



Cabinet
14 April 2015

**Report from the
Chief Operating Officer**

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL WARDS

School Crossing Patrol Service Review 2015/16

1.0 Summary

- 1.1. The School Crossing Patrol (SCP) service is a discretionary one and the Council has no duty to provide the service in whole or in part. A number of London Boroughs are reviewing the provision of SCPs as most now have physical safety measures and reduced speed limits introduced around schools.
- 1.2. Since the SCP service was first provided by the Council many physical measures have been introduced around school entrances to improve road safety there. In 2015/16 officers will also be reviewing the current speed limit policy with a view to drafting a Speed Limit Strategy for the introduction of more 20mph limits / zones.
- 1.3. In 2011 a review and consultation was completed to determine whether or not the SCP service should continue and, if so, the extent to which the service should be provided. This resulted in a reduction of SCP sites to 34 that were identified using a site prioritisation model.
- 1.4. As part of the Budget setting process for 2015/16 the deletion of funding for the SCP service was offered as a budget saving, as the Council had to identify over £50 million savings across all service areas.
- 1.5. The full list of potential budget savings were the subject of consultation inviting views and comments from interested parties. During this period two petitions were submitted in support of retaining the service. The

petitions, along with individual representation received, were considered by Cabinet at its meeting of 23 February 2015.

- 1.6. A paper taken to Cabinet on 23 February, recommending a budget for Full Council to consider on 2 March 2015, recommended to take the saving offered. This means the Council will stop providing the SCP service unless the school is prepared to pay for it.
- 1.7. This report identifies measures and initiatives to mitigate the impact from the removal of the SCP service. It also outlines the timescales involved in completing the service deletion in line with the managing change policy.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1. That Cabinet approves the School Crossing Patrol Service to be deleted at the end of the academic year (20 July 2015), with the exception of schools that agree to pay for the service where SCPs will continue.
- 2.2. That Cabinet approves the measures and initiatives set out in section 5.3 of this report to ensure that children, parents/carers and motorists are aware of the deletion of the SCP and that safety is maintained for child pedestrians.

3.0 Background

3.1. SCP Service

- 3.1.1. Historically, Brent has given priority to providing an extensive SCP service. In 2011 the service was reviewed and resulted in the reduction of staffed sites from 47 to 34 through the introduction of a site prioritisation model. This ensured SCP's are provided at locations where the road safety risk is greatest.
- 3.1.2. The service is not provided to secondary schools although secondary school pupils may use it as part of their home to school journey.
- 3.1.3. The focus of the service has been on maintain/improving road safety and more recently encouraging sustainable transport modes such as walking to school and supporting School Travel Planning.

3.2. Road Casualty reduction

- 3.2.1. Road casualty reduction is the result of implementing a wide range of measures and initiatives. These can include focussed road safety education, introduction of engineering measures and improved vehicle technology. However, although the SCP service has been a part of the

strategy to reduce road casualties, in particular child casualties, it is not possible to identify the direct contribution that the SCP service has made.

3.2.2. Road accidents are random events influenced by many factors which are in general preceded by a situation where one or more road users have failed to cope with the road environment at that time. Analysis indicates that :

- The majority of child pedestrian casualties are not associated with school related journeys (i.e. they take place when children are not travelling to and from school)
- The majority of child pedestrian casualties associated with school related journeys do not occur in the close vicinity of schools.

3.2.3. There were 141 child pedestrian casualties recorded between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2014

- 1 fatal
- 20 serious
- 120 slight

The fatality was a 5 year old on a Monday at 16.45pm and not near a school.

Of the 20 serious casualty incidents:

- 7 occurred during weekends
- 1 during the schools holidays
- 3 involved secondary school pupils
- 5 were during the evening/out of school arrival and dispersal times
- 2 involved young children (5yrs) that would have been supervised
- 2 involved primary school pupils on their way to or from school but did not happen at a SCP site or in the close vicinity of the school

Of the 120 slight casualty incidents:

- 2 were near SCP's but not on sites
- 16 were close to schools and would have been school related journeys

3.3. Comparison with London boroughs

3.3.1. The provision of SCP sites across London is varied with the number of SCP officers ranging from 53 in Greenwich to just 3 in Hammersmith & Fulham. There does not appear to be any correlation between the level of service and the number of primary schools in each borough.

3.3.2. Since March 2011 the position has remained fairly constant with only five boroughs reducing the number of SCP officers. However, a number of local authorities are now considering the future provision of their SCP service.

3.4. Other road safety initiatives currently offered

3.4.1. As well as the SCP service there are a range of other road safety education services offered to schools to educate children on how to be safe on the roads. All schools are offered the opportunity to receive a road safety visit which includes bespoke assemblies.

3.4.2. The schools are informed of all the resources and initiatives currently available, these include Transport for London (TfL) Junior Road Safety Officers and Youth Travel Ambassadors schemes.

3.4.3. We work with Year 6 pupils to assist with their transition to secondary school. There is a road safety activity at the Junior Citizen event and all Year 6 pupils are provided with a booklet which helps them to prepare for the move. This age group was previously identified as having a disproportionate number of casualties.

3.4.4. Interactive workshops are available for nurseries and under 5's settings and they are all encouraged to promote the children's traffic club. Parent's talks are also available upon request.

3.4.5. The road safety education programme is also extended to parents/carers to remind them of the importance of safety outside schools and how their actions could put children in danger, for example parking on school entrance markings.

3.4.6. Our 'Schools Safer Roads Project' is delivered to schools with safety concerns.

3.4.7. In recent years we have installed physical measures outside many schools to improve road safety. These have included, zebra or pelican crossings, providing shorter crossing points through kerb build outs, additional parking controls through school keep clear markings and speed humps to make the highway environment safer for all.

4.0 Service costs

4.1. The cost of delivering the current service is £177,000 per annum.

4.2. It has always been recognised that schools value this service. Following the review in 2011 the option to purchase the service was made available to schools, in particular those that had 'lost' the service through implementation of the site prioritisation model. This service continues to be available and we have been encouraging schools to purchase this service at a cost of £6,000 per year. To date we have two schools that buy back this service.

- 4.3. The Highway Authority provides the service as they have the authority to stop traffic. As a result the Highway Authority recruits, trains, supervises, provides all equipment and training required for the role on behalf of the school.
- 4.4. Following the first reading of the budget schools with a SCP service (31 schools) were notified by letter informing them of the proposal to stop providing the service. Feedback on the proposal, for inclusion in the final budget report, and confirmation if they would be interested in purchasing this service was requested.
- 4.5. Feedback received indicated that nine schools would be willing to pay for the service (this included the two already funding the service). Of the sites considered priority sites three schools have agreed to fund their SCP site and one only if can share the costs with neighbouring schools. Of the remaining non priority sites five schools have agreed to fund their SCP site should the service be deleted.
- 4.6. Following the decision of 2 March Full Council, officers have formally notified the schools and provided an extended period to 27 March (end of school term) for schools to confirm in writing if, in light of the decision, do they now want to procure the service. As of the 20 March a further four schools have confirm they now want to procure the service. An update will be provided at the Cabinet meeting.
- 4.7. Appendix I of this report provides a list of schools who have agreed to pay for the service from the commencement of the 2015/16 academic year.

5.0 Proposed measures and initiatives

- 5.1. Where a SCP has been provided for many years children, parents/carers and motorists would have become used to their presence. To prevent children in particular being adversely affected by the changes in service provision it is proposed to provide continuity through providing the service until the end of the academic year; July 2015. This takes advantage of the summer holidays providing a natural break and schools to then start the academic year in September without the SCP service.
- 5.2. The outcome of this is the full budget saving will not be fully realised as we would need to continue to fund the service for the first quarter of 2015/16. The cost for providing the service for the first quarter is £44,000. This will be contained within the overall department budgets
- 5.3. Regardless of the timing, when it is proposed to cease providing a SCP at any site a number of measures would be taken to ensure that children, parents/carers and motorists would be aware of the change

and the following actions would be taken to mitigate any adverse impact:

- Engage with the schools affected to raise awareness of alternatives available to them in providing road safety for children.
- We would provide additional road safety education above that already offered for children at those schools affected by the changes. This would include prioritising materials and training for children as particularly at risk of road accidents as identified in the equality assessment.
- Reviewing and refreshing if necessary signage and road markings in the vicinity of those schools affected. The identified work to be completed prior to the start of the academic year in September.
- Prioritisation of physical mitigation measures such as zebra or pelican crossings, traffic calming measures, kerb build outs, speed awareness etc. at the current high priority SCP sites for inclusion in the 2016/17 Local Implementation Plan (LIP) Annual Spending Submission.

Currently these proposals have been funded by Transport for London through the LIP programme. The type of intervention to be introduced has usually been informed by the individual school's Travel Plan.

- Continue to promote the SCP service to schools each year as a traded service.

6.0 Staff Consultation

- 6.1. On 4 December 2014 a meeting was held with SCP staff to inform them that the service had been proposed for a budget saving. At that meeting the decision making route and timeline was explained, highlighting that once the decision had been taken by Full Council on 2 March 2015 further information would be available to them.
- 6.2. Following the Cabinet report on 23 February 2015, where the decision to take the saving was agreed a staff consultation paper has been prepared. This provides information to the SCP officers regarding the reason for the change, support available to them and the timescales involved.
- 6.3. Upon the decision from Full Council on 2 March 2015, implement the following:

Consultees	Action	By when	Documents
Trade Unions	Briefing on consultation document and implications for staff	15 April 2015	Presentation
All staff affected / Trade Unions	Launch of formal consultation, including new traded service and assimilation	22 April 2015 – 15 day consultation	Consultation document
All staff affected	Formal briefing for staff of proposal	22 April 2015	Presentation
All staff affected	Formal notification to staff of proposal	23 April 2015	Individual letters
All staff at risk	Applications for voluntary redundancy submitted to at risk staff	22 April 2015 – 6 May 2015	VR application
All staff affected	1:1 meetings or team meetings with managers/HR on request	22 April 2015 – 6 May 2015	
All staff affected / Trade unions	Deadline for response to consultation proposals	6 May 2015	
VR panel – senior managers	Decisions on VR made notified to staff	8 May 2015	Individual letters
All staff affected / Trade Unions	Response to consultation issued	w/c 11 May 2015	Consultation response circulated
All staff affected / Trade Unions	Staff subject to competitive assimilation advised of dates for interview Notice of termination issued to staff and placed on redeployment register	13 May 2015	Individual letter
All staff affected	Interviews	18 May 2015 – 22 May 2015	Interviews
	Summer Half Term	25 May 2015 - 29 May 2015	
All staff affected	Staff advised of outcome of selection process Appointment of staff to new posts confirmed	26 May 2015 – 27 May 2015	Confirmation letter

	in writing		
HR Recruitment	Any vacant post s advertised	June 2015 onwards	External advertisement

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1. The cost of improving road safety at current SCP locations will be covered by funding provided from TfL's Local Implementation Plan.
- 7.2. There are implications to achieving the agreed £0.177m budget saving. This saving was calculated with the assumption it would be achieved from the start of the financial year. However, in accordance with our policy regarding managing change notice of redundancy cannot be given until the decision has been approved, which was at Full Council on 2 March 2015.
- 7.3. Should the service be deleted from the end of the summer term, i.e. 20th July 2015 the saving for this current financial year would fall short of its target by £44,000 to £133,000. This does not include redundancy payments which will be paid centrally.
- 7.4. Additional one off savings from within the Service / Directorate will need to be identified to cover the shortfall of £44,000 in 2015/16.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1. Section 26 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 as amended provides that the Council may make arrangements to appoint people for the patrolling of places where children cross roads on their way to or from school, at such times as the Council thinks fit subject in respect of GLA roads to consultation with Transport for London.
- 8.2. There is no statutory requirement placed upon a local authority to provide school crossing patrols. There is no "duty". There is however a power, that is, a discretion, to do so. In the exercise of those powers the Council must act reasonably, taking into account all relevant considerations and complying with other administrative law requirements.
- 8.3. There is no criteria set in law which must be applied by a Council in deciding SCP arrangements. There are national guidelines, but they are only guidelines and not binding. There is not a statutory duty to provide the service in a particular way. The Council is entitled to determine its own set of criteria to decide whether and if so where SCP provision should be made, provided those criteria are reasonable and

fit for purpose. It is also entitled to review and alter the criteria for that service.

- 8.4. With regards the alternative arrangements available the Council is permitted under the Local Authorities Goods & Services Act 1970 to enter into arrangements with schools to provide such services and to charge for such services, or where there is a community school to cost recover.

9.0 Equality Implications

- 9.1. The public sector duty set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic.
- 9.2. The removal of the SCP service has been assessed by way of an Equalities Impact Assessment (EA). A copy of this EA can be supplied on request.
- 9.3. The EA has concluded that there is an adverse impact on age, disability, race for the deletion of the SCP service. However the mitigation measures described above aim to reduce this so as to not unfairly impact on the equality group.
- 9.4. The EA has concluded that there is an adverse impact on age, sex, race for SCP officers.

10.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 10.1. The deletion of the service will result in the loss of 36 posts (9.16 FTE)
- 10.2. There are no accommodation implications as SCP staff are contractually required to work at any site as directed although, in general, staff remain at a particular site throughout their careers to accommodate where they live and their lifestyles.
- 10.3. The proposals will be implemented in accordance with the Council's managing change policies and procedures.

Background Papers

Executive report 19 September 2011: Proposed changes to the School Crossing Patrol service

Cabinet report 23 February 2015: Petitions – Save School Crossing Patrol and Leopold Primary School – save our School Patrol Officer

Cabinet report 23 February 1025: Budget 2015/16 and Council Tax

Contact Officers

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Appendix I

Schools who have agreed to pay for the service from the commencement of the 2015/16 academic year.

1. Barham Primary * *
2. Oakington Manor Primary
3. Furness Primary *
4. Gladstone Park Primary *
5. North West London Jewish * *
6. Anson Primary
7. Roe Green Infant
8. Wembley Primary
9. Harlesden Primary (will fund 2 SCP's)
10. Leopold Primary *
11. Mitchell Brook Primary *
12. Braintcroft Primary
13. Mount Stewart Infants and Juniors have agreed to share the cost
14. St Robert Southwell RC Primary
15. Park Lane Primary

* School has requested to keep the current SCP.

* * School already funds SCP and requested to keep current SCP

Appendix II

Schools who have responded stating they cannot afford or are not prepared to pay for the service.

1. Malorees Infants have stated they cannot afford to pay but they are exploring with Malorees juniors and QPCS the option of sharing the cost of the patrol crossing person on Aylestone Avenue. They have requested an extension beyond the 27 March deadline to the 24 April which has been agreed.
2. Salusbury Primary Governors believe it's the council's responsibility to pay not theirs.
3. Islamia Primary originally expressed an interest but now the Governing body has decided they are unable to pay due to financial constraints.

Appendix III

Schools who have been contacted but not responded.

1. Northview Primary
2. Christchurch Primary
3. Wykeham Primary
4. Convent of Jesus and Mary Infants
5. St Mary Magdalens Juniors
6. St Joseph RC Primary
7. St Marys RC Primary
8. Donnington Primary
9. Sudbury Primary
10. Lyon Park Infant School
11. Lyon Park Junior School
12. 2 Ealing schools