

## CABINET

16 November 2021

<b>Title:</b> School Streets Programme	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes
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<b>Accountable Director:</b> Caroline Harper (Chief Planning Director, Be First)	
<b>Accountable Strategic Leadership Director:</b> Claire Symonds, Managing Director	
<b>Summary</b> <p>Under the Department for Transport's (DfT) Active Travel programme, a 'School Streets' trial project has been initiated in the Borough by Be First, working with the Council's Enforcement service and local schools. School Streets is aimed at improving air quality and road safety around school gate areas and encouraging more active travel (cycling, walking and scooting). Vehicles are prohibited from using the designated areas during the main school drop-off and pick-up times, with exemptions for those living in the designated roads, key school staff and other specified service providers. School Streets are enforced by cameras and those making unauthorised journeys during the designated times are liable to a fine.</p> <p>The School Streets trial project was implemented at four of the Boroughs primary-age schools (Grafton Primary, Manor Junior, Dorothy Barley Primary and Becontree Primary) in July 2021, with Eastbury Primary implemented in September. A further seven primary-age schools are planned for implementation by Spring 2022. The projects are funded by the DfT via Transport for London (TfL).</p> <p>The current trial programme has been well received and each trial can be in place for an 18-month trial period, at which time the Council can assess the benefits before deciding whether any or all should be made permanent.</p> <p>The report r presents an update on the School Streets trial project, the consultation and feedback to date, the draft Exemption Policy and proposed arrangements for deciding on whether to make schemes permanent in the future.</p>	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <p>(i) Endorse the current School Streets trial projects at Becontree Primary, Dorothy Barley Primary, Eastbury Primary, Grafton Primary and Manor Junior;</p>	

- (ii) Approve the inclusion of Hunters Hall Primary, Parsloes Primary, Richard Alibon Primary, Southwood Primary, St Joseph's Primary (Dagenham), Sydney Russell Primary and Valence Primary in the trial programme by Spring 2022;
- (iii) Approve the draft School Streets Exemption Policy, as set out at Appendix D to the report, and authorise the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth to make any necessary changes to the policy in response to feedback from statutory consultation and guidance issued by TfL and DfT;
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development and the Strategic Director, Law and Governance, to:
  - (a) Agree the inclusion of further schools in the trial programme, subject to appropriate grant funding being available;
  - (b) Determine whether any trial scheme should be made permanent, prior to the expiry of the Experimental Traffic Management Order (ETMO) and following statutory consultation and a full assessment of the benefits of the scheme;
  - (c) Take all necessary steps to make permanent any trial schemes, including the publication of Traffic Management Orders.

**Reason(s)**

To assist the Council to achieve its priorities of 'Prevention, Independence and Resilience' and 'Inclusive Growth' by providing safer streets, reducing air pollution outside schools and encouraging active lifestyles.

**1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 450 School Streets are currently operating within London. They have seen on average a 23% reduction in air pollution at school gates (source TfL). Barking & Dagenham Council is therefore committed to help support families to switch to active travel to school by making it clear that motor vehicles have no place outside school gates. The School Streets will help make the road safer and calmer for pupils at school start and finish times, reinforcing the principles of 'School Keep Clears' and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport to and from school.
- 1.2 A School Street is a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic, but residents within the School Street zone exempt. Funding was received from the DfT via TfL to implement School Streets in LBBB as part of the response to the pandemic, to improve road safety for students and encourage active travel (walking, cycling and scooting).
- 1.3 Five School Streets have already been implemented (Appendix A) with permission to proceed obtained through the Educational Attainment and School Improvement Portfolio Board and the Enforcement and Community Safety Portfolio Board.
- 1.4 This report seeks to combine and confirm approval for the existing five School Streets in operation and implementation for a further seven schools (Appendix B)

for which funding has been provided by TfL. These seven new schools have already been designed and consulted on (see Appendix C). The Educational Attainment and School Improvement Portfolio Board and the Enforcement and Community Safety Portfolio Board have been kept informed of progress at each stage of design and consultation and have given their approval to proceed.

## **2. Proposal and Issues**

- 2.1 During School pick-up and drop off times, the streets with entrances to school are increasingly crowded with motorised traffic, causing road safety issues for students and access and congestion issues for the residents of the streets. 'School Keep Clear' markings have proved ineffective in addressing these issues, so the concept of a School Street was developed.
- 2.2 A School Street is a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic but allows access for vehicles of residents who live within the School Street zone and other vehicles that require essential access during the restricted times. Pedestrians and cyclists are not restricted. Local authorities have powers to use traffic management orders to turn a road outside a school into a pedestrian and cycle zone and there are now more than 500 School Streets in the UK.
- 2.3 School Streets in LBBD are enforced using Automatic Number Plate (ANPR) recognition cameras. If a vehicle enters a School Street during the restricted times and its number plate is not on the exemption list, the registered owner receives a penalty charge notice.
- 2.4 School Streets are signed using legally compliant warning signs on posts at the entrance and exit to each School Street, including signs informing drivers that the restrictions are enforced by camera.
- 2.5 LBBD has introduced 5 School Streets (please see Appendix A) using experimental traffic management orders (ETMO), which allow the statutory consultation for the traffic order to take place while the traffic order is in place. A decision whether to make the ETMO permanent, change it or have it removed must be made between 6-18 months of the order being active. It was decided to use the experimental route for the traffic order to test how effective or otherwise the School Streets were, make changes if necessary or remove them all together.
- 2.6 These 5 School Streets were chosen because the schools with which they are associated had particular issues with congestion and road safety outside of their student entrances. Furthermore, local residents had complained about access issues resulting from inconsiderate and illegal parking during school pick-up and drop-off. The 5 schools had also expressed an interest in School Streets, so were supportive of the concept, which was essential for successful implementation.
- 2.7 Funding has been provided by TfL to implement a further seven schools (some of which have more than one student entrance). This funding was originally provided to introduce three Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), but it was agreed that funding could be diverted to School Streets on the proviso that the schools were within the LTN areas. The seven schools chosen have issues with congestion and

road safety outside of their student entrance, local residents have complained about access issues during school pick-up/drop-off, and all 7 schools support implementation of the school streets.

2.8 A rolling programme of School Street implementation is planned in LBBD, but this is contingent on funding being provided by TfL. Priority will be given schools that have expressed an interest in School Streets and have issues with congestion and road safety outside of their student entrances.

2.9 The table below shows the status of current and proposed School Streets for the schools listed, timings subject to camera procurement and delivery of supporting infrastructure, enforcement systems and due notice to residents and schools.

<b>Round 1 schools w/t School Streets</b>	<b>Commencement of Enforcement</b>
Eastbury Primary	09/09/2021 (delayed due to tornado)
Grafton Primary	05/07/2021
Manor Junior	05/07/2021
Dorothy Barley Primary	05/07/2021
Beacontree Primary	05/07/2021
<b>Round 2 schools w/t School Streets</b>	
Sydney Russell Primary	To be confirmed, Jan '22
Richard Alibon Primary	To be confirmed, Feb/March '22
Hunters Hall Primary	To be confirmed, Feb/March '22
Parsloes Primary	To be confirmed, Feb/March '22
Southwood Primary	To be confirmed, Feb/March '22 likely
Valance Primary School	To be confirmed, summer 22 <i>To be timed with CPZ roll out 22</i>
St Joseph's Primary Schools	a/a

Be First Planning are also gathering a list of future schools which will be included in LBBD's 2022-24 LIPs funding bid.

### **Exemptions Policy:**

2.10 The Council is mindful that there are good reasons to exempt certain road users from the restriction of a School Street which – if managed properly – will not have a material impact on the effectiveness of the scheme. These groups include:

- Residents of the school streets, including carers and visiting NHS key workers
- Emergency Vehicles
- Special Educational Needs and Disabled Students
- Blue Badge Holders
- School Buses
- School Staff (though encouraged where possible not to use the streets)
- Statutory Undertakers (with appropriate permit)
- Businesses on School Streets
- Postal vehicles

2.11 A draft Exemption Policy document has been prepared (Appendix D) taking account of the feedback from the recent consultation exercise undertaken in the streets local

to the initial proposed sites. The policy clarifies particular circumstances and the process for applying for exemption permits and also the process around appealing and paying penalty notices. This policy document will be kept under review and updated as necessary depending on feedback throughout the trial.

- 2.12 A decision will be made after the trial (in place for a minimum of 12 months) about whether to make the School Streets permanent. Feedback and representations received will be considered and Councillors will be consulted before a final decision is made.

### **3. Options Appraisal**

- 3.1 Funding of £198K was provided by TFL specifically to implement the first round of 5 School Streets. There was no option to spend the funds provided for any other purpose. If LBBD did not implement the School Street, the funds would have had to have been returned.
- 3.2 Originally funding of £437K was provided by TfL to implement LTNs. However, LTNs have been controversial elsewhere and a number have been removed following implementation. Furthermore, the Council indicated that it would not support the road closures that LTNs involved. By contrast, the first round of five School Streets has proved generally successful and popular and councillors have supported the implementation of more. After some discussion, TfL agreed to allow us to spend the funds on School Streets instead of LTNs.
- 3.3 Currently LBBD has not made any contribution to the School Streets programme and there was no requirement to do so e.g as match-funding. However, for any future funding received for the introduction of camera enforcement, TfL (under the DfT's direction) expect to see a contribution from camera revenue reinvested into the Healthy Streets programme in the following financial year 2022/23 from Council resources.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 Proposals for the School Streets programme have been presented to the Housing and Regeneration, Education and Enforcement Council Portfolio Boards. The Council Leader has also been briefed and a site visit undertaken in May 2021. All groups have indicated strong support for the programme and operational method of camera enforcement proposed. Initial engagement was carried out with schools, to decide whether a School Street would be supported and how this might make a difference to the school journey.
- 4.2 Face-to-face consultations were carried out with residents, both inside the School Street closure zones and immediately outside the School Streets, as these would likely be affected by displaced traffic or a change to how they travel in the area. A phone line was set up to allow residents to make enquiries, complaints or suggestions and call-backs were carried out by Be First and The Project Centre (consultants).
- 4.3 Online engagement also took place using a hub or home page, as well as a dedicated webpage for each of the School Streets being proposed, on LBBD's Engagement HQ platform. Communication materials included leaflet (distributed to

residents, parents and school staff before face-to-face engagement took place), banners for schools to display on the school gates and letters sent to 70 local stakeholders across all areas.

- 4.4 A summary of the consultation report is provided in Appendix C, which highlights strong support for the proposals. The full consultation report is available to view at <https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=180&MId=11192&Ver=4>.

## **5. Financial Implications**

Implications completed by: Alison Gebbett – Capital Accountant

- 5.1 This report sets out an update on the first phase of School Streets projects and requests Cabinet approval for a second phase of similar schemes as set out in the table at paragraph 2.9 above. These schemes constitute capital expenditure as the main expenditure relates to purchase and installation of ANPR cameras.
- 5.2 The new schemes will be fully funded by TfL grant up to the grant allocation amount of £437k. This funding was originally intended for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods but TfL have allowed flexibility to use this amount towards School Streets instead.
- 5.3 As these allocations are fully grant funded, there are no additional financial implications for the Council. Any major risks, issues or overspending that becomes apparent will be monitored, managed, and reported on as part of the Council's normal quarterly capital monitoring process.

## **6. Legal Implications**

Implications completed by: Dr Paul Feild Senior Standards & Governance Lawyer

- 6.1 Essentially the proposal is to restrict the passage of traffic. The report proposes that such highways as identified as "School Streets" should be closed for general traffic except for defined exempted vehicles for specified times.
- 6.2 The School Street will be established by utilisation of the Council as Highways Authority making Traffic Management Regulation Orders or Experimental Traffic Management Orders to control the traffic in their area. These are legal powers and can be temporary or permanent. Residents must be informed and consulted about the proposals.
- 6.3 Experimental traffic management orders are made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These orders can last up to 18 months and during that period objections can be made. If the Order is made then a driver of a non-exempted vehicle entering a School Street zone during the times of prohibition may incur a civil Penalty Charge Notice. As set out in the report the proposal is that residents living within the "School Street" will be exempt.

## 7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Risk Management** - There is a risk log maintained by Be First. Key risks are around public and school support by ensuring good consultation and communications. Also ensuring the enforcement and exemptions policy is clear and LBBB staff are available to help and reassure people when the schemes go live. Additional enforcement staff have been engaged to mitigate this risk.
- 7.2 **Contractual Issues** - Be First is working closely with LBBB Enforcement to procure and supply the Camera systems necessary for the schemes to operate
- 7.3 **Staffing Issues** – The scheme is funding additional staff to manage the existing consultation process and manage the enforcement and exemptions process.
- 7.4 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – The School Streets programme is a key plank of the new Local Plan and Corporate EIA policies. The programme will:
- Improve safe access to schools
  - Reduce accidents and improve air quality
  - Encourage more cycling, walking and scooting by school children
  - Will provide exemptions to residents of the School Street zone who can still use the streets at all times
  - Include exemptions for key groups in line with the Exemptions policies set out in Appendix D.
  - An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached at Appendix E.

### Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- School Streets, Safer Streets Engagement Report  
<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=180&MIId=11192&Ver=4>

### List of appendices:

**Appendix A:** Maps of Five Current School Streets

**Appendix B:** Map of Seven new proposed School Streets

**Appendix C:** Summary of Consultation report

**Appendix D:** Draft Exemption Policy

**Appendix E:** Equalities Impact Assessment