

**4 October 2010**

**Domestic Vehicular Crossing (Dropped Kerbs)**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Councillor Tom Ansell

**Executive Summary:**

This report details the process relating to the application, cost and construction of domestic vehicle crossings. This matter was previously the subject of a Question to Council in September 2009. Each application to the Council for providing a domestic vehicular crossing is treated individually and priced accordingly depending on location and complexity of work. The quotation remains valid for a period of 6 months. A vehicular crossing does not have to be provided by the Council; a suitably qualified contractor can carry out the construction. However, a road opening permit at a cost of £250 is required. This cost includes: provision of relevant documents, assessment of the contractor's documents once submitted and a site inspection fee.

For the period 1 April 2010 to date, the Council received 81 applications and only 3 have been constructed by private contractors.

The costs for these Domestic Vehicular Crossings are in the following range which includes an administration fee. The Council's partner, Tarmac, has completed 78 crossings.

Lowest - £397  
Highest - £1,395  
Average - £822

In the West Midlands, Walsall is within 9% of the lowest average cost and 37% cheaper than the highest average cost of those supplied.

**Reason for scrutiny:**

The Chair of the Scrutiny and Performance Panel has requested the report.

**Background papers:**

1. Procedure for the construction of a Domestic Vehicular Crossing
2. Road opening permit for the construction of a Domestic Vehicular Crossing by a private contractor

**Resource and legal considerations:**

The Council's partner, Tarmac, employs a gang to construct crossings and is paid through the contractual arrangement.

**Citizen impact:**

The construction of a crossing is beneficial to the resident and engenders a peace of mind for safety of their property by virtue of being able to park their vehicle in a safe place. It can also have a significant benefit by reducing the number of vehicles parked on the highway.

**Environmental impact:**

Construction of a crossing can have both a positive and negative effect on the environment. A positive effect is that cars are off the street and therefore improve the street scene a negative effect is that, sometimes, a grass verge has to be excavated and removed to facilitate construction of the crossing.

**Performance management:**

Tarmac carry out the construction work for a vehicle crossing and are also contracted to undertake our planned and reactive work as a priority. Therefore, Tarmac batch the crossing works together. The average time period from receiving full payment to installation is two months with the longest period being around three months.

**Equality Implications:**


An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out as these are the result from an application by a resident.

**Consultation:**

None.

**Contact Officer:**

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## 1. Report

A resident can request a Domestic Vehicle Crossing, letter by phone or e-form either directly to the Roadworks Management group or via the First Stop Shop. One of the conditions of having a domestic vehicle crossing is that there is a drive on the property; many residents apply for a crossing to stop motorists parking outside their property which in itself is not enough to warrant the granting of a permit.

After receipt of the completed form, the location is checked to ensure that a crossing can be constructed and then it is passed to Tarmac for a quotation. Some locations are not suitable for a variety of reasons including planning, highway safety and tree preservation orders. Upon receiving the quotation, a fee of £60 is added towards our administration and site visit costs and forwarded to the resident. The quotation is fixed for 6 months. Should the resident decline the offer and re-apply outside the 6 month period, a new quote is generated.

A resident can engage their own contractor to construct the crossing. In such cases, a fee of £250 is charged to inspect the contractor's documentation to ensure the relevant insurances and competencies are in place and for an inspector to carry out a site visit after completion.

The cost of a crossing is not subsidised. However, when we carry out either new carriageway schemes or as part of our maintenance programme we are reconstructing the carriageway, we ask each resident that doesn't have a crossing whether they want one. If they do want a crossing we charge them the difference between installing normal kerbs and installing dropped kerbs and the extra construction depth required in the footway crossing. This is a cheaper cost than if the resident requests the crossing. From the responses we have had from other West Midlands Councils, the average cost for a crossing is £882 with the lowest being £743 and the highest being £1,130.

From the table below, it can be seen that Walsall's costs are lower than the West Midlands average. They are 10% more expensive than the cheapest council (Birmingham) and 28% cheaper than the most expensive of those supplied (Solihull).

### Comparison of Regional Highway Authority

Council	Administration cost	In House average cost	Total Cost	Fee for using a private contractor	Fee for payment in stages
Sandwell	£125	N/A	Not supplied	£100	n/a
Dudley	N/A	£750	£750	£500	£30
Birmingham	£143	£600	£743	£107	n/a
Wolverhampton	£125	N/A	Not supplied	Not permitted	n/a
Coventry	N/A	£1,037	£1,037	£75	n/a
Solihull	£50	£1,080	£1,130	Not permitted	n/a
Walsall	£60	£822	£882	£250	n/a
Average	£100.60	£857.80	£896.40	£206.40	£30.00