

Agenda item: 

**Title of meeting:** Traffic and Transportation

**Date of meeting:** 12th March 2015

**Subject:** School Crossing Patrol Service Policy

**Report by:** Head of Transport & Environment

**Wards affected:** All Wards

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To review the current practices into School Crossing Patrol site retention, recruitment and adopt the School Crossing Patrol Policy.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 **That the Executive Cabinet member for Traffic and Transportation approve the adoption of the School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Policy (Appendix A) and the guidance therein to be implemented;**
- 2.2 **That we grade existing sites to enable essential staff cover.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 After a Road Safety Scrutiny review in 2007 it was recommended that the SCP service be relocated from Education to the Road Safety & Active Travel Team (formerly Road Safety & Sustainable Travel) within the now Transport & Environment Service. This enabled greater control over safety of the sites and allowed the service to have a more direct approach to co-ordination of site risk assessments to address safety concerns.
- 3.2 Numbers of patrollers have been in decline in recent years to the current low of 55 staff with 55 site vacancies. We have held the number of sites at 110 but without the budget or ability to fill all.
- 3.3 For a relatively small unitary authority we have a disproportionately high number of sites, Brighton and Hove has 21 and Southampton have 58.

Roadsafety GB guidance recommends working to a  $PV^{2*}$  formula to ascertain if a site meets the requirement for a member of staff. Portsmouth is the only authority out of the 12 in the South East region to not follow this rule. This is a historic decision and one that was inherited 6 years ago.

- 3.4 Initial counts on our sites has found that of the 54 sites surveyed so far, only 5 would actually meet criteria based upon the standalone formula. Officers recommend that in addition to the traffic and pedestrian counts ( $PV^2$ ), all sites should be risk assessed to determine if environmental factors such as obscured visibility, the proximity of safe crossing points and/or junction layouts are of a concern that would warrant a patroller presence.
4. We therefore seek approval to use this formula not just as a deciding factor in its own right, but to be used alongside detailed risk assessments to ascertain both existing and new site eligibility.  $PV^2$  counts will form the basis, but sites will be graded according to usage, location and other environmental factors rather than just rely on  $PV^2$  alone.

Crossing sites will fall within the following three categories:

**Gold standard site - fill**

**High priority**

- Meets criteria based on  $PV^2$  alone

**Silver standard - fill**

**Medium priority**

- Does not meet  $PV^2$  but would if based on  $PV^2$  + 'Risk' - based on location and / or other environmental factors

**Bronze standard - decommission**

- Does not meet  $PV^2$  or need based on location and / or environmental factors and therefore be de-commissioned

- 4.1 Following safety concerns as well as resource duplication, officers recommend the movement off, and non-reinstatement of patrollers at engineered crossing sites such as Zebra and Pelican crossing points. The SCP policy highlights issues with doubling up on engineered sites from a safety view point. Our recommendation would be that staff remain on newly constructed sites for a period of two weeks before being relocated. The site would then be decommissioned. In extreme cases where safety is of a major concern and/or in instances where the patroller is privately funded by a sponsor, staff would act as a marshal without the visual mechanism of the stick to actually stop traffic.

**5. Reasons for recommendations**

- 5.1 The proposals would best use the resources available to PCC and provide cover to schools in the appropriately identified locations.

- 5.2 The proposals improve safety for local residents and pedestrians at the busiest sites within the area.
- 5.3 We would have an identifiable mechanism in place that can is data led for the reallocation of patrollers and the decommissioning of sites.

## 5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

An equality impact assessments is not required as the recommendations do not have a negative impact on any of the protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010

## 6 City Solicitors' Comments

- 6.1 The provision of school crossing patrols is governed by the Road Traffic Act 1984, The City Council as a unitary authority is the appropriate authority for the purposes of the Act. The provision of the service is discretionary but there are certain duties should the authority decide to provide the service.
- 6.2 The City Solicitor is satisfied that recommend action is within the powers of the City Council

## 7. Finance Comments

Head of Finance Comments

- 7.1 The adoption of the School Crossing Patrol Policy as set out in the recommendations of the report will require each of the current School Crossing Patrol sites to be assessed against the criteria contained within the policy. The required to undertake this review can be found within the existing Road Safety and Active Travel Team.
- 7.2 The cash limited budget for School Crossing Patrols is £330k per annum. This is sufficient for 80 School Crossing Patrollers. Currently there are 55 employed filling half of the 110 sites. As a result of this the budget is forecast to underspend in the financial year 2014/15 by an amount of 77k.
- 7.3 As a result of adopting the policy and carrying out these reviews it may result in the change in the number of School Crossing Patrol manned sites. This could result in a change in the level of funding required for School Crossing Patrols in future financial years.

*\* Sites having fewer than 15 children (P) crossing the road in the busiest period should not be considered for establishing an SCP. A classified count should be taken at the Site to identify the busiest period, recording child pedestrians (P) and vehicles (light vehicles, large goods vehicles and PCUs and cycles).It is*

recommended the traffic counts be recorded as 'passenger car' equivalent values (PCUs), by using the following multiplication factors:

**Passenger Car Units (PCUs)**

- 3 Pedal Cycles = 1 PCU
- 2 Motorcycles = 1 PCU
- 1 Car = 1 PCU
- 1 Light Goods Vehicle = 1 PCU  
(up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight)
- 1 Bus/Coach = 2 PCUs
- 1 Medium Goods Vehicle = 2 PCUs  
(over 3.5 tonnes gross weight)
- 1 Large Goods Vehicle = 3 PCUs  
(over 7.5 tonnes gross weight/multi axle lorries)
- 1 Bendi-bus = 3 PCUs

The count should include child pedestrians who attend an educational establishment and who cross the road at the time of the heaviest traffic flow (normally during the morning peak). Record the numbers of children (P) who cross the road at (for existing staffed sites) or within 50 metres of the site (for unstaffed or new sites). Calculate the total of child pedestrians (P) and multiply it with the square of the total number of PCU equivalents (V<sup>2</sup>) from the same consecutive period to provide the product PV<sup>2</sup>. If a PV<sup>2</sup> of greater than 4 million is achieved, an SCP location can be justified.

**Example 150 pedestrians 75 vehicles**

V<sup>2</sup> 75 x 75 = 5,625  
 PV<sup>2</sup> 5625 x 150 (peds) = 843,750  
 This produces a value of 843,750, and is very much less than 4 million

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 Signed by:

**Appendices:**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Appendix A SCP Policy	Transport & Environment

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

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 Signed by: