

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 12

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Queen's Park Safer Routes to School Scheme

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2010

Report of: Director of Environment

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Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: Queen's Park

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove City Council has a statutory duty to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on its roads under the Road Safety Act 2006. The performance of this duty is monitored through the Councils Local Area Agreement and will assist in achieving the target NI47, the Key Performance Indicator of reducing casualties classified as Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI's). The council's Local Transport Plan also prioritises road safety and casualty reduction within the Safer Routes to Schools Programme.
- 1.2 Queen's Park Primary School, Royal Spa Nursery School, Carlton Hill Primary School and Tarnerland Nursery School have been selected within the Safer Routes to School Programme as a priority due to the number of collisions in the area during school journey times over the past three years. The purpose of this report is to seek permission to begin public consultation on the Safer Routes to School Scheme measures, which focus on improving road safety for children, parents and carers travelling to and from nursery or school.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the initial principles of the proposed road safety measures and gives permission to begin formal public consultation.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Safer Routes to School is an initiative that aims to improve routes to school making it safer for children and their parents and carers to walk, cycle or use public transport thus providing increased travel choice for the journey to and from school. The initiative forms part of the Council's Road Safety Strategy; a key component of the Brighton & Hove City Council's Local Transport Plan 2006/07 – 2010/11.

- 3.2 The proposed scheme will complement the work that continues with the schools in the development and monitoring of their School Travel Plans. A School Travel Plan aims to encourage the use of sustainable transport on the school journey and to improve safety. The Safer Routes to School Scheme funding will enable practical engineering measures to be put in place that make those sustainable journeys easier and safer.
- 3.3 The scheme will benefit four schools: Queen's Park Primary, Carlton Hill Primary, Tarnerland Nursery and Royal Spa Nursery, which between them cater for 773 children. These improvements will also benefit the wider community of Queen's Park including children attending St Luke's Primary, the subject of a previous scheme implemented in 2008.
- 3.4 The area was identified by Officers as appropriate for a Safer Routes to School Scheme based on collision data. During the three year period 1st January 2007 to 31st December 2009 there were 46 collisions involving a pedestrian or a cyclist and another vehicle during school journey times. This resulted in 50 casualties, 9 of whom were seriously injured, including one child, and 37 of whom were slightly injured, including 3 children.

Outline of proposed Safer Routes to School Scheme (See Appendix 2)

- 3.5 There are four measures proposed:
- Firstly, to extend and upgrade the footway realignment on eastern side of Freshfield Road (north of junction with Freshfield Place) and alter parking arrangements to improve pedestrian sightlines (See Appendix 2A).
 - Secondly, to upgrade the Zebra crossing on Eastern road (west of junction with Walpole road) to a light-controlled Puffin crossing (See Appendix 2B).
 - Thirdly, to alter the Zebra crossing on Queen's Park Road (south of junction with Albion Hill) to address speed issues and drive throughs on the crossing (See Appendix 2C).
 - Finally, to install a pedestrian refuge on Egremont Place and extend the pavement north-east of junction with West Drive. (See Appendix 2D).

Links to other council measures

- 3.6 The Council provided Child Pedestrian Training for year one pupils at Carlton Hill in 2008 and Queen's Park Primary in 2009. Training is undertaken within the local area of the schools ensuring pupils will benefit from the additional safety engineering measures.
- 3.7 Queen's Park Primary is currently consulting on proposals to expand the school to two forms of entry with an increase in intake of 15 pupils per year and development of the school site. The measures outlined in the Safer Routes to School Scheme will be beneficial to the expanded school and increased pupil numbers.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In 2009 the Council undertook a survey with Pupils, parents, carers and staff at Queen's Park Primary, Carlton Hill Primary, Royal Spa Nursery and Tarnerland Nursery. The survey was commissioned to gain an understanding of the transport needs of the schools and concerns people had regarding road safety. The main findings of the survey can be seen in Appendix 1.

Summary of consultation with schools

- In all of the schools the majority of children would prefer to travel to school in a sustainable way. 38% of infants and 53% of juniors at Queen's Park Primary say that walking to school is their favourite method. 46% of infants and 65% of juniors at Carlton Hill stated that cycling would be their favourite way of getting to school. 43% of the infants at Turnerland would like to walk to school.
- Cycling becomes more desirable as a means of travel as the pupils get older.
- Many parents felt that cars did not stop at the zebra crossing near the junction of Albion Hill & Queen's Park Road and that they would feel safer if there were additional traffic control measures at this site.
- The majority of comments related to crossing at Egremont Place. Parents felt that this road was very difficult to cross with cars appearing around the corner quickly.
- Many parents from Queen's Park Primary felt that it was difficult to cross Freshfield Road to get to Freshfield Place.
- Parents coming from south of Eastern Road also felt that cars did not stop at the Zebra crossing west of Walpole Road and that it was difficult to cross here.

4.3 Local Ward Councillors for Queen's Park have been notified of the outline of proposals for this scheme, invited to discuss alternatives and to participate directly in the consultation when it starts.

4.4 A summary of the proposed scheme has been sent to The Children and Young People's Trust (School Transport and Admissions) for information.

Future consultation strategy – July 2010

- A Postcard drop for frontages around the scheme sites will be conducted before the consultation begins directing recipients to online pages and exhibitions where the scheme details will be explained. Press releases will reinforce this message.
- Information available to the public will consist of two indoor public exhibitions at Brighton Town Hall & one other site in area TBC. In addition to this, temporary all weather displays will be placed on the pavements outside the main entrance gates at the sites of the schools & nurseries involved. Paper copy feedback forms will be available from reception on all these sites with a freepost address to return the forms to. Respondents will also be invited to complete an online questionnaire if this is more convenient.
- The Council Website Road Safety Pages will also include full details of the proposals as well as the online questionnaire.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Any costs associated with the implementation of the Queens Park Safer Routes to School Scheme will be covered by the allocated funding for Safer Routes to School Schemes within the Local Transport Plan. This amounts to £110,000 in 2010/1011

Finance Officer consulted: Karen Brookshaw

Date: 28/4/10

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Before implementation, all relevant procedural requirements will need to be dealt with. For example, it will be necessary for any proposed Traffic Regulation Orders to be advertised publicly and for any unwithdrawn objections or representations to be considered before a final decision is taken to implement the proposals. There are no human rights implications to draw to Members' attention at this stage

Lawyer consulted:

Liz Culbert

Date: 21/04/10

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There will not be an Equalities Impact Assessment as these proposals do not include a change to existing policy. However, the DDA will be consulted on the proposals to ensure that the highway measures are appropriate for people with physical difficulties.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainable Consumption and Production: It is proposed that materials no longer needed from the upgrade of the Zebra crossings to Puffin Crossings will be reused at other sites in the city.
- 5.5 Climate Change and Energy: The Safer Routes to School initiative seeks to increase use of sustainable modes of travel to and from school by increasing safety on the routes.
- 5.6 Sustainable Communities: The initiative includes engagement with communities to encourage sustainable travel.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.7 There are no implications for the prevention of crime and disorder at this stage. However, Sussex Police will be consulted as part of the public consultation process.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.8 Following guidelines from the Institute of Highways and Transportation, independent safety audits will be carried out to ensure that safe designs will be implemented.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The proposals will assist in the achievement of the council priorities by protecting the environment through the encouragement of sustainable modes of travel to and from school. The proposals will reuse any appropriate materials to realise a better use of money. The Safer Routes to School Scheme reduces inequality by increasing access to safer, sustainable routes through the city.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The proposed scheme includes measures such as upgrading existing Zebra crossings and the installation of a new pedestrian refuge in Egremont Place.

These measures have been identified through consultation with parents, carers, staff and children from the schools as well as local ward councillors and as such represent the best means of addressing the problems identified.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To enable Officers to conduct public consultation of the proposed Safer Routes to School Scheme at Queen's Park in order to proceed to the drawing up of final proposed measures and the development of the scheme.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Appendix 1: Initial Schools Consultation report
2. Appendix 2: Location map of measures
3. Appendices 2A – D: Individual site maps

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. Initial Schools Consultation Report

Background Documents

1. Local Transport Plan 2006/07 – 2010/11

