

TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held on Friday, 3 October 2014 at 5.30 pm in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

Present

Councillor Stuart Potter (in the Chair)
Simon Boshier
Hannah Hockaday
Phil Smith
Lynn Stagg

10. Apologies for Absence. (AI 1)

No apologies for absence had been received.

11. Appointment of Vice Chair. (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor Hannah Hockaday be appointed Vice Chair.

12. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 3)

No declarations of interests were made.

13. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 1 July 2014. (AI 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2014 be agreed as a correct record.

14. Review of Road Safety Around Schools. (AI 5)

Marc Griffin, Assistant Head of Service, Traffic & Transportation gave a presentation and in response to questions, clarified the following points:

- Schools are provided with leaflets and information to include in letters to parents.
- Many pupils now travel to school by scooter and a safety training programme is available.
- The most common problem encountered is parking on zig-zag lines outside schools. The enforcement of zig-zags outside schools are prioritised. Those considered to be high priority receive double the visits of normal priority, low priority get half the visits of medium. The classification given depends on traffic volume, the number of pupils at the school and the number of parents doing the school run. High priority areas tend to be on high speed roads. Fernhurst and Devonshire Avenue schools are high priority.
- Other problems he has witnessed include cycling on pavements and parents parked on double yellow lines.
- A raised table was recently introduced in Doyle Avenue to reduce traffic speed.
- Staff should not receive abuse when carrying out their duties.
- The number of schools that have Junior Road Service Officers is quite low.

- An injury is classed as serious if the victim is hospitalised for one night or more.
- Portsmouth City Council has higher numbers of School Crossing Patrol Officers than other local authorities. A recruitment drive has recently been launched to fill the 23 vacancies and so far 27 applications have been received.
- Staff in the Traffic Management Centre control the timings of the crossings particularly at rush hours.
- Some older children do walk out into the roads and are aggressive to drivers. Road safety campaigns for pupils have been carried out.
- The casualty data shows that KS1 and KS22 pupils are not at risk at junctions. This may be because they are with their parents and are not exposed to more dangerous roads.

•
In response to questions from the panel, Michael Robinson, Parking Manager clarified the following points:

- Vehicles that weigh less than 7.5 tons cannot be prohibited from parking on the highway.
- A Members' Bill is currently passing through Parliament regarding parking on pavements.
- The council's policy on parking is the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation.
- Signage regarding parking restrictions must be clear as any appeal hearing would consider whether it is reasonable to expect the appellant to understand that they were contravening the council's policy.
- If a parked vehicle obstructs a dropped kerb, the police or the council may issue a ticket.
- Parking on yellow lines is illegal.
- Loading bays are indicated by little yellow lines on the kerb stones.
- The British Parking Association will discuss parking legislation at its meeting next month.
- His team have been invited to three schools' parents evenings to explain parking regulations around schools.
- It is very difficult to enforce parking on zig zags.
- The priority for enforcement is to ensure road safety especially for most vulnerable in society.
- On average it takes an experienced Civil Enforcement Officer (CEOs) 20-25 seconds to issue a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). This depends on visibility as there is a lot of information to input into the handheld device and the officer walks towards the vehicle at the same time. Two PCNs are issued a day and 12 school visits a day.
- Joint operations are carried out with the police and community wardens.
- CEOs receive more abuse and assaults outside schools than anywhere else. Last year there were 30 aggravated incidents of which 12 took place outside schools.
- There is a lack of understanding about the role of zig-zag lines. They are seen by many parents as a drop off area. PCNs can only be issued to vehicles parked on the lines. If they are stopped in the middle road, tickets can be issued for double-parking because they are more than 30cm from

the kerb. PCNs can also be issued for parking on zig-zag lines either side of pedestrian crossings.

- Education and infrastructure are key to improving road safety.
- The British Parking Association said that the use of cameras for parking enforcement outside schools is very effective. The cameras would be mounted on a vehicle and cost approximately £40,000. The cost would be recouped in a very short time. He would recommend its use outside schools and in bus stops.
- Solent Junior School had railings installed during the summer holidays to improve the safety of pupils. During the first week of term, the parking service received 14 complaints from mothers who were angry because they had to get out of the car to lift the child over the railings.
- When there are no uniformed officers present, the behaviour of drivers changes significantly.
- Double red lines are used in London for main roads bus routes and strategic roads. They are not designed to manage traffic near schools.
- Some schools do not provide storage facilities for bicycles.

Darren Fells, Bikeability gave a presentation and in response to questions from the panel, clarified the following points:

- Bikeability replaced the old Cycling Proficiency Scheme and covers three levels of training: 1) Two hours in the playground for years 4 and 5 pupils to cover the basics. 2) Local roads in school environment (if suitable) to encourage cycling to school and 3) Complex road junctions, hazard perception and route planning for adults too. Levels 2 and 3 are also provided in colleges.
- Only training schemes approved by the Department for Transport are provided in schools.
- Some bikeability schemes in London do not promote the wearing of helmets because they believe that children do not want to wear them in reality.
- He recommends that the council should ensure that all pictures of cyclists in its literature wear helmets.
- Pedal Power Training was set up 5-6 years ago.
- This academic year the number of pupils who attended was almost 1,600. In Southampton there were 1,300.
- Three or four courses are provided at Court Lane School because of its size.
- Some schools do not want to be involved because their focus is on academic achievement.
- We can offer weekend, holiday and after school courses.
- It is very difficult to get into secondary schools because of trying to locate the correct person responsible for this.
- One hour scooter workshops are also provided which cover control skills, pavement etiquette, driveways and pedestrian safety.
- The KSIs are reducing.
- The key to improving safety is to ensure that Head Teachers are onboard.

After considering two maps, presented by Marc Griffin, which showed pedestrian casualty locations for KSI, KS2 and KS3, the panel noted that:

- There is a relatively high number of cycling in Portsmouth and so there is a higher number of casualties.
- Not many accidents happen outside schools.
- The peak for accidents is between 8 and 9am for younger children (KS1 and KS2) and between 3pm and 3.30pm and 5pm and 6pm for older ones (KS3 and KS4)
- August is not a quiet time in terms of accidents.

The panel discussed the importance of cycle helmets and the possibility of retailers donating cycle safety equipment to schools.

The Chair reminded members that they have been invited to:

- 1) Observe first-hand some of the issues outside schools between 08:45-09:15 and from 14:45-15:30. One with a uniformed officer and one visit with an un-uniformed officer.
- 2) Visit the Traffic Management Centre in the Civic Offices to observe traffic problems outside schools at the start and the end of the school day (same times as above).
- 3) Attend a Bikeability Training session.

Members agreed the survey that had been drafted which will ask teachers, governors and parents whether they feel that road safety around schools is an issue and if it is, what they think could be done about it.

It was agreed that the following information be provided to the panel:

- Details of road safety information given to parents.
- The list of priority schools for zig zag enforcement.
- The number of schools that have Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs).
- Details of child pedestrian and cyclist injuries.
- Invite a representative of the cycle forum to a meeting to discuss education given to pupils.
- Breakdown of the number of child cyclists and the gender.
- Details of whether accidents more often in term time.
- List of schools that offer bikeability training.
- Details of discussions held by the British Parking Association at its November meeting.

.....
Councillor Stuart Potter
Chair.