

ITEM NO: 5

Report to :	SCHOOLS FORUM
Date :	22 October 2013
Reporting Officer:	Ian Saxon, Assistant Executive Director, Environmental Services
Subject :	SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL SERVICE
Report Summary :	<p>The report provides an update to the Forum on changes in legislation, which prevents Schools from using the currently allocated and earmarked Dedicated Schools Grant from funding the School Crossing Patrol Service and sets out the options considered by the Council's Executive Board for the future of the service following the 30% reduction in all Council budgets, which has meant that the Council has no funding to support such a service, although this had previously been funded and supported by the Schools Forum using DSG.</p>
Recommendations :	<p>That School's Forum's are invited to consider the report and note that the Executive Board considered the options set out in the report and approved the recommendations set out below as a way forward. This includes consultation with Schools about those school crossing patrols that the Council will be forced to reduce by unless alternative funding is provided from other sources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the Council continues to deliver a School Crossing Patrol Service from 1 April 2014.2. public consultation and consultation with stakeholders is undertaken to reduce the number of school crossing points to 35 (listed in Appendix 2) following the application of the 2012 guidelines and the final proposal be subject to a Key Decision.3. options be considered for the service to be delivered utilising a variety of additional physical features (zebra/pelican crossings), in-house staff and volunteers, with sponsorship to be sought for individual patrol points.4. in association with Human Resources consultation is undertaken with staff and Trades Unions, to explore alternative employment opportunities and appropriate exit strategies, to reduce current staffing levels to meet the revised service offer.5. a marketing exercise is undertaken to engage the community in delivering the school crossing patrol service.6. a media exercise is undertaken to ensure that there is a full understanding of the Council's position.
Links to Sustainable Community Strategy :	Contributes to a Safer Tameside

Policy Implications :

The proposals are in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy considerations.

**Financial Implications :
(Authorised by the Borough
Treasurer)**

From 2012/2013 the Council discontinued funding for the School Crossing Patrol (School Crossing Patroller) service as a result of efficiency savings requirements.

This service has continued to be provided since this date and has been funded via non Council resources in agreement with the Tameside Schools Forum. The service will cease to be funded on 31 March 2014.

The report provides the Council with 7 options to consider regarding the future of this service.

Option 1 – Continuation with the existing provision of 65 SCPs via Environmental Services – Estimated cost of £365k.

Option 2 - Provision of 35 SCPs via Environmental Services. Service provision for schools following application of revised guidelines – minimum estimated cost of £230k.

Option 3 - Stop delivery of the service – The Council will incur associated staff exit costs (estimated costs to be confirmed).

Option 4 - Introduction of additional physical features (zebra/pelican crossings) – Estimated costs to provide a Zebra crossing £6k, and £25k for Pelican crossing.

Option 5 - Provision of service via volunteers - minimum estimated costs of £50k.

Option 6 – Provision of service via sponsorship – minimum estimated costs of £50k.

Option 7 - Mix of in-house service provision, reduced number of school crossing patrol points, new physical features volunteers and sponsorship – minimum estimated costs of £50k.

The report requests recommendation for the approval of Option 7. This is estimated to cost a maximum of £230k reducing to a minimum of £50k being the costs of providing a supervisor / coordinator and providing the necessary personal protective equipment and management of the service. The recommendation is to be referred to the Executive Member (Transport and Land Use) for determination.

In addition it is likely that the Council will incur staff exit and other associated costs in relation to the proposed media exercise as this service is delivered differently.

Following the previous decision to discontinue funding for this service and the ceasing of non Council resources from 1 April 2014, the proposed recommendations will require the service to be self-financing. This will require confirmation of alternative revenue via sponsorship to finance the associated expenditure.

The additional physical features (zebra/pelican crossings)

could be funded by resources allocated for such purposes from developments in the Borough.

It is important to note that there is a risk to the Council that the proposed delivery of this service will not be entirely self-financing by 1 April 2014. This may require support from Council resources in the short term.

**Legal Implications :
(Authorised by the Borough
Solicitor)**

The Council has a statutory power enabling it to provide a school crossing patrol service. The report details a number of options available to the Council in connection with the future offering which will be subject to consultation as a result of the proposed change to the current offer. The outcome of the consultation and an equality impact assessment will be considered in a Key Decision at a later date. There are significant cost consequences in continuing with the service or with any transitional stage and these need to be properly costed and set out in the Key Decision report to determine the way forward. If the costs of the service are to be reduced so that budget reductions do not have to be found from other services to fund this service which is currently funded but the funds can no longer be used a significant amount of work will need to be undertaken to set out a robust cost/benefit analysis of the options.

Risk Management :

The provision of School Crossing Patrollers is not a statutory function for the Council. Although parents or carers remain responsible for ensuring their children's safety on their whole journey to and from school, the provision of a School Crossing Patrol helps provide a safer journey to and from school.

A reduction in the School Crossing Patrol Service may result in negative publicity for the Council.

Access to Information :

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Ian Saxon, Assistant Executive Director, Environmental Services



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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Widespread changes to public services are currently under consideration by the Council. The Council is currently managing and will be required to deliver significant efficiency savings during the period 2013 to 2015 of circa £70 million.
- 1.2 School Crossing Patrols were established by the School Crossing Act 1953 and instituted on 1 July 1954 through the School Crossing Order 1954. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Sections 26 – 28) gave 'Appropriate Authorities' (defined as county councils, metropolitan district councils, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the Common Council of the City of London) the power to appoint School Crossing Patrollers to help children cross the road on their way to or from school, or from one part of a school to another, between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:30 pm.
- 1.3 Section 270 of the Transport Act 2000, amended the 1984 Regulations to allow School Crossing Patrols to operate "at such times as the Authority thinks fit". Therefore, School Crossing Patrols may work outside the hours of 8.00 am to 5.30pm and can stop traffic to help anyone (child or adult) to cross the road.
- 1.4 There is no statutory duty for the Council to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service.
- 1.5 The law gives a School Crossing Patroller appointed by an appropriate Authority the power to require drivers to stop. Those operating independently of a local authority have no such legal powers. However, the Council does not need to employ school crossing patrollers directly it can authorize others as it does with its car parking enforcement.
- 1.6 Nevertheless, even where a School Crossing Patrol is provided, parents or carers remain responsible for ensuring their children's safety on their whole journey to and from school and the inherent risk of crossing roads safely doesn't transfer to the Council.

2. TAMESIDE SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLLER SERVICE

- 2.1 Within Tameside there are 90 School Crossing Patrol sites previously identified as suitable for a service. Following reviews of the service and utilising the 2010 School Crossing Patrol Guidelines from The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) this changed to 66 of which 57 are currently staffed (see **Appendix 1**).
- 2.2 A further revision of ROSPA's School Crossing Patrol Guidelines (June 2012) has recently been assessed and on application of these current guidelines, the number of required crossing points meeting the recommended criteria reduces to 35 (see **Appendix 2**).
- 2.3 The School Crossing Patrol service is currently managed by Environmental Services within the Economic Growth Investment and Sustainability Directorate, acting as the Highway Authority for Tameside.
- 2.4 The service includes the provision and ongoing management of trained School Crossing Patrollers for established crossing points and the supply and subsequent replacement of their uniforms and equipment. Compulsory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks, (formerly CRB - Criminal Records Bureau) are carried out and staff are recruited as required. Patrollers are tasked with aiding pedestrians to safely cross the road in peak periods, primarily whilst making journeys to and from schools.
- 2.5 In the provision of this service, to ensure that the most vulnerable crossing points are covered, a priority criterion has been established. For this a survey of all sites was undertaken using the national guidance for School Crossing Patrol service provision

identified above. The guidance document establishes recommended criteria governing the establishment of School Crossing Patrol points. These centre around a number of factors including:

- Pedestrian and vehicle counts;
- Adjustment factors including carriageway width, speed/visibility and lighting;
- Consideration of additional facilities such as a zebra and light-controlled crossings; and
- Accident data.

2.6 Using the above factors, all sites currently rated as suitable for a School Crossing Patrol service have either been staffed over the last 12 month period or recruitment processes have actively been pursued, and this continues as appropriate.

2.7 The table in **Appendix 1** lists all School Crossing Patrollers provided for Primary and Secondary schools within the Borough. The table indicates those schools which are currently provided, or will be provided, with a patroller. A number of schools have more than one patroller; others have individual patrollers which may serve more than one school.

3. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 For the financial year 2012/2013 the Schools Forum agreed that the Council could use £347k to pay for the School Crossing Patrol service that provides a service to 58 Schools across Tameside, with 65 Patrollers.

3.2 Under the School Funding Formula rules for 2013/2014, the Schools Forum could not agree to centrally retain funding for this particular activity and therefore the associated funding which was centrally retained in 2012/2013 was allocated to schools within the Age Weighted Pupil Unit in 2013/2014.

3.3 For the financial year 2013/2014 the School Crossing Patrol service continued to be provided via non Council resources. This funding will come to an end on 31 March 2014.

3.4 Whilst not a statutory duty to provide a School Crossing Patrol service, Central Government legislation requires that any School Crossing Patrol that is provided is done so under the management of the Council, as this provision cannot be managed at individual School level.

3.5 In order to continue to provide School Crossing Patrols, the Council has explored the option of including this service as part of its Traded Services offer to Schools.

3.6 However, a Statutory Instrument - The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2012, which came into force on 1 January 2013, specifically preventing schools from funding school crossing patrols. The relevant section is:

Part 2, Chapter 2 Section 7 (c)

7. A local authority's non-schools education budget or schools budget must not include the following classes or descriptions of expenditure—

(c) expenditure for the purposes of section 26 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

(a) (arrangements for patrolling school crossings).

3.7 The outcome of this is that whilst schools have set aside the funding to pay for this service it cannot owing to legislation be used to fund the School Crossing Patrol service and as from 1 April 2014, there is no other funding available for this service.

4. OPTIONS FROM 1 APRIL 2014

4.1 Whilst the Service is discretionary and not mandatory, the Council recognise that parents and schools value the School Crossing Patrol service. Consequently, in light of the legislation preventing use of ring-fenced Education funding it is necessary to explore innovative ways in which to continue to provide the service and has a series of options to consider:

4.2 **Option (1):** The continued provision of a School Crossing Patrol Service for 65 School Crossing Patrol points (at approx. £365k per annum, resourced via the Council's general fund) for those schools deemed as reaching minimum criteria for a school crossing patrol as set out in the School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines (June 2010 revision) and in the table in **Appendix 1**.

4.2.1 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council continues to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service;
- All points deemed as requiring a School Crossing Patroller under 2010 guidance as noted in **Appendix 1** would continue to be staffed;
- Ongoing and continued Risk Assessments undertaken by the Council;
- Provision of ongoing and future training and assessment of School Crossing Patroller staff provided;
- Agreed criteria for the assessment and location of patroller locations.

4.2.2 The disadvantages of this option include:

- The Council has no funding for this option and would need to allocate funding requiring budget reductions from elsewhere;

4.3 **Option (2):** The continued provision of a School Crossing Patrol Service for 35 School Crossing Patrol points (at approx. £230k per annum, resourced via the Council's general fund) for those schools deemed as reaching minimum criteria for a school crossing patrol as set out in the School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines (June 2012 revision) and in the table in **Appendix 2**.

4.3.1 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council continues to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service;
- All points deemed as requiring a School Crossing Patrol under revised 2012 guidance as noted in **Appendix 2** would be staffed;
- On-going and continued Risk Assessments undertaken by the Council;
- Provision of on-going and future training and assessment of School Crossing Patrol staff provided;
- Agreed criteria for the assessment and location of patroller locations;
- The application of the 2012 guidance reduces the number of crossing points meeting the criteria and therefore reduces the overall costs of the Service.

4.3.2 The disadvantages of this option include:

- The Council has no funding for this reduced cost option and would need to allocate funding requiring budget reductions from elsewhere;
- The Council currently employs around 60 School Crossing Patrollers, working 10 hours per week. The possibility of finding alternative employment for this group of staff would prove problematic and early involvement of Human Resources and Trades Unions;

- During any transition phase reducing the number of School Crossing Patrollers would likely expose the Council to poor publicity despite fact in line with current guidance despite the fact parents/carers remain responsible for ensuring their children's safety on their whole journey to and from school even where a School Crossing Patrol is provided).

4.4 **Option (3):** The Council discontinues the provision of a School Crossing Patrol Service.

4.4.1 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council will not have to allocate additional financial resources from its general fund and find alternative budget cuts from elsewhere although a cost for severance would be required for the staff affected.

4.4.2 The disadvantages of this option include:

- The Council may suffer severe reputational damage at the cessation of this service. This can be mitigated through publicity explaining that for the previous two years the School Crossing Patrol Service has been funding directly by Schools, but they are now prevented from doing so by Central Government.
- The Council currently employs around 60 School Crossing Patrollers, working 10 hours per week. The possibility of finding alternative employment for this group of staff would prove problematic and early involvement of Human Resources and Trades Unions.

4.5 **Option (4):** The Council considers undertaking a programme of assessment of existing school crossing patrol points for the introduction of physical measures using capital funding such as section 106 monies to reduce the number of required staffed crossing points on an invest to save basis.

4.5.1 By introducing physical measures, Zebra or Pelican Crossings, the Council can reduce the number of required staffed crossing points.

4.5.2 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council reduces the cost of providing a School Crossing Patrol Service;
- Finances required to run the service are predominantly staff time weighted as opposed to payment for School Crossing Patrols;
- Physical measures will be available permanently and not just at school opening and closing times, to further improve pedestrian safety.

4.5.3 The disadvantages of this option include:

- The cost of providing a Zebra Crossing is around £6,000 and the minimum cost for the provision of a signal controlled crossing point is in the region of £25,000 and this could increase considerably if the controlled signals are required to be linked to other traffic signals to maintain the free flow of traffic.
- Not all positions would be suitable for the introduction of physical measure and an assessment of each point would be required to assess its suitability.

4.5.4 The funding for these points could be funded by resources allocated for such purposes from developments in the Borough.

4.5.5 Consideration should also be given to include in the approval process for planning applications that all new applications that would result in increased vehicular traffic and all new housing developments, a condition of approval should be the provision of pedestrian

facilities. These facilities need not necessarily be in the immediate vicinity of the development but where the impact of the development is required.

4.6 **Option (5):** The Council undertakes a marketing exercise in schools and the local community to try to recruit volunteers, to fully or partly provide the service.

4.6.1 One of the themes of the Council's priorities is to increase the self-reliance of communities and reduce the demand on the Council to provide services directly.

4.6.2 The School Crossing Patrol Service is viewed as an important service by teachers and parents and by presenting the Council's financial position in a directed marketing campaign, greater interest may follow.

4.6.3 Initially this marketing should be targeted at parents, teachers, Parent Teacher Associations and local Church organisations.

4.6.4 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council continues to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service;
- The Council acts as an enabler rather than a direct provider of the service;
- Finances required to run the service are predominantly staff time weighted as opposed to payment for School Crossing Patrols;
- Whilst traditional recruitment of School Crossing Patrol staff has proved difficult, a more focussed approach on local issues together with a targeted approach may prove more successful.

4.6.5 The disadvantages of this option include:

- The Council still needs to provide the protective clothing, training, insurance and management of the volunteers;
- Financial cost implications for compulsory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks, (formerly CRB - Criminal Records Bureau) which may be numerous if volunteer turnover is high;
- The Council has traditionally had great difficulty in recruiting paid employees to this role. It may prove even more difficult to recruit volunteer staff.

4.7 **Option (6):** The Council can approach local businesses to sponsor a patrol point.

4.7.1 The advantages of this option include:

- The Council continues to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service;
- The scheme is an opportunity for businesses and other organisations to raise their profile as well as helping out their local community;
- Sponsors' logos could appear on the patrol uniforms.

4.7.2 The disadvantages of this option include:

- Raising and managing sponsors may require a considerable amount of staff input;
- Reliability of financial sponsorship, potentially impacting on continuous provision of patrol;
- The Council still needs to provide the training, insurance and management of the patrol.

4.8 **Option (7):** The Council can explore delivering the Service with a reduced number of school crossing patrol points through a variety of in-house staff, volunteers and through sponsorship.

4.8.1 The major advantage of this option would be;

- The Council would still provide a School Crossing Patrol Service , at reduced costs and with the possibility of some of these costs being offset by income via sponsorship

4.8.2 The major disadvantage of this option would be;

- The provision of a service with both paid and unpaid staff undertaking the same role.

4.9 Summary of Options

All of the above options are summarised in the table below highlighting both the risks and benefits of each option.

Option	Description	Benefits	Major Risks	Possible Costs (£k)	Possible Income / Reduced Expenditure (£k)
1	Provision of 65 SCPs via Environmental Services	Continuation of Service	Funded via general fund	365	0
2	Provision of 35 SCPs via Environmental Services	Continuation of Service at reduced cost	Funding, Reputational damage	Min 230	0
3	Stop delivery of the Service	Financial – no cost	Reputational damage	Staff Exit Costs	0
4	Introduction of additional physical features (zebra/pelican crossings)	Continuation of Service at reduced cost	Recruitment. Reputation	Min 50	0
5	Provision of Service via Volunteer	Continuation of Service at reduced cost	Recruitment. Reputation	Min 50	0
6	Provision of Service via sponsorship	Continuation of Service at reduced cost	Securing sponsors	Min 50	5 per patroller sponsored
7	Reduced number of school crossing patrol points with a mix of in-house Service provision, new physical features volunteers & sponsorship	Continuation of Service at reduced cost	Management & HR issues, securing sponsors	Min 50	5 per patroller volunteer or sponsored

5 CONSULTATION

5.1 The preferred option (Option 7) is to reduce, following the application of the School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines (June 2012 revision), the number of school crossing patrols and to provide this service with a mix of in-house Service provision, new physical features

volunteers and sponsorship. This option is to be further explored through public consultation undertaken following a Key Decision. The outcome of consultation, an Equality Impact Assessment and a more detailed report will be subject to a further Key Decision in the New Year.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The Council recognizes the importance of continuing to provide a School Crossing Patrol Service - although not a statutory requirement, either at its current level or at a reduced level following the application of revised guidelines, and to continue the service the Council will be required to explore alternative funding arrangements.
- 6.2 The Council can attempt to reduce the costs associated with this service by the introduction of physical features (zebra and/or signal controlled crossings), utilizing volunteers by engaging with the community and also by exploring sponsorship arrangements with local businesses.
- 6.3 If the Council decides to continue with the service at a reduced level it will need to undertake the necessary consultations with staff, Human Resources and Trades Unions, and undertake a media exercise to mitigate any negative reputational damage.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 As set out at the front of the report.

APPENDIX 1

Table 1 : School Crossing Patrol Provision April 2013

	Staffed at Sept 2013	Point Ref	School
1	Y	324	Hyde Tech & Flowery Field Primary
2	Y	323	Hyde Tech & Flowery Fields Primary
3	Y	322	Flowery Field Infants
4	Y	234	Audenshaw High
5	Y	123	Gorse Hall Primary
6	Y	132	All Saints High
7	N	111	The Heys & Our Lady of Mount Carmel
8	Y	116	Ashton New Charter Academy
9	Y	127	Yew Tree Community Primary
10	Y	222	St Marys RC Primary Denton
11	Y	205	Moorside Infants & Juniors
12	Y	102	Waterloo Primary
13	Y	103	Waterloo Primary & Canon Burrows CE Primary
14	Y	313	Dowson Primary
15	Y	214	Fairfield High
16	Y	217	Poplar St Primary
17	N	120	St James CE Primary
18	Y	233	St Stephens Infants& Junior
19	Y	207	St Stephens RC Infants
20	Y	226	Corrie Primary
21	N	219	Denton Community High
22	Y	333	St Georges Primary
23	Y	211	Manchester Rd Infants& Juniors
24	Y	133	Rosehill Primary
25	Y	114	Rosehill Primary
26	Y	330	Millbrook CP
27	Y	112	Our Lady of Mount Carmel RC Primary
28	Y	106	St Peters Infants
29	Y	136	The Heys Primary
30	Y	134	St Marys Primary
31	Y	224	St Thomas More HS and St Marys Primary
32	N	320	St Pauls Hyde
33	N	331	Buckton Vale Primary
34	Y	206	Moorside Infants & Junior
35	Y	236	Manor Green Primary
36	Y	315	St Georges CE Hyde
37	Y	124	St Johns Junior
38	Y	208	St Stephens RC Infants

	Staffed at Sept 2013	Point Ref	School
39	Y	237	Denton West End Primary Academy
40	Y	327	Bradley Green Primary
41	Y	130	Lyndhurst Primary
42	Y	318	Godley CP
43	Y	329	St Raphael's CP
44	Y	201	Audenshaw CP
45	N	239	St Marys CE Primary
46	Y	128	Ravensfield Primary
47	Y	129	Ravensfield Primary
48	N	209	Greenside Lane Infants& Junior
49	Y	215	Fairfield Rd Infants& Junior
50	Y	105	Ashton West End Junior
51	Y	109	Ashton West End Primary
52	Y	312	Gee Cross Holy Trinity Primary
53	Y	235	Greswell CP
54	Y	319	Leigh Primary
55	Y	302	Stalyhill Infant & Stalyhill Primary
56	Y	305	Broadbottom CP
57	Y	228	St John Fisher CP
58	Y	307	Mottram Primary
59	Y	110	Ashton West End Junior/ St Peters CE Primary
60	Y	328	St Pauls CE, Stalybridge
61	Y	303	Hollingworth High & Hollingworth Primary
62	Y	204	St Marys Primary, Droylsden
63	Y	332	Milton St Johns Primary
64	Y	122	St Peters RC Primary
65	Y		Oakfield Primary
66	N		Droylsden Academy (requested as traded service)

APPENDIX 2

Table 2: Proposed School Crossing Patrol Provision April 2014

	Staffed at Sept 2013	Point Ref	School
1	Y	324	Hyde Tech & Flowery Field Primary
2	Y	323	Hyde Tech & Flowery Fields Primary
3	Y	234	Audenshaw High
4	Y	123	Gorse Hall Primary
5	Y	132	All Saints High
6	Y	116	Ashton New Charter <u>Academy</u>
7	Y	127	Yew Tree Community Primary
8	Y	222	St Marys RC Primary Denton
9	Y	102	Waterloo Primary
10	Y	103	Waterloo Primary & Canon Burrows CE Primary
11	Y	313	Dowson Primary
12	Y	214	Fairfield High
13	Y	217	Poplar St Primary
14	Y	233	St Stephens Infants& Junior
15	Y	207	St Stephens RC Infants
16	Y	226	Corrie Primary
17	Y	333	St Georges Primary
18	Y	211	Manchester Rd Infants& Juniors
19	Y	114	Rosehill Primary
20	Y	112	Our Lady of Mount Carmel RC Primary
21	Y	106	St Peters Infants
22	Y	136	The Heys Primary
23	Y	134	St Marys Primary
24	Y	224	St Thomas More HS and St Marys Primary
25	Y	206	Moorside Infants & Junior
26	Y	236	Manor Green Primary
27	Y	315	St Georges CE Hyde
28	Y	124	St Johns Junior
29	Y	208	St Stephens RC Infants
30	Y	237	Denton West End Primary Academy
31	Y	327	Bradley Green Primary
32	Y	130	Lyndhurst Primary
33	Y	201	Audenshaw CP
34	Y	215	Fairfield Rd Infants& Junior
35	Y	204	St Marys Primary, Droylsden