

QUESTION NO. 1

Councillor White to ask the Chair:

Tackling Car Congestion at School Gates

Many parents are concerned about car congestion and the associated problems outside of school gates in Reading. Crescent Road for example has three schools next to each other and gets very congested at the start and the end of the school day. A number of Councils around the country such as Solihull have introduced school streets. This is where a street is closed to the majority of traffic at the start and the end of the school day. This reduces the number of cars using a road near to, or on which a school is located and has a number of benefits. These include an increase in walking and cycling and a reduction in car congestion and pollution. Does the Lead Councillor agree with me that it is worth looking into this type of scheme to improve the health and well-being of Reading's schoolchildren ?

REPLY by the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee.

I invite Councillor Page, the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by Councillor Page, Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport:

I thank Cllr White for his question.

We are aware of various initiatives that have been introduced around the country and some of these have been promoted in Reading, such as 'Beat the Street' and Play Streets.

I am advised that the Solihull pilot scheme has been carried out in the vicinity of three schools, two of which are in cul-de-sac locations and the third is within a residential estate. None of the schools are located on local through-routes or commuter corridors, and I'm not aware that their local circumstances can be compared with Crescent Road. The Solihull restriction is a signed prohibition, rather than physical road-closures, and is entirely dependent on Police enforcement.

We have not yet been made aware of the results of the pilot and, like many local Highway Authorities, will be keen to see some data and information on the impact of the trial.