It went on to say that following "continued community representation to change the speed limit in settlements omitted from the Spaces for People programme" consultations would be carried out in additional places to understand if support for a change in the future "will be forthcoming".

As well as maintaining the reduced speed limits in towns it is proposed restrictions of 20mph are introduced in Levenhall, Garvald, West Saltoun, Tynninghame, Stenton, Innerwick, Oldhamstocks, Spott and Drem.

Gladsmuir and New Winton would see a 40mph speed limit reduce to 30mph.

The six week consultation on all the changes proposed to

become permanent will open next month with details expected to go on the council website.

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

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