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Report of: *Director of City Growth*

Report to: *Cabinet Member for Transport and Development*

Date of Decision: *27th November 2019*

Subject: *School Streets and Play Streets*

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000		<input type="checkbox"/>		
- Affects 2 or more Wards		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? <i>Transport and Development</i>				
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? <i>Economic and Environmental Wellbeing</i>				
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>653</i>				
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

SCHOOL STREETS

- Approve the School Streets selection policy and prioritisation procedure
- Make Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders to implement a pilot School Streets scheme, allowing the implementation of School Streets at up to 5 schools across Sheffield on a temporary trial basis only
- Continue to monitor and assess the impact of the pilot School Streets scheme so as to inform a subsequent decision whether to implement School Streets permanently at any of those 5 schools, and identify opportunities to expand the School Streets scheme to other suitable locations in 2020

PLAY STREETS

- That Officers are authorised to undertake a pilot scheme to help shape future Council policy relating to the processing of applications for temporary road closures for street play events and develop further details / application forms etc.

Recommendations:**SCHOOL STREETS**

- That a pilot school streets scheme is approved
- That the school streets selection policy and prioritisation procedure is approved
- That we will monitor and assess the impact of School Streets before deciding whether these should be made permanent, as well as identifying opportunities to expand the scheme to other suitable locations next year.

PLAY STREETS

- That Officers are authorised to undertake a pilot scheme to help shape future Council policy relating to the approval of temporary road closures for street play events and develop further details / application forms etc.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Sarah Uttley</i>
		Legal: <i>Richard Cannon</i>
		Equalities: <i>Annemarie Johnston</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	<i>Edward Highfield</i>
3	Cabinet Member consulted:	<i>Cllr Bob Johnson</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Susie Pryor</i>	Job Title: <i>Senior Transport Planner</i>
	Date: <i>21/10/2019</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

SCHOOL STREETS PILOT SCHEME

- 1.1 'School Streets' is a term being used to describe a scheme where the road outside a school is closed temporarily at school opening and closing times. Typically a road is closed for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon.
- 1.2 School Streets are becoming increasingly popular across the UK as more Local Authorities are using them as a way to address key issues such as air pollution, traffic congestion and inconsiderate parking at the school gate, whilst also promoting active travel and healthy lifestyles.
- 1.3 The main aims of School Streets are to:
- Reduce volume of traffic using roads past school gates, both school-run and through traffic;
 - Improve air quality in and around school gates;
 - Increase number of pupils walking and cycling to school; and
 - Reduce the number of pupils arriving at the school gate by car
- 1.4 Walking or cycling to school helps children meet the recommendation to accumulate at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, which is linked with improved physical health.
- 1.5 Reducing the number of children being driven to school reduces particulates and harmful exhaust emissions around the school. This helps to improve air quality and reduces associated risks of lung and cardiovascular diseases.
- 1.6 Studies from pilot schemes undertaken at other Local Authorities in the country have recorded that the introducing school streets has reduced traffic volumes around the school, hence creating safer walking and cycling routes to school.
- 1.7 The Council is going to pilot a School Streets scheme as part of its work to encourage safer, greener and healthier travel to school in Sheffield. A trial scheme of a similar nature was run in two Sheffield schools (Nether Edge and Watercliffe Meadows) in conjunction with Clean Air Day on 20th June 2019. The trial scheme in respect of both schools was well received on the day with positive feedback from parents and pupils. Media coverage highlighted the high levels of participation and enthusiasm as well as support for future similar events.
- 1.8 The School Streets scheme will be piloted with up to 5 schools across the City, which have been selected using the prioritisation procedure details in paragraphs 1.10 and 1.11. Schools who wish to participate will be included within the pilot.

- 1.9 The pilot School Streets scheme will likely run for one week in each case and be implemented with Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 1.10 The Council will monitor and assess the impact of the pilot School Streets scheme before a further decision is made regarding whether it should be made permanent in respect of any of the schools included in the pilot, as well as identifying opportunities to expand the scheme to other suitable locations next year. If a scheme is to be made permanent it is intended to be implemented with a (permanent) Traffic Regulation Order.

School Streets School Selection Policy and Prioritisation

- 1.11 For the pilot, the Council will prioritise schools that meet the following criteria for selection.
- Those schools that have already gained ModeshiftSTARS accreditation and are actively engaged in the school travel planning process. Modeshift STARS (Sustainable Travel Accreditation and Recognition for Schools) is a national schools awards scheme that has been established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel.
 - The schools must have a road outside their entrance that is considered suitable for closure during the set times.
 - The road is not a major bus route
- 1.12 Those schools that meet the criteria are then prioritised using a process that awards points for a range of factors such as ModeshiftSTARS rating, Air Quality, School Support, number of residents affected, access Impacts and displacement of through traffic.
- 1.13 Schools with entrances on A-roads or B-roads, or bus routes are unsuitable for closure as a school street. However, these schools can still take part in the ModeshiftSTARS programme and other initiatives.
- 1.14 The Schools Streets scheme will typically work in the following way:
- The street directly outside a school will be closed for a short time when children are arriving in the morning and leaving in the afternoon.
 - The street will become a pedestrian and cycle zone at these set times.
 - Motorised vehicles will not be allowed to enter the street between these times unless they have been granted an exemption agreed in advance, and where other access arrangements or times cannot be agreed, (for example a blue badge holder or an emergency vehicle). The Council will work closely with schools to determine

where the road closure starts and ends (the entire street may not necessarily need to be closed).

- School streets will come into effect at different times for each school.

- 1.15 Residents will be able to leave the road at any point during the closure times. However no traffic will be allowed to enter the road during the closure times, unless they are a blue badge holder or an emergency vehicle.
- 1.16 Each road will be clearly signposted with the closure times clearly displayed. Typical closure times are 8.15am to 9.15am and 2.45pm to 3.45pm during school term times. The closures will not be in operation during the weekend, school holidays or bank holidays. In addition, the school street will not operate on teacher training days, or any other day that children are not in school.
- 1.17 Residents and businesses will be consulted by letter before the School Street pilot closure takes place on their street and given the opportunity to raise any concerns. Parents will also be informed of the scheme via the school.

PLAY STREETS

- 1.18 All children and young people should engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and preferably up to several hours every day. For under 5 year olds it is recommended that they undertake three hours of physical activity a day.
- 1.19 Data from the 'Active Lives Children and Young People Survey' for the academic year 2017/18. Data showed that the number of 5-15 year olds achieving the required level of activity has reduced over the years. With only 21% of boys and 14% of girls -being active for at least 60 minutes a day;
- 1.20 Play is one of the main ways in which children learn. It helps build self-worth by giving a child a sense of his or her own abilities and to feel good about themselves
- 1.21 Empowering communities and changing the environment to make it easier to be physically active are two outcomes of the Move More Plan of which the Playing Out Scheme would be part.
- 1.22 Sheffield City Council trialled street play events as part of the introduction of 20mph zones.
- 1.23 6 play events were given approval during this trial period. Of these 6, only 2 play events took place, these were on Coverdale Road and Dransfield Road. These streets were not within the 20mph zones but were the only streets that were able to participate in our trial.

- 1.24 A survey, carried out by a student at Sheffield University at the time of this trial, and connected to it found that **98.6 %** of participants in the questionnaires supported the idea of organising regular playing out events although only **49%** would support the idea of a road closure.
- 1.25 The new policy on play events will need to take into account the weight that the City Council gives to objections to the proposals (residents and businesses). If there are a high number of objections or concerns raised regarding the Play Street and its associated traffic management scheme, the proposal would not go ahead. Each proposal will be considered on its individual merits.
- 1.26 The proposed policy would have to take into account whether specific CRB, now called DBS checks, will need to be carried out on people stewarding the events. This will be explored through the development of the policy.
- 1.27 The principle of street play events is that they are minimally supervised and there needs to be a judgement of whether the City Council would endorse this.
- 1.28 The proposed policy would consider which legislation is suitable for the road closure. At present, most of those authorities already operating a play street event policy use the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 however this may not be the most expedient option available to the Council.
- 1.29 It is proposed that this policy would cover a one year trial period at which time the success of the scheme in delivering desired outcomes, its uptake by local residents and any feedback that we receive can be assessed and reported back to the Cabinet Member.
- 1.30 The policies/documentation that other local authorities have in relation to street play events, and their results, are as follows:

Bristol: Bristol carries out a large number of street parties for play events. They do receive a number of objections to the proposals but as the Council formally endorses play events, these objections are assumed to have been considered and determined not to overcome the benefits of implementing play events. Residents must be allowed vehicle access at all times. In 2012 the University of Bristol carried out a pilot study which looked at the physical activity levels of children. 66 children between the ages of 2-13 years old wore accelerometers at playing out sessions on two streets in the city. The pilot found that the playing out sessions saw children outside 70% of the time compared to only 20% on a normal school day. 30% of the time outdoors was undertaking moderate intensity activity compared to only 5% of indoor time at the same time of the day.¹ The pilot also found that there was equal participation across boys and girls which is unusual.

¹ PEACH pilot project Bristol University

Stockport: Stockport has a document relating to street play events and offer advice about how to apply and prepare for such events. This document does give slightly more weight to any objectors and they do state that objections may result in the application being refused. Even if permission is granted, any complaints may result in the permission being rescinded.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 Implementing the School and Play Streets schemes described in this report will contribute to the creation of a safer residential environment and *'thriving neighbourhoods and communities'*.
- 2.2 Implementing the report's recommendations will contribute to the delivery of:
- The council's continuing *commitment to address traffic-related emissions* of the Corporate Plan;
 - Policy 4 of the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy 2018-2040 (Make our streets healthy places where people feel safe).
 - The Council's Transport Strategy (March 2019) A safer and more sustainable Sheffield (Sustainable safety, safe walking and cycling as standard)

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Consultation will be carried out with local residents on each proposed School or Play Street before it is implemented. A letter is sent to every household on the street explaining the scheme and this contains contact details for any queries or concerns to be raised.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1.1 Overall there are no significant differential, positive or negative, equalities impacts from this proposal. School and Play Streets will fundamentally be positive, particularly for pedestrians. No negative equality impacts have been identified.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 SCHOOL STREETS

The service will fund up to £5,000 from revenue for the trial street closures for a maximum of 5 schools including TROs and Amey costs (signage and traffic management) and up to £5,000 for staff time

(project management and policy development), traffic counts and promotional items from the Sustainable Travel Access Fund grant.

4.2.2 PLAY STREETS

Process approvals of Play Street applications will be managed through existing Network Management team resources.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety.

The Council has powers to make Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) under section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act') to restrict traffic for reasons that include there being a likelihood of danger to the public. Before the Council can make a TTRO, it must undertake a notification procedure which includes publication of notice of its intention in a local newspaper in accordance with the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992.

The Council has the power to make traffic restrictions permanent with Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) made under section 1 of the 1984 Act. No TROs will be made until such point as a later decision is made to implement School Streets permanently.

Recently introduced guidance from the Department for Transport suggests that a 'Special Event' order made under section 16A of the 1984 Act may be suitable for the implementation of Play Streets. The Council has corresponded with the Department for Transport, who have indicated that such an order may be made for the duration of an entire year (and cover multiple events) rather than the making of individual orders per play street event. This would be subject to the approval of said order by the Secretary of State via the DfT.

In exercising the powers under the 1984 Act, the Council must have regard to its duty to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) as well as the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. It should also have regard to the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises and the effect on the amenities of any locality affected. In the event that a Special Event order is not approved then section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 represents an alternative.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 The schemes will be developed using existing staff resources.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

SCHOOL STREETS

- 5.1 No alternative options have been considered as this is a pilot scheme of proposed school streets. The schemes will be monitored to measure if they have been successful.

PLAY STREETS

- 5.3 Authorising road closures for street parties is a service that the Council currently provides to the people of Sheffield. When it receives an application, the impact of the closure on local traffic is assessed in terms of the location, the timing of the closure and what other works are in the vicinity of the proposed closure.

Included in the pack that is sent out to the applicant is a consultation letter that is to be sent out to the other residents on the road asking for their opinion on the proposed closure. Any objections to the closure are taken into account and may result in the rejection of the application for the street party.

This approach has been widely accepted by the local residents and it is rare that an applicant is unhappy with the Council's decision.

- 5.4 The Council considers applications for play events in the same manner as the current approach to street parties, but its decisions to refuse applications have been met with mixed reactions as the policy framework is very different.

- 5.5 It is therefore felt that a formal policy relating to street play events specifically is of paramount importance.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

SCHOOL STREETS

- 6.1 To reduce volume of traffic using roads past school gates, both school-run and through traffic
- 6.2 Reduce the number of pupils arriving at the school gate by car
- 6.3 To increase number of pupils walking and cycling to school
- 6.4 To improve air quality in and around school gates;

PLAY STREETS

- 6.5 To enable the City Council to respond to the interest the public have in holding play events

- 6.6 To allow officers to follow an approved policy when assessing applications for play events
- 6.7 To allow any non-highway matters relating to the refusal / acceptance of such events to be referred to Senior Officer in STSI