

**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Transport**

11th May 2021

Report of the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning

**Receipt of a Petition for a Zebra Crossing at the Kent Street / Fawcett
Street Junction**

Summary

1. The report acknowledges receipt of the petition and details how officers propose to take this request forward.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - Acknowledge receipt of the petition and instruct officers to put the site through the assessment process when traffic conditions return to some form of normality.

Reason: To determine whether improved pedestrian crossing facilities are justifiable and the type of facility which would be the most appropriate.

Background

3. A petition was presented to Full Council on the 29th October 2020 by Cllr Andy D’Agorne in his role as the Fishergate Ward Member on behalf of the lead petitioner.
4. The e-petition, hosted on the Change.org website is worded as follows:
We would like to petition the City of York Council for a zebra crossing on the junction of Fawcett Street and Kent Street. This is a busy school run for both Fishergate Primary School and St George’s RC Primary School. We have witnessed traffic accidents, where children have narrowly avoided being hit by drivers who either indicated late, or not at all. Congestion on the pavement caused by children and parents with

pushchairs, scooters, bikes etc struggling to cross the road also makes this junction unsafe. A zebra crossing will help to calm the traffic at this junction and create a safer road for our community.

5. The e-petition had 371 signatories at the time it was presented to Full Council but now has 386 signatures (at 27th April 2021).
6. Prior to starting the e-petition, the lead petitioner had submitted a similar request to council officers for crossing improvements and the site had been added to the list of pedestrian crossing requests. The scheme requestor was informed that the site would need to be put through a formal assessment prior to any changes being made at the junction.
7. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, council officers have not been able to undertake any crossing assessments over the past 12 months because both the traffic flows and pedestrian flows were not representative of “normal” conditions and therefore the results of any assessment could not be relied upon.
8. An analysis of average traffic flows on school days has been undertaken to determine if we are close to reaching pre-COVID traffic levels. At the closest automatic traffic counter site to the Kent Street / Fawcett Street junction, located approximately 120 metres away on the section of Fishergate between Fishergate Primary School and the Mecca Bingo site, the southbound traffic flows showed the following:
 - For the hour commencing at 8am, when most children would be escorted to schools, flows are approximately 81% of the value which would have been expected if the 2009 to 2019 trend had continued to 2021
 - For the hour commencing at 3pm, when most children would be heading home from school, flows are approximately 91% of the value which would have been expected if the 2009 to 2019 trend had continued to 2021
9. These flows are still considered to be too low to enable a proper assessment to be undertaken. Officers will continue to monitor the nearby traffic levels until they reach the level which would have been expected, based on the traffic trends between 2009 and 2019. Once that level has been reached the relevant surveys will be commissioned and the assessment undertaken.
10. The results of the assessment will determine the most appropriate improvements for the location. At that point the scheme will be considered for further feasibility work to determine where the most appropriate location would be and what measures could be physically accommodated. Any resulting proposals will be brought back to the

Executive Member for a decision to proceed to the implementation phase or not.

Consultation

11. No consultation has taken place thus far as no formal crossing assessment has taken place. If the assessment does indicate that crossing improvements are appropriate then as part of the design process consultation with both internal and external stakeholders will take place.

Options

12. There are two options available:
 - a) Acknowledge receipt of the petition and instruct officers to put the site through the assessment process when traffic conditions return to some form of normality
 - b) Acknowledge receipt of the petition but take no further action.

Analysis

13. The advantage of the first option is that it will result in the site being assessed using the adopted methodology, the outcome of which will be a decision as to whether formal crossing facilities are appropriate, the type of improvement which is justified and where that would be located. The only disadvantage of this option is a cost to undertake the surveys, however, this will be covered by the pedestrian crossing budget.
14. The advantage of the second option is that there would be no further cost to the council. The disadvantages are the fact that we would not be undertaking any subsequent improvements to the crossing which will inevitably discourage residents who have expressed concerns about this junction from walking. This would go against the objectives of the Local Transport Plan and the Council Plan as discussed in more detail below.

Council Plan

15. The proposals in this report contribute to the following outcomes in the 2019-23 Council Plan:
 - A greener and cleaner city – encouraging residents to walk rather than drive will reduce congestion and improve air quality,
 - Getting around sustainably – safety improvements will encourage walking,

- Good health and wellbeing – walking is a good form of exercise and will help improve health and wellbeing,
 - Safe communities and culture for all – making the crossing safer will benefit the local community,
 - A better start for children and young people – encouraging parents to walk their children to school will benefit the children’s physical and mental health,
 - An open and effective council – responding positively to the petition will demonstrate that the council listens to its residents and takes on board their concerns.
16. The Local Transport Plan has at its’ heart a hierarchy of transport users which puts pedestrians at the top. Pedestrian crossing improvements will help encourage people to walk. It will also contribute to the key themes:
- Provide quality alternatives – improvements will make walking an alternative for more journeys,
 - Improve strategic links – the junction acts as a barrier to some journeys currently so improvements will help link up residential areas with the nearby schools, York Barbican and other facilities,
 - Encourage behaviour change – safety improvements will encourage people to walk,
 - Tackle transport emissions – any shift from driving to walking will help reduce traffic and improve air quality,
 - Enhance public streets and spaces – crossing improvements are an enhancement to the street.

Implications

- **Financial** – surveys and any subsequent infrastructure improvements will be funded from the council’s Transport Capital Programme.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – there are no HR implications.
- **Equalities** – Improvements to the current crossing facilities will make access easier for people with reduced mobility and parents escorting children to and from school.
- **Legal** – there are no legal implications other than any changes to Traffic Regulation Orders which may ensue following the crossing assessment.
- **Crime and Disorder**- there are no Crime & Disorder implications.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no IT implications.
- **Property** – there are no Property implications
- **Other** – Staff resources will be required to analyse the survey data and undertake subsequent feasibility and design work. Any changes

to the Highway layout will also need to go through an Executive Member Decision Session for approval.

Risk Management

17. The only risk associated with this report is a potential reputational risk to the council if Option B is selected. Option B is not the option recommended to the Executive Member.

Contact Details

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James Gilchrist
Director of Environment, Transport and
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Report **Date** 28.04.21
Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: Fishergate

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

None