

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 13 April 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Experimental Traffic Regulation Order – School Street Closure Dryden Road, Penarth
Purpose of Report:	To agree the introduction of an experimental school street closure on Dryden Road for Fairfield Primary School, Penarth
Report Owner:	Cabinet for Neighbourhood and Building Services
Responsible Officer:	Miles Punter - Director of Environment and Housing
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Accountant Neighbourhood Services and Building Committee Reports - Legal Operational Manager - Engineering Local Ward Members for Cornerswell, Penarth
Policy Framework:	This Report is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council was awarded funding through the Welsh Government Safe Routes in Communities (SRIC) fund to create an active community led street design project around Fairfield Primary School in Penarth, to encourage and facilitate active travel to and from school. • This pilot project involves the proposed first school timed street closure in the Vale of Glamorgan by implementing a one-way system, installing traffic calming measures and school staff managing the timed closure. This would provide a traffic free, safe environment for pupils to access and exit school premises. • The Report proposes that this Scheme is introduced using an experimental traffic regulation order where objections and comments as well as traffic data in respect to the Scheme would be collected in their first 6 months of operation. This data would inform decisions taken on the permanency of the Scheme or otherwise, within the 18-month trial period and would be the subject of a future report to Cabinet. • The lessons learned from this project would form part of a School Street Closure study to assist with any future closures around the Vale. 	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet agrees to public notice being given for an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a school street closure on Dryden Road, Penarth as detailed in Appendix A and B to this Report.
2. That Cabinet receives a further report detailing the outcome of the Experimental Order at Dryden Road, Penarth by October 2024.
3. That Cabinet authorises the Director of Environment and Housing Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services to agree the final design and extent for the school street closure trial and that the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services / Operational Manager, Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to execute any legal Orders to implement the Scheme.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To provide the necessary authority to the progress with the experimental traffic regulation order.
2. To allow the success or otherwise of the experimental order to be properly considered to inform decisions on any permanent arrangements.
3. To provide the necessary authority to ensure the scheme is implemented in the most appropriate and efficient manner.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows Highway Authorities to make and vary Orders to regulate the movement of vehicular traffic and to improve the amenities of an area.
- 1.2 The Council as Highway Authority has a responsibility to improve the safety of the highway user and may be found to be negligent if it does not meet its statutory obligations under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- 1.3 One of the ways of improving highway safety is to reduce traffic around schools and the Council is proposing a school street closure on Dryden Road in Penarth that does not allow motorised vehicles into the street at set times of the day.
- 1.4 The Council has previously implemented a Traffic Road Order (TRO) for traffic calming measures and a one-way system along Dryden Road to facilitate the school street trial. The details for this TRO were considered and approved by Cabinet on 19th December, 2022 (Minute Number C194 refers).

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** In 2020/2021 the Council was awarded funding through the Welsh Government Active Travel Core Allocation Fund to start an active community led street design project around Fairfield Primary School in Penarth. The aim of the Scheme was to encourage and facilitate active travel to and from school. The Council appointed Sustrans Cymru in September 2020 to commence work on delivering this project.
- 2.2** In 2021/2022 the Council was awarded Welsh Government Safe Routes in Communities funding to continue the development of this project. The project aims to combine infrastructure improvements and behaviour change to create a safer environment, where walking, cycling, and scooting are the obvious choice for pupils and parents.
- 2.3** Closing streets around schools to traffic at drop-off and pick up times can help lower congestion and improve air quality. It can help boost the number of children walking, cycling and scooting to school each day. Findings from Sustrans on the benefits of school street closures can be found here: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/opinion/2020/august/school-streets-provide-solution-to-inactivity-congestion-and-air-pollution>
- 2.4** The Council has undertaken extensive engagement in the area to discuss proposals that included Dryden Road, Penarth being closed in the morning and afternoons.

Face to face:

- 4 student workshops.
- 5 drop-in sessions with parents and residents.
- 1 community summer event making proposals available.

Online engagement to date:

- 123 geo-located comments from 55 unique users.

Letters:

- 800 letters distributed within the catchment area for Fairfield Primary School prior to the start of the project, raising awareness and inviting people to visit the Council's website and leave comments.
- 25 letters sent to the residents of Dryden Road inviting them to the first drop-in session for parents and residents.
- 25 letters sent to residents of Dryden Road inviting them to attend the second drop-in session
- 300 letters distributed for drop-in session Dryden Road, Penarth on 30th June 2021.
- 800 letters distributed for drop-in session Wordsworth Avenue on 7th July 2021.

- 800 letters distributed for a Community Street Celebration event on 24th July, 2021.

Emails to wider stakeholders (including the Parent/Teacher Association, after school clubs, local church, ward members and so on)

- Project launch: 23rd November, 2020
- Project launch - Phase 2: 29th June, 2021

Messages via Dryden Road, Penarth Residents WhatsApp group

- A resident of Dryden Road advised Sustrans that they circulated messages promoting engagement events and online surveys on 11th June, 22nd June, and 10th September, 2021.

Door to door engagement on Dryden Road

- Members of Sustrans visited 20 of the 26 houses on the street to discuss proposals. The 20 spoken to support the implementation of a permanent one-way system and closure of the street at school times.

- 2.5** The Council's Active Travel Officer and an officer from Sustrans Cymru met with the Head of Fairfield Primary School on 22nd February, 2023 to finalise the details of the school street closure. Discussion took place on the proposed timings of the closure morning and afternoon; go live date and the supervision of the closure point.
- 2.6** The outcome of this pilot will capture information to assist in developing a strategy for the roll-out of similar schemes at other schools in the Vale.
- 2.7** It is proposed to implement an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the school street closure under Section 9 & 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Prohibition of Driving) in accordance with the details provided by Schedule 1 in Appendix B to this report. This will require equipment to indicate the street is closed. The Scheme will consider signage and bollards at the point of closure.
- 2.8** An Experimental TRO which can be in place for up to 18 months is preferred to a permanent TRO as it will give time to assess the success or otherwise of the pilot school street closure.
- 2.9** It is proposed to commence the scheme from May 2023 and for the experimental order to be in place for up to 18 months. Objections and comments from the public will be accepted during the first 6 months of the trial and a further report on the outcomes of the experiments will presented to Cabinet before October 2024. Vehicle speeds and traffic volumes will be assessed prior to implementation and continually monitored during the proposed experimental school street closure.
- 2.10** A decision on whether to continue with the changes on a permanent basis or revert back to the previous (existing) situation will be based on the public

feedback received and the traffic data obtained and will be a decision for Cabinet.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Long term - The proposal will allow us to pilot a school street closure, providing a safe, traffic free environment outside of the school gate which, with other enhancements in the area, is promoting active travel to and from school. The long-term goal is to introduce school streets closures to other schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 3.2** Integration – The introduction of this Scheme would integrate Road Safety, Highway Improvements and Active Travel ensuring a safe environment for pupils and staff outside of the school gate.
- 3.3** Involvement – The process of developing this Scheme has involved discussion with Fairfield Primary School, Sustrans Cymru, the local community and other stakeholders, including a full initial letter drop to each household within the zone, seeking views on the proposals to introduce a school street in Dryden Road. After fully considering the responses received public notice was given, posted within the affected streets and in the press, thereby contributing and delivering on the involvement agenda. Furthermore, it ensures that the Council’s residents and visitors are involved in the management and safety of our local highway network.
- 3.4** Collaboration – The proposal has involved working in collaboration with Fairfield Primary School, Sustrans Cymru, South Wales Police and residents, ensuring that there is a majority interest in delivering the scheme benefits described within the Report.
- 3.5** Prevention - The proposal promotes active travel and the health benefits that it brings. Actively travelling prevents health issues such as diabetes and obesity which puts a strain on the NHS. The road safety interventions will also reduce the potential for any road traffic accidents.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** Active travel reduces reliance on a vehicle that can release harmful emissions which is damaging to the natural environment.
- 4.2** Implementing a timed closure at school drop off and pick up times will reduce the number of vehicles entering the street and will encourage active methods of travelling to school.

- 4.3** It is important to provide a traffic free environment to encourage pupils to choose low carbon transport options like cycling, walking and scooting, assisting in the Council's commitment to meet Project Zero by 2030.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** The Welsh Government Safe Routes in Communities Grant has funded this scheme to date.
- 5.2** Total funding of £838,391 has been awarded to the end of March 2023 (£510,491 in 2021/22 and a further £327,900 in 2022/23). It is forecast that this will have been fully committed at the end of the current financial year. The spend includes works on Wordsworth Avenue, Tennyson Road, Dryden Road, legal costs, traffic regulation orders and other administrative fees.
- 5.3** A further allocation of £53,006 has been awarded for 2023/24 which will enable completion of the scheme.
- 5.4** The Council's own administrative resources will be used to progress the legal Order.

Employment

- 5.5** Progression of the Traffic Regulation Order will be undertaken by the Traffic Management team within Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Legal Department.
- 5.6** The implementation of the regulatory signs on site will be managed and undertaken by the Council's own in-house resource.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.7** The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows Highway Authorities to make and vary orders to regulate the movement of vehicular traffic and to improve the amenities of an area.
- 5.8** The Council as Highway Authority has a responsibility to improve the safety of the highway user and may be found to be negligent if it does not meet its statutory obligations under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Act 1988.

6. Background Papers

None.

Appendix A

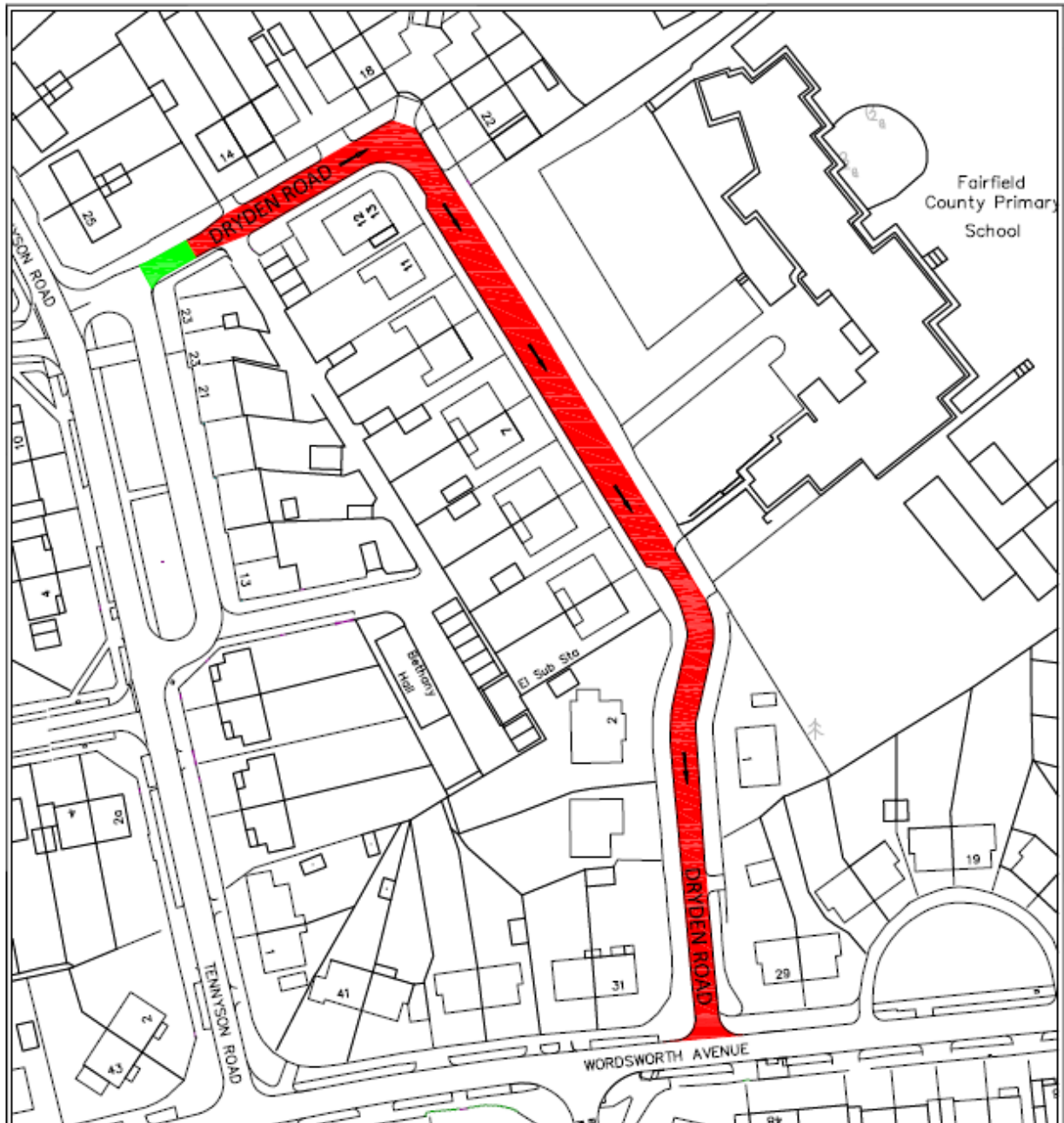
SCHEDULE 1

No person shall cause or permit any Motor Vehicle to enter and proceed along the length of road described below, during term time, between the hours of 08:00 and 09:15 and between the hours of 15:00 and 16:00 on any day other than a Saturday or Sunday, unless exempt, as set out in the articles to this Order.

Dryden Road (part), Penarth

From a point approximately 15.5 metres from its junction with Tennyson Road, in a generally easterly and southerly direction, to its junction with Wordsworth Avenue, a distance of approximately 235 metres.

Appendix B - Proposed School Street Plan



VALE of GLAMORGAN
 ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING
 SERVICES

Director:
 Miles Parker

Head of Neighbourhood
 Services & Transport:
 Emma Reed

BRO MORGANNUGO

No.	To	Description of Amendment	Revisions	Date	By

Client: **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

Site: **Dryden Road, Penarth**

Drawing Title: **Dryden Road, Penarth
 Proposed Experimental 'School Street'**



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