

# SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



**LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)**

**DATE: 13 NOVEMBER 2020**

**SUBJECT: PETITION RESPONSE REPORT –  
FARNHAM HEATH END SCHOOL PARKING ON  
BULLERS ROAD**

**DIVISION: FARNHAM NORTH**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**The Local Committee is asked to agree that:**

- (i) When central government give local authorities outside of London the power to enforce School Street road closures, then Bullers Road should become the first pilot of this type of scheme in Surrey.
- (ii) Proposals for a School Street on Bullers Road would be subject to consultation with the local residents and school. The results of the consultation will be presented to the Local Committee when seeking approval to proceed with advertising the legal order to create the School Street. This will assist the Committee in deciding whether to proceed with the scheme or not.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

School Streets are roads near schools that are closed at drop off and pick up times and have been implemented at several locations across London. Once central government give Local Authorities outside of London the power to enforce such road closures, this type of measure could help to solve the problems associated with congestion, road safety, anti-social parking and poor air quality in the vicinity of schools. It is proposed that Bullers Road becomes the first pilot school street in Surrey as it could provide a solution to the concerns raised by the petitioners.

## **PETITION DETAILS:**

A petition has been submitted to the Local Committee from the residents of Bullers Road containing 57 signatures. The lead petitioner is Ali Pritchard. The petition states the following:

*“As residents of Bullers Road, we would like to formally register our complaint and petition concerning the use of our residential street by parent drivers of*

*Heath End School students. This concern is widely shared with Bullers Road residents, as indicated in the enclosed signed petition.*

*Bullers Road is a quiet residential no-through road, which provides delivery-only access to Farnham Heath End School (the main entrance point to the school is accessed via Hale Reeds). The street consists of predominantly period properties with limited off-street parking for residents and over the years has witnessed increasing levels of traffic from school parents using the street for drop off and collection rather than the designated car park at Hale Reeds. This activity has caused significant disruption, conflict and importantly safety concerns for local residents.*

*These daily, albeit currently paused occurrences, due to the current Covid-19 climate, continue to be highly stressful and dangerous elements that form the daily routine on Bullers Road. We urge you to take action to provide some relief after years of resident tolerance.”*

**RESPONSE:**

Officers sympathise with the concerns raised by residents. At school drop off and pick up times the roads in the immediate vicinity of schools can be especially busy and there is usually a high level of vehicle, pedestrian, and cyclist activity. This causes slower vehicle speeds, congestion, poorer air quality and very often leads to frustration from residents and road users at the apparent chaos caused by parents and children arriving or leaving the school.

The County Council would like to encourage safe walking, scooting and cycling to school, as this is better for the health of children, and reduces congestion and pollution. The perceived danger to children on busy roads on the school journey, and antisocial parking, especially in the vicinity of a school, can prove to be a barrier to more walking and cycling. This then results in more car journeys and more congestion.

Consequently, the council has a “Road Safety Outside Schools” policy that describes the process the County Council will use when investigating such issues, which can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-safety/outside-schools>

A comparatively new measure that has now been implemented across several locations across London and is now also being piloted in several other local authority areas is ‘School Street’ road closures. School Streets are roads near schools that are closed at drop off and pick up times.

Within London, most School Streets have been enforced using Automatic Number-Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras operated by the civil authorities (with a small range of exemptions for residents, school staff, essential carers who may need to enter the closed road). Outside of London, at the present time, Local Authorities do not have the legal power to enforce School Street road closures or to use ANPR cameras to issue penalties for moving traffic offences such as passing a point closure at the start of a School Street. This will require legislation by central

government. In the meantime, enforcement is only possible by the police who have many other demands on their resources.

In other locations where the School Street closures are manually operated, this has usually taken place where there are no residential properties within the closed road zone, and so a temporary barrier can be installed (by a school caretaker for example), to ensure no vehicle can physically enter the closed road during the closure period. This would not be practical at locations where some vehicles will still need to have access to the closed road. We are not aware of any locations within Surrey where a manually operated School Street would be practical and worthwhile (for example, where there are not any residential properties on the roads in question).

The Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has indicated in Parliament that Central Government *will* be giving local authorities outside London the powers to enforce moving traffic offences, but has not given a timescale as to when this will take place.

Any School Street scheme would require that residents within the School Street would need to register their vehicles for an exemption. They would also have to accept that they will not be able to receive any deliveries or visitors using non-registered vehicles during the closure times. The impact of displacement of parking onto other nearby roads will also need to be considered carefully. The back-office arrangements to issue and administer penalties and exemptions will also need to be set up.

In accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy, a site visit to Bullers Road was undertaken by a County Council officer, local Borough Councillor Mark Merryweather and the lead petitioner Ali Pritchard, on the afternoon of Thursday 15 October 2020. It was noted that several vehicles associated with the school journey used Bullers Road, and that at school closing time many children walk from the school along Bullers Road. Several children walked in the road rather than the footway, due to cars belonging to both residents and parents/carers of the children being positioned half on the footway. It was also noted that alternative off-street parking facilities were located nearby outside Weybourne Village Hall and adjacent to Weybourne Recreation Ground. There may also be a possibility for parking adjacent to the Hockey pitch accessed via Monkton Lane (subject to the agreement of the school and existing users of this facility).

Therefore, it is recommended that when central government give local authorities outside of London the power to enforce School Street road closures, then Bullers Road should become the first pilot of this type of scheme in Surrey.

Proposals for a School Street on Bullers Road would be subject to consultation with the local residents and school. The results of the consultation will be presented to the Local Committee when seeking approval to proceed with advertising the legal order to create the School Street. This will assist the committee in deciding whether to proceed with the scheme or not.

Funding for the scheme has not yet been secured. Funding might be available from the County Council's central budget as this is a pilot that could inform the

ITEM 5

implementation of many other school streets across the county. Alternatively, money could be sought from CIL funding from Waverley Borough Council, and/or from the budget allocated to the Local Committee for highway improvements.

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