

Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel (Special)

Minutes

7 December 2021

Present:

Chair: Councillor Jerry Miles

Councillors: Dean Gilligan James Lee
John Hinkley Kairul Kareema Marikar
Ameet Jogia

Advisers: Ms V Chamberlain Mr A Wood

Apologies received: Councillor Anjana Patel

148. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Anjana Patel

Councillor Paul Osborn

149. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that

- (1) the Declarations of Interests published in advance of the meeting on the Council's website were taken as read. The following further declarations were made at the meeting for agenda item 3 – Report – School Street Schemes:

- Councillor Kairul Marikar declared a non-pecuniary interest in that their niece's sons attend Grimsdyke School.
- (2) Members of the Committee and Co-opted Members who had declared interests remained in the virtual meeting whilst the matters were considered and voted upon.

Recommended Items

150. Report - School Street Schemes

The Panel received a report which provided Members with details about the six-month extension of the four school streets schemes trials in the London Streetspace Programme following their special meeting on 22 April 2021 and the results of a recent public consultation to consider the future of the schemes.

An officer gave a brief presentation highlighting:

- The school street scheme was part of the wider packages from 2020, there was a 18-month experimental term for the schemes and the trials were agreed to be extended for a further 6 months, during that time feedback was received from the local community. The report set out the response from the community, circa 150 comments, which had shown a negative sentiment towards the schemes. Those that had responded negatively ended to live further from the schemes.
- The negative themes from the feedback received revolved around access for deliveries, convenience, traffic and parking on surrounding roads.
- A final consultation had involved the local community and there had been a separate consultation with the school community. It was found that the school community was much more positive. It was noted that there was strong support for Grimsdyke and Park High schools street scheme, 50/50 support from Newton Farm School and Marlborough School had shown more opposition towards the scheme.
- All Head Teachers had shown support and could see the benefits to the school community, the school pupils had shown support, with 90% in most cases supporting the scheme.
- During the consultation, a petition had been received in regard to the Marlborough School street scheme, where residents were opposed to the school street scheme.
- The report's recommendations sought the Panel's views as to whether the individual schemes should be removed or retained. It was highlighted that all schemes had an experimental status and the maximum length of time an experimental scheme could continue was

18 months. There was an end date of 31 March 2022 for these experimental schemes.

The Chair thanked the officer for their presentation and invited questions from the Panel.

- A Panel Member referred to appendix A and noted that the most recent traffic counts had taken place in July 2021 and questioned whether these could be relied upon why there had not been a more recent traffic count. An officer explained that all of the available funding had been used and therefore no further surveys could be undertaken but that he was of the view that the July surveys provided a reasonable understanding of the traffic conditions around the schools.

The Chair introduced the Headteacher and staff from Newton Farm School. Two videos were shown that explained the school street scheme in relation to Grimsdyke and Newton Farm Schools.

The Head Teacher from Newton Farm School explained that, from a school's perspective, the scheme had supported the physical and mental health of students. They noted that active travel rates had increased, those that lived further away parked and walked part of the way. The scheme had lowered their concern of traffic being a potential risk to pupils' safety. A staff member from Newton Farm School added that it had benefited the school's active travel rates.

The Head Teacher had noted that staff dropping off their children to school and then travelling onward to work had been a challenge brought by the school streets scheme. It was suggested that a possible exemption status be given to staff similar to that issued to local businesses.

The Chair thanked the Newton Farm School Staff for their presentation and invited the Panel to ask questions which were answered as followed:

- A Panel Member ask what had the school done to engage with local residents. The Head Teacher explained that residents that had children attending their school had been engaged with, however no engagement had taken place over parking restrictions and that local residents had not engaged with the school.
- In response to point raised that for some staff and pupils that lived further away from their school, this scheme could be problematic. The Head Teacher explained that staff and pupils had been travelling part way and walking the rest in order to improve their active travel.
- A Member raised the issue of displacement parking as they residents outside the exclusion zone had been negatively affected by parked cars and users of the scheme. The Head Teacher noted that car usage had decreased which had been due to some parents choosing to walk instead of drive.

- A Member sought clarification in relation to the objectors to the scheme and whether this could be mitigated. An officer explained that in general terms, there had been improvement in support for the schemes, which the most recent consultation had identified. The schemes that had the strongest support also had the fixed enforcement cameras, which gave the maximum impact and best delivered the schemes.

The officer added that Newton Farm School and Marlborough School only had temporary enforcement in place and believed that support would increase if permanent enforcement had been delivered by the use of ANPR cameras.

The officer highlighted that the number of negative responses was small and that there was not a strong opposition towards the schemes.

A Member questioned whether there was an update available on the ticketing/enforcement regarding the Marlborough School scheme. An officer explained that Marlborough School only had a mobile enforcement unit, however the officer suggested Members consider schemes that had permanent enforcement because these had shown that residents had adapted and accepted these restrictions. If the schemes were made permanent, then permanent enforcement measures would need to be put into place.

The Chair proposed additional recommendations which were duly seconded and agreed by the Panel following. The following was noted during the discussion:

- A Member indicated that though he largely agreed with the recommendations the School Street Scheme in relation to Marlborough School further discussion was needed due to the complexity of roads potentially affected by this scheme.
- A member of the Panel requested further clarification over what it meant to mitigate objections and how would this be achieved. The Member expressed the view that the Marlborough School Street Scheme should not be removed but should be looked into further and brought back to the Panel. The Chair explained that the mitigation would be to work with residents to overcome any objections made.
- It was highlighted that if the Marlborough School Street Scheme were to be deferred, one Panel Member stated that he would be interested in what mitigating solutions were available to appease objectors.
- An Adviser commented that there was a need to tackle obesity and that a scheme that supported a community's health and wellbeing should be supported. The advisor also highlighted that there was demand for wanting to cycle in Harrow. The Adviser expressed support for all the school street schemes to be made permanent.

A Member moved an amendment to the recommendation which requested that the decision in relation to the school street scheme by Marlborough School be removed or made permanent be deferred until the next Panel meeting. This was duly seconded, put to the vote and was carried.

[Voting for the amendment was as follows: Councillor Dean Gilligan, Councillor James Lee, John Hinkley, Councillor Ameet Jogia, Councillor Paul Osborn. Against the amendment: Councillor Jerry Miles, Councillor Kairul Marikar].

RESOLVED: That the decision in relation to the school street scheme by Marlborough School be deferred until the next Panel meeting.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet) That

- (1) The school street scheme by Grimsdyke School be made permanent;
- (2) the school street scheme by Newton Farm School be made permanent;
- (3) the school street scheme by Park High School be made permanent;
- (4) although there was over-whelming support from the school communities for both the Marlborough School and Newton Farm School schemes, in order for the Council and Highways team to better understand the reasons for the small majority of resident objectors, a formal action plan be collated to mitigate these concerns ensuring the long-term success of the schemes.

Reason for Recommendations: The maximum 18-month experimental period allowed for the school streets traffic management orders under current legislation ended on 27 March 2022 and a decision was required on whether to remove the schemes or make them permanent.

The audio recording of this meeting can be found at the following link:

<https://moderngov.harrow.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=260&MId=65278>

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.41 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Jerry Miles
Chair