

<b>9 January 2014</b>		<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>The Consideration of Road Safety Measures Outside Schools</b>		
<b>Report of:</b> Cllr A Smith – Regeneration, Highways and Transportation		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Basil Jackson – Interim Head of Transportation and Highways		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull		
<b>This report is</b> Public		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To consider a request to investigate road safety around all schools in Thurrock.		

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Capital budget allocations are made available annually within the Integrated Transport Programme to deliver measures in and around schools to improve road safety and also encourage alternative modes of travel to school other than the car. Schools are encouraged to participate and support proposals for measures by way of an annual review of their School Travel Plans. This enables schools to be prioritised for treatment and schemes to be delivered that deal with the most problematic areas in priority order.

The use of flashing amber lights are considered where appropriate, depending on the nature of the problems and issues surrounding the school and where the criteria is met. Due to the need to adhere to Traffic Signs Regulations and the commitment to reduce street clutter of unnecessary or non-conforming signs, flashing amber lights should not be implemented borough-wide as a formality.

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 It is recommended that the current system of prioritisation for road safety measures in and around schools, as referred in paragraph 3.2, is continued and that measures are determined as appropriate and according to the problems/issues that are determined for each individual school. Measures will be determined and delivered through the Capital Integrated Transport Programme with the support of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund budget allocation.**

## **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1 On 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013 Planning Committee submitted a request for investigations to be carried out outside all schools in the borough, with regard to improving safety, and for Graham James School, in The Sorrells, Corringham, to be used as a pilot for any action recommended as a result of the investigation. In particular, the use of flashing amber lights (more commonly known as wig-wags) to be introduced.

## **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 Very few road accidents occur outside schools. However, the potential for accidents to happen and the congestion that occurs daily around schools is an issue that needs constant review. Currently, funding is made available annually within the Integrated Transport Programme to implement measures in and around schools to improve safety and promote alternative modes of travel to the car (Safer Routes to School budget allocation). For the last 4 years, the Capital funding allocations have been enhanced by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).
- 3.2 In order to prioritise the list of schools requiring treatment from the above Programme, all schools in the borough have submitted a School Travel Plan and any areas of concern relating to road safety are highlighted in the Plan. Measures to help reduce car use to and from school are also included within the Plans, such as the need for cycle shelters, pedestrian shelters, etc. The schools' Travel Plans are reviewed and resubmitted by the schools annually. Plans are prioritised using a number of factors, depending on the nature of the request. The factors taken into consideration for speed limit and speed hump requests are, for instance, the occurrence of any injury accidents in the vicinity of the school and the actual recorded vehicle speeds.

Other aspects such as the cycle and pedestrian facilities on routes to schools and the number of pupils cycling and walking to school are taken into consideration for requests for cycle/scooter storage or improved cycle and pedestrian footway links. Congestion is also an issue outside many schools and measures that will help reduce the busy school time congestion are given priority.

- 3.3 The most common requests raised within the Travel Plans is for the provision of cycle shelters or parking restrictions to be introduced. No requests have been received for amber flashing lights through a School Travel Plan.
- 3.4 Flashing amber lights are classified as a traffic sign within the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and their use is therefore subject to conditions and certain criteria being met. In accordance with the Regulations, they should only be used in areas where traffic speeds exceed 35mph or where there are other exceptional safety circumstances.
- 3.5 Graham James School in The Sorrells has a 20mph speed limit outside the school, along with physical traffic calming measures. A School Crossing

Patrol also operates at the site. This site would not meet the criteria for flashing amber lights.

- 3.6 It is important that the Regulations are adhered to when placing traffic signs on the highway. A proliferation of signs can cause confusion and additional hazards and they also add to unnecessary street clutter.
- 3.7 In addition to the annual Capital budget allocation for Safer Routes to Schools, a School Safety Working Group was set up in 2012 involving Members and various Council Officers, including Officers from the Education Department. The purpose of this group was to agree ways forward with encouraging schools to be more actively involved in the issues surrounding their schools and to ensure School Travel Plans are reviewed in order that they can qualify for measures to be installed via the LSTF programme.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the current practice with regard to dealing with road safety issues outside schools is continued due to the reasons given in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.6. This encourages schools to be involved in the issues occurring outside the school grounds and in some instances for them to take ownership of the schemes implemented. On occasion, depending on the type of scheme to be implemented, pupils from the school are invited to be involved in scheme designs, such as designing the images that accompany 20mph speed limit signage.

#### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 No consultation has been carried out on the contents of this report. Consultation is carried out as and when measures are determined and proposed for implementation.

#### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 6.1 These actions accord with the Council's priorities to create a safer environment.

#### **7. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652150**  
**mterry@thurrock.gov.uk**

Should the recommendations in this report be upheld, there will be no financial implications beyond the funding allocations that are made available each year within the Integrated Transport Programme.

## 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Daniel Ansong**  
Telephone and email: **01375652994**  
**dansong@thurrock.gov.uk**

Under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, local authorities must prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety. Authorities must also carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles on roads. In the light of those studies, the authority should take such measures as appear appropriate to prevent such accidents. Section 39 lists the following as possible ways of preventing further accidents:

“the dissemination of information and advice relating to the use of roads, the giving of practical training to road users or any class or description of road users, the construction, improvement, maintenance or repair of roads for the maintenance of which it is responsible and other measures taken in the exercise of its powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads”

The School Travel Plans and Integrated Transport Programme are ways in which Thurrock Council complies with this statutory duty. The recommendations in this report ensure that the duty continues to be met.

## 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson Dealyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**  
**sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no diversity and equality implications to consider as a result of this report.

## 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- None

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- None

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