

School Streets

Report by Ricky Moffat, Head of Commercial Operations

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the intention to progress 'School Streets' at two Midlothian Schools subject to consultation, funding awards and the necessary legal process being completed.

This is part of a wider project promoting sustainable transport in Midlothian.

2 Background

- 2.1** 'School Streets' have recently been piloted by both City of Edinburgh Council and East Lothian Council. This initiative involves a legal order that bans most traffic from driving in the street during a specified period (generally when children are arriving at or leaving the school).
- 2.2** The ban is applied to streets where vehicles manoeuvre to drop off/pick up children and are causing an unsafe environment for pupils arriving at the school on foot or by bike.
- 2.3** It is proposed to trial 'School Streets' in Midlothian at Kings Park Primary School, Dalkeith and Lasswade Primary School, Bonnyrigg. It is acknowledged that many of Midlothian's schools have similar issues. However these schools are typical and have a prolonged record of issues around drop-off and indiscriminate parking. Police Scotland, Traffic Warden service, School Travel Plan Co-ordinator, School Staff and Parent Teacher Associations of both schools have worked tirelessly introducing many initiatives and promotions to reduce the problem with limited success.
- 2.4** Although the problems are primarily caused by too many pupils being driven to/from school, fewer than 1 in 5 pupils are driven to the school.
- 2.5** It is proposed that consultation exercises be carried out to establish whether residents, school staff, pupils and parents/carers are supportive of the initiative and in the case of Lasswade Primary School, which streets should be included in the zone.
- 2.6** Passes will be issued to residents and there will be exceptions for disabled badge holders, emergency services, badged delivery vehicles etc.

- 2.7** A letter of support has been received from Police Scotland supporting this initiative at the identified schools and is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.8** The significant risk is that parent's/carers cars park in the streets adjacent to the zones. Whilst this is likely in some capacity, there is a dispersion of vehicles round the zone and 'park and stride' options will be marketed along with this project. This will involve mapping locations and requesting that parents can park further away and walk into the zone. These locations may include local facilities and businesses car parks, subject to agreement.
- 2.9** The intention is to monitor the project for twelve months after its introduction and bring back the findings to a future Council meeting for consideration.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The funding for this project is part of a larger sustainable transport project comprising Smarter Choices Smarter Places, SESTRAN sustainable transport, Climate Challenge Fund (via RUTS), Council environmental improvement funding, and in-kind contributions comprising council staff time. The whole project has a value of £158,416 as detailed in the table below. The 'school streets' element is estimated at £21,000.

Funder	Amount
Smarter Choices Smarter Places	£79,200
SESTRAN sustainable transport	£25,000
Council environmental improvement funding	£11,500
Climate Challenge Fund (RUTS)	£22,700
In kind Contribution (council staff)	£20,000
Total	£158,400

3.2 Risk

The primary risk is a lack of appropriate enforcement, leading to vehicles continuing to drive in the streets adjacent to schools. As set out in Appendix A Police Scotland are supportive of this proposal.

Prior to considering a roll out of this initiative to other schools, comprehensive monitoring of the two schools and awareness of adjacent Council projects, will allow the deliverance of robust rationale for additional schools to be included subject to future Council consideration.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The aims and objectives of the project are to improve safety for children arriving and leaving school and reduce car use and hence a reduction in carbon emissions.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions and this proposal supports that aim. Further to this Midlothian Council has adopted the Scottish Government accident reduction targets for 2020. By reducing conflict at the school gate, the likelihood of a traffic accident is reduced.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The project aims to reduce the environmental impacts of travel and in parallel promote healthy living.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Schools, parents, consultation and promotional events are all included within the scope of this project. In addition SEStran, Paths for All and local ward members are identified partners in the project

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The project aims to help adults, children and the Midlothian community live a happier, healthier and longer life. Enabling and promoting walking, cycling and public transport use does not affect those who require to drive (for example disabled persons and residents who will be exempt from the vehicle ban in school streets).

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

The project will aim to offer a more sustainable form of transport use which in turn will lead to lower carbon emissions.

3.10 Digital Issues

There are no digital issues associated with this report.

4 Summary

It is proposed that Council introduce the necessary legislation and support to allow 'School Streets' to be introduced at two of the primary schools in Midlothian i.e. Kings Park Primary and Bonnyrigg Primary. This will allow restrictions to be put in place which effectively removes vehicles at the times when children will be walking to school thereby reducing the likelihood of conflict and hence the potential for accidents.

5 Recommendations

Council is asked to;

- 1) support the introduction of 'School Streets' at Kings Park Primary, Dalkeith and Lasswade Primary, Bonnyrigg.
- 2) request that the Director, Resources provide a follow up report after the twelve month period of monitoring.

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Background Papers: