

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Executive  
**Date:** 27 January 2020  
**Report for:** Approval  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Climate Change

### Report Title

Safety Around School Gates

### Summary

This report updates the Executive regarding initiatives and activity that supports the Council's commitment to road safety and improving air quality in and around schools in the Borough and updates the committee on the work resulting from the Safety Around Schools inter-departmental working group.

### Recommendation

The Executive is recommended to:

- a) Note the current activity and progress to date to improve safety and air quality around schools;
- b) Note the expected outcomes as set out in the report;
- c) Approve the initiatives and next steps in order to further improve safety and air quality.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers: None

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	This report supports the Corporate Priorities: Children and Young People Health and Wellbeing Green and Connected
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	Air Quality Management
Financial	No financial implications from this report. There will be a future report to Executive containing a

	costed action plan with detail of activities, initiatives and secured, likely or potential funding sources.  This report will also report on the outcome of the funding bid under the Mayor's Challenge Fund.
Legal Implications:	No legal implications from this report. Legal will be further involved with the drafting of the ETRO and in advising on the implementation of the provisions of the Regulations
Equality/Diversity Implications	Not Applicable
Sustainability Implications	Improving Safety around Schools will lead to a more sustainable environment
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Not Applicable
Risk Management Implications	Not Applicable
Health & Wellbeing Implications	There are wide ranging health benefits to improving safety around schools through less use of vehicles and therefore air quality will improve.
Health and Safety Implications	Roads will become safer in and around schools through some of the measures described in this report.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's commitment to road safety and improving air quality in and around schools in the Borough has resulted in a Member and Officer working group being established in October 2018, comprising of the Executive Members for Environment, Air Quality and Climate Change; Health and Well-being and Children's Services, officer representatives from Transport, Education, Public Health and Parking and representatives from the Police.
- 1.2 Reducing traffic and improving road safety around schools at the start and end of the school day is hugely important to increasing the likelihood that children are able to walk or cycle to school and to improving air quality near schools. In turn, it is believed both these aspects will have a large positive impact on children's health and wellbeing and indeed, on their school attainment.
- 1.3 As Safety around Schools is an inter-departmental and portfolio initiative, the work described in this report informs the Executive of work and initiatives to date and provides an indication of what will be recommended to a future meeting by way of improvements in order to deliver on;
- Improved health and well-being of Trafford's young people
  - Improved air quality in and around schools
  - Road safety improvements.
- 1.4 This report updates Members on the progress to date on meeting the objectives set at the Member and Officer working group established in October 2018.

## 2.0 Public Health

- 2.1 Public Health are working with the Living Streets organisation, a UK charity that promotes everyday walking. Living Streets, which is based in Manchester, run a programme to promote walking to school: <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-to-school>; this gives excellent resources to support schools in promoting active travel to children and parents.
- 2.2 Presently, the local Living Streets team is working with six Trafford schools; Kings Road, St Hugh's (Timperley), Oldfield Brow, Flixton Primary, Heyes Lane and English Martyrs. The team would like a further six schools to participate in the programme as the outcomes with the existing schools so far has seen 44% more pedestrians and a 20% cut in car use.
- 2.2 The Public Health Living Streets team are continuing to work with Education, Environmental Health and One Trafford to advocate alternative options for travel that will improve the health of Trafford residents and school children on an evidence based approach. Further projects and initiatives will be rolled out following review of the current programme early next year.

## 3.0 Mayors Challenge Fund

- 3.1 The One Trafford Partnership has been successful in winning a bid as part of the Mayors Challenge Fund to make the Urmston area an "Active Neighbourhood". Contained within this bid are two locations containing four different schools that have been identified as locations that would benefit from becoming "School Streets". To take this initiative forward discussions are underway with the schools regarding the potential to introduce an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO), to assist in managing the effect of the daily school run.
- 3.2 Both locations would effectively become no car zones in the immediate vicinity of the schools at school start and finishing times, albeit, exemptions from the ETRO would be given to residents, local businesses, Blue Badge holders and other permitted vehicles, such as emergency services, school contract buses, roads and utility companies working on emergency works. At the entrances to the scheme it is proposed to install large signs which will have flashing lights to indicate when the scheme is in operation.
- 3.3 The two locations are:
  - 3.3.1 Newton Road, Hereford Grove, Wycliffe Road – these roads form part of a one-way system which serve Urmston Primary, English Martyrs and Urmston Grammar and a private day nursery. Urmston Primary is a large school with 522 pupils, Urmston Grammar has 880 pupils, some of which enter the school from Moorside Road. English Martyrs R.C has 211 pupils and the private day care has 54 children.
  - 3.3.2 Delamere Road and Mardale Avenue – two narrow cul-de-sac's which serve Flixton Primary. It is a large school with 458 pupils.

- 3.4 Historically, these locations have experienced on going road safety issues caused by drivers bringing their vehicles too close to the school gates which often results in drivers parking inconsiderately.

#### **4.0 Current Position**

- 4.1 Discussions are underway with the four Schools and so far, these have been positive with schools willing to be part of the pilot.
- 4.2 There are many positive outcomes that will be delivered as a result of these initiatives and proposals, for example;
- a. Parents and guardians to park further away from schools
  - b. Pavements and crossings will be safer
  - c. More schools to participate in Living Streets initiative
  - d. Refresh of school travel plans
  - e. Delivery of objectives contained in the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, which is aimed at improving air quality by reducing NOx emissions
  - f. Reducing car usage and congestion
  - g. Ensuring that the general public and parents in particular, are aware of the impact of air quality on their children's health and the steps that they can take to mitigate the risks
  - h. Supporting schools to work with children and families on promoting active travel
  - i. Potential for increasing 20 mph zones especially near schools and at school start/finish times
  - j. Increase in walking and cycling and active lifestyles for pupils and parents/carers
  - k. Reduce traffic speed, congestion and pollution around the school gates during school start/finish times
  - l. Contribute to improvements in child obesity levels
  - m. Respond to demand from parents and residents
  - n. Use the of nearby car parks and walking the short distance to school
  - o. Reduced enforcement activity through less inconsiderate parking

#### **5.0 Enforcement of School Streets**

- 5.1 Currently enforcement of moving vehicle offences remains with GMP, however there is a potential for this to be decriminalised in the future. All GM authorities are signed up to be awarded the new powers if and when they become available.
- 5.2 At present enforcement of experimental orders for all Authorities outside London is not undertaken by the Police as a policy objective. The signage and other alternative solutions however, would still have a positive impact on behaviours and in the absence of any enforcement the signs and other agreed measures will be monitored to determine the impact.
- 5.3 Schools Streets is on the agenda for the next traffic managers meeting in February 2020 to look at how the Police can support the range of initiatives being rolled out. The consultation exercise and timetable advising the community of the roll out of School Streets and the range of measures being implemented will continue during 2020.
- 5.4 If a school is identifying problems they now have access to a named local PCSO as contact details have now been shared with all schools to enable them to report and

highlight particular concerns. These named PCSO's can then react and work with the schools locally.

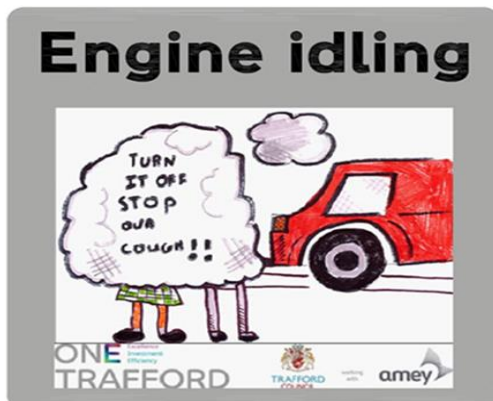
- 5.5 There is the opportunity to look at a trial by use of cameras and that the council would have to fund the initial purchase cost. The camera can record both idling and parking and supports penalties with camera evidence. The camera can be moved to different locations again at a potential cost. A trial to check if it is viable to use a camera is being explored. The best time to trial the camera would be following Easter and from September to Christmas next year. The trial would target the schools in the worst areas.

## **6.0 Introduction of 20mph Speed Limits**

- 6.1 The Department for Transport has published the 20mph Research Study by Atkins, AECOM and Professor Mike Maher (UCL) 22 November 2018.
- 6.2 It assesses the outcomes of introducing 20 mph speed limit schemes (i.e. reducing speed limits from 30mph to 20mph) in residential areas and town centres. These are generally on a wider scale, but "signs only", i.e. without the traffic calming measures of earlier 20mph zones. They were introduced for a variety of transport, community and health reasons.
- 6.3 The study finds:
- a. Public support for 20mph (signed only) limits but concern about non-compliance
  - b. Minor changes in driven speeds: median speed fell 0.7mph in residential areas and 0.9mph in city centre areas
  - c. Faster drivers reduced speed more: 1.1mph and 1.6mph respectively (85th percentile)
  - d. Road characteristics have a much larger impact on driven speeds than whether the road has a 30mph or 20mph limit
  - e. No significant change in short term in collisions and casualties in the majority of case studies
  - f. The majority of people have not noticed a reduction in the speed of vehicles, and do not perceive there to be fewer vehicles driving at excessive speeds
  - g. Small increase in use of active travel modes; mode shift cannot be determined from data.
- 6.4 Accepting that the DfT have produced a report that does not totally support the introduction of 20mph speed limits, other authorities are still moving forward with introducing schemes.
- 6.5 It is suggested therefore that local environmental conditions need to support the wider introduction of 20 mph speed limits so they are in effect self-regulated and enforced.
- 6.6 Where the environment does not support the 20mph limit physical measures and changes in the road environment would have to be considered however, this would require investment. In the context of supporting increased safety around schools any proposed physical measures to introduce a 20mph zone in the vicinity of schools should only be considered locally.

## 7.0 Vehicle Engine Idling

- 7.1 On 11 March 2019, Public Health England (PHE) published a review of evidence designed to inform local and national government on actions to improve outdoor air quality and health.
- 7.2 One of their recommendations was the implementation of no-idling zones in areas with 'vulnerable hotspots' such as schools, hospitals and care homes.
- 7.3 PHE says air pollution is the biggest environmental threat to health in the UK, with between 28,000 and 36,000 deaths a year attributed to long-term exposure. In support of this initiative the Council is to work with schools in Trafford to take action and help in reducing air pollution caused by idling vehicles around the Borough's schools.
- 7.4 The Council will promote anti-idling policies within schools and more widely raise awareness of the issue of engine idling across the Borough. The first stage is to introduce signing around schools (see below). Various signage can also assist with enforcement of engine idling. Introduction of signage is anticipated to be installed in the spring 2020.



## 8.0 Enforcement of Vehicle Engine Idling

- 8.1 In the UK it is illegal under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 to leave a vehicles engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road. The regulations do not cover vehicles that are located on private land. Where an offence is established a fixed penalty fine of £20 can be imposed under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) Regulations 2002. However, a fixed penalty fine can only be imposed if the driver of the vehicles fails to turn off their engine when asked to do so.
- 8.2 Providing additional enforcement officers within the Council to undertake this enforcement role would be required to enforce the regulations in Trafford as there is no existing capacity to enforce this currently. The company 3GS are however, contracted by the Council to undertake enforcement activity including that of littering, flytipping and dog fouling offences and can issue fixed penalty notices for offences delegated to them within this contract. This area of work is similar to the requirements needed for the enforcement of the anti-engine idling legislation. Contract discussions will therefore progress with the company to see if this is an area of enforcement that they could take forward as part of their business model.

- 8.3 In addition, central **government has recently announced** proposals to consult on toughening up rules on vehicle idling and increase fines for drivers who leave their engine running while parked. The launch of this consultation has not yet been confirmed. The GMCA will be writing to the Transport Secretary with a letter signed by Executive Members of the associated portfolio from the GM Authorities to ask them to bring forward the consultation and we can update in due course on any proposed dates.
- 8.4 The Council will also look at funding engine idling notices through the social value aspect of the parking enforcement contract. These signs will be placed at suitable locations such as outside schools and along agreed heavily trafficked routes and at level crossings within Trafford and should assist with the enforcement of engine idling in the future.
- 8.5 As highlighted earlier the use of cameras as a trial will also be explored to see if this can assist with enforcement of engine idling.

## **9.0 Education**

- 9.1 Work will be undertaken with the majority of schools within the Urmston area as part of the Mayors Challenge Fund Active Neighbourhood, from a Road Safety/Highways viewpoint, with additional information from a more strategic bearing pursued via colleagues in Education.
- 9.2 Campaign Options around enforcement action including Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) by working with schools is being developed with the Education team. A tiered approach would have greater impact with this campaign and would involve school children. The tiered approach involves use of willing school children as wardens in the first instance to educate locally and determine the impact. Signage would also be used to inform those who drop off and pick up children of the need to switch off engines and park responsibly. Follow up action would then be considered by use of the legislation and issuing of FPN's if a particular school did not benefit from the signage and school warden approach.
- 9.3 Head Teachers, children and parents would need to be involved and to focus on the problem areas associated with this tiered approach and the focus will be aimed at tying this campaign with health and pollution and will therefore target schools with high levels of pollution.
- 9.4 A pilot of five interested schools are being explored with Education and Environmental Health to enable this trial to start next year.
- 9.5 School travel plans will also be reviewed with the schools to also focus on active travel and alternative healthy travel options.

## **10.0 Conclusions**

- 10.1 The work undertaken so far by the working group is proving beneficial in joining up thinking and options to improve safety around schools

10.2 It should be recognised that there is no one size fits all solution and each school may benefit from a range of approaches depending on its location and surrounding environment.

10.3 Enforcement trials and use of legislation whilst at the moment is proving difficult will be reviewed to ensure Trafford maximises the powers it has available to improve safety around school gates.

### **11.0 Other Options**

11.1 A range of initiatives and options are being explored as detailed in the report. The options are being developed in partnership with colleagues and schools affected by the proposals.

### **12.0 Consultation**

12.1 Consultation with schools and partner agencies is ongoing as part of the project.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**


To inform and seek approval from members on the range of initiatives being undertaken relating to this priority.

**Key Decision** No

**If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given?** N/A

**Finance Officer Clearance**      HZ/AN  
**Legal Officer Clearance**      TR

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE**



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.