

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Appendix N7b

Budget Proposals 2017/18: Road Safety		Head of Service: Mark Edwards Author: Mark Cole	16 February 2017 Version 2 (Executive)
Proposal:	To delete one of the two full-time Road Safety Officer posts in our Traffic Management and Road Safety Team.		
Total budget 2016/17:	£124,000	Recommended officer saving 2017/18:	£35,000 (28.2%)
Initial proposed saving 2017/18:	£35,000 (28.2%)	Final recommendation to Executive 2017/18:	To proceed with this proposal
No. of responses:	<p>In total, 27 responses were received. Of those that responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 identified themselves as residents of West Berkshire • 7 as council employees • 4 as Parish/Town Councils • 4 as other, including Unison 		
Key issues raised:	<p>Of the 27 responses received 26 included comments. 11 agreed with the proposal, 13 were opposed to it, one neither agreed nor disagreed, one said don't know and one didn't answer the question. Unison stated that road safety education in schools is being proposed to be reduced or removed altogether and this is at odds with providing better education in an area which can provide life-saving information, and save money overall by raising the standard of our young road users.</p> <p>10 respondents were particularly concerned about the impact on children / young people who will be missing out on a valuable part of their social education, two mentioned the potential to severely affect people's lives generally and the loss of positive life skills to keep them safe on the highways and one suggested that roads would be less safe with resultant litigation, injuries or deaths, one respondent thought that many of the safety activities are nice to have, one thought there would be no additional impacts, one thought these activities could be done by volunteers, one thought there was no need for these activities, one thought it is unnecessary expenditure and Thatcham TC supports the cut as our statutory duty will be fulfilled.</p>		
Equality issues:	No issues were raised during the consultation, that weren't already included in the EqIA stage 1.		
Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Charge people over the age of 18.	Charging for over 18's could discourage engagement and therefore impact negatively on road safety.	
	Do not proceed with this cut because of the negative consequences.	It is true that the cost to society of this saving could far surpass the saving although this cost would not be borne by WBC. This cut will mean that a number of road safety activities will reduce or stop as identified in the consultation paper but the Council would still be fulfilling its statutory duty regarding 'Promotion of road safety'.	

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	Identify those most at risk and only deliver road safety initiatives to them.	The road safety team already uses data and reports to identify risk areas and target these areas to reduce casualties (eg children, young drivers, motorcyclists). It is the case however that this cut means that a number of road safety activities will reduce or stop.	
	Call for volunteers to assist such as retired people or groups.	It might be possible for volunteers to assist but the skills required are quite specialist. There would not be sufficient resources remaining in the team to train would be volunteers though.	
	Provide more online content.	This will be explored if the cut goes ahead.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Fund this from the public health budget that seems well funded.	The public health service is already providing funding to support road safety initiatives but it is unknown how long this will last or whether it could provide more funding. This could be explored as an alternative however.	
	Restructure management instead.	This is already happening within the council generally and there have already been re-structures within the Highways and Transport Service in the last year.	
	Investigate sponsorship opportunities.	If the decision was taken not to proceed with this cut or delay its implementation, opportunities for sponsorship avenues could be explored further.	
	Reduce the number of councillors and expenses that can be claimed.	This is a possibility as part of boundary changes.	
Suggestions for income generation:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Increase council tax.	This would be a decision for Council Members to make.	
	Generate income by outsourcing / charging for our services.	Outsourcing elements of the road safety service is unlikely to make sufficient savings. We have previously investigated income generation in this area and will continue to do so.	
	Share road safety services with other local authorities.	This is not really an income generator as such. Sharing of services with other LA's is always worth exploring but it is necessary to have sufficient resources to be able to do this.	
Suggestions for	There were no offers to contribute from individuals or organisations other than from one respondent who said that she could		

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how others may help contribute:	teach her children how to cross roads safely and when they are old enough, how to be considerate and careful drivers and cyclists. There was one response from a school governor suggesting that governor services could ask for volunteers to assist with some tasks. The road safety team is already engaged with schools so there would be no need to introduce another party in the process such as governor services. The activities that the road safety team undertake require specialist skills and volunteers would need to be trained. There would not be sufficient resource remaining in the team to undertake this training if the cut goes ahead.		
Officer conclusion and recommendation as a result of the responses:	Since the council would continue to fulfil its statutory duty regarding 'promotion of road safety' as required by legislation it is not unreasonable to continue with this proposed service cut despite the majority of respondents being opposed. It is therefore recommended that the council progress with this proposal.		

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