

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES – 21 JUNE 2022

REVIEW OF SCHOOL STREETS

Report ES20192

The Review of the School Streets Report was presented by the Assistant Director for Traffic and Parking, along with the Road Safety Manager.

A Member stated that she had liaised with colleagues in other boroughs and found that the common denominator in terms of the successful implementation of School Streets was the use of ANPR cameras. She expressed the view that a reliance on Street Marshals was misplaced. She felt that the financial arguments outlined in the report were unacceptable and asked for the recommendations to be refused.

Another Member agreed with this view and asked that the recommendations of the report be rejected. She said that she had taken the time to observe the School Street operating in Hayes at 8.00am. Her experience of the School Street was not as outlined in the report. She said that she saw hundreds of children, walking, scooting and cycling to school in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Many families were enjoying the School Street. The Member had taken photographs and had drafted a report. In her report she had recommended the use of Traffic Enforcement Officers. She explained that the main problem that they had at the barrier (manned by one steward) was with delivery drivers and builders. The Member continued and pointed out that the Ward Councillor (Cllr Thomas Turrell) took a positive view of the School Street. She suggested that LBB could look to adopt the model used in Birmingham where they used mobile ANPR cameras. Another possibility (also used in Birmingham), was the use of body cameras by stewards. The Member stated that there were many positives about the scheme and many teething problems that could be fixed.

A Member asked that as the Council was earning approximately £3m from the moving traffic contravention cameras, could not some of this money be spent on School Streets.

The Assistant Director for Traffic and Parking responded and pointed out that the report was not saying that the Council was not going to be involved in any School Street projects. He said that the recommendation of the report was that the Council would support schools that wanted to run School Streets. However, the Council was not looking to roll out School Streets everywhere because of the resource implications. He stated that the School Streets project in Hayes was initially a pilot and that other schemes had been piloted during lockdown. Some were successful and others were not.

The Assistant Director pointed out that the use of CCTV and mobile cameras was very expensive and even if the Council had the cameras, it was expensive to move them around. The Assistant Director explained that at the moment the Council did

not have any mobile cameras in the borough and to purchase any would involve the Council in significant cost. There was also the additional cost involved in the running of the cameras. At the end of the day, it was a matter of the prioritisation of resources and budgets. There were numerous demands on resources, for example the installation of a zebra crossing. He stated that the likely revenue generated from ANPR cameras for School Streets would probably not cover the running costs of the cameras.

The Assistant Director for Traffic and Parking said that the income generated from moving traffic cameras was covering costs at the moment. This income was not ring fenced and would be used to cover all aspects of the ECS Portfolio. Currently, not as much income was being generated as was anticipated—it was hoped to make the MTC cameras more effective going forward.

A Member drew attention to the table in section 3.17 of the report. He pointed out that the percentage figures for July 21 added up to 98% and not 100% and wondered where the other 2% had gone. The Road Safety Manager apologised and said that she thought this was an error with respect to the data submitted for travel by Trams.

A Member drew attention to the table in section 3.41 of the report. He pointed out that the percentage figure for June 21 was 92.3% and that the percentage figure for November 21 was 100.41% and so it was clear the figures were not adding up.

A Member stated that she had investigated several other boroughs and found that their School Streets were self-funding. She felt that this was something that the Council should look into further. She also emphasised the importance of School Streets in providing better air quality for young people.

The Assistant Director for Traffic and Parking stated that School Streets were not the only way of reducing air pollution outside of schools. Things like active travel plans could also be used. There was indeed a broad spectrum of tools that could be used that were not as expensive. He said that the Council could not justify an investment in cameras at this stage.

A Member commented that Bromley was not a poor borough and that the Council should be proactive and join the other 500 School Streets in London.

Recommendations 2.4 and 2.5 of the report were as follows:

2.4 That funding for the ongoing support for existing School Streets continues to be found from the existing revenue budget for Traffic and Road Safety; and for the possible introduction of any new School Streets would need to be considered on a case by case basis, subject to funding being available within that budget.

2.5 That the decision to introduce or discontinue any School Street is delegated to the Director of Environment and Public Protection, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety."

Councillor Simon Fawthrop proposed the following amendments to the recommendations:

2.4 That funding for the ongoing support for existing School Streets continues to be found from the existing revenue budget for Traffic and Road Safety.

2.5 Any new School Streets would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to funding being available within budget and subject to approval from the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety and scrutiny from the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee.

2.6 That the decision to discontinue any School Street is delegated to the Director of Environment and Public Protection, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety.

The Chairman asked for a vote on the revised recommendations and the motion was carried by five votes to four.

RESOLVED that:

2.1 That School Streets are not actively rolled out across the borough, due primarily to resource implications, but also the negative impact on some parents and on some nearby residents.

2.2 The Council supports schools that currently operate a School Street and that wish to continue running their School Street using their own marshals, where there is support from parents and local residents and the School Street is not causing significant negative knock on effects in nearby streets

2.3 That Members note that if the additional schools wish to install a School Street, consideration should be given to their Travel Plan status, catchment area, existent level of active travel and consultation to ascertain if there would be a significant parent buy in, in addition to consultation with affected residents. Also, that the schools agreed to commit to marshalling the School Street with their own resources going forward.

2.4 That funding for the ongoing support for existing School Streets continues to be found from the existing revenue budget for Traffic and Road Safety.

2.5 Any new School Streets would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to funding being available within budget and subject to approval from the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety and scrutiny from the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee.

2.6 That the decision to discontinue any School Street is delegated to the Director of Environment and Public Protection, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety.