

Dear Mrs Miles

Further to your email of 19/02/2021.

We are currently seeking comments from the Highways Traffic engineers in relation to reviewing / improving existing signage. We are also making enquiries with the Police regarding any reports of damage or highway disruption. Once we have their responses we will update you.

We have examined our casualty database for this area over the last 10 years on Cross Stone Rd, Great House Rd, Crossley New Rd and Hey Head Lane, Upper Lane and Broad Lane and there has been one recorded road traffic collision recorded for the area (appended below).

2011- Great House Road junction with Cross Stone Road, Todmorden

Veh 1, a JCB, travels on Great House Rd towards Cross Stone Road. Veh 1 attempts to stop due to an oncoming vehicle but collides with wall causing Veh 1 to turn onto its roof.

The database covers all road traffic collisions resulting in injury (slight/serious/fatal) that the Police have attended and is current to the end of 2020.

The Council has been receiving a high number of similar complaints from the public in regard to traffic speeds and anti-social driving across the District's highway network. Sadly there have been a number of drivers who have taken advantage of the lighter traffic conditions during the coronavirus restrictions to wilfully ignore the speed limits and are continuing to drive in an aggressive and dangerous manner. The Council does not have any enforcement powers to deal with these drivers, but we are taking these complaints seriously and are working closely with West Yorkshire Police to take action against them. We have notified the Police of your concerns regarding traffic speeds. Any issues with Anti-Social Behaviour or reckless/dangerous driving along with any observed behaviour by other motorists should be reported to the Police directly.

We have noted also other complaints about the size and speed of delivery wagons and farm vehicles in the area. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to restrict the size or number of vehicles which use a length of highway. Basically, as long as a length of highway remains part of the highway network, drivers have a legitimate right to use it.

In the past councils have tried to restrict the size of vehicles using a length of highway by means of a weight restriction order. However, to do so requires the processing of a legal traffic regulation order which is both time-consuming and expensive to do. Unfortunately, weight restrictions are not effective at deterring drivers of large vehicles from using a road. This is because they are almost

impossible to enforce. This is because any weight limit must have exceptions for access both written into the order and signed on site. Otherwise, delivery vehicles, bin wagons and other oversized vehicles would be unable to legally enter the area covered by the weight restriction. This exception to the restrictions means that the police, whose are responsible for enforcing weight limits, must show that any vehicle they take action against has actually broken the law. Drivers of overweight vehicles which enter the area covered by the weight limit and drive through without stopping have broken the law. Drivers who enter the area to access properties within the restricted area are acting lawfully. Basically, therefore, the police need to follow all large vehicles travelling through the weight restricted area to see if they stop or not. This level of enforcement is beyond the police and drivers of large vehicles regularly travel through areas covered by weight limits, safe in the knowledge that, unless they get stuck, they are unlikely to get caught.

The only guaranteed way of preventing large vehicles from travelling through an area is to physically close off roads. Restricting the width is not an option. Some vehicles, such as bin wagons, delivery trucks and fire engines will still need to gain access and it is impossible to restrict non-essential large vehicles whilst permitting essential ones in. Closing the road would prevent large vehicles from travelling through an area. However, it also restricts access to everyone, including residents and is, therefore, something that is considered only in exceptional circumstances.

The only option which can realistically be used is to introduce blue and white “Unsuitable for large vehicle signs”.

These signs are displayed at the junction of the A646 and Cross Stone Rd, and at the junction of Cross Stone Rd and Hey Head Lane.

Kind regards

Highways Information on behalf of the Road Safety Officer

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Regards

Ian

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