

REPORT TO: Cabinet

MEETING DATE: 9 June 2015

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Proposed Traffic Regulation Order – Prohibition of Vehicular Traffic (During School Travel Times): Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road, Haddington

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the performance of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to prohibit vehicular traffic in Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road in Haddington, during specified school traffic time periods.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet approval to commence the statutory procedures necessary to make the TRO permanent.
- 1.3 To advise Cabinet of other suitable streets around schools in East Lothian that will be considered for similar treatment in the future. This will follow the development of an appropriate assessment policy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the findings below.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the initiation of the statutory procedure necessary to make the Order in accordance with 'The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedures) Scotland Regulations 1999 and such amendments that are in force.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was submitted to Cabinet on 13th November 2012 by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnership and Services for Communities) advising of the proposal to introduce an Experimental TRO at two locations near schools in Haddington. The purpose of the Order was to prohibit "moving" vehicular traffic near to the school gates, during the peak school travel times.

3.2 The aim of this experimental TRO was to:

- Improve Road Safety by reducing traffic speed, congestion and pollution around the school gates
- Encourage more pupils and parents/carers to walk or cycle to school
- Improve the health and well being of pupils and parents/carers
- Create, support and maintain a sustainable Environment and Safer and Vibrant Communities
- Respond to desire from School, parents and local residents

3.3 The 18month Experimental TRO to prohibit vehicular traffic in Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road commenced on 27th January 2014. The experimental TRO is due to expire at the end of June 2015.

3.4 This report presents an assessment of the performance and effects of the experimental TRO.

3.5 Detailed Traffic Survey Results

3.5.1 Detailed traffic surveys were undertaken on Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road over a 7 day period in June 2014.

3.5.2 The results in Appendix A show the average number of “moving” vehicles (both directions) recorded over 15 minute periods during the four full school days (Mon – Thurs). The important points to note are:-

- During the morning restricted period (08.30 – 09.30hrs) there were on average 10 vehicle movements recorded
- During the afternoon restricted period (15.00 – 16.00hrs) there were on average 15 vehicle movements recorded
- When morning nursery classes end (80 pupils 11.45 – 12.00hrs) and afternoon nursery classes begin (80 pupils 12.45 – 13.00hrs) when there are no TRO movement restrictions operating, 42 – 44 vehicle movements per hour were recorded. This gives an indication of the traffic that could be experienced on Victoria Road during the key morning and afternoon school travel periods. When combined the travelling school population (Kings Meadow, Haddington Infants and St. Mary’s) (nursery and primary) in this area is over 800 pupils.
- There was no TRO enforcement carried out during the survey period

3.6 The outcomes were considered by assessing feedback from the Head teachers, pupils, parent councils and Police Scotland. A simple questionnaire was used in this process and feedback received is shown in section 3.6 and Appendix B, C, D of this report.

It should be noted Police Scotland and others will be consulted further as part of the statutory procedure necessary to make the TRO permanent.

3.7 **Police Scotland Community Beat Officer (Haddington) feedback**

Q1 Have conditions for pedestrians/cyclists significantly improved following the introduction of the TRO?

A1 *The introduction of the TRO has greatly helped both pedestrian and cyclists in both areas most drivers are adhering making the streets quieter allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel in a safer environment there are a few remaining drivers that ignore the TRO*

Q2 How many drivers are offending and are these numbers growing?

A2 *3 tickets issued in August 2014 on Neilson Park Road to drivers who said they were not aware of the TRO, being new to the school, and that they did not see the signs on the roadwhen officers are not present some drivers ignore the TRO.*

Q3 Is this experimental TRO worth making permanent?

A3 *100% support of making the TRO permanent*

Q4 Are there any further measures that could be introduced?

A4 *Education to new parents to the schools local taxi firms who pick up / drop off to be given residents vehicle permits School Travel Co-ordinator could organise days of action with the school JRSOs and police to remind parents of the TRO*

3.8 **Head Teacher and Parent Council feedback**

3.8.1 Haddington Infant School – See Appendix B

3.8.2 St Mary's Primary School - See Appendix C

3.8.3 Kings Meadow Primary School - See Appendix D

4 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Reduction in numbers and severity of road casualties on relevant streets which contributes towards the national casualty reduction targets in Scotland's Road Safety Framework and towards East Lothian's SOA Outcome 7 - East Lothian is an even safer place.

4.2 These proposals will contribute towards The East Lothian Plan - Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013 and our 3 strategic objectives - to create, support and maintain a Sustainable Economy, Resilient People and Safe and Vibrant Communities. This will be achieved in part by having an environment that will encourage active travel and support walking and cycling.

- 4.3 The impacts of this report in relation to the elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered. The proposals in the report will have positive impact on reducing carbon emissions, increasing the Council resilience to climate change and help to achieve a sustainable East Lothian.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

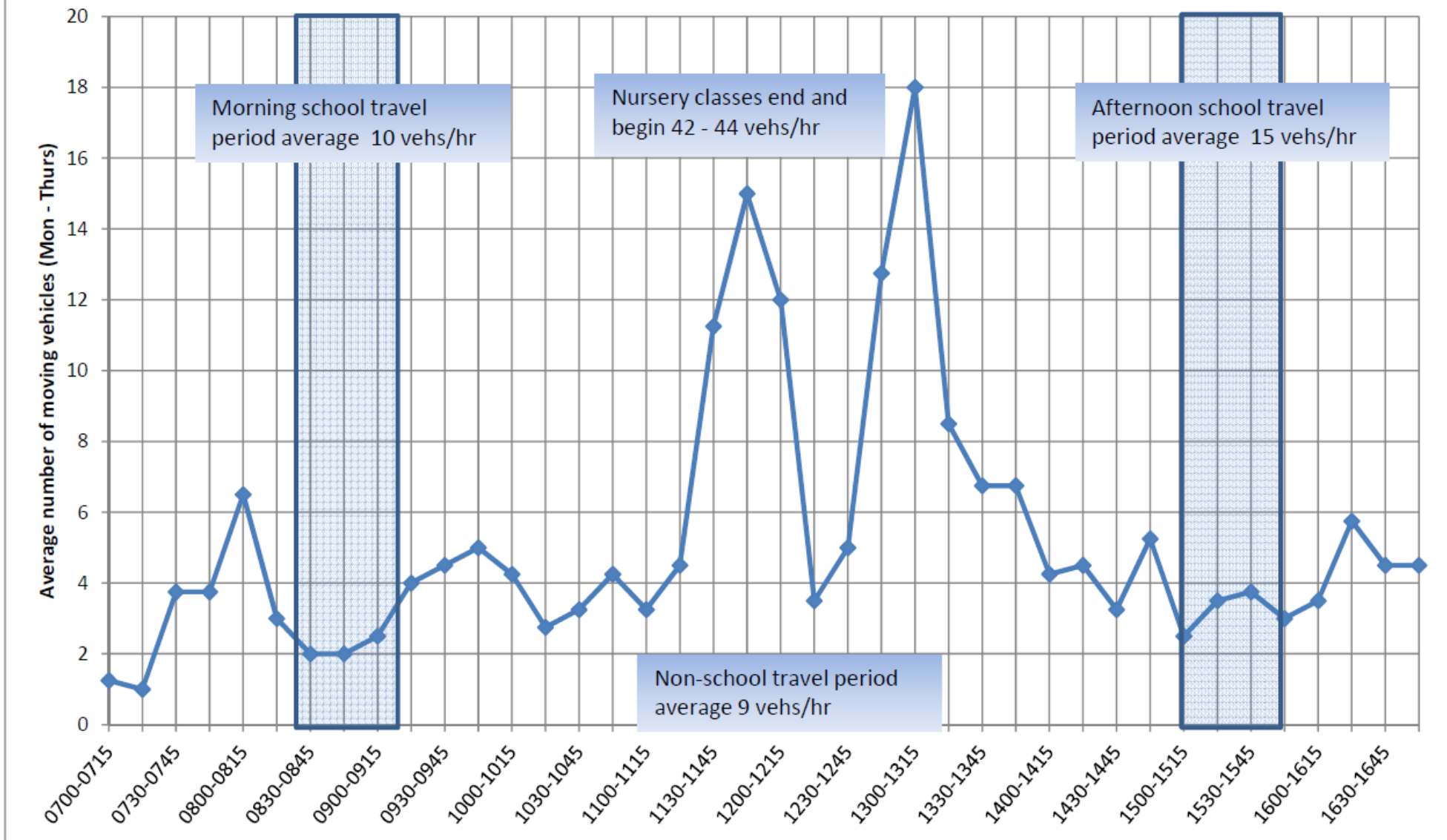
- 6.1 Financial - costs associated with the statutory procedures necessary to make the TRO permanent can be accommodated within the current Road Services revenue budget.
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road, Haddington – Proposed Experimental Traffic Regulation Order – Prohibition of Vehicular Traffic (During School Travel Periods) Cabinet Report 13 November 2012

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Recorded Moving Vehicles, Victoria Road, Haddington June 2014



**Haddington Infant School - Collated Responses for Temporary Restriction Order
Victoria Road/ Meadowpark, Haddington**

NOVEMBER 2014

• Whether you consider that conditions for pedestrians / cyclists have significantly improved following the introduction of the TRO

From time to time I monitor Victoria Road and Neilson Park Road. I think there has been a considerable reduction in the traffic at key times therefore I would say there is a significant improvement. I have more knowledge of the congestion and dangerous manoeuvres that have been carried out in Victoria Road due to the location of our old school. It is great to see children walking and cycling in this road coming to our new school.

• Whether you consider that the offending vehicle numbers are growing again

A minority of parents/carers and grandparents are still ignoring the restrictions. I have seen this more in Neilson Park Road with parents from our school driving right up to the very end of the road. Parents have reported to me that this has also happened in Victoria Road.

• Whether you think that this initiative is worth making permanent or not

I strongly believe there is a value in making these restrictions permanent. Even with people ignoring the restrictions there is a significant difference in these particular roads. I feel it would be a backward step to remove the restrictions and unfortunately I think more people would start driving there again.

• Whether you think that there are any further improvements we can make

Wider restrictions - I think the restrictions could be widened to include Meadowpark and Tynebank Road. Although the initiative has been successful in reducing the traffic in Victoria Road and Neilson Park Road it has led to the less responsible members of our community driving in Meadowpark and stopping their vehicles on the corner at the playing fields. They are parking on the double yellow lines to drop off children and parking on the grass there. Parents have told me that some drivers are using the Peartree nursery car park as a drop off point too. Meadowpark is a difficult road to negotiate as residents park on the west side of the road reducing the traffic to a single lane – this leads to the congestion. Parents have reported to me that drivers are carrying out dangerous turns in this road. If the restrictions cannot be extended then road markings, either double yellow lines or zig zags in the area of the corner could be extended or residents only car parking allowed outside the houses.

Wider pavements in Victoria Road, Meadowpark and Neilson Park Road - When discussion about the traffic problems was on-going wider pavements in Victoria Road were discussed and planned however work has not been carried out.

High Visibility in the Community - Signage within the community directing traffic to safe areas to park and stride e.g. signs in Tesco long stay or Aubigny Centre car park saying 'this is a park and stride car park'.

I know the police are stretched and they cannot be present to enforce the regulations all the time however some publicising of enforcement – warnings, fines etc. would perhaps deter others. A more regular visible presence of community wardens or police would be helpful in acting as a deterrent.

Community education through the press – highlighting the benefits of walking to school, asking for support in getting our children walking.

• **What are your Parent Council's views on the above questions**

I would like to say that it has really helped our walk to school. I am definitely in favour of keeping the TRO. I have witnessed a few cars using both roads in order to drop off children and so if the TRO is to become permanent, then consideration will need to be given to ensuring that the Community Warden or the police are able to make sporadic visits.

Meadowpark and Tynebank Road - There were works done, a while ago raising the road level at the above corner. It has somehow led to parents driving onto the grass of the playing fields, doing outrageous 3 point turns while children are crossing the road and parking/dropping kids off in very dangerous parts of the road at the entrance to the back of the Knox Academy. We have witnessed several near misses of smaller children that have been standing waiting to cross the road and they have not been seen due to where cars have been parked. Even the bushes that run up the sides of the playing fields make it very difficult to see traffic coming down Tynebank Road towards Meadowpark. Can something please be done to make this area safer? It is a very busy bit of road and a large number of children cross here. Any assistance here would be much appreciated by a large number of concerned parents.

My second point I need to bring to your attention is about the number of parents using Neilson Park Road again to drop off children. This morning I saw 5 cars using the road to drop off kids and some even in King's Meadow schools car park. The parents that are doing this are the ones running late and driving way too fast.

Meadowpark - There has been a huge knock on effect to the traffic in Meadowpark since the traffic restrictions went into operation. Both my kids walk to and from school and have to cross Meadow Park and although I am not there many of my friends have been talking about this. Although there is now no traffic on the 'key streets' there is without doubt increased and, at times, dangerous traffic now on others. The problem has shifted a street along!

Generally the parent council members are in favour of the restrictions and are concerned about people ignoring them and driving inconsiderately in Meadowpark.

• **What are your pupils views on the above questions**

I spoke to the Primary 3 children about their walk to school; there are 94 of them. They spoke really knowledgeably about the problems and solutions; it's clearly something they talk about at home.

The children think both Victoria Road and Neilson Park Road are very busy with people, this is good however some of them reported seeing cars driving there and no child thought this was safe.

The children thought the pavements in Neilson Park Road and Victoria Road were very narrow – this came from them, they did not have to be asked.

It is the children's perception that cars have stopped driving in these roads and some were very aware of the restrictions and that only people who live in the streets, fire and ambulance could drive there at certain times.

The children think the restrictions are a good idea and feel safer walking there.

The children were very keen to talk about Meadowpark Road – a lot of them said they don't like the bushes there because they can't see what's coming and some of them thought that the road was very narrow and people did silly things in cars. They thought that Meadowpark wasn't a good place to cross as cars drive too fast and mums and dads have to listen for traffic as they can't see it round the corner. They said that cars drive on the pavement and park on the grass.

The children came up with ideas to make the roads safer.

Wider pavements; Traffic wardens; Post a letter to everyone's house; Traffic lights in Meadowpark

One way system in Meadowpark

Experimental TRO on Victoria Road and Neilson Park Road – St Mary's Primary feedback

Parent Council

- Huge improvements on Victoria Road – restrictions are allowing children to access the school without risk
 - Fully supportive of order being made permanent
- Not working so effectively on Neilson Park Road
 - Risk is reduced but not eliminated
 - Parents still driving down to Kings Meadow car park, dropping off then driving through KM car park and back up the road
 - Not being effectively monitored or policed
 - The longer the order is in place without policing/checking the more people will ignore the restrictions
- What are the implications for drivers if order not adhered to?
- Maybe a barrier at KM car park would help as this would prevent access for turning
- We think we need more safe 'Park and Stride'/drop off points in Haddington

Pupil Views

- We feel much safer on Victoria Road, it's much less busy and there's no risk of being knocked down
 - We would like the TRO to be made permanent
- We still see some people driving down Neilson Park Road and dropping off in the Kings Meadow car park
 - Neilson Park Road does not feel as safe as Victoria Road
 - Sometimes we see a police officer/warden checking the road
- One child from a very large family commented that the pavements are very narrow and sometimes some of them end up walking on the road

Although there is presently no TRO in place for Meadowpark the children were very keen to share their concerns about using this road to walk to and from school (hope that is ok)

- Drivers drop off and pick up all the time, sometimes right on the bend of the road – it is very unsafe and we often have to wait ages to cross
- Drivers dropping off or picking up (particularly of very young children) leave their car doors open on both the pavement side and the road side
 - If the doors are open on the pavement side we have to walk on to the road to get round the car
 - If the doors are left open on the road side we can't see traffic coming when we need to cross
- It's very difficult for two way traffic coming up and down Meadowpark due to the road being narrow and all the parked cars
 - This causes huge congestion and is very dangerous; we've seen cars reversing back round the bend to let oncoming traffic pass

Experimental TRO on Victoria Road and Neilson Park Road – Kings Meadow Primary. Head Teacher's feedback

- Not many parent responses – question over the number of fines that have been given out. Parents spoken to, feel this would be a good deterrent, a number of parents have also stated that the TTRO has moved the problem to other areas. Generally, the Parent Council is pleased with the quieter streets but we really do need to deal with those who continue to flout the order.
- Concerns raised re. parking on Mill Wynd (Aubigny Sports Centre). The pedestrian crossing is very helpful, however, each day at drop off and pick up, parents are parking on the zig-zags. Many with no concern for pedestrians. Crossing the entrance to the Aubigny is also hazardous as it is incredibly busy with cars coming from all directions. Some parents are parking on the corner and reversing back in towards the Aubigny as a way of changing direction on Mill Wynd. The restrictions put in place on the other streets appear to be working and that is great but I must stress the need for some attention to be given to Mill Wynd i.e no parking on zig zags enforced & priority to pedestrians crossing the Aubigny entrance