

Decision Session
Executive Member for Planning & Transport

23 July 2015

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

Petition – Safe School Crossing on Askham Lane

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to consider a 174 signature petition (Annex A copy of front page of petition) requesting City of York Council to establish a pedestrian crossing on Askham Lane in the vicinity of Westfield School.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve:

Option 1 – investigate the feasibility of a pedestrian crossing across Askham Lane in the vicinity of Westfield School and also how one may be funded

Reason: To determine whether a pedestrian crossing would be appropriate at this location and if so, how this would be achieved both in terms of design and funding.

Timescale: Will require surveys to be undertaken during school term time therefore will only be able be done once the schools return after the summer break. Whether the feasibility and implementation can be completed in the 2015/16 financial year will depend on the availability of staff and financial resources.

Background

3. A 174 signature petition was presented by Cllr Andrew Waller to Full Council on 26th March 2015 on behalf of local residents. The petition was titled “Safe School Crossing on Askham Lane” and worded as follows: “We the undersigned request that a pedestrian crossing is established at the crossing point on Askham Lane to Westfield School. This is to assist with the safe crossing by

residents, especially school children, on this busy road.” A scan of the front page of the petition, with the names blanked out, is included as Annex A to this report.

4. In line with the recently adopted policy on petitions it was reported to the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 7th April. Members of the committee acknowledged receipt of the petition and noted its contents and that it had been passed through to the relevant department to action.
5. The petition was raised by Cllr Waller on behalf of concerned residents and was prompted by the absence of the school crossing patrol on Askham Lane for a period of approximately 3 months in early 2015 due to sickness. The Council were unable to backfill the position during the period of absence therefore children either needed to be accompanied across the road by an adult or had to cross unsupervised. The crossing patrol returned to work on 14th April, shortly after the petition was submitted.
6. School crossing patrol vacancies are notoriously difficult to fill due to the relatively short, but inflexible, working hours (30 minutes at both school start and finish times). Many of the crossing patrol sites have in the past been staffed by a parent or grandparent of a child at the particular school the crossing serves. In an ideal world the post would be filled by someone who was also employed in a non-teaching role by the school the site served and could fit the crossing duties around their other duties, however, there are not many sites which fall into this category.

Consultation

7. The circumstances have changed since the submission of the petition with the crossing patrol returning to work, however it is considered to be still worth reviewing the options for providing crossing improvements at this location.
8. It is not proposed to consult further with residents until there is evidence to demonstrate whether a formal crossing is:
 - deemed appropriate (taking into consideration factors such as pedestrian flow, vehicle flow, vehicle type and speed and casualty statistics)
 - physically deliverable

- deemed a high enough priority compared to other transport schemes to be considered for future capital programme funding
9. Some initial internal consultation has been done with council officers who deal with road safety, school crossing patrols and safety engineering to shape the options below.

Options

10. The options available are:
- Option 1 – investigate whether a formal crossing is appropriate and if so, undertake feasibility work to determine how to deliver such a scheme. This work would include consultation with affected parties and identification of a funding source. If a feasible scheme is identified a further report would be brought to Executive Member Decision Session for consideration.
 - Option 2 – note the petition but take no further action.

Analysis

11. The advantage of Option 1 is that the initial feasibility work will identify whether a formal crossing is appropriate and if so, where the most suitable location would be. If a formal crossing is not deemed appropriate then other solutions can also be investigated. If a formal crossing is provided it will help pedestrians to cross at all times of the day as opposed to just school start and finish times during term time when the crossing patrol is in-situ. The presence of a crossing would also remove any uncertainty for parents about how their children would cross the road safely as there would always be a facility whether or not there was a crossing patrol present in the future.
12. The disadvantages of Option 1 are the additional staff resource required to undertake the feasibility work, the cost of survey work and the cost of implementation which will need to be found from existing budgets. The investigation will need to take into consideration several factors such as the current pedestrian flow across the road, the vehicle flow along it and type of vehicles involved, the speed of vehicles and whether there is a history of pedestrian casualties on this section of Askham Lane. If these

factors indicate that a formal crossing is the most appropriate solution a design will need to be drawn up and consulted on.

13. Option 2 is the “do-nothing” option which just acknowledges receipt of the petition but does not propose to take any further action. The advantage of this option is that no further staff or financial resources are required.
14. The disadvantage of Option 2 is that if the school crossing patrol has any further absence or retires from the role then parents and children will be back to the same situation as when the petition was raised unless a replacement can be found. A similar scenario would also come about if funding for school crossing patrols was ever reconsidered.

Council Plan

15. Considering this matter contributes to the following Council corporate priorities, as set out in the Council’s Plan 2011-15:
 - Get York moving – encouraging children and adults to walk to school and for other journey purposes.
 - Build strong communities – helping the community either side of Askham Lane keep connected and removing any severance caused by traffic on Askham Lane.
 - Protect vulnerable people – helping vulnerable road users cross the busy Askham Lane.
 - Protect the environment – encouraging parents not to drive their children to school and other residents to walk for shorter journeys.

Implications

16. **Financial:** If a formal crossing is required funding will be sought to implement it. It will be possible to accommodate the costs of the investigation in the current Transport Capital Programme. Funding for the delivery of a crossing would need to be prioritised against other transport schemes.

Human Resources (HR): There are no HR implications

Equalities: If a crossing is to be implemented it will be fully disabled-compliant

Legal: There are no Legal implications

Crime and Disorder: There are no Crime and Disorder implications

Information Technology (IT): There are no IT implications

Property: There are no Property implications as the area in question forms part of the adopted highway.

Other: There are no other implications

Risk Management

17. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Neil Ferris
Assistant Director CES

**Report
Approved**



Date 10th July 2015

Wards Affected: Westfield

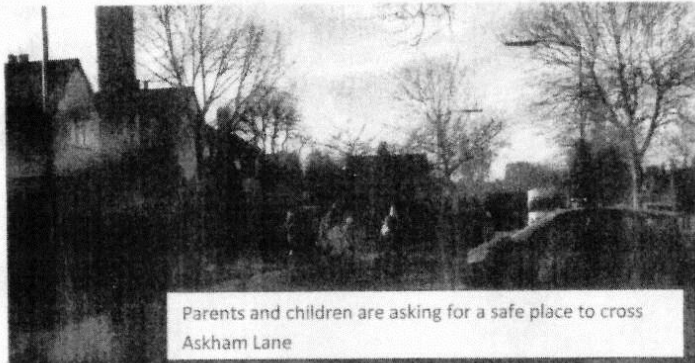
For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – copy of front page of petition

Copy of Petition Front Page



Parents and children are asking for a safe place to cross Askham Lane

Safe school crossing on Askham Lane

For many years the community has benefitted from a school crossing patrol on Askham Lane but since Christmas the council has not been able to provide this, and residents are concerned that there is risk to pedestrians (young and old) on what is a very busy road. Parents have asked local councillor Andrew Waller to help resolve the situation.

We the undersigned request that a pedestrian crossing is established at the crossing point on Askham Lane to Westfield School. This is to assist with the safe crossing by residents, especially school children, on this busy road.



Signed	Name	Address	Email

Please return completed forms to ; Cllr Andrew Waller, 194 Askham Lane, York YO24 3HP (more copies available by ringing 337757) – his house is close to the entrance to Westfield School

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