

Report

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Report to:	Enterprise Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 August 2012
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Temporary Directional Signs to New Housing Developments
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise members of the intention to introduce a more robust system for the control of directional signs to new housing developments and to seek approval for the introduction of a fee, payable by house builders, to cover the additional administrative and inspection arrangements.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that a fee of £200 per housing development sign per 12 month period be introduced; and
- (2) that the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) be authorised to agree the details of the more robust system for the control of directional signs to new housing developments.

3. Background

- 3.1 Under Section 65(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the Council, as traffic authority, may permit prescribed traffic signs to be placed on or near a road.
- 3.2 On 11 May 1993, the Scottish Office Industry Department issued Circular 5/93 entitled "Signs to Housing Developments" which authorised black on yellow temporary directional signs giving directions to new housing developments. The aim of the signs was to reflect the traffic management need to direct construction traffic, delivery vehicles and prospective buyers to new housing developments by the most appropriate route and to offer a realistic alternative to unlawful, fly-posted advertisements. The Circular also dealt with the financial arrangements relating to such signs and indicated that use of the signs should have nil net cost and labour implications for Councils.
- 3.3 The signs authorised by that Circular have now been incorporated in the Traffic Signs and General Directions 2002. Such signs should be retained on or near a road for not more than six months after completion of the housing development to which they refer.

- 3.4. Following the authorisation of black on yellow temporary directional signs to new housing developments, some house builders operating in South Lanarkshire do seek approval to erect such signs. This allows agreement to be reached on the type of sign, their number and location, minimising the risk of clutter and ensuring compliance with the traffic regulations.
- 3.5. Unfortunately, the majority have failed to seek such approval from the Council and have proceeded with the erection of temporary directional signs.

Many of these signs do not comply with the regulations. A number of developers have also subsequently failed to remove signs following completion of residential developments. This has led to large numbers of redundant signs on the public road network, a number of which are in a poor condition. In some locations, the built environment is now visibly cluttered with irrelevant signs. This can be confusing and distracting and can present a hazard to road users.

- 3.6. According to a pan-European survey of 8000 motorists by the European Motoring clubs (including the AA) in summer 2008, 61% of respondents thought there were too many signs. In response to the results of the survey, the President of the AA said, "Highway Authorities need to remove redundant signs and clamp down on illegal sign erectors."
- 3.7. A significant number of highways authorities in England operate a licensing system to control temporary directional signs and charge a fee to cover their costs. Although many roads authorities in Scotland permit signage, charging is not yet widely used as a management tool.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. As explained above, the Council does not currently charge a fee in relation to temporary directional signage to new housing developments. Applicants can obtain permission free of charge at present. However, frequently developers choose to erect signage without permission and often neglect to remove them, all of which has led to a proliferation of such signage on the road network.
- 4.2. It is proposed to significantly improve control over temporary directional signage associated with new housing developments in South Lanarkshire. This is to be regarded as a new service. In order to meet the requirements of the regulations, it is proposed to levy a fee on house builders for each sign, to cover the additional resource implications. It is intended that the introduction of the new process will see the removal of all the redundant, damaged and insecure temporary directional signs across the local road network in South Lanarkshire. The new process will ensure, in future, that signs are removed within the stipulated period. House builders will be notified of these changes in writing.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. There are no employee implications.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. It is anticipated that this exercise will be cost neutral with income received from retained signs meeting the costs of managing the arrangements and removing redundant signs.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. There are no risk implications.
- 7.2. There are no sustainability implications.
- 7.3. There are no other implications.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1. Although this report introduces a new policy, this policy area has been screened for equality issues and is not relevant to the Council's equality duties and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2. There is also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in the report.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

27 July 2012

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Improvement Themes

- Improve the quality of the physical environment
- Improve the road network and public transport

Previous References

No previous references.

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: - Martin Muir

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