

# **East Lothian Council calls for review of A1 litter pickups**

**East Lothian Council is set to call on the Scottish Government to take over responsibility for litter picking on the A1 amid claims the local authority can no longer afford to take part.**

Councillors will be asked to instruct the chief executive to write to Ministers asking them to consider bringing sections of the road, which currently fall under their responsibility, in line with the main section which is maintained by government contractors BEAR Scotland.

A report due to go before elected members next week says the council is responsible for clearing litter and maintaining part of the road from the Edinburgh City boundary to Old Craighall as well as being expected to clear rubbish from Thistly Cross Roundabout to the Scottish Borders Council boundary.

But it says the growing population of the county is putting additional pressure on its services and funding need to be used to support town centres and areas of heavy footfall rather than the banks of the A1.

It says: "A review of litter management responsibilities for the full section of the A1 would allow the consideration of

consistency with areas part of the special roads order.

“This would allow specialist contractors to undertake duties the council are less equipped to fulfil on land not under council ownership or control whilst allowing the council to focus resources on population centres, local road network and area of ownership/responsibility.

“This would not lead to a reduction in council resource, or a budget efficiency based on the volume of litter management required in areas under council control and increasing demand through population growth.”

The report says the majority of the A1 in East Lothian was delivered under special orders which made Scottish Ministers and their contractor BEAR Scotland responsible for it.

The council is responsible for maintenance of the stretch from Edinburgh to Old Craighall which is cleared at least annually alongside other planned maintenance.

On the Thistly Cross section of the road the council is not responsible for its maintenance, repairs or grass cutting but litter picking was not included in the contract leaving it, by default, at the council's door.

The chief executive is recommended to write asking Scottish Ministers, in conjunction with Scottish Government/Transport Scotland to review litter management responsibilities for the section of A1 in East Lothian as well as consider looking at the A1 and other trunk roads across Scotland sitting within local authority boundaries.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter