

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	19 January 2021
Subject:	Sefton Vehicle Crossings Policy		
Report of:	Head of Highways and Public Protection	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Locality Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No Please delete as appropriate and remove this text.
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) for the update to the Vehicle Crossing policy to align it with the latest Highways Infrastructure Code of Practice, the Transport & Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Policy & Strategy 2019/21 and the recently updated Developers Pack.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) Comment on the proposed changes in minimum driveway dimensions
- (2) Comment on the proposed changes in minimum distance from junctions
- (3) Comment on the proposed clarity in defining reconstruction area
- (4) Comment on the proposed changes in presentation of the criteria
- (5) Comment on the proposed changes in recovering staff costs

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To enable the Council to operate in a consistent and transparent manner and fully recover costs incurred in providing this service.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

To continue with the current policy which does not provide clarity on the extent of reconstruction required for vehicle crossings, does not conform with the requirements set

out for new developments in relation to driveway minimum dimensions and incurs cost to the Council in the provision of quotes for vehicle crossings.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The cost of works delivered under the scope of this policy will be funded by the customers. The cost of all associated works will be contained within customer income charges and relevant budgets.

(B) Capital Costs

NA

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): Delivered using existing staffing, resources and available income budgets.
Legal Implications: Under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 Sefton Council has a statutory duty to maintain the public highway.
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications. (Please delete as appropriate and remove this text)

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: The effective management of changes to the footway ensures safety for pedestrian users.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The effective management of changes to the footway will assist communities across the Borough.
Commission, broker and provide core services:
Place – leadership and influencer:
Drivers of change and reform:

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The highway infrastructure is one of the Councils' largest assets. Residential customers rely on effective transport links to enable them to travel the borough freely. Keeping the vehicle crossing implementation process maintained, increases off street parking and therefore potentially reduces on street parking, helping to prevent congestion on the network.
Greater income for social investment:
Cleaner Greener

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6238/20) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4439/20.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

The Councils Insurance team have also been consulted and their recommendations included into the vehicle policy update document.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

Contact Officer:	Graham Lymbery
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 4175
Email Address:	graham.lymbery@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Draft Sefton Council Vehicle Crossings Policy

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council as the Highway Authority has a statutory obligation to manage and maintain the public highway.
- 1.2 Vehicle crossings are provided to assist vehicle access across footways into driveways. They are provided at the request of householders, subject to payment of the costs of installation. The policy will identify issues which influence the acceptability of individual vehicle crossing applications and ensure adherence to the installation criteria detailed when considering the installation of vehicle crossings to private properties across the Borough.
- 1.3 The construction of a vehicle crossing by the Highway Authority does not give the occupier of the premises any particular rights, except to drive across the footway to gain access to his/her property with a private light goods or similar vehicle. The crossing itself forms part of the public highway. From the date that the Highway Authority accepts the completed crossing, they will assume responsibility for its maintenance at no cost to the occupier, apart from any damage caused by illegal use by heavy vehicles or suchlike.
- 1.4 It has been identified in recent years that there have been a number of defects identified within the footpath areas of the highway that have not been included for reconstruction as part of the provision of vehicles crossings. When quotes are prepared a judgement has to be made regarding the area to be reconstructed and where the footway appears to be in acceptable condition the full area is not included in the quote for reconstruction. These subsequent defects are the responsibility of the Council.
- 1.5 There is a £5 million backlog in damaged footways in the borough. This backlog is maintained as safe and fit for purpose through highway safety inspections and reactive repairs.
- 1.6 There have been reports of issues of vehicles parked on driveways overhanging the footway causing an obstruction to potentially vulnerable footpath users.
- 1.7 The Council currently provides a quote for a vehicle crossing on request. If the quote is accepted the Council charges a fee to cover staff time and requires payment of the costs for the crossing to be made in advance. If the quote is not accepted the Council does not recover the costs associated with the provision of the quote.

2. Proposed Changes to the Policy

- 2.1 To change from 4.1m Depth of Driveway requirement to 4.8m (4.8m x 2.4m). This aligns closely to the new car parking dimensions (5m x 2.5m) but is considered to be a reasonable compromise that recognises the nature of our existing housing but will avoid future issues of vehicles parked on driveways overhanging the footway.

- 2.2 Any new vehicle crossings requested on or near junctions will be subject to a restriction to maintain a minimum distance between the junction and the vehicle crossing.
- 2.3 Quotes prepared for vehicle crossings will include for reconstruction from the kerb to the rear of the footway. This will reduce the future maintenance requirements to the Council and ensure that the applicant is paying for the full construction costs associated with their vehicle crossing.
- 2.4 The criteria for a vehicle crossing have been presented in a clearer way that can be replicated on the Council's website and application forms. This will allow residents to make an informed decision prior to applying. This would also include an indication of the typical cost of a vehicle crossing.
- 2.5 The fee associated with staff costs will be split into two elements. The first will be a non-refundable fee for the provision of a quote, the second will be an administration fee associate with the ordering, management and supervision of the construction of the vehicle crossing. These fees would be set on an annual basis.