



Bee Network Committee

Date: Thursday 24th October 2024
Subject: School Streets and Crossings
Report of: Richard Nickson, Network Director Active Travel

Purpose of Report

To advise on the development and implementation of a series of School Streets and Crossings as part of a School Travel Programme.

Recommendations:

The Committee are requested to:

1. Note, comment and endorse the proposed approach to School Streets and Crossings.

Contact Officer

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Impacts Questionnaire		
Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion	G	There is no discernible impact Reducing the need to travel by car and enabling choice of mode will assist these groups It will improve them Yes Yes
Health	G	Yes - it will seek to improve physical health Yes - it will seek to improve mental health Yes - it will improve levels of physical activity By encouraging active travel and reducing severance caused by the motor vehicle dominating streets social isolation can be addressed. No No
Resilience and Adaptation	G	
Housing		
Economy	G	
Mobility and Connectivity	G	
Carbon, Nature and Environment	G	
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		Yes by encouraging modal shift associated with school travel
Further Assessment(s):	Carbon Assessment	
G Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	A Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.	R Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.
		RR Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment		
Overall Score	[Progress Bar]	
Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation
New Build residential	N/A	Not applicable n/a n/a n/a n/a Not applicable n/a n/a n/a
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	
New build non-residential (including public) buildings	N/A	
Transport		
Active travel and public transport		
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access		
Access to amenities		
Vehicle procurement	N/A	
Land Use		
Land use	#DIV/0!	
No associated carbon impacts expected.	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.
		Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.
		Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

Risk Management

The proposed approach is low risk and is based on existing sub-programmes of the Active Travel Programme and hence risks will be managed in accordance with TfGM's policies and procedures.

Legal Considerations

Transport for Greater Manchester and the Local Authorities will need to enter into delivery agreements for the disbursement of elements of the funding associated with the proposed approach set out in this report.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

£1.3m Capability Fund 24/25 Revenue Grant (from Active Travel England) has been allocated to development and programme management of the initial programme (to 2027) as set out in the 26th September 2024 Bee Network Committee paper.

Financial Consequences – Capital

It is currently estimated that Capital expenditure of circa £17.5m would need to be secured to deliver the initial programme outlined in this paper. The Active Travel Programme is fully committed at present to existing schemes and hence this would be an additional commitment to the existing capital pipeline.

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In May 2024, the GM Mayor and Active Travel Commissioner set out their ambition to develop up to 100 school streets and create new and / or upgraded road crossings near schools.
- 1.2. Every day, approximately 460,000 pupils travel to over 1,200 schools and further education establishments across Greater Manchester. Supporting these journeys is a key function of the Bee Network.
- 1.3. Recognising the importance of travel to school, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) has developed a draft School Travel Strategy, included on the agenda for this meeting, which sets out a vision where every school is accessible by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.
- 1.4. It is proposed that an integrated School Travel Programme should be developed to support the Strategy, including School Streets and Crossings, together with other measures to be confirmed as the programme develops. School Streets are a road danger reduction measure that can contribute to Vision Zero Safer Streets objectives. Currently, only 26%¹ of residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good in their local area (up from 16% in 2019). 54%¹ of residents agree their area would be a better place if streets outside schools are closed at drop off.
- 1.5. The draft School Travel Strategy targets by 2030:
 - Primary schools: walk, wheel, and cycle 70% (up from 63% in 2023);
 - Secondary schools: walk, wheel and cycle and/or public transport 80% (up from 74% in 2023); and
 - Further education: walk, wheel and cycle and/or public transport: 80% (up from 66% in 2023).
- 1.6. Encouraging alternatives to car journeys for school travel can assist in mode change more broadly helping us achieve our Right Mix outcomes – getting more people out of cars and onto public transport, or walking, wheeling, and cycling. School Streets can also assist in air quality and noise pollution mitigation .

¹ Sustrans Walking and Cycling Index

2. Background and proposed approach

- 2.1. Using funding from Active Travel England, TfGM has coordinated a pilot school streets programme where local authorities have developed nearly 40 school streets, often as trials or local experiments that are likely to be able to be converted into permanent schemes. A number of these have already been converted into permanently enforced school streets.
- 2.2. In January 2023, TfGM identified 189 traffic signals that have no signalised pedestrian facilities. Since then, 15 of these junctions have been upgraded with new facilities. Of the 189, 12 are at locations with no viable pedestrian / wheeling routes or at motorway junctions, hence 162 junctions remain to be treated. Of these 80 such junctions are within 500m of a school. A further 5 of these junctions have received Active Travel Funding to be upgraded by the end of 2025. So 75 will remain to be treated.
- 2.3. The Bee Network Crossings element of the Active Travel Programme targets 'points of severance' on the envisaged walking, wheeling, and cycling network – these often will be at 'mid-block' locations or at intersections with no current traffic signal control. So far it has delivered 33 such new crossings, with a further 4 programmed to be delivered by April 2025. There remain at least 2000 points of severance for walking, wheeling and cycling, not including locations on the wider footway network where there are no dropped kerbs.
- 2.4. The Active Travel programme has also created 25 'protected junction' improvements.

Proposed approach to School Travel Programme – 2024/5 to 2027/8

- 2.5. It is proposed to develop a School Travel Programme, which will be a combination of actions that are suitable to the local area that reduce the risk of conflict between vehicles and people, especially children, including School Streets, crossings, and other measures. These will encourage trips to school by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport (where applicable), in preference to private motor vehicles.
- 2.6. Initially, TfGM will work with Local Authorities, schools and local communities to deliver up to 100 School Streets by 2028, subject to funding. £1.3m of development funding has been identified from the Capability Grant 2024/25 from Active Travel England, as approved at the 26th September 2024 Bee Network Committee. Approximately 30 of the existing School Streets have the potential to become

permanent schemes and we propose that those should form the basis of an initial programme for conversion to permanent.

- 2.7. We will explore the development of a single "Safer Routes to School" pilot project, to examine the scope for a wider package of infrastructure measures such as side road treatments, crossings, junction, or road improvements in a much broader area than the immediate School Street to help inform future scheme planning.
- 2.8. We will also seek to deliver a complementary package of crossings (approx. 10 per year), subject to funding at known locations within 500m of schools where there are no facilities.
- 2.9. Pavement parking can pose a real hazard to people using footways and we will continue to press Government for powers to address this issue.
- 2.10. We estimate that c.£10m capital expenditure would be needed to deliver the School Streets programme above phased over the next 3-4 years. Additionally, to deliver a package of crossing improvements at junctions close to schools (approx. 30 over 3 years) would require an additional circa £7.5m i.e. £17.5m in total. Work is underway to identify potential funding sources for these schemes and an update will be brought to the Committee in the near future.
- 2.11. Work will also continue with Local Authorities to ensure that the right resources are available to them to develop and deliver the ambitions that are set out in the School Travel Strategy and within this report.
- 2.12. Updates on the development and delivery of both the School Travel Strategy and the Schools Streets and Crossings programme will be brought to the Committee on a regular basis.

3. Future development of a School Travel Programme

- 3.1. In the period beyond 2027, we recommend that we continue to address junctions with no pedestrian facilities (up to the total of 80 near schools). We would also aim to further develop more school streets.
- 3.2. It would also be necessary to continue to seek ways to support the provision of more cycle parking for staff and pupils, and to promote active travel and public transport use (these are largely grant funded at present) and to review existing and future school bus provisions, as set out in the School Travel Strategy.

3.3. In the longer term, more extensive safer street areas around school streets would enable the lessons from our active neighbourhoods' schemes to be applied. There may be other opportunities as well to engage staff and parents / carers in onward and other journey planning. Some school sites might wish to explore additional or modified entrances and provide seating / waiting areas and / or parking for visitor cycles, including modified bicycles such as cargo bikes or other adapted vehicles.