

Briefing Note

School Streets Update

1. Background

- 1.1** The Crime and Disorder Committee have been investigating solutions to tackle problems associated with inconsiderate parking around the schools within the Borough as part of a School Parking Scrutiny Review and a subsequent Councillor Call for Action associated with school time parking at Whitehouse Primary School in Elm Tree.
- 1.2** A wide variety of stakeholders have been involved in the process including headteachers, teachers, governors, parents, petitioners, police, enforcement officers, and local authority officers. One of the recommendations to tackle the problem of inconsiderate parking is to look at the feasibility of introducing School Streets around the schools within the Borough. A School Street consists of a zone, in the immediate vicinity of a school, where motor vehicles are prohibited at the beginning and end of the school day. An exemption to the prohibition can be provided for residents, school staff and blue badge holders.
- 1.3** The main aims of a School Street is to:
- o Create a safer street for everyone.
 - o Reduce the volume of traffic using the roads past school gates.
 - o Encouraging more children to be more active by walking or cycling to school.
 - o Improve air quality, in and around the school gate.
- 1.4** It is estimated that there are approximately 150 School Streets schemes in the UK with the majority residing in London. We understand there are currently plans to establish over 400 School Streets nationally. Regionally Northumberland County Council are the only Local Authority to have established School Streets, however most of the North East Councils are currently exploring options to introduce School Street Schemes.
- 1.5** Local Authorities that have introduced School Streets strongly recommended that extensive community engagement is undertaken before progressing with any scheme, especially with residents who will be directly affected by the closure. Enforcement can be carried out by cameras for those authorities with the relevant powers or by Police Enforcement or a physical closure such as introducing temporary barriers at the closure points staffed by stewards during the duration of the closure.

2 Current Position

- 2.1** The Council's Cabinet Member has been updated on the investigation to date and it is recommended that a further period of monitoring be undertaken so that the success of the initiative can be demonstrated before significant resources are invested.

3 Timescales and Programme

- 3.1 The Council's Crime and Disorder Committee be updated in March 2022 with a recommendation for a further monitoring period of six months to be undertaken with a view that additional, hopefully more local schemes will be implemented that could provide insight and inform the way forward.