

Cabinet

11 September 2013

Review of School Crossing Patrol Service

Key Decision NS/20/13

MTFP Ref NS11



Report of Corporate Management Team
Terry Collins, Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Brian Stephens, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods
and Local Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

1. This report summarises a review of the School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Service and recommends the removal of lunchtime provision where it is known that children no longer use the crossing facilities during the lunchtime period.
2. The report also recommends that the existing SCP policy, agreed following a review of the SCP service in 2008, is retained.

Background

Legislation and National Guidance

3. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (sections 26-28) gave 'appropriate authorities', which includes county councils, the power to appoint SCPs to help children cross the road on their way to or from school, or from one part of a school to another, between the hours of 8.00 am and 5.30 pm. However an amendment to the regulations came into force on 30th January 2001 and now allows SCPs to operate 'at such times as the Authority thinks fit'. Therefore SCPs may now work outside the hours of 8.00 am and 5.30 pm and can stop traffic to help anyone (child or adult) to cross the road.
4. It is important to note that the SCP service is a discretionary function rather than a statutory duty and therefore councils do not have an obligation to provide a service.

5. Although the service is discretionary there is a national standard for the provision of SCPs and this is set out in the School Crossing Patrol Service-Guidelines: revised June 2011. This was developed by Road Safety GB and supported by the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).
6. The national standard is based on the number of pedestrians and vehicles who use a road during the busiest half hour of the day. Clearly the busier the road that pedestrians use, the more likely it is to meeting the national standard.
7. Durham's policy sets the local threshold for providing SCP's at half that recommended nationally. SCP provision is therefore well above the national recommended level and this would be unchanged if lunchtime provision is removed in the manner recommended in this report.

Existing Policy

8. The SCP Service was last reviewed in 2008 and the following policy was adopted:-
 - Adoption of the national standards but with an adjustment of the number of vehicles and pedestrians using a road reduced to half that of the national recommended standard threshold
 - Disestablishment of sites at light controlled crossing through natural wastage, early retirement (ER) and voluntary redundancy (VR)
 - Disestablishment of sites below the agreed local standard through natural wastage and ER/VR
 - The immediate disestablishment of all sites below agreed local standard that were vacant at that time
9. As part of the 2008 review it was agreed that this authority would provide a SCP at sites where the number of pedestrians and vehicles using a road is half that of the recommended national standard. Therefore the SCP service currently provided by this Council is above the national standard and is in excess of what many other local authorities currently provide.
10. In 2008 when this policy was last reviewed children were allowed to leave the school premises during a lunchtime period and therefore a lunchtime SCP service was required However this is no longer the case at the majority of schools.

National Position

11. In order to gain an understanding of the level of reduction and change within the SCP Service provided by local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales, Road Safety GB undertook a survey in 2011 reflecting what was happening in 2010 when the austerity began following the Comprehensive Spending Review. It is understood that following this survey more authorities have or are reviewing their SCP service as a consequence of the ongoing savings required. The main findings of this survey are detailed below:-

- The number of established sites varied between councils (2 to 390)
- 17 Councils were either considering or had planned to make changes
- 10 Councils had already implemented changes
- 6 Councils had entered into some form of sponsorship
- 1 Council removed all funding after July 2011 and schools were offered to 'buy back' the service at £6,900 per patrol. 14 of the 30 schools accepted.
- In 1 Council Head Teachers are SCP Line Managers and address issues with pay, advertising and recruitment. The Council pays 50% grant and monitors the service annually.
- 7 Councils utilised volunteers to some degree
- Councils had considered or made various other changes such as:
 - removal of lunchtime provision
 - removal of service at light controlled crossings
 - removal of sites below national criteria
 - reductions through natural wastage
 - removal from secondary schools

12. Further information has been received from the National Adviser for School Crossing Patrols who reports that many Councils have reduced their service by removing patrols from light controlled and zebra crossings, lunchtime duties, those sites above the national standard and sites with long term vacancies. In addition a small number of councils have proceeded with a complete removal of the service.

Proposal

13. An analysis of activity at lunchtime has shown that very few or no primary school children leave the school premises at lunchtime. However there are six sites that operate close to secondary schools where children do leave the school premises during the lunchtime period.

14. It is proposed that lunchtime provision is removed at the sixty sites where very few or no children leave the school premises during a lunchtime period. The service will be retained at those six schools where children are known to leave the school premises during a lunchtime period.
15. A list of affected sites is attached at Appendix 2.
16. The remainder of the existing policy will be retained.
17. A copy of the updated policy is attached at Appendix 3.

Consultation

18. Engagement with stakeholders will be required for this change in policy. An engagement plan will be drafted in conjunction with the Lead Officer. The plan will be approved by the Consultation Officers Group and the actions will then be implemented.
19. Specific consultation will take place with each of the schools affected by the removal of lunchtime provision and they will be given the opportunity to self-fund the service if they want it to be retained.
20. Following the consultation exercise, a consultation summary document will be produced outlining the activities carried out together with the results.

MTFP Implications

21. The Council has faced unprecedented reductions in Government grants since the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review to the extent that the Councils current budget takes into account that Government funding will over the six year period 2011-2017 reduce by £139m. This equates to a 36% reduction in Government support although this is likely to substantially increase in the near future.
22. As a result the medium term financial plan forecast requires the Council to deliver total savings of £188m in the six year period 2011/12 to 2016/17 and these are estimated to exceed £200m by 2017/18.

23. In 2011/12 and 2012/13 Neighbourhood Services has already achieved £15.2m of savings with a further £10.1m already identified over the next three years.
24. The 2014/15 budget requires savings of £20.9m across all service groupings to achieve a balanced net budget; with the Neighbourhood Services contribution totalling £4.1m.
25. This proposal to remove SCP lunchtime provision will achieve an annual revenue saving of £163,986 without having any impact on service users. This will contribute towards this saving target.

HR Implications

26. In order to ensure that all affected employees and Trade Unions are fully engaged in this restructure exercise the consultation process will follow the guidance laid down in the Council's Change Management protocols. All employees will receive Early Warning Letters referencing the proposed review of the service.
27. There are currently one hundred and eighty three established sites. Lunchtime provision is currently provided at sixty six sites. As six sites will retain a lunchtime provision under the proposals, sixty staff will be subject to the Section 188 consultation process as they will be directly affected by a reduction in their specific area of service. All affected employees will receive a briefing on the process and will be issued with Section 188 Notices (if appropriate) on the proposal contained within this report.
28. Whilst the Council's Change Management protocols will be adhered to in relation to these proposals, the service will mitigate the impact of the reductions as far as possible and will continue to work with the Trade Unions and affected employees in this regard. They will include consideration of Expressions of Interest in ER/VR and exploring the availability of alternative employment opportunities.
29. As part of the analysis of the Expression of Interest applications already submitted, there are three requests which directly relate to the posts that are potentially affected by the proposal.
30. There are no agency workers currently engaged within the SCP Service.

Summary

31. The proposed changes will achieve annual revenue savings of £163,986 without having any negative impact on service users.
32. Those sites where children do leave the school premises during a lunchtime period will retain the lunchtime SCP and therefore there is no risk to the safety of children.
33. The proposal to retain the policy which provides a SCP at sites where the number of pedestrians and vehicles using a road is half that of the national recommended standard will ensure that the Council continues to provide an enhanced SCP service to the residents of County Durham.

Recommendations and Reasons

34. That Cabinet agrees to
 - i) Commence a consultation on the proposed changes and:
 - ii) Delegates to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhood Services the consideration of the outcome of that consultation and, taking it into account, the decision whether to make any changes, such decision to be taken in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships

Background Papers

- Cabinet Report : School Crossing Patrol Service Review dated 25th September 2008
- Road Safety GB SCP Service Survey 2011

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Implications
- Appendix 2: Affected SCP Sites
- Appendix 3: SCP Service – Updated Policy
- Appendix 4: Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The annual revenue savings from the removal of SCP lunchtime provision are detailed within the report.

Staffing

The proposed changes to lunchtime cover at 60 sites will require a S188 consultation with staff and Trade Unions.

Risk

A corporate risk assessment has been carried out and no reportable risks were identified.

Equality and Diversity – Public Sector Equality Duty

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 4

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Human Rights

None

Consultation

A consultation exercise will be carried out on the proposals.

Procurement

None

Disability Issue

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

Legal Implications

The SCP Service is a discretionary function rather than a statutory duty. Therefore the Council is able to vary its policy subject to following its procedures and appropriate consultation.

Appendix 2: Affected SCP Sites

Location	Area
Cockton Hill Rd Jct with Northumberland Rd, zebra crossing	COCKTON HILL
Junct Crook & Brandon Colliery Roads	BRANDON
B6173 / path leading to Parkside	TANFIELD LEA
Ouston Lane/ Pelton Lane	PELTON
Sunderland Road/ Mill Lane outside Vets	SHERBURN
Outside St Josephs, Ushaw Moor AM opposite entrance to church driveway	USHAW MOOR
A690 - High Street/Cumberland Avenue	WILLINGTON
Pelaw Avenue outside Shield Row Primary	SHIELD ROW
Fire Station Corner	SEAHAM
Durham Road/King Street	SPENNYMOOR
Front Street outside Lanchester Primary	LANCHESTER
T junction of Moor Lane and North Road Wingate	WINGATE
North Rd/Blackett Street - Zebra	CATCHGATE
Ouston Lane/ Aberfoyle	OUSTON
Manor Road outside St Helen Auckland Primary	ST.HELEN'S AUCKLAND
Princess Road	SEAHAM
Broomside Lane / Church View	BELMONT AND PITTINGTON
Traffic Island, Seaside Lane	EASINGTON
Benfieldside Road/Shotley Bridge Inf School	SHOTLEY BRIDGE
Burdon Crescent	SEAHAM
Barrier next to 88 Broomside LaneT junction of Bainbridge Street	BELMONT AND PITTINGTON
Main Road Outside School	MURTON
Elliott St/Croft St o/s Community Centre	CROOK

Location	Area
Picktree Lane/path leading to sub station	CHESTER LE STREET
Junction Broom Road/Elm Rd	FERRYHILL
Albert Street outside no 77/Jubilee Road	SHILDON
Bridge Street/High Street (Crossing point West of Roundabout)	HOWDEN LE WEAR
A689 Market Place by War Memorial to include minor road	WOLSINGHAM
Carr Avenue - dropped kerb by barrier outside school	BRANDON
Syke Road/Cedar Crescent	BURNOPFIELD
Cutlers Hall Road / Pemberton Road (Highgate Corner)	BENFIELDSIDE
Traffic island Coast Road (Near Aged Miners Homes)	BLACKHALL
Park Road/ Charles Street	SOUTH MOOR
Junct Durham/New Brancepeth Road	USHAW MOOR
Middle Street, Blackhall T junction Blackhall Resource Centre and School Ave	BLACKHALL
Top of Darlington Road at Zebra crossing, outside Red Cross shop	FERRYHILL
Pemberton Road o/s St Marys RCVA Primary	BLACKHILL
Acre Rigg Road / York Road Pinch point outside Infants	PETERLEE
Priestman Avenue / o/s No. 46	CONSETT
Main Road (A67) opposite No 3 Eden Crescent	GAINFORD
Bullion Lane/outside Bullion Lane Primary	CHESTER LE STREET
Buckinghamshire Road/Ent to Sch Campus	BELMONT AND PITTINGTON
Jct of Passfield Way/Durham Way	PETERLEE
Chilton Lane close to ent Ferryhill Stn Primary	FERRYHILL STATION
Durham Road/ Laurel Drive	LEADGATE
Barnes Road - Ped entrance by barrier - near library	MURTON
Outside West Rainton Primary	WEST RAIN TON
Durham Rd (A167) o/s Town Council Offices	CHILTON

Location	Area
Dipped kerb near T junction of Black Road and Brandon Lane	BRANDON
B6302 - Newhouse Rd, next to Co-Op	ESH WINNING
By the barrier opposite No 22 Hallgarth Lane, Pittington	BELMONT AND PITTINGTON
Ropery Walk/Gas Works Road	SEAHAM
T junction Margaret Terrace / Front Street (Beside carpet shop)	DEAF HILL
Bottom of Church Hill outside no 1	CROOK
Cross over Butterwick Rd close to X roads	FISHBURN
Outside School - Near T Junction - Thornley Primary	THORNLEY
Eden Lane, outside Seascope Primary School	PETERLEE
Cotsford Park - Outside Cotsford Infants School	HORDEN
B6291 - Outside Cassop Primary	CASSOP
T junction of Western Terrace North and North Coronation Street	MURTON

Appendix 3: Durham County Council Policy for the Provision of School Crossing Patrols (SCPs)

Durham County Council Policy for the Provision of School Crossing Patrols (SCPs)

Introduction

This policy is based upon the national standard produced by Road Safety GB entitled 'School Crossing Patrol Guidelines : June 2012'. It is endorsed and supported by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). The policy details where the Council will provide a SCP.

School Crossing Patrol – Service Provision

The Council recognises the need to provide a SCP service for schools across the County and it has a power to provide a service, but not a statutory duty.

SCPs provide a safer crossing facility in certain locations where a risk assessment has identified a need, and the Council has adopted the national guidance for justification and establishment of sites but with the adjustment of the PV^2 value from 4 million PV^2 to 2 million PV^2 .

The criteria is as follows:

Criteria for Establishment/Disestablishment of Sites

The criteria for the establishment of a school crossing patrol site uses a formula known as the ' PV^2 '.

The ' PV^2 ' is the formula for measuring whether or not a SCP site is justified where

- P = pedestrians
- V = vehicles

By counting the number of pedestrians and vehicles over a period of time, the PV^2 formula can be applied to determine if it meets the criteria, or not.

The PV^2 is actually applied to the busiest half hour period of the survey. Further multiplying factors are applied such as road and footpath width, vehicle speed, visibility, and accident history.

Should the final figure be at or above 2 million, the site is justified.

Disestablishment - Sites below 2 Million PV^2

Under the same criteria, sites below the 2 million PV^2 threshold are dis-established over a period of time, when they become vacant through natural wastage, early retirement, or voluntary redundancy.

Light Controlled and Zebra Crossings

Providing a SCP at light controlled crossings such as Pelicans, Puffins, and Traffic Lights and at zebra crossings is an unnecessary doubling of resource. At these sites, pedestrians themselves can halt traffic by simply standing at the kerb at a zebra crossing or by pressing a button to stop traffic at light controlled crossings. Sites are disestablished over a period of time when they become vacant through natural wastage, early retirement or voluntary redundancy.

Lunchtime Provision

The Council will not provide SCP cover at lunchtimes as generally school children do not leave school at lunchtime. However, a small number of schools where children are known to be allowed to leave school at lunchtime will be covered.

Parental Responsibility

The national guidelines are clear regarding the responsibility for the safety of children on the journey to and from school. Even where a SCP is provided, parents or guardians remain responsible for ensuring their children's safety, just as they do when a zebra crossing or pelican crossing is provided. Parents should not assume that the Council has the responsibility for the safety of their children on the journey to and from school.

Parents have a vital role to play in a child's road safety education and can improve a child's understanding greatly by walking with them to school and by setting the right example.

The Council's Road Safety team can give further guidance on how parents can become more involved in their child's road safety education.

What are we doing to maintain safety for children and other members of the public?

Road Safety is a vital area of the work for the Council and work will continue to provide support for schools, parents and children. This will include:

- Externally Funded Sites:
SCP sites, which do not meet the above criteria, may be retained or provided if funding for the site can be found by a school or another funding source.
- Volunteer SCPs:
Volunteers may be an option that gives parents and other members of the community an opportunity to support their local school in a positive way. Where requested, the Council may train volunteers to operate as SCPs which will help schools to keep a SCP facility.
- Road Safety Education and Training and Publicity:

The council's Road Safety Officers take a proactive approach to road safety, through education, training and publicity.

The team trains over 6,000 children each year in pedestrian and cycling skills, and these activities have helped to raise road safety awareness and skills in young children across the County. For example, training is provided to children on how to use light controlled and zebra crossings safely using real crossings where they are close by or use scale down working models.

Road safety education is provided through schemes such as the Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme, and general road safety education in the school curriculum helps improve road safety awareness. This important work develops the skills needed in young people to be safer independent road users.

- Advice and Information to Parents/Guardians:
The Council will support parents and guardians with advice and information. Training and equipment may be offered that will enable and encourage them to develop safer journeys to school. This includes written and verbal advice, loan equipment, development of 'Walking Buses' and the training of volunteer trainers.

For further information contact the Road Safety Team on telephone number 03000 268167/8 or e-mail address NS.roadsafety@durham.gov.uk.

Appendix 4

Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment

**Review of the School Crossing Patrol service
NS11.02**



Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments.

You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.	
Service/team or section: Road Safety, Strategic Highways, Technical Services, Neighbourhood Services	
Lead Officer Road Safety Manager Service Improvement Officer, Equalities and Diversity	01.05.2013
Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate) Review of the School Crossing Patrols service The need to achieve savings targets has led to a review of this service which has included consideration of the data in relation to accident statistics and what is recommended in terms of best practise by Government. The review encompasses discontinuing the use of school crossing patrols during the lunchtime period where there is no service requirement and retaining the existing policy. This will result in lunchtime provision being withdrawn at 60 sites where the school policy does not allow for pupils to leave the premises on a lunchtime . A public consultation will take place on the proposals	
Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify) – Schoolchildren and parents within the affected areas	
Is a copy of the subject attached? No Contact Road Safety, Strategic Highways, Technical Services	
Initial screening	
Prompts to help you: Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?	
Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings? Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure	

Service delivery											
Gender	N	Disability	N	Age	N	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	N	Sexual orientation	N
What evidence do you have to support your findings?											
The proposed changes to the provision should not have any service delivery impact as it is centres on schools which should not need lunchtime cover due to the school's policy during lunchtime. There will however be a consultation on the proposals to determine any impact. The results of the consultation will be used to inform a refreshed Equality Impact Assessment											
Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?											
Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure											
Staff											
Gender	Y	Disability	Y	Age	Y	Race/ethnicity	?	Religion or belief	?	Sexual orientation	?
What evidence do you have to support your findings?											
Impact on Staff: The management of change toolkit will be followed to take account of staffing changes.											
Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes Date: 01.05.2013											
If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.											
Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity											
Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.											
	Identify the impact: does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?			Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.				What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)			
Gender	Service delivery To be determined following the consultation and analysis of the results Staffing The majority of staff employed in this service are female							Analysis of consultation responses and further consideration required in final assessment.			

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

	Identify the impact: does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Age	<p>Service Delivery To be determined following the consultation and analysis of the results</p> <p>Staffing The average age of staff employed in this service is over 50.</p>		Ensure the management of change toolkit and process is applied
Disability	<p>Service Delivery To be determined following the consultation and analysis of the results</p> <p>Staffing There are 15 staff currently affected who have recorded a disability.</p>		<p>Analysis of consultation responses and further consideration in final assessment.</p> <p>Ensure the management of change toolkit and process is applied</p>
Race /ethnicity	<p>Service Delivery No negative impact has been identified.</p>		N/A
Religion or Belief	Not sufficient data		
Sexual orientation	Not sufficient data		

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities? N/A

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.

Service Delivery

the public consultation will enable a more detailed assessment to be developed based on the respondents and their profile

Staff Implications

Staff profile data from Resource link identifies some of the equality strands for the staff affected. However, there are gaps in relation to the data surrounding race/religion /sexual orientation so this is not included.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
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Change Management Toolkit and Corporate HR Procedure followed including consultation where appropriate to ensure fair treatment Ensure staff that are on maternity/paternity/sick leave are kept informed and/or enabled to attend presentations/meetings or offered alternative arrangements. Ensure those staff who may reside in remote areas and who may find travelling difficult are accommodated, ensuring they can attend individual or group meetings.	Road Safety Manager	December 2013	Project Plan for the implementation of the review
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Consultation -to ensure robust consultation and engagement process with the public and schools is in place	Road Safety Manager and Communications and Marketing Team Leader		Consultation Plan
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EiQA to be reviewed in line with any changes generated through consultation	Road Safety Manager and Service Improvement Officer (Equalities)		EiQA Plan
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When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: November 2013
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Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	N/A
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Lead officer - sign off: Head of Technical Services	Date: 19 August 2013
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Service equality representative - sign off: Customer Relations Policy and Performance Manager	Date: 19 August 2013
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