

Subject:	Fiveways Safer Routes to School scheme		
Date of Meeting:	27 November 2012		
Report of:	Strategic Director, Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Matthew Thompson	Tel: 29-0235
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Ward(s) affected:	Withdean		

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove City Council has a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to prepare and carry out road safety measures. This includes preparing and carrying out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety, carrying out studies into accidents, and providing information, advice and training
- 1.2 Balfour Primary, Dorothy Stringer and Varndean schools have been selected within the Safer Routes to School Programme as a priority due to the number of collisions in the area involving pedestrians and cyclists during school journey times over the past three years. The purpose of this report is to seek permission to proceed with the proposed 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. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Transport Committee approves the preferred scheme outlined in Appendix 2 and authorises officers to begin implementation including the advertising of any necessary Traffic Regulation Orders

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 a key component of Brighton & Hove City Council's Local Transport Plan 2011/12 – 2014/15.

- 3.2 Based on collision data the area was identified by officers as appropriate for a Safer Routes to School scheme. During the three year period 01/09/08 to 31/08/11 there were 16 collisions involving a cyclist or pedestrian and another vehicle during school journey times. This resulted in 16 casualties, 13 of whom were pedestrians and 3 of whom were cyclists. In total, 12 children were injured, with three sustaining serious injuries.
- 3.3 The measures recommended for implementation are as follows:(see also Appendix 2)
- Introduce a zebra crossing and build outs to help pedestrians cross from the corner near St Mary's Church to The Ride in Preston Park. Extend the kerb on the corner of Preston Park Avenue to slow left turns out onto Preston Drove and improve visibility down Preston Drove
 - Remove the bus stop north of the upper gate to Varndean School and replace it with a pedestrian refuge and build outs allowing pupils to cross more safely to the bus stop opposite.
 - North of Friar Road, create a new bus stop outside 391 Ditchling Road
 - Refresh existing double yellow lines on the junction of Loder Road and Surrenden Road
- 3.4 The scheme will benefit three schools (Balfour Primary, Dorothy Stringer and Varndean) which between them cater for almost 3900 children. These improvements will also benefit the wider community of Fiveways.
- 3.5 The headline results of the public consultation are as follows:
- Proposals for the junction of Surrenden Road and Preston Drove – 91% in favour with 37 comments made.
 - Proposals for Ditchling Road near the junction of Friar Road – 79% in favour with 35 comments made.

Links to other Council measures

- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The Council provides Child Pedestrian Training for year 1 & 3 pupils on a first come first served basis. Balfour Infants School applied for training a few years ago but have not done so recently. Balfour Junior School have never applied. If the school choose to apply for training their application will be prioritised.

- 3.8 Balfour also received Scooter training for 103 Year two children in February 2012. The Council has also provided cycle training for Year 5 and 6 pupils at Balfour every year since 2004 and has trained approximately 460 children to date.
- 3.9 Both Dorothy Stringer and Varndean Schools use the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership's education package 'Routes' (for Years 7-11) as the basis of assemblies, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons and tutor group work. This teacher led resource is offered with additional support where the schools request it.
- 3.10 The Road Safety team (in conjunction with Sussex Police Schools Liaison officers and East Sussex Fire and Rescue) ran Road safety activity days for Year 7 at Dorothy Stringer in the summer terms of 2011 and 2012. These were based on the seatbelt and distraction modules in the Routes package. Assemblies were run for Year 7 and Year 8 at Varndean in 2011 based on the same modules. Theatre-in-education productions for Year 11 on car passenger safety are visiting both secondary schools in the autumn term of 2012.
- 3.11 The Sustrans 'Bike it' officer (partly funded by the council) has led 'Transition' bike rides to both secondary schools for Year 6's from selected feeder primary schools in the summer term of 2012.
- 3.12 The scheme compliments the proposals before the November Transport committee to improve crossing facilities at the lower end of Surrenden Road as part of the pedestrian crossing request scheme.
- 3.13 These proposals would complement the proposed third phase of the 20mph speed limit area for 2014/15, the first phase of which is being considered by the Transport committee on 27 November 2012.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In September 2012, in conjunction with the public consultation, the Council undertook a survey with pupils, parents, carers and staff at Balfour Primary, Dorothy Stringer & Varndean Schools. The survey was commissioned to gain an understanding of the transport needs of the schools and concerns people had regarding road safety. The parents' survey was combined with the public consultation on the proposed measures. 85% of the responses were from parents with children at one or more of the three schools. The main findings of the survey and the consultation can be seen in Appendices 1 & 2.

Summary of consultation with schools

- 4.2 Report pending – data still being collated and results being written up 23/24 Oct

Summary of Public consultation

- 4.3 The public consultation took place between 10 September and the 12 October 2012.

- 4.4 Ward Councillors for Withdean & Preston Park visited the two sites with Council officers on the 30 August 2012 prior to the public consultation and welcomed the two main measures.
- 4.5 Postcards were delivered to 1000 random addresses in the area and properties adjacent to the proposed measures in the week commencing 10 September inviting people to attend exhibitions to view plans of the proposed layouts. Survey forms were available at exhibitions and the public event on Wednesday 19 September for people to give feedback. An on-line survey was also available on the Council website. Links to the survey were sent out in school e-newsletters, and paper copies were offered to those parents without internet access.
- 4.6 An area map was available showing the locations where changes are proposed and plans were also given showing more detailed layouts.
- 4.7 People were asked to look at plans for suggested improvements and to then give their preferred options for improvements. Each question also gave a space for comments. These are listed in Appendix 2.
- 4.8 126 people responded giving a response rate of 12.6%. 7 replies came from the exhibitions and events, 100 came from the on-line survey. 19 parents at Dorothy Stringer replied via survey forms provided by the school.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Capital: £50,000 has been set aside within the LTP capital budget for 2012-13 to fund the Fiveways Safer Routes to School Scheme.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Karen Brookshaw Date: 02/11/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council has powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to construct pedestrian crossings and make traffic regulation orders, and under the Highways Act 1980 to construct traffic calming works of any type prescribed by regulations.

Before implementation, all relevant procedural requirements need to be dealt with. For example, it is necessary for any proposed Traffic Regulation Orders to be advertised and for public notice to be given of any proposed new pedestrian crossing. Any representations received must be taken into account and any unwithdrawn objections to Traffic Regulation Orders will need to be considered by the Transport Committee 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: Carl Hearsum Date: 06/11/12

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 be reused where possible

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no implications for the prevention of crime and disorder at this stage. Sussex Police have been consulted as part of the public consultation process.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

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

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 Sustainable Communities: The initiative includes engagement with communities to encourage sustainable travel.

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 option is judged to be the preferred option that reflects the consultation results supporting a crossing facility on Ditchling Road south of Friar Road involving the removal of the current bus stop at this location, and delivers the aims and objectives of the Safer Routes to school scheme.
- 6.2 In the original proposal a new bus stop was to be created outside 387 Ditchling Road. The nursery management were concerned about parents' parking and felt the current unrestricted parking arrangements were important for their business. The bays were proposed as a way of protecting this access while relocating the bus stop, and were discussed with ward members prior to the consultation.

- 6.3 For technical reasons it has been decided to remove the parking bays from this aspect of the proposal. Parking bays north of Friar Road would make it difficult to extend the cycle facility which ends at the Friar Road junction any further north to improve cycle access into the South Downs national park. This would not be consistent with the city's commitment to improving sustainable transport into the national park as demonstrated in its commitment as a partner in the Sustainable Travel to the Two Newest National Parks LSTF bid. Furthermore planned improvements to enable cyclists and pedestrians to cross at the top of Ditchling Road are being implemented in the coming months strengthening the cycle link between Stanmer Park and the City via Ditchling Road.
- 6.4 In order to minimise the impact on the nursery and its immediate neighbours, the modified proposal leaves parking as it is and relocates the bus stop further north outside 391 Ditchling Road.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To enable Officers to proceed with the implementation of the modified scheme.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. School Surveys Report
2. Public Consultation Report
3. Appendices 3.1(overview); 3.2 A – C: (Individual site maps).

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. School Surveys Report
2. Public Consultation Report

Background Documents

1. Local Transport Plan 2011/12 – 2014/15