

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Transport Cllr Mark Elliot, Cabinet Member for Resources	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	Not before 29th March 2025	E 3588
TITLE:	School Streets Prioritisation and Funding	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council has allocated £250,000 of Clean Air Zone (CAZ) funding to develop a School Streets programme. However, the secured funding is not currently included as a provisional budget in the Capital Programme. As part of the governance within Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES), there is a requirement for this capital funding to be formally pulled into the Capital Programme with appropriate approvals. This would usually happen as part of the annual budget setting exercise but spend needs to commence within 2024/25 so we are seeking a SMD to formalise approval of this budget in the current financial year. In addition, a further £87,000 of funding has provisionally been allocated from the main Council budget to the programme for 2025/26. The Council intends to support as many School Streets as possible with the funding available, with a minimum of three. This is subject to (a) the willingness and number of schools able to take part in the programme and (b) the cost of the measures required in each instance, depending on the nature of the street.

1.2 Approval of the CAZ allocation of the budget will enable delivery of the School Streets programme. Intended outcomes will be to restrict some motor vehicle traffic on the roads outside of schools at school drop off and pick up times, and the schemes may introduce further road safety, active travel and public realm improvements to support pupils, parents and school staff to travel by sustainable modes of transport.

- 1.3 This report also sets out the work done to date on the programme and the approach taken to prioritise which schools will initially be considered for a School Street as well as the considerations being given to delivery and enforcement.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Members are asked to;

- 2.1 Fully approve the capital budget of £250,000 funded by CAZ reserves, which are already received and committed for this purpose.
- 2.2 Note the work done to date on the programme.
- 2.3 Approve the initial shortlist of schools that will be subject to further feasibility and design work. These will be subject to further Single Member Decisions to enable delivery at the appropriate time.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 School Streets aim to improve the environment directly outside schools at the start and end of the school day by restricting access for the majority of motorised vehicle traffic. The schemes may cover a whole street, part of a street or several roads outside or leading to a school. The restrictions are only in place on weekdays during term time and will generally run for between 30 – 60 minutes in the morning and afternoon. Further measures to support active travel, improve road safety and enhance the public realm may also be introduced to complement the motor vehicle restriction, or may form part of a School Street if the roads are not suitable for a motor vehicle restriction (usually due to being located on a main road or bus route).
- 3.2 The schemes are in place in a large number of local authorities across the United Kingdom and have gained particular popularity over the past five years. While the majority of schemes have been introduced in London over this time, significant numbers of cities and towns across the country have schemes in place with many more planning to implement them. Further consideration is increasingly being given to schools in rural settings as well as those that may not be suitable for traditional School Street timed motor vehicle restrictions. These schools may be more suited to public realm and road safety improvements such as improved crossings, accessibility improvements such as dropped kerbs and pavement widening, tree planting and other street greening as well as benches and other street furniture to create a welcoming and social environment outside of the school.
- 3.3 School Streets would contribute to the meeting the aims of the Journey to Net Zero and contribute to delivering the Corporate Strategy:
 - Preparing for the future – the schemes would support residents to make travel choices that have a positive impact on the environment.
 - Delivering for local residents – they would provide facilities that give priority and support to active travel.

- Focusing on prevention – the schemes would support people to choose active travel, promoting better health with the potential to contribute towards improved air quality.
- More travel choices – as part of the wider programme to deliver improved sustainable transport across B&NES, the schemes would contribute towards providing alternatives to private car use.

3.4 The schemes are often introduced as an initial trial under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) for up to 18 months in order to assess their impact on the road network and collect monitoring data and feedback. This is the proposed approach for the School Streets programme in B&NES. This approach may be reviewed at a later date once the outcomes of the initial trial schemes are known.

3.5 The first schemes in B&NES will be introduced using relevant ‘no motor vehicle’ signage with restriction times and temporary barriers that block access to the road. The barriers would be put in place and marshalled by at least two volunteers to allow people driving exempt vehicles to pass through the restriction. An exemption list would be managed by the project team and shared with the volunteers. As well as residents living within the restricted School Street area, exemptions would be available for Blue Badge holders or people with a disability that require access to an address on the street, and anybody else carrying out a statutory duty such as the emergency services and refuse collectors. The exemptions policy would be clearly communicated to local residents and parents, and the project team would be available to answer any questions or concerns via email or over the telephone, and in person during planned engagement events.

3.6 In June 2024, following a recommendation from the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to ensure that all schools in B&NES were given an equal chance to express interest in a School Street, an email was sent to all schools in the district providing information on School Streets along with an expression of interest survey. Eighteen schools expressed an interest in a scheme. Officers then reviewed the schools to create a shortlist to receive further development work as ‘Phase 1’ of the programme. The outcome of this assessment is outlined in Table 1 along with the key reasons whether or not the team recommend selection for this phase.

Table 1 – Expression of Interest Responses and Assessment

School	Selected for Phase 1?	Rationale
Bathwick St Marys	No	School wished for other softer measures to initially be considered such as improved crossings. This will be considered as future funding becomes available. Outcome of nearby Sydney Place Liveable Neighbourhood trial still

		being understood. Could be suitable for a later phase of the programme.
Chandag	No	Situated on a bus route. Other measures as outlined in section 3.2 may be considered as future funding becomes available.
Farrington Gurney	Yes	Engagement currently being carried out with the school to determine feasibility.
Freshford	No	The local road network is technically challenging due to the school being located at the end of a narrow lane. Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the programme could be used to consider this school for a future phase.
Mulberry Park	No	Roads are not yet adopted highway.
Newbridge Primary School	Yes	This school is within the Lyme Road and Charmouth Road Liveable Neighbourhood area and engagement with the school is being carried out by this project team. Feasibility and delivery of a scheme will be carried out by this project in consultation with the School Streets project team.
Peasedown St John	No	Situated on a main road. Other measures as outlined in section 3.2 may be considered as future funding becomes available.

Salford	No	Further information requested to understand entry points to school. No response received to date. May be suitable for a later phase of the programme.
Shoscombe	No	The local road network is technically challenging due to rural setting. Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the programme could be used to consider this school for a future phase.
St Andrews	Yes	Reasonably simple to implement and school engaged with Modeshift STARS. Parent community available to manage barriers.
St Mary's Timsbury	No	The local road network is technically challenging due to rural setting. Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the programme could be used to consider this school for a future phase.
St Philips	Yes	Reasonably simple to implement and school engaged with Modeshift STARS. Parent community to potentially manage barriers.
St Stephens	Yes	Reasonably simple to implement and school engaged with Modeshift STARS. Parent community available to manage barriers and are already carrying out regular informal School Street.
Swainswick	No	The local road network is technically challenging

		due to the school being located at the end of a narrow lane. Some road safety changes being introduced via the Local Active Travel Safety Programme. Lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the programme could be used to consider this school for a future phase.
Two Rivers	No	Roads are not yet adopted highway.
Welton	No	Located on a main road. Other measures as outlined in section 3.2 may be considered as future funding becomes available.
Westfield	No	Located on a bus route. Other measures as outlined in section 3.2 may be considered as future funding becomes available.
Weston All Saints	No	Technically challenging to introduce as would require multiple closure points. Could be considered for future phases.
Widcombe	Yes	Reasonably simple to implement and school engaged with Modeshift STARS. Parent community available to manage barriers and are already carrying out regular informal School Street.

3.7 Initial meetings with five of the proposed selected schools have taken place during Autumn Term 2024. A meeting with Farrington Gurney Primary School is in the process of being arranged. The meetings have enabled the project team to see the conditions outside of the schools during school run time and speak with supportive school staff and parents to further explain the requirements of a

scheme. Those schools not proposed to be selected for the initial phase of feasibility work were informed and given the opportunity for a meeting to discuss further.

- 3.8 Subject to the approval of this report and transfer of the CAZ funding, further feasibility and design work will be undertaken, and initial monitoring data will be collected. This will enable cost estimates to be established which will need to account for officer time as well as design and delivery costs. This information will then further inform which schools are selected from the schools outlined above for the first School Streets in B&NES. These would be subject to further Single Member Decisions at the appropriate time.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery and construction element of the scheme allows for further public consultation to be undertaken, as part of the TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) process. The schemes would be introduced under Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders in order to provide people with the opportunity to provide feedback before a decision then being made whether or not to make them permanent.
- 4.2 The public sector equality duty (Equalities Act 2010) requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services. A programme-wide Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) can be found in Appendix A. Individual EQIAs will be developed for each school as the schemes progress.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 Funding of £250,000 has been allocated from the CAZ reinvestment reserve to develop this programme. The commitment to spending from the reserve has gained the required internal approval through transport members and the CAZ portfolio holder and is ready to progress following this decision.
- 5.2 The CAZ reserve is made up of revenue from daily charge and penalty charge payments from use of higher polluting vehicles within the zone since its launch in March 2021. Any revenue over the operating costs of the scheme is held in reserve for future use to support sustainable transport projects and initiatives that promote air quality improvements across the district and can be used to fund both revenue and capital expenditure.
- 5.3 Further funding of £87,000 has also provisionally been allocated from the 2025/26 Council budget in order to support the aim to deliver at least three School Streets. Utilising the funding allocation to carry out initial feasibility and design work on a number of schemes has the potential to be advantageous as future funding opportunities arise from the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) or Active Travel England. Any such funding will be considered in future phases of the project and transferred into the capital programme via the appropriate decision process once funding is confirmed.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management

guidance. Further risk assessments will take place prior to the implementation of any School Streets and these will continue to take place on a regular basis during the development and trial period of the schemes.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out at a programme-level and can be found in Appendix A. Scheme specific EQIAs will be created for each School Street as these are developed and will be updated throughout the project lifecycle.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 Addressing school-run traffic and providing more travel choices are key elements of the Journey to Net Zero and the Council's Corporate Strategy. As transport is the largest emitter of carbon emissions in B&NES, reducing the amount of school run traffic would contribute to reaching carbon neutrality.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Local consultation will be carried out during the development of each School Street. This is likely to be in the form of the delivery of letters to local addresses giving residents and stakeholders the opportunity to input and comment on the schemes as they develop. This will also include opportunities to attend drop in events and respond to relevant surveys. The project team would also engage with pupils at the school to understand their views on the changes. The schemes would be introduced as trials under Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders, which would provide further opportunity for feedback. The feedback received, along with other monitoring data and consideration of Council policies, would inform whether or not the scheme(s) would be made permanent at the end of the trial(s).

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Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	