

7 July 2022

**Response to the Petition: 'Pedestrian Crossing for Birmingham Road, Aldridge, enabling the safety of school children'.**

**Ward(s):** Aldridge Central and South

**Portfolios:** Councillor Andrew – Deputy Leader of the Council and Regeneration

**1. Aim**

- 1.1 A petition was presented to Walsall Council containing 1,052 signatures, calling on the council to install a pedestrian crossing facility on Birmingham Road by the junction of Tynings Lane, Aldridge to ensure the safe travel to and from school for many children.
- 1.2 The council's petitions scheme states that *'if a petition contains at least 500 signatories the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The authority has determined that the response to such petitions must be given by either the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Assistant Directors or Heads of Service. The Committee may also decide to call the relevant Portfolio Holder to attend the meeting'*.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 This report recommends that the scrutiny committee:
  - a) Note that the requested pedestrian crossing is currently ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the list of reserve schemes on the council's measures to encourage walking for 2022/23, and that the request will again be considered as part of the annual borough-wide road safety review for 2023/24.
  - b) Note that there will be a renewed effort to recruit to the vacant school crossing patrol post on Birmingham Road, Aldridge close to Tynings Lane as this would offer short term assistance at this location.

**3. Report detail – know**

- 3.1 Birmingham Road in Aldridge is a local distributor road that runs between the A454 Walsall Road and the B4154 and is approximately 0.47miles (0.75km) in length. A 30mph speed limit extends along the full length of the road. There is also footway provision along the full length. Aldridge School, Whetstone Field Primary School and St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School are nearby.

3.2 The petition submitted makes the following request: -

*'There is an urgent need for a pedestrian crossing to be installed by the junction of Tynings Lane, ensuring the safe travel to and from school for many children.'*

3.3. Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions (TSRGD), Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 6 – Traffic Control, gives guidance regarding the assessment of pedestrian crossing facilities.

3.4 A school crossing patrol site is situated on Birmingham Road, 5 metres south of Tynings Lane. This site has been vacant since 10 January 2020. This vacant site has been advertised since that date as part of the ongoing recruitment drive to vacant school crossing patrol Sites across the borough.

3.5 A pedestrian survey was undertaken on 23 March 2022 between 08:15 and 09:15 when a total of 98 people were observed crossing Birmingham Road, close to the junction with Tynings Lane.

3.6 The council regularly receive requests for new or improved pedestrian / cycle crossing facilities. All requests are prioritised under the measures to encourage walking and cycling programme following an assessment against the following criteria:

- degree of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles;
- pedestrian collisions;
- volume of pedestrians;
- first Year Rate of Return;
- public amenities, schools, open spaces; and
- whether there is an existing facility.

3.7 Crossing schemes are ranked using a scoring system. Points are allocated against the criteria outlined above.

3.8 Speed data from 2021 (analysed for the annual borough-wide road safety review 2022/23) indicates an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 36.1mph (the highest speed recorded by 85% of the traffic surveyed). With a combined seven-day average speed of 29.1mph. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed for Birmingham Road remains below the level at which additional speed enforcement can be requested from the police.

#### **4. Financial information**

4.1 The proposed crossing would fall within the scope of the council's road safety budget through measures to encourage walking programme. Subject to surveys of the site a zebra crossing in this location is estimated to cost in the region of £25,000 for capital infrastructure. There would also be a requirement for a small amount of ongoing revenue funding for electricity costs and periodic refreshing of highway lines.

## **5. *Reducing Inequalities***

- 5.1 The council's road safety programmes of work provide all citizens using Walsall's highway network a standard of service which will maintain the safe passage of vehicular and pedestrian traffic so far as is reasonably practicable.

## **6. Decide**

- 6.1 The Council must determine a reasonable level of intervention in response to the concerns raised by the signatories of the petition detailed in this report. This needs to consider the borough-wide demand for crossing facilities and the site-specific data and note that the request is currently ranked 7<sup>th</sup> on the reserve list of measures to encourage walking.

## **7. Respond**

- 7.1 The Council's officers will renew efforts to recruit to the vacant school crossing patrol on Birmingham Road immediately south of Tynings Lane. This will include exploring new ways to stimulate applications for this post.
- 7.2 The request for a pedestrian crossing will be reconsidered as part of the annual borough-wide road safety review for 2023/24, with 2022 data. The outcome of this process could result in this pedestrian crossing request moving up or down the priority list, and the inclusion within any future funded programme will be subject to the total amount of funding available and the affordability of any requests that may have a higher ranking at the time of assessment.

## **8. Review**

- 8.1 A review of pedestrian crossing requests through the measures to encourage walking programme is completed on an annual basis as part of the council borough-wide safety review. This location will be reassessed annually until such time as the request can be delivered, or the request for the pedestrian facility is removed for a legitimate reason.

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