

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	14 January 2021
<b>Title:</b>	School Streets
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

**Contact name:** Nicola Waight

**Tel:** 0370 779 4339

**Email:** nicola.waight@hants.gov.uk

### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
  - a. report back to the Select Committee after initial discussions in October 2020,
  - b. provide details on the proposed trials due to be considered by cabinet in February,
  - c. describe the criteria proposed for selection of schools into the trials, and
  - d. provide detail on proposed monitoring and evaluation of the trials,to inform Select Committee discussions prior to making recommendations to Cabinet and further reporting to the Full Council.

### Contextual Information

#### Background

2. A School Street is “a road outside a school with a ... restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic. The objective of school streets is to create a safer, healthier and pleasant environment for everyone” (schoolstreet.org)
3. A motion to trial school streets was considered by the County Council on 24 September 2020. After due discussion the motion was passed, with agreement that a firm proposal for a trial, including costing information and confirmation of potential funding, would be considered by the ETE Select Committee, before being brought back to Cabinet for consideration and reported to County Council.
4. A presentation was made to ETE Select Committee in October 2020 setting out the outline context for School Streets and proposing to develop details of a trial

to be delivered in 2021. At this Committee meeting it was agreed that the Cabinet paper would be further considered by the Select Committee in January 2021, ahead of consideration by the Cabinet in February 2021.

5. The Select Committee supported the development of proposals for a limited local trial of school streets in Hampshire, and agreed to further consider the proposals ahead of discussion at Cabinet.

### **Proposals**

6. It is proposed that the trial consists of three schools in a mix of areas (e.g. rural/urban) where measures would be implemented, with a further three to six control schools to enable an assessment of the impact of the measures to be compared. This is particularly important given the current impact of coronavirus on social distancing and travel patterns.
7. The trials would be funded by the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 award.
8. Between January and March 2021 engagement with schools and wider communities would take place to ensure broad support and resolve any early issues.
9. Between March and June detailed preparations, traffic orders, and baseline monitoring would take place.
10. In July, a trial day or week would take place.
11. Between the start of term in September and the October half term the full school streets trials would take place.
12. The results of the trials would then be reviewed and the results assessed to enable a report to be brought back to Cabinet with the outcomes and conclusions from the trial.

### **Shortlisting process**

13. A working group of officers from ETE and Children's Services has developed criteria for schools' inclusion in the trials based on the following criteria:
  - interest from the School (head and governors) and enough staff to manage the trial;
  - School already engaged in travel planning measures including STARS accreditation to at least Bronze level;
  - County Councillor member support (to be established) ahead of Cabinet in February, and subject to Cabinet support;
  - an access on a suitable road (public highway, speed limit 30mph or below, access on a minor road);
  - limited impact on schools very nearby;
  - infant, primary or secondary school (not colleges);
  - Hampshire maintained school (for insurance purposes); and

- Not a Special School due to representativeness/application across the county, greater travel distances and complex needs of some pupils in relation to travel.
14. Schools for inclusion in the trial have been proposed directly by the schools themselves via Hants Covid Travel Map.
  15. In addition, schools have been considered based on suggestions by councillors and the School Travel Plan team.

### **Legal and Insurance**

16. The exact School Streets measures would be determined following engagement with the school and local community. Like schemes elsewhere in the country, it is envisaged that trials are likely to take the form of street closures to motor vehicles; either temporary closures staffed by volunteers with barriers, or more fixed measures such as bollards (in suitable locations and for the duration of the trial). Other types of measure may be possible which, if applicable to a particular location, will be explored further, including with reference to potential liabilities and insurance cover.
17. Training and PPE details will be developed and reviewed by the County Council's Asset Management team.
18. Trials involving moving traffic enforcement (e.g. Automatic Number Plate Recognition – ANPR) are not possible as legislation does not currently support this. It remains a possible option for the future.

### **Finance**

19. Funding awarded from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 award has been re-allocated to fund this trial up to a total £66,000.
20. It should be noted that there is pressure on all of the ATF Tranche 2 budgets as the final award was 95% of the indicative allocation, and the schools streets trial did not formally form part of the detailed and costed original bid.
21. In the longer term there is no secured funding for the further development of roll out of School Streets beyond the trial. Any future rollout would require significant staff resource within the County Council, as well as inputs from the schools themselves.

### **Consultation and Equalities**

22. Engagement with parents, schools, residents and local businesses before, during and after trials would form a crucial part of the process.
23. Potential equality related impacts have been identified and are set out in the Equality Impact Assessment summarised in this report. It is expected that these impacts can be mitigated and/or monitored as part of the trials.

## **Other Key Issues**

24. Key issues to be addressed by the trials are to further investigate:

- the impact of school streets on schools and their wider communities;
- the practicalities of delivering school streets e.g. legal issues, securing volunteers, and both Hampshire County Council and school staff resource requirements;
- the legal and practical considerations to deliver school streets in more complex scenarios.

## **Conclusions**

25. The proposals in this report establish a methodology for trialling School Streets in Hampshire.

26. Subject to Cabinet support, the trials would be undertaken during the 2021 calendar year.

27. Findings of the trials will be reported and any conclusions to be drawn will be reported back to the Cabinet following the conclusion of the trials at the end of 2021.

**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
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

### Other Significant Links

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
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:**

An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken for the proposal and it has been found to have a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. Specific assessments will be carried out for specific schemes, but the proposed trial will provide an opportunity to assess the approach more generally, particularly in relation to potential impacts on people with disabilities and older people, who may have to travel further at specific sites when escorting children to school, and also on women, who are known to form a higher proportion of parents escorting children to school and who would therefore be particularly affected by any consequences of the scheme. Other potential impacts to be monitored might fall upon religious communities for whom access to places of worship may be affected, or other groups that may feel vulnerable escorting children to school on foot rather than by vehicle.

It is assessed that there would be a positive impact for younger people (school pupils) through increased opportunity for physical activity, reduced road danger, and potential reductions in air pollution.

A potential positive impact could also be experienced by people with disabilities not reliant on a private car as the environment would be safer e.g. people with visual impairment, mobility scooter.

## **Appendix A**

### **Further detail of proposed School Streets Trials**

This Appendix sets out more details of the proposed School Streets trials. It aims to:

- set out the background to the project;
- set out a plan for School Street trials;
- provide detail on monitoring and evaluation of the trials;
- set out the criteria for inclusion in the trials

### **Background information**

1. A School Street is “a road outside a school with a ... restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic. The result is a safer, healthier and pleasant environment for everyone” (schoolstreet.org)
2. A motion to trial school streets was brought to Full Council on 24 September 2020 by Councillor Jackie Porter. The motion was passed without objection. The recording can be viewed [here](#).
3. The Council resolved to:
  - work with districts, schools and local partners to swiftly identify those schools in the county that could put a “school streets” scheme in place;
  - work with districts, schools and local partners to enable all schools that wish to take part in the “school streets” scheme to do so – taking advantage of experimental traffic orders and new statutory guidance over fast-tracked Traffic Regulation Orders where necessary;
  - measure air quality around a sample of schools in all 11 districts at child-head height to identify the level of air pollution children are being exposed to at school drop-off and pick-up; and
  - pilot additional measures to improve air quality near schools in 2020/21, such as ‘living green walls’ and tree planting.
4. A presentation was made to ETE Select Committee in October 2020 setting out the outline context for School Streets and proposing to develop details of a trial to be delivered in 2021. At this Committee it was discussed that a Cabinet paper would be developed, and returned to Select Committee in January 2021 (this meeting), ahead of Cabinet in February 2021. A recording of the Select Committee discussion can be found [here](#).
5. The benefits of school streets include:
  1. improved air quality;
  2. reduced carbon emissions;
  3. increases active travel journeys to school;



- provides a safer and more pleasant environment locally for the whole school community;
  - can assist with social distancing by reducing the street space that motor vehicles occupy;
  - create safer roads to improve road safety for children, build confidence and others;
    4. supports '[Hampshire Physical Activity Strategy 2018-21](#)';
    5. supports '[Towards a healthier Hampshire: a strategy for improving the public's health 2016-2021](#)';
    6. supports Climate Change Strategy;
    7. supports 'Hampshire 2050: Vision for the future'; and
    8. reduce/spread issues arising from residents around parent parking.
6. The challenges of school streets include:
1. not suitable for all schools (coach access, main roads, bus routes etc);
  2. still being trialed in other Council areas;
  3. displacement of traffic onto nearby streets;
  4. costs depending on complexity of scheme, varied;
  5. lack of support from stakeholders;
  6. liability and safety issue to overcome (equipment, third parties);
  7. road space/utilities;
  8. can be reliant on school staff or volunteers;
  9. don't yet have the back office or powers for moving traffic enforcement, so will take time to develop and deliver;
  10. may be seen as anti-car and subject to objections;
  11. need active support of schools – it cannot be done without them; and
  12. standalone 20mph speed limits of limited effect – require changes to physically slow traffic see results of 2018 Hampshire County Council trials [here](#) (item 4).
7. Hampshire County Council already delivers an air quality programme in schools within designated areas of poor air quality. The schools are identified through district air quality monitoring work. Around 30 schools have already engaged with initiatives including diffusion tubes, flow meters and anti-idling campaigns. Clean Air Day has been promoted in schools for the last two years.

8. Hampshire County Council also delivers a wider ranges of initiatives and support for schools with regard to their travel needs. This includes:
  - School Travel Plans following national online accreditation and recognition scheme, STARS;
  - School Crossing Patrol service;
  - Support Development Planning etc to identify and deliver school walking and cycling schemes;
  - Park and Stride sites, cycle and scooter storage;
  - training – Bikeability, Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSOs), Pedestrian training, Scooter training;
  - My Journey promotion to encourage active travel and road safety;
  - annual challenges (Scooter Challenge, Walktober, Walk to School Week, Road Safety Week);
  - ongoing programmes (Bike It, Street Sense, Air Quality, Walk Once a Week (WOW)); and
  - resources (Transition to new school e.g. maps, and Parkwise resources).
9. The County Council Travel Plan Team recently won three more Modeshift awards – 'Excellence in Walking', 'Best Project under £1000' and 'Modeshift Honorary Membership" for the team leader Helen Harris.

### **Proposed trials**

10. Following the October Select Committee, a working group has been established to investigate the requirements for a trial and develop a proposal to trial School Streets in different locations across the County – both rural and urban.
11. The working group includes officers from ETE (Integrated Transport, Implementation, Travel Plans, Asset Management, Safer Roads and Parking), Children's Services, Public Health, Legal and Insurance.
12. The working group has:
  1. learnt from Southampton City Council's/Sustrans' experience of delivering school streets – which have been aided by HCC teams through traded services agreements (a recorded presentation can be found [here](#) at 48:45);
  2. developed criteria for inclusion in the trial;
  3. created a GIS map with data relevant to criteria;
  4. applied these criteria to shortlist schools for the trial;
  5. understood legal and insurance requirements; and
  6. developed an evaluation and monitoring logic model.

### **What would a trial look like on the ground?**

13. The measure for each school street will depend on the specific needs of each location. It is most likely that school streets would involve a temporary prohibition of motor vehicles using barriers and cones, with trained volunteers in place to manage closure and reopening, and escort vehicle access at walking pace where absolutely necessary.
14. An alternative option could be a 24 hour/7 day a week closure e.g. where the school is at the end of a cul-de-sac. This would not require volunteers but will be limited in applicable sites.
15. A third option, of “signed only” closures where signs at the side of the road advise that the road is closed to motor vehicles between set times around the school run, is very unlikely to be accepted by insurance brokers as compliance cannot be ensured.

### **How would it work?**

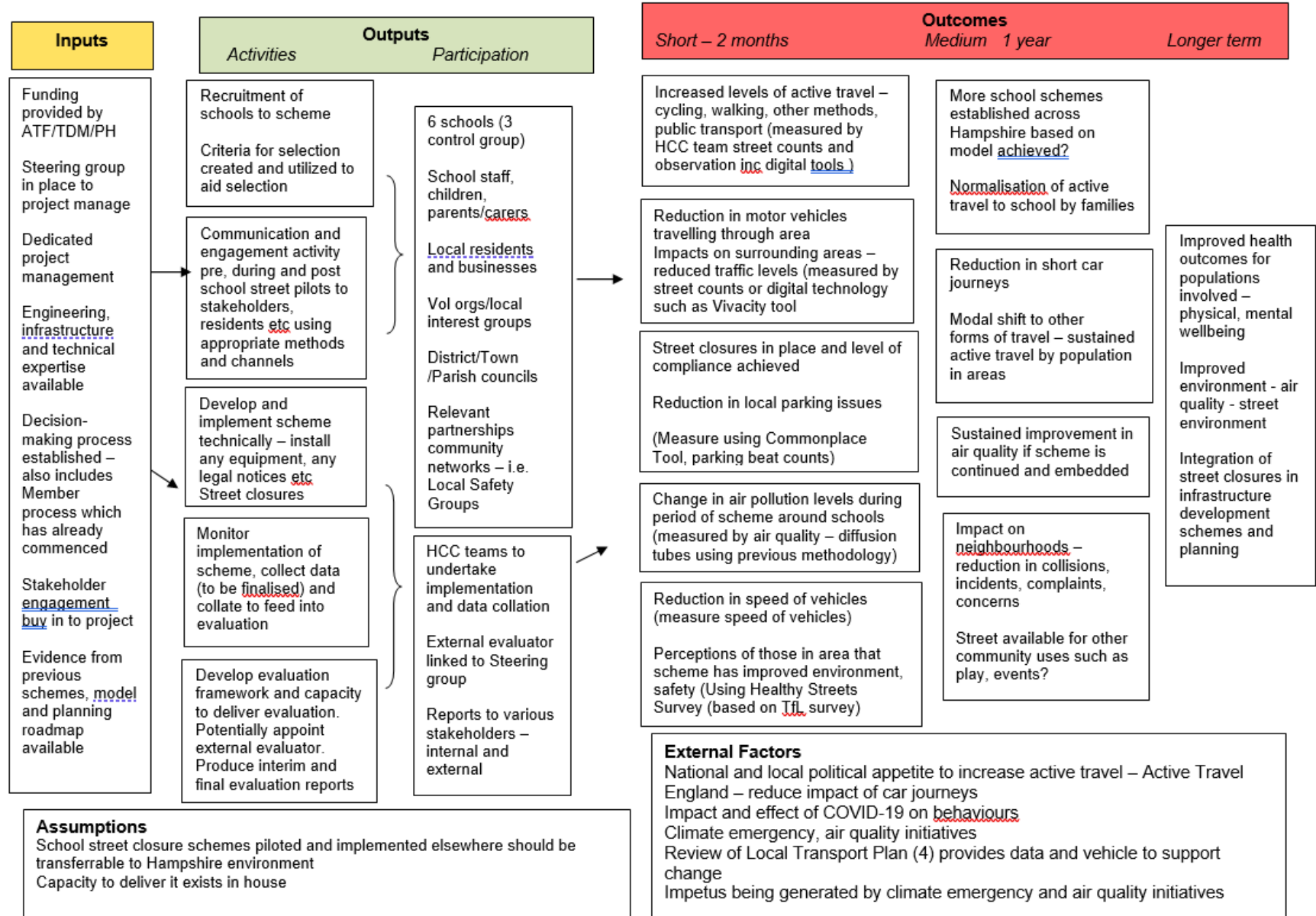
16. It is proposed that the trial consists of three schools, with a further three to six control schools to compare the impact of measures. This is particularly important given the impact of coronavirus on social distancing and travel patterns.
17. The trials would be funded by the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 award.
18. Between January and March 2021 – engagement with schools and wider communities would take place to ensure broad support and resolve early issues.
19. Between March and June detailed preparations, traffic orders, baseline monitoring would take place.
20. In July a trial day or week would take place.
21. Between September and the October half term the full school streets trials would take place.
22. The results of the trials would be reviewed in October with the results ready in November for review.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

23. It is suggested that the scheme is monitoring and evaluated against the following aims:
  - to explore the practicalities of undertaking School Streets in Hampshire;
  - to understand how they could be applied;
  - to set and test criteria in practice;
  - to test if School Streets can make a positive difference; and
  - to understand costs involved in delivering School Streets more widely.
24. A monitoring and evaluation logic model is set out below:

**Programme: School Streets Logic Model** (to act as base for evaluation)

**Aim of programme:** to develop, implement and evaluate school streets pilot schemes across Hampshire, testing feasibility and practicalities, changes in modal shift to active travel and impacts on local environment, and understanding costs in 2021.



## Criteria for selecting trial schools

25. A longlist of schools was compiled based on direct requests from schools in response to the Hants Covid Travel Map website used to collect suggestions for social distancing and active travel schemes in response to the coronavirus; suggestions from Members and suggestions from the Travel Plan team who work very closely with schools. The longlist included over 60 schools.
26. As there would be a very large number of variables associated with each school and its suitability for the trial, a phased sifting approach has been followed with schools being filtered at each stage until a final short list is determined. The first stage involved application of a limited number of criteria. The second stage was the application of a longer list of wider considerations. The final stage will be applied to the shortlist of schools.
27. Stage 1: Criteria include:
  1. interest from the School (head and governors) and enough staff to manage the trial;
  2. School already engaged in travel planning measures including STARS accreditation to at least Bronze level;
  3. County Councillor member support (to be established ahead of Cabinet) -support subject to formal Cabinet support;
  4. an access on a suitable road (public highway, speed limit 30mph or below, access on a minor road);
  5. limited impact on schools very nearby;
  6. infant, primary or secondary school (not colleges);
  7. Hampshire maintained school (for insurance purposes); and
  8. Not a Special School due to representativeness/application across the county, greater travel distances and complex needs of some pupils in relation to travel.

A shortlist will be developed, with a list of suitable reserve schools.

28. Stage 2: Considerations include:
  1. high percentage of children within catchment;  
district member support;
  2. site of previous trial closure;
  3. School Crossing Patrol site;
  4. bus route diversion required;
  5. Home to School transport alterations required;

6. good public transport alternatives available;
7. cycle routes available;
8. sufficient cycle and scooter storage;
9. suitable traffic diversion routes;
10. parking alternatives available;
11. school street would be the only access for large number of residential properties;
12. impacts on businesses, public facilities and places of worship;
13. access for staff to leave site;
14. coach/bus access for school trips;
15. Emergency Services route affected (this would be established through formal traffic order process);
16. number of pupils;
17. very high car use; and
18. residents' parking permit area.

This stage is underway at present (Dec-Jan 2021)

#### 29. Stage 3: Deciding factors:

1. casualty record around shortlisted schools (very unlikely that any school has a significant number or casualty pattern);
2. reported near miss information from school travel plans;
3. are local residents supportive?;
4. are affected businesses/public facilities supportive?;
5. EqlA and Risk Assessment impacts and mitigation requirements;
6. proximity to an AQMA;
7. diffusion tubes show existing air quality is poor (data very limited); and
8. cost to implement and maintain a scheme at each location.