

Edinburgh councillors to consider zebra crossing study

Edinburgh councillors are set to consider backing a study which could make building new zebra crossings in the city cheaper and easier.

At present, all zebra crossings on council-owned streets have flashing beacons, which a council report says drives up the cost of installing them significantly.

To cut prices and make it easier to install crossing points, officers want to trial "continental" zebra crossings, which consist of a zebra crossing marked on the pavement but no beacons.

They are in use in much of continental Europe, and have recently been trialled in Manchester, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, where they have since been recommended for further use.

The study would see monitoring of continental zebra crossings on non-public roads in the city, which exist at the airport, shopping centres and other locations, in order to gather data on how safe they are.

It would also gather and study together existing research on the topic, in order to evaluate how beaconless zebra crossings could fit into the urban environment of the city.

The main aim of it is to prove that trials of these crossings are worthwhile, and to help make a case to the Scottish and UK

governments that they should be allowed.

As of now, zebra crossings without beacons are not legal on council-owned roads in Scotland due to legislation in Westminster and Holyrood.

The report says that legislative change would likely be required before the council could trial the crossings.

However, a letter from Scottish transport minister Fiona Hyslop included in the report said the Scottish Government would be willing to work towards changing the legislation if the crossings are proven to be 'effective and safe'.

If the scheme is approved by councillors, officers would explore grant funding options to support most of its costs – but, if none can be found, officers would draw down up to £60,000 in operational funds.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter