

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 16/17: School Crossing Patrols		Caroline Corcoran - Service Manager	19 January 2016 Version 2 (Exec)
Proposal:	<p>To no longer fund or manage school crossing patrollers.</p> <p>To work with a partner, where there is a desire for a patrol to continue. If a partner does not come forward for a specific site, the school crossing patrol on that site will cease.</p>		
Total budget 15/16:	£21,000	Recommended officer saving 16/17:	£21,000 (100%)
Initial proposed saving 16/17:	£21,000 (100%)	Final recommendation to Executive 16/17:	To proceed with this savings proposal, without any modifications.
Nos. of responses:	<p>There were 60 responses from individuals. There were also responses from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council • Pangbourne Parish Council • Governing Body, Pangbourne School • West Berkshire Green Party • Tilehurst Parish Council • UNISON 		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crossing busy roads safely without assistance from a school crossing patroller will be difficult, due to the volume of pedestrians and the volume and speed of traffic. • There may be an accident and someone may get injured or killed. • Where one adult has more than one child to cross (and perhaps a buggy/ bike/ scooter), or for those with disabilities, it will take longer to cross the road and may be more difficult to judge when it is safe to cross • Removing the school crossing patroller will reduce the independence of pupils who travel to school unaccompanied <p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of responses suggested installing an automated or zebra crossing as an alternative and considering more traffic calming measures 		
Equality issues:	None were drawn out from the responses		

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Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Move the speed camera nearer to the crossing point, to slow traffic. This will aid parents and children to find a spot to cross the road. This comment was specific to Mortimer.	Thames Valley Police operate the safety cameras. A request to move it would need to be agreed by the police and paid for by the Council. As sites are subject to selection criteria, it is unlikely the police will agree to move this camera, although this suggestion has not been explored further at this stage.	
	Install a zebra crossing or pedestrian lights or some other form of automated crossing	Assessed sites failed to meet the Department of Transport criteria for a controlled crossing (which includes zebra crossings). A zebra crossing would give too much priority to pedestrians and this could result in congestion and frustration for drivers at peak times and cannot be supported by traffic engineers.	
	More traffic calming measures	All schools are assessed in relation to speeds, accidents and other criteria to identify schools where safety schemes will be beneficial. This aspect is also kept under regular review, and emerging issues are considered. There are no current plans to introduce more traffic calming measures at the identified sites as the Highways assessments have indicated that there is sufficient opportunity to cross the road safely.	
	More parking restrictions to aid visibility would mitigate some of the impact	If a particular location is identified we will investigate and where a problem is identified will propose a solution. However, most parking restrictions are required to go through a lengthy legal process before they can be introduced and in residential streets it is likely that residents would formally object if the restrictions are unreasonable or if they have few alternatives to park off-street.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Council keep the service and recharge the schools	If a school wanted to partner with the Council to keep the school crossing patrol service, we would welcome an application.	
	Can the Council apply for a grant to fund the crossing patrollers?	Grant funding is not available to the Council. Partner organisations could explore the potential for grant funding or sponsorship.	

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	Could the Police PCSO staff the crossing?	Thames Valley Police have confirmed that they could not commit PCSOs to school crossing patrols.	
	Councillors forego their expenses to fund the SCP in their Ward.	This would be a private matter for the relevant Councillors.	
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Crossing Employee could be employed directly by school, payment through school 'friends' committee fundraising, with support from WBC • Parent Volunteers - core team of ten parent volunteers per school who commit to patrolling for one session per week for one year. Fixed day, fixed term so easy for each volunteer to plan around. Not easy to administer. • Respondent who is a Road Safety Engineer has offered to donate high visibility clothing for the patrol and the children needing to cross the road. • Special village fundraising? • Sponsorship by a company? 		
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>The exercise has not highlighted any impacts that are not already anticipated.</p> <p>We will continue to be open to working with a partner in the future, where this is a desire for a school crossing patrol. The framework and legal agreement for a partnering arrangement are in place.</p> <p>A temporary amendment to mitigate the impact could be to retain the current staff but deleting the other posts and associated costs. The savings from this proposal would reduce from £21k to £11k, and a Council budget of £10k per annum would be required. This temporary arrangement would be on the understanding that, as and when the patroller left the post, the partnership arrangement we have described in our proposal would be required or the crossing would cease at that time. This interim solution would mean that the full savings from the proposal would not be realised, but would ensure that the willing and effective staff on the 4 crossings could continue. The Council budget would reduce over time as and when patrollers left their posts or retired, providing small savings in future years. The Council budget would eventually be removed.</p>		
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the Council from proceeding with this proposal.		

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