
Meeting: Delegated Decisions by the Executive Member for Community Services on Traffic Regulation Orders
Date: June 2015
Subject: Consideration of the following petitions that have been submitted to the Council:
Report of: Rook Tree Lane – Stotfold
Paul Mason, Head of Highways
Summary: This report is to note the receipt of a petition submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council and suggest a way forward.

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Stotfold, Arlesey and Langford
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

None from this report

Financial:

There is currently no highways budget allocated to undertake any work at this location. £30k has been allocated to a school safety zone initiative by CBC Children's Services in 2015/16

Legal:

None from this report

Risk Management:

None from this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None from this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None from this report

Community Safety:

None from this report

Sustainability: None from this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Community Services note the petition and that the lead petitioner be informed that the site does not currently meet the Council's criteria for the provision of a school crossing patrol or zebra crossing but that school safety zone initiatives are to be considered during 2015/16 for this school.

Background and Information

1. A petition containing 52 names has been received from local residents, and parents of students attending St Marys Academy situated at Rook Tree Lane in Stotfold. The residents, parents and staff at the school are concerned at the speed of vehicles thus the safety of pedestrians whilst trying to cross the road, especially when crossing to gain access to the public footpath after the bend in the road heading towards Queen Street.
2. The petitioners are requesting a zebra crossing or a school crossing patrol.
3. We do not have any traffic speed data in the immediate vicinity of the school. A traffic survey was carried out between 2012 -13 (prior to the improvement works) in Rook Tree Lane, though not close to the school. The 85th percentile speeds measured in both directions were within the existing 30mph speed limit.
4. Rook Tree Lane is on the edge of Stotfold and has a reasonably rural feel. The road is lightly trafficked with approximately 1500 vehicles a day in each direction
5. St Mary's Academy undertook a recent school travel survey with both teachers and parents, that highlighted concerns relating to road safety and speed of vehicles. Both parties would like a crossing near to the school to combat both issues.
6. In order to undertake an objective review of the request the Council's Road Risk Advisor who also manages the School Crossing Patrol service was asked to undertake an assessment of the site. In order to allocate resources where needed the Council operates an assessment process that relates the number of children and the number of vehicles measured over prescribed times. This process is based upon the detailed procedure recommended by Road Safety Great Britain and uses the same methodology and nationally agreed threshold levels.
7. The results of this survey are shown in the report from the Road Risk Advisor at 'Appendix A'. This shows that the site would fall far short of meeting the criteria for a school crossing patrol. On that basis it would also not meet the criteria for a zebra crossing.
8. St Marys Academy is however currently undergoing expansion and as a result of the expected increase in school numbers the Children's Services team have allocated a budget for 2015/16 of up to £30k to undertake the creation of a school safety zone at St Marys Academy.
9. This project is at the very early stages and it is not yet known what form the zone will take but a number of measures will be considered including improved signage, waiting restrictions, a Traffic Regulation Order on the Keep Clear markings, enhancement of crossing points on pedestrian desire lines.
10. Local consultation will be undertaken as part of this process and the opinions of the school and the petitioners will be included in the considerations.

11. Recommendation

12. It is recognised that whilst there are local concerns the site does not meet the Council's own criteria for a school crossing patrol or a zebra crossing but that there are some works that will be carried out to enhance the trip to the school as a result of the school expansion. On that basis the Executive Member for Community Services is asked to note the petition and officers will inform the lead petitioner of the situation as set out in the report.

Location: Rook Tree Lane, Stotfold.



Public Footpath



Re: Request for a School Crossing Patrol on Rook Tree Lane in Stotfold

In response to your request as a result of a petition received for a School Crossing Patrol to be installed on Rook Tree Lane in Stotfold for the use of the pedestrians that use St. Mary's Lower School.

I carried out two counts to determine whether the site would meet the minimum criteria to install a School Crossing Patrol person in accordance to the authorised School Crossing Patrol guidelines. Both counts took place with weather conditions being dry, warm and sunny and during a 'walk to school week' taking place at the school.

I monitored movement between 08:10hrs - 09:00hrs and 15:10hrs – 15:45hrs.

The main movement of pupils and parents crossing was between 08:40hrs to 09:00hrs and 15:25hrs to 15:40hrs the results are based on these times. There is a criteria of which a certain formula is calculated based on PV^2 and requires a minimum unit figure of 4,000,000 units to establish a School Crossing Patrol site, the figure reached on the survey was only 281,232 in the morning and 115,200 in the afternoon. I have attached a leaflet to more fully explain how the criteria works.

I observed that everyone crossed safely within a minute's wait before they could cross. Drivers were obliging by stopping to allow pedestrians to cross and there was no evidence of speeding during my survey as the parent parking did not allow any drivers to have the opportunity.

I did however observe that there were a number of children who were not holding an adults hand when they crossed the road and were allowed to run ahead of the adult and wait at the kerb side for the adult to arrive, before crossing

As a result of my count I cannot recommend the installation of a School Crossing Patrol on Rook Tree Lane in Stotfold.

Should you require any further details please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Road Risk Advisor

Highways and Traffic Management

Community Services

Central Bedfordshire Council

Priory House,

Monks Walk,

Shefford, Bedfordshire

SG17 5TQ

Appendix B Petition Details

Dear Stotfold Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways,

We, the undersigned, are concerned about the safety for school children, dog walkers and elderly residents crossing Rook Tree Lane. We would like to make an urgent request for some improvements and are asking you make the road safer; we would like STC or CBCH to do the following:

- Assess the safety for people, especially school children, crossing Rook Tree Lane from the public footpath from St Mary's Church
- Install a zebra crossing urgently at this point
- Assess the safety for people, especially school children, crossing Rook Tree Lane nearer Oliver's Lane/Home Close
- Install a zebra crossing urgently at this point

The speed of traffic on Rook Tree Lane, despite it now being a 20mph zone, forces parents and children to quickly dart across the road to get to and from school. Often motorists will not see pedestrians waiting to cross the road due to parked cars (the parked cars isn't the issue here) so having zebra crossings will make motorists more aware of pedestrians wanting to cross the road. We are all pleased with the recent addition of the zebra crossing on the High Street but would welcome one or two on Rook Tree Lane for the safety of St Mary's school children. I imagine all parents are keen to promote walking to school as a health benefit so it would be good to have a safer road to cross to get to school.

Please could STC or CBCH review these safety concerns raised and provide our community with a safer crossing for school children? If zebra crossings are not possible, how about a lollipop person, for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon at each end of the road?

We thank you sincerely for taking the time to listen to our concerns.