

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Highways Operations
Date:	18 November 2021
Title:	School Streets Pilot – Update
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: James Laver

Tel: 0370 779 3370 **Email:** James.Laver@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the School Streets Pilot, in particular to set out the programme for reporting on the detailed results and conclusions from the monitoring and assessment of the trial and also to seek approval to continue the trial arrangements at participating schools whilst the Council considers future policy on Hampshire School Streets initiatives.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Highways Operations notes the progress to date and the programme to seek a decision from Cabinet in early 2022 on the future of the School Streets initiative in Hampshire following a review of the findings from the initial trial schemes.
3. That the Executive Member for Highways Operations approves the interim continued operation of School Streets measures at two participating trial sites until such time as Cabinet determines a policy decision on the future of the School Streets initiative in Hampshire.

Executive Summary

4. The high-level delivery approach for the School Streets pilot was set out in a report ('School Streets') that was approved by Cabinet on 9 February 2021. This report detailed that the trials would take place from the start of the 2021/22 academic year until the October 2021 half-term, with the outcomes and conclusions from the trial to be reported back to the Cabinet thereafter.
5. Based on feedback from the initial trial period, the early indication is that the three trial schemes have been successful with community support for all three trial schemes. However, the schools participating in the trial have found it difficult to free up staff and find volunteers to man the closures.

6. The detailed analysis of the monitoring data is ongoing and the full output and conclusions to be drawn from the trial is not yet available. This report proposes that the full results of the monitoring and assessment of the trials, along with recommendations on a policy package for a future Hampshire School Streets programme, shall be reported to Cabinet in early 2022. In addition, this report recommends a continued operation of the trial arrangements at two of the participating schools, to continue to realise the scheme benefits at these trial sites, whilst the Council deliberates over the future of a Hampshire school streets programme.

Contextual information

7. School Streets schemes seek to reduce motor vehicle traffic from roads in the vicinity of school entrances at busy times to help make journeys to school safer and make active travel to school (cycling and walking) more appealing. This is achieved through implementation of timed access restrictions on motor vehicle traffic on the roads providing the main route of pedestrian access to the school site, thus providing increased road-space for those walking and cycling during the start and end of the school day.
8. Following a motion to Full Council on 24 September 2020 and subsequent Cabinet approval of the high-level delivery approach on 9 February 2021, the implementation plan for the Council's School Streets Pilot was developed. The implementation plan and the recommended sites for trial interventions were approved by the Executive Member for Highways Operations on 17 June 2021, with authority to make arrangements to implement the three individual trial schemes being delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment. The detailed implementation proposals were approved by the Director on 6 July 2021.
9. Testing of the trial arrangements commenced at the three participating schools in the final days of the 2020/21 academic year to ensure there were no significant operational issues in advance of the main trial period. The main trial period commenced at the start of autumn term of the 2021/22 academic year and School Streets schemes have been in continuous effect during term-time periods at the three trial sites thereafter.
10. Initial consideration of the feedback received from the participating schools suggests that the trials have been effective, particularly in terms of road safety and the improvements to the road environment around the school at peak times. All participating schools have indicated that resourcing the stewarding arrangements presents a significant challenge, and as a result one of the three participating schools, Alverstoke Infants School in Gosport, has confirmed that it cannot continue to commit the necessary resources and has therefore withdrawn from the trial. The other two participating schools (Harrison Primary School, Fareham, and Cadland Primary School, Holbury) have both confirmed a desire to continue with the school street arrangements over the coming months ahead of Cabinet determining the future of School Streets in Hampshire.
11. In partnership with Sustrans, a programme of monitoring and assessment has been implemented to gauge the effectiveness of the school streets interventions. This monitoring includes traffic count data, traffic camera survey

data, parking behaviour surveys, a community engagement exercise and school pupil surveys.

12. Full analysis of the data and conclusions to be drawn from the pilot will be available to report to Cabinet in early 2022 and, if required, to ETE Select Committee ahead of the Cabinet meeting. The full results and assessment will be accompanied by a draft policy package to provide guidance, should Cabinet support the wider rollout of School Streets in Hampshire.
13. Until such time as the future policy direction of Hampshire School Streets is determined, this paper recommends a continued operation of the trial arrangements at the two remaining participating schools, for the following reasons:
 - it will allow the benefits to the community and local area to continue to be realised whilst the Council deliberates over the future policy direction of Hampshire School Streets;
 - it will provide sufficient time to fully analyse the monitoring data and draw clear conclusions to inform decision making on future policy. It also enables gathering complementary data relating to changes in transport mode choices during the winter months, and during the pandemic recovery period as travel patterns and public transport patronage continues to adjust;
 - it avoids the need to revoke the existing Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) prior to full evaluation of the monitoring data and reporting on the outcomes of the trial; and
 - to remove the school streets arrangements at the remaining two trial sites may send misleading signals that the future direction of Hampshire School Streets initiatives has already been determined.

Consultation and Equalities

14. The County Council Members for the three trial locations have previously been contacted with updates on the trial; there is Member support for the initiative and no objections have been received.
15. There are no significant equalities implications associated with the continuation of the School Streets at the trial sites whilst the County Council deliberates on the future of School Streets in Hampshire. On this basis, the decision has been assessed as having a neutral impact on protected characteristics.

Finance

16. Revenue funding from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 is funding the School Streets pilot.
17. A full financial evaluation of any rollout of school streets will be included in the report to Cabinet in early 2022.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

18. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies

and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

19. The School Streets trial schemes encourage a modal shift toward active travel modes, which has direct benefits in carbon reductions and also indirect benefits by promoting a change in behaviours toward travel choices for local journeys.

Statutory Procedures

20. The ETROs which form the legal basis for the road closures are effective from July 2021, and a decision on whether the changes introduced under the School Streets initiative will be removed or made permanent must be made within 18 months of this date. The ETROs will therefore remain in effect to enable a continuation of the trial arrangements, whilst the Council determines the future of a Hampshire School Streets programme.

Legal and insurance

21. There are no significant legal or insurance implications that are additional to those detailed in previous School Streets Pilot decision reports. The County Council's legal team will continue to update the insurer as necessary regarding this trial.

Maintenance Implications

22. There are no significant maintenance implications associated with the continuation of school streets at two of the trial sites.

Conclusions

23. In accordance with the commitments of previous decision reports, the results and conclusions from the pilot will be reported to the Cabinet meeting in early 2022, alongside recommendations on a policy package for a wider rollout of Hampshire School Streets.
24. In addition, this report recommends the continued operation of school streets at two of the participating schools in order to continue to realise the scheme benefits at these trial sites, whilst the Council deliberates over the future of a Hampshire school streets programme.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
School Streets (Report to Cabinet)	9 February 2021
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

There are no significant equalities implications associated with this decision that are additional to those detailed in previous School Streets Pilot decision reports. On this basis, the decision has been assessed as having a neutral impact on protected characteristics.