

SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction and Background

Road safety is an issue to which great importance is attached by both central and government. As 18% of cars on urban roads at peak times are used by parents taking children to and from school, road safety around schools is a major problem. Improving transport choice and safety is a key objective of the Council Plan which aims to reduce the numbers killed or injured in road traffic accidents and also to encourage more journeys by public transport, cycling and walking. Tackling road safety involves a variety of measures ranging from traffic calming, school safety zones, road safety education and other initiatives designed to promote alternatives to car use.

The aim is for the County Council to create an environment which will give parents the confidence to allow their children to use alternatives to the car to undertake their journeys to and from school. By doing so they will impact on the whole community in terms of health, education, air quality and traffic congestion.

Recruitment of School Crossing Patrols (SCPs) is a national problem. Hours of work are limited which in turn limits pay. SCPs work in all weather conditions and they often have to deal with bad/abusive motorists. They form however, an integral part of the County Council's road safety policy. Without them, it is clear that parents would not allow their children to walk to school and traffic congestion and its associated problems would be increased.

1.2 Issues and Recommendations

Overall, the review concludes that the SCP Service in Derbyshire is well managed. This is evidenced by amongst others, a low vacancy rate, high staff morale, performance indicators and the high profile the Service has compared with other authorities. There are however, issues which the review feels need to be addressed.

The Service, in order to ensure that SCPs are able to take up their duties at the earliest opportunity, undertake some of the personnel work that would normally be performed by the departmental personnel section. These additional responsibilities along with flexible management responsibilities provide an efficient way of working.

Recommendation 1

That the Director of Environmental Services prepares a further report to Cabinet on the management arrangements in the SCP Service.

The Service does not at present undertake formal exit surveys of staff leaving the service, or monitor the reasons why SCPs leave. This does not help to identify or address any particular problems that may arise.

Recommendation 2

Formal employee exit procedures and monitoring be introduced for SCPs.

PSA funding has been added to the Service base budget and utilised on advertising and awareness initiatives including bus back and interior adverts and radio air time. This has resulted in the vacancy rate reducing from over 17% in 2002 to its present level of 13.7%.

Recommendation 3

That priority should continue to be given to the advertising and awareness campaigns which have resulted in the reduced vacancy rate.

The promotional material used by the Service has been in use for several years. The reviews concludes that new material should be produced, the costs of which should be able to be contained from within existing budgets.

Recommendation 4

That new promotional material be designed and produced for use by the Service.

SCPs work in isolation from their day to day management. Whilst they obviously enjoy a close and good working relation with service managers, every effort should be made to provide SCPs with as much support and information as possible.

Recommendation 5

An annual newsletter be produced for circulation to all SCPs.

The Improvement and Scrutiny review of LEA Governors recommended that an officer be seconded on a pilot basis to work in the community to implement the LEA Governor recruitment strategy and reduce the level of governor vacancies. This review concludes that there may be opportunities for joint working between the two sections which should be explored further.

Recommendation 6

The Road Safety Section and the Governor Support Section further pursue the possibilities of joint working on community involvement in the recruitment processes of SCPs and LEA Governors.

A major area of concern for SCPs was abusive/bad motorists which may put the lives of both SCPs and children at risk. Linked to this is the perception on the part of SCPs that the Police fail to take action to support SCPs against abusive/bad motorists. Initial discussions have taken place with the Police with a view to developing a protocol for dealing with such cases.

Recommendation 7

The Highway Safety and Performance Manager work with the Police to develop a protocol on addressing the problems experienced by SCPs relating to abuse and inconsiderate motorists.

Arising from the group training sessions attended by the working group, concerns were expressed by some SCPs that they had limited contact with the schools they cover. This was not a major matter for concern and it is accepted that some SCPs may in terms of location, be remote from the school or they may cover more than one school. The review considered however, that the Service should do more to encourage a closer working relationship between schools and SCPs.

Recommendation 8

The Highway Safety and Performance Manager develop a protocol to encourage a closer working relationship between SCPs and schools.

The review recognises the benefits that the adoption of school travel plans can bring to schools, the local community and not least to SCPs. Plans help create an environment in which parents can have confidence in allowing children to walk to school and they also support SCPs in their work. School travel plans require dedicated officer support to establish them since a great deal of work and community consultation is required prior to a plan being adopted by a school. At present dedicated officer support exists in the form of the School Travel Plan Co-ordinator, a post funded until March 2004 by the Department for Transport and the Regions. The review recommends that the County Council should seek to continue this post as a substantive permanent post within their establishment should Department of Transport and the regions funding be not extended beyond March 2004.

Recommendation 9

Should Department of Transport funding not be extended beyond March 2004, the review supports the case for the post of School Travel Plan Co-ordinator to be made a permanent post within the Environmental Services Department establishment.

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO THE SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL SERVICE

2. Introduction

Road safety is an issue to which great importance is attached by both central and local government. The Government is seeking through local authorities to promote a series of measures which are designed to reduce car journeys and congestion and encourage alternative means of transport. Examples include School Travel Plans and School Safety Zones.

Improving transport choice and safety is a key goal of the Council Plan. Key Council Plan objectives aim to:-

- reduce the number of people killed or injured in road traffic accidents
- encourage more journeys by public transport, cycling and walking

These objectives are supported by a range of Council Plan targets, PSA targets and other local performance indicators relating to road safety. The School Crossing Patrol Service form part of the County Councils overall road safety provision.

The County Council must aim to create an environment in which parents/carers are willing and able to let their children travel to school by means other than by car. At present this environment does not for the most part exist, not just in Derbyshire but across the country as a whole. Concerns over road safety and personal safety mean that the number of children who travel to school by car has increased significantly in recent years. In turn this creates a vicious circle by increasing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions and health problems.

A range of services and initiatives which are designed to meet these targets are in place, ranging from physical measures such as traffic calming and school safety zones, road safety education in schools, to promoting school travel plans and walk to school initiatives. The School Crossing Patrol Service (SCP) is an integral element of County Council measures to improve road safety. It is important therefore, that the County Council gives consideration to all matters relating to the recruitment and retention of SCPs in order that the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service is maximised.

3. Background and Scope of the Review

At the meeting of the Service Effectiveness, Community Services and External Affairs Improvement and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2002, the scope and terms of reference for the review was approved. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 1.

SCPs were established by the School Crossing Patrol Act 1953. Until January 2001, SCPs only had power to stop vehicles to help school children cross the road. The Transport Act 2001 however, extended their powers to enable them to assist any person to cross the road safely during their normal duty times. The Act also enabled local authorities to operate Patrols at any time rather than the 0800 to 1730 hrs to which they had previously been restricted. Ultimately, responsibility for ensuring children's safety on the journey to and from school remains with parents even where a SCP has been provided.

In recent years the journey to school has changed significantly for the nine million plus school children in education in the UK. It is estimated that at the morning peak time, 18% of cars on the road in urban areas are taking children to school. Over the last ten years the proportion of journeys to school by car has increased from 16% to 30% and the average journey length has increased by over 33%. Twenty years ago, 80% of 7 and 8 year olds walked to school. Now this figure has fallen to just 9%.

Taking children to school by car indirectly has an impact on the whole area and community in terms of health, education, air quality and traffic congestion. The causes which are complex and inter-related, include:-

- Increasing car ownership
- Choice of schools
- Demographic changes
- Lack of other forms of transport/high fares
- Road safety concerns
- Personal safety fears
- Children required to carry more equipment/books
- Pressure of time/work on the part of parents

In 2002/2003, 50 children were killed or seriously injured on Derbyshire roads. The target is to achieve a reduction in this figure to 33 by 2010.

The problem of the recruitment and retention of School Crossing Patrols is a longstanding national issue which is not confined to Derbyshire. SCPs traditionally work short periods of time at the beginning and end of the school day, which can be disjointed, in all weather conditions. They are required to control children whilst crossing the road safely and at the same time they may be subject to abuse and intimidatory behaviour from impatient motorists.

Guidelines for authorities in managing SCPs are produced by the Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA). The Environmental Services Department recently conducted a survey of other local authorities on how they manage the School Crossing Patrol Service. The summary report is attached at Appendix 2 to this report.

4.0 The School Crossing Patrol Service in Derbyshire

The Environmental Services Department took over responsibility for managing the SCP service from Derbyshire Constabulary in 1995.

The Service aims to:-

- provide assistance to parents/carers and their children on their journeys to and from school
- provide assistance during duty times, to other people within the community
- to support the Council Plan Goal: to improve transport choice and safety
- support the casualty reduction targets.
- contribute towards health, environmental and sustainability issues

The annual budget for the Service in 2002/2003 was £713,278 which was supplemented by £35,000 PSA funding.

4.1 The Present Establishment

A dedicated team has been established within the Highways Safety Section of the Department. The Highway Safety and Performance Manager has line management responsibility for the service supported by the following establishment:-

- 1 SCP Co-ordinator
- 1 Assistant SCP Co-ordinator
- 0.5 wte Admin Assistant (employed on a temporary basis from the relief register)
- 6 Area Supervisors
- 8 Mobile Patrols
- 234 Regular SCPs
- 46 Deputy/Relief SCPs

The regular SCPs provide cover at active sites on a day to day basis. Deputy SCPs cover for the absence of regular Patrols on their specified site whilst mobile SCPs provide emergency cover at any location within their designated area in response to service needs and priorities.

LARSOA guidelines suggest that in order to provide and supervise a safe and efficient service, a ratio of one supervisor to 40 SCPs is

recommended. The average ratio in Derbyshire for SCPs is one supervisor to 48 patrols.

4.2 Profile of SCP Workforce

SCPs in Derbyshire include mothers with children at the school at which they cover. Some continue to work after their child has left the school. However, increasingly men over the age of 50 are becoming SCPs. Approximately 35% of SCPs are male. 3 locations are also covered through job sharing arrangements.

The minimum age for SCPs in Derbyshire is 18 years with the retirement age being 70 years. This in line with the LARSOA guidelines.

4.3 Pay

The current rate of pay for a regular SCP in Derbyshire is £5.45 per hour. Pay, which is paid fortnightly, is equated over 52 weeks rather than the 39 weeks term time (equated pay is £5.12 per hour). This equated pay system provides patrols with a regular income throughout the year. A laundry allowance is also paid in addition to the weekly pay. Mobile SCPs are guaranteed payment 10 hours per week at a rate of £5.45 per hour. Payment is made for any hours worked above the 10 hours per week and a mileage allowance and travelling time is also paid. Relief SCPs are paid at a rate of £5.40 per hour but are paid only for hours worked.

Whilst the level of pay was identified as an issue in terms of recruitment and retention, the County Council rate of pay for SCPs is at least in line with that paid by other authorities. The problem is more likely to be the small number of hours worked which limits weekly pay. It is worth noting that a recent survey undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council found that a pay increase had no effect on recruitment figures.

4.4 Criminal Background Checks

All SCPs are subject to Criminal Background Checks. Recent delays in processing enquiries by the Criminal Records Bureau have caused delays of months in some cases, in newly appointed SCPs taking up their positions. In addition, some SCPs have experienced problems with completing the forms and providing supporting information. In response to this problem, the SCP Supervisors now work directly with SCPs if they wish to complete the questionnaire and check documentation. This has served to reduce potential delays caused by incorrectly completed forms.

4.5 Training

Initial training is provided to new SCPs as detailed below:-

- Pre-site training and induction- Video, booklet and SCP Handbook (Duration: 1-2 hours)
- On-site training – One to one instruction by SCP Supervisor (Duration: minimum 1 day or until SCP is confident)

On-going training is provided to SCPs in the form of:-

- At least one supervisory visit per term by SCP Supervisor
- Annual Group Training Sessions

4.6 Incident Reporting

Unfortunately, SCPs are subject to abuse from motorists, including parents or other drivers from the local community, whilst undertaking their duties. In addition they can also be victims of bad and dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking which makes it difficult for SCPs to carry out their duties safely.

All SCPs are instructed on the actions they should take in such circumstances and they are required to report incidents to their supervisors. Supervisors record the information on an incident report form and take the appropriate action or seek advice from management. This may include reporting the matter to the Police or, redress through the school if the school is supportive of the SCP.

The problem of abuse, dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking was highlighted as a matter of concern at the training sessions attended by the Members working group and in the consultation exercise with SCPs.

4.7 Uniforms and Equipment

Basic legal requirements for SCP uniforms are set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Obviously the County Council complies with this legislation.

The standard of uniforms issued to SCPs in Derbyshire has in the past been an issue, particularly immediately following the transfer of the Service from the Police. The SCP Service has however, taken on board these issues and provided better quality uniforms and equipment. Developments

and improvements to uniforms are routinely considered and patrols are asked to trial as appropriate.

4.8 Active and Vacant SCP Sites

Schools are not automatically entitled to have a SCP. There is a laid down formula for determining eligibility for a SCP which takes in to account pedestrian and vehicle traffic along with other factors relating to the particular site.

There are currently 276 active sites, with 5 requests for new sites currently being assessed. Of these 43 do not have a SCP currently appointed. The vast majority of sites are outside infant and junior schools. Only 3 are specifically for secondary schools. This equates to a vacancy rate of 13.7%. 5 are also awaiting outstanding CRB checks. The average vacancy rate in other authorities identified in the recent Environmental Services Department survey was 20%. In 2002, the vacancy rate for the County Council was around 17%.

The safety of the SCPs and the children is crucial. All locations for SCPs are assessed on safety and local environmental conditions. Arising from proposals to introduce a school travel plan at Dronfield Infant and Junior School, the desire to have an additional SCP at Hallowes Lane was identified. In response, the SCP Co-ordinator assessed the site and identified the most appropriate location, taking in to account road environment and parked vehicles, many of which belonged to parents.

In this case, parents, through the school travel plan, demonstrated that they would be prepared to walk their children to school. This resulted in an increased number of pedestrians which enabled the establishment of the additional patrol. This is an example of where parents, the school and the SCP Service can work together within the framework of their school travel plan to resolve local problems.

4.9 SCP Recruitment

SCP vacancies are advertised in the same way as other County Council job vacancies. The Service also use a variety of other means to advertise specific vacancies including:-

- Flyers distributed within the local community
- Press releases
- Notices adjacent to vacant site

The recruitment literature and posters used is a mixture of locally developed material and national campaign material. The local posters and leaflets have been in use for several years. It is worth noting that some of this material has been taken on board and used nationally and by other authorities. The total expenditure for advertising in 2002/2003 was £39,500. This included the additional £35,500 PSA funding utilised for bus rear and internal adverts and local radio advertisements.

The Service has also taken over some of the personnel procedures associated with the recruitment process from the Environmental Services Personnel Section in conjunction with the Departmental Personnel Manager. Previously delays in processing job vacancies, particularly after interview have, in some cases led to SCPs taking up alternative employment and their services being lost to the authority.

In the majority of cases, SCPs are informally interviewed when they leave their jobs. Some reasons for leaving have been identified as the impact on benefit payments; more hours or full time work; and the SCPs children leaving school. However, there is no formal exit survey undertaken or record kept monitoring of the reasons why SCPs give up their posts.

4.9.1 SCP Service Priorities

The SCP Service has themselves set service improvement, personnel focussed and awareness raising service objectives including:-

- Maintain a vacancy rate of not more than 10%
- Vacancies to be advertised within three weeks
- Requests for new sites reviewed within six weeks
- 85% first day emergency cover at high priority sites
- Annual SCP campaign on awareness and driver consideration
- Induction training and on-going training at least once per year
- Joint annual training events
- Regular Supervisory visits (minimum of one per term)
- Quality uniforms/equipment
- SCP Newsletter
- Representation with engineering projects such as traffic calming schemes.

The review found that the SCP Service is performing well against these objectives. No major issues relating to these were raised as part of the

consultation exercise with SCPs. Whilst it was noted that the Service was not achieving the target of maintaining a vacancy rate of not more than 10%, the review found that there had been a significant reduction in the rate towards this target in the preceding year.

4.9.2 School Travel Plans

School Travel Plans are organised in partnership with schools, LEAs and highways departments and the local community. Typically a School Travel Plan will bring together a series of measures aimed at improving safety and reducing car usage. School Travel Plans are based on consultation and partnership involving the school, parents, pupils, governors, highway engineers and local people. SCPs will be involved in the process of establishing and supporting the outcomes of such Plans. School Travel Plans are dynamic plans that need to operate within a changing environment. In order to ensure that this is the case, School Travel Plans have been made Ofsted documents.

The aims of School Travel Plans are likely to include:-

- A reduction in traffic around a school
- Management of traffic near a school such as the introduction of School Safety Zones
- Increasing walking to School
- Promotion of car sharing
- Road safety awareness both on the part of school children and motorists
- Promotion of other road safety initiatives

The Road Safety Team has been set a target to have 40 schools with adopted School Travel Plans by 2005. 10 were adopted in 2002/3. Schools are invited annually to apply to have School Travel Plans. Applications are “scored” and the top ten are selected on this basis. New schools or schools requiring planning permission for capital works are now under planning law required to adopt an School Travel Plan as a condition of planning permission.

To assist with the development and adoption of School Travel Plans, the County Council has, utilising DTR funding, appointed a School Travel Plan Co-ordinator. Funding for this post ceases in March 2004.

4.9.3 School Crossing Patrol Working Group

The County Council has been the lead authority in the establishment of the LARSOA Regional School Crossing Patrol Working Group. Phillippa Young, the County Council Highway Safety Officer Chairs the Group which aims to compare performance and share good practice and develop common performance measures to improve service delivery.

4.9.4 Performance Indicators

There are a number of performance indicators against which the performance of the SCP Service can be judged.

To reduce by 60% the number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents by 2010

- The PSA Interim Target for 2002/2003 was a reduction in child casualties to 66
- The actual outturn figure for 2002/2003 was a reduction to 50 casualties
- This target has therefore been achieved.

Number of children arriving at school by non-car modes

- The target is to increase the number of children arriving at school by non-car modes to 36,898 in 2002/2003.
- The outturn figure for 2002/2003 was only 34,972
- This target has therefore not been met

Number of schools that have adopted school travel plans

- The target is for 10 Derbyshire schools to adopt STPs
- 10 new STPs have been adopted
- This target has been achieved

4.9.5 Consultation

As part of the review process, consultation in the form of questionnaires was undertaken with the following:

- School Crossing Patrols – questionnaires were sent to 277 SCPs. In total 136 responses were received, giving a response rate of 49%. Findings from this survey include;

- increased public awareness was the main area where SCPs felt the Service could be improved (50%)
 - Local knowledge was the main way in which SCPs became aware of the job vacancy (41%)
 - An increase in pay would encourage others to become SCPs (37%)
 - Abusive/bad drivers was the second most popular reason given for SCPs not enjoying their jobs (43%), bad weather being the most popular!
- Schools – 287 questionnaires were sent to schools with SCPs. 141 responses were received, a response rate of 49%. The main findings include;
 - 77% of schools are either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the SCP
 - 80% of schools said it would be unsafe not to have an SCP
 - Parents/Carers – 1580 questionnaires were sent to parents/carers. 347 responses (22%) were received. Responses to this survey include;
 - 81% of respondents were either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the SCP service
 - 68% felt it would be too dangerous to let children cross the road without an SCP
 - 56% felt that the Service provided could be improved by preventing vehicles dropping off/parking near SCPs

A summary of the surveys is attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

The working group overseeing the review has also interviewed:-

- Councillor W Burrows – Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Transport
- Mags Young - Highway Safety and Performance Manager
- Eillen Murphy – School Crossing Patrol Co-ordinator
- Kevin Senior – School Travel Plan Co-ordinator
- Inspector Paul Berry and David Skinner – Derbyshire Constabulary

Notes of the above meetings are attached at Appendix 4.

In addition, the working group attended SCP training sessions at Alfreton, Chesterfield and Matlock. Notes of these meetings are attached at Appendix 5.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations arising from the review are set out below. An action plan is attached at Appendix 6.

5.1 Management of the Service

Overall the review found that the SCP Service in Derbyshire is well run and managed. This is evidenced by:-

- A lower than average vacancy rate of SCP sites of 13.7%. The average taken from the recent survey of other authorities is 20%
- High staff morale which is clearly demonstrated in the results of the SCP survey and was evidenced by the working group at the joint training sessions
- Achievement against performance targets
- Performance against service objectives
- Responsive management arrangements
- Adherence to LARSOA good practice guidelines
- Derbyshire SCP service has a high profile with other authorities and it has recently been the lead authority in establishing the SCP Regional Working Group
- Varied and on-going advertising strategy
- 50th Anniversary of SCPs events

It is clear from the survey results that the SCPs are highly valued by parents and schools. Both surveys demonstrate an awareness that without SCPs the roads would be more dangerous, traffic would increase and children and parents would lose confidence in walking to school. SCPs play an important role in helping to achieve the Council Plan objectives of reducing the number of people killed or injured in road accidents and encouraging more journeys by public transport, cycling and walking.

The Service has developed flexible management arrangements in response to the problems it faces. As detailed, the Service undertakes much of its own personnel work in order to reduce delays and to avoid losing new recruits to the Service. Much of this work is currently undertaken by a Scale 2/3 (£6,360) 0.5 wte relief member of staff. If this relief provision were to be withdrawn at any point this would seriously impact on the Service's ability to ensure that SCP recruitment processes

are expedited efficiently and that SCPs take up post at the earliest opportunity.

Recommendation 1

That the Director of Environmental Services prepares a further report to Cabinet on the Management arrangements in the SCP Service.

The Service currently operates an informal process of exit interviews and no formal monitoring of the reasons why SCPs leave the Service is undertaken. It is recommended that this procedure should be formalised.

Recommendation 2

Formal employee exit procedures and monitoring be introduced for SCPs.

5.2 Recruitment

The review found that the recruitment strategy for SCPs in Derbyshire was currently over and above that undertaken by other authorities and this reflected in the below average vacancy rate.

The additional £35,000 PSA funding for advertising and awareness has been utilised to provide additional advertising such as bus rear and interior adverts and radio advertising. This has resulted in a reduction in the vacancy rate from at the start of 2002 of over 17% to 13.7% at present. The review recognises the benefits gained from this additional focus on advertising and awareness and recommends that priority should continue to be given to this area of activity in the future.

Recommendation 3

That priority should continue to be given to the advertising and awareness campaigns which have resulted in the reduced vacancy rate.

Awareness of the role of SCPs was an issue which 50% of SCPs who responded to the survey felt could be improved. The locally designed posters and leaflets utilised in both general and specific recruitment and awareness campaigns in Derbyshire have been in use for several years. The Highway Safety and Performance Manager considers that there would be benefits to new material being produced. The review recommends that

new posters and leaflets should be produced, the costs of which should be able to be contained from within existing resources.

Recommendation 4

That new promotional material be designed and produced for use by the Service.

It is clear from the survey of SCPs that there is a good working relationship between SCPs and their Area Supervisors. Given however, that SCPs work in an environment which is remote from direct day to day supervision or management it is recommended that an annual newsletter for circulation to all SCPs be produced. The newsletter can be used as a mechanism of providing information and support to SCPs.

Recommendation 5

An annual newsletter be produced for circulation to all SCPs.

The Education Improvement and Scrutiny Committee has recently completed a review, which has been accepted by Cabinet, on the recruitment of LEA Governors. One of the recommendations arising from the review was that a pilot study basis, an officer be seconded to work directly in the community on implementing the governor recruitment strategy. The officer will work closely with local community groups, parish councils and forums to hopefully reduce the level of vacancies of LEA governors. Local knowledge was identified by SCPs as the main source from which they learnt of job vacancies.

Discussions have been held with the Road Safety and Performance Officer and the Head of Governor Support within the Education Department. Both agree that there may be opportunities for joint working on recruitment between the two sections, which should be explored further.

Recommendation 6

The Road Safety Section and the Governor Support Section pursue the possibilities of joint working on community involvement in the recruitment processes of SCPs and LEA Governors.

5.3 Abusive/Problem Motorists

Issues around road safety, speeding, poor driving and abusive motorists were raised as reasons why SCPs are likely to give up their jobs. Linked to this is a strongly held view of a lack of support and action from the Police which was raised at every training session attended by the working group. It is also a view held by SCP Supervisors. Similar factors were raised as issues in the surveys of parents and schools.

The number of incidents recorded during the 2001/2 school year was 45. To date in the 2002/3 year there have been 45 incidents reported to date. Since Environmental Services took over responsibility from the Police in 1995, there have been no successful prosecutions of motorists relating to incidents involving SCPs.

The Highway Safety and SCP Services have a good relationship with the Police, particularly with senior ranking officers. They have worked with the Police on many occasions in the past on various joint initiatives. In fact, for over 8 years the County Council and Police have had excellent formal and informal arrangements, in particular with the Derbyshire Road Safety and Safety Camera Partnership. The Highway Safety and Performance Manager and the SCP Co-ordinator have in the past met with the Police to discuss such problems. Agreement was reached that efforts would be made to address the problems. The difficulties appear to arise with the Police at a more local level.

The working group held a very constructive meeting with the Police to discuss a way forward. Several issues were identified which needed to be addressed including reporting of incidents, the need for locally based action and the need for better communication. As a means of improving the relationship and communication between the Police and SCPs, it was felt that local beat managers from the Police should attend the annual training events. It was agreed that the SCP Service, with the support of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and the Police work together to develop a protocol on dealing effectively with problem/abusive motorists.

Recommendation 7

The Highway Safety and Performance Manager work with the Police to develop a protocol on addressing the problems experienced by SCPs relating to abuse and inconsiderate motorists.

5.4 Relationship Between SCPs and Schools

Arising from the group training sessions attended by the working group, concerns were expressed by some SCPs that they had limited contact with the schools they cover. By way of an example, SCPs complained that on occasions, schools failed to notify them of dates of INSET days. This was not a major matter for concern and it is accepted that some SCPs may in terms of location, be remote from the school or they may cover more than one school. The review considered however, that the Service should do more to encourage a closer working relationship between schools and SCPs and that a protocol promote this should be developed.

Recommendation 8

The Highway Safety and Performance Manager develop a protocol to encourage a closer working relationship between SCPs and schools.

5.5 School Travel Plans

The review welcomed the progress the County Council is making towards introducing School Travel Plans in Derbyshire.

The introduction of School Travel Plans will mean that it is even more imperative that SCPs are appointed and retained. For example, School Travel Plans encourage parents to allow their children to walk to school on the basis that problems and dangers will have been identified and addressed, including SCP provision. Once expectations are raised it is important that every element of the provisions set out in a School Travel Plan work on an on-going basis or all the potential benefits will be lost.

Plans will engage all relative agencies and the local community in dealing with road safety issues in a school area. School Travel Plans embrace community action and raise awareness in general of issues around road safety at schools. An environment will be created which will support SCPs in their work and be conducive to their recruitment and retention. Tackling problems such as abusive/problem motorists should also be easier to address where Plans exist as there will be a closer relationship between the SCP, the school, the community and the Police. Plans should also a closer working relationship between schools and SCPs. This was highlighted as a problem at some schools at the training meetings attended by Members.

Introducing plans is a very time consuming process involving considerable officer time working with agencies, the school and the community. Hence the target of establishing only 10 per year. Department of Transport funding for the post of School Travel Plan Co-ordinator is due to cease in March 2004, although there is a possibility that it may be extended further in part by the Government. If it does cease, there would be no officer in the County with responsibility for introducing and promoting Travel Plans. The work of the Co-ordinator would, where possible, be taken on by Road Safety Officers within the Department. Without dedicated support, the number of Plans adopted would inevitably decrease. It is recommended therefore, that should Department of Transport funding for a Travel Plan Co-ordinator not be extended, a bid for resources be made in the next budget round to fund provision for this post (Scale SO1/£22,000 per annum) as part of the Environmental Services establishment.

Recommendation 9

Should Department of Transport funding not be extended beyond March 2004, the review supports the case for the post of School Travel Plan Co-ordinator to be made a permanent post within the Environmental Services Department establishment.

6. The Next Stage

The report will be referred to the Cabinet for consideration. It is recommended that:-

- (1) the Chair of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee presents the report to the Cabinet.
- (2) following consideration of this report and subject to the Cabinet agreeing to the recommendations, it is suggested that the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee receives a report at a date to be determined, to outline progress made.

29/7/03

Derbyshire County Council

**Service Effectiveness, Community Services and Public Protection
Improvement and Scrutiny Committee**

16 October 2002

Report of the Chief Executive

School Crossing Patrols – Scoping report

1. Purpose of the Report

To consider the scope of the Improvement and Scrutiny Review of the School Crossing Patrol Service in Derbyshire.

2. Information and Analysis

The review will examine the present position in Derbyshire with regard to School Crossing Patrols and how their recruitment and retention can be improved.

School Crossing Patrols play a vital role in ensuring that school children travel safely to and from school. Responsibility for administering the service is through the Environmental Services Department. Locally, and indeed nationally, there are problems with recruiting and retaining School Crossing Patrols.

As part of the review process, the Committee is asked to consider appointing a Working Group (with political balance) to work alongside officers in undertaking the review.

3. Officer Recommendation

That (1) the scoping report for the Improvement and Scrutiny review of School Crossing Patrols be approved.

(2) the Committee is asked to consider appointing a maximum of three Members to a Working Group (with political balance) to work alongside officers in undertaking the review.

**Nick Hodgson
Chief Executive**

Appendix

Improvement and Scrutiny Committee Service Effectiveness, Community Services and Public Protection

School Crossing Patrols Scope of the Review

The review will examine the present position in Derbyshire with regard to School Crossing Patrols and how their recruitment and retention can be improved.

Issues to consider

- What is the County Council policy on the provision of School Crossing Patrols?
- What are the problems associated with the recruitment and retention of School Crossing Patrols?
- How can these problems be addressed to bring about an improvement in the service?
- What initiatives if any, have been used in Derbyshire which are designed to improve the service and how effective have they been?
- Are there any initiatives in other local authorities which may improve or compliment the service currently provided in Derbyshire?

Information Sources

- Officers from the Environmental Services Department
- School Crossing Patrols (Regular/Mobiles)
- Parents
- Schools
- Other local authorities
- Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
- National/local Case studies/reports/seminars etc.

Conduct of the Review

The review will be conducted by the Improvement and Scrutiny Team, working closely with officers from the Environmental Services Department.

The Team will gather information from School Crossing Patrols, parents and schools by using a variety of means including questionnaires/surveys and if appropriate, face to face meetings.

Timescale

It is intended that the review be completed by March 2003. The Committee will receive regular reports updating Members on the progress of the review.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

I&S REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL SERVICE

SURVEYS FINDINGS

As part of the Improvement and Scrutiny Review of the School Crossing Patrol Service, questionnaires were distributed to the following groups of service users: -

- School Crossing Patrols
- Schools, served by a School Crossing Patrol
- Parents

KEY FINDINGS FROM SURVEYS

The following have been identified as key issues from the completed questionnaires distributed to School Crossing Patrols, Schools (Served by a SCP) and parents/carers (via a sample of the above schools). Full details for all questions are given in this report.

School Crossing Patrol Survey

- **92%** of Patrols receive regular visits from their Area Supervisor
- **50%** said that improvements to the service could be made by increasing awareness of the service and the work/role of the SCPs
- **35%** of Patrols feel that greater advertising using different media would encourage more people to become Patrols, with **37%** identifying an increase in pay as an encouragement
- **65%** of Patrols identified that they enjoyed their job because of working with/helping children and meeting parents. A further **17%** said that contributing to road safety was the enjoyable the element of their work
- In total, **88%** identified one of two issues that were not enjoyable about their work; either bad weather (45%) or abusive/bad drivers (43%)

- **69%** identified either ill health or retirement as the reasons why they may leave their work as a SCP while **14%** would leave for other work with more hours/pay
- Further improvements to the uniform (such as waterproof hats, footwear and better summer coats) was identified by **64%** of the Patrols in their additional comments on improving the service

Schools Survey

- **92%** of schools completing the questionnaire said that they were satisfied, very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the SCP service provided, with **77%** expressing that they were very or extremely satisfied
- Favourable responses to the service included:
 - Good with children and good rapport with parents/friendly
 - Reliable, prompt and effective
 - Crosses children safety
 - Moderates and influences adult behaviour, especially drivers
- Unfavourable comments regarding the service included:
 - Vacant post/relief patrol post vacant
 - Lack of cover for absences
 - Delays due to criminal background/police checks
 - Traffic and parking problems
- **80%** of schools who responded identified that not having a SCP would result in an unsafe environment. Another impact identified by **12%** of respondents was the increase in car use for school journeys and increased congestion
- There were a large range of suggestions given on how the service could be improved, including:
 - Better cover for absences
 - Increase in pay
 - Replace SCPs more quickly/appoint SCPs more quickly
 - More SCPs
- **96%** of schools identified that they were aware of the County's Walk to School initiatives; **76%** being aware of the road safety educational work and **75%** having an awareness of the County's School Travel Plan work

- With regard to recruitment, **35%** of schools said that they could help using their school newsletter, with **23%** assisting by distributing posters/leaflets. **12%** felt that their contact direct with parents/grandparents could also help and encourage the recruiting of Patrols
- Many schools commented on the need to quicken up the recruitment process, however, **96%** were aware that SCPs must have a full criminal background check before being appointed
- Schools suggested a number of ideas for improving the service, including:
 - Should allow SCPs to start work while check is being carried out
 - Speed up the recruitment process
 - Update uniforms
 - Raise profile/importance of the role and work of the SCP service
 - Providing adequate standby cover for illness

Parents/Carers Survey

- **98%** of parents who completed the questionnaire said that they were satisfied, very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the SCP service provided, with **81%** expressing that they were either very or extremely satisfied
- Safety is a key factor for parents, with **76%** identifying that not having a SCP would result in a dangerous environment and more accidents. Another impact identified by **8%** of respondents was that children would not be aloud to walk to school or would lose confidence in doing so
- **72%** of parents said that the service could be improved by preventing vehicles dropping off /parking close to school and using traffic calming measures. **22%** identified that the service could be improved by employing more SCPs and providing more cover for illness
- Parents suggested a range of ways to advertise and help recruit Patrols including:
 - School newsletters/School Notice Boards
 - Newspapers
 - Job Centres
 - Surgeries – doctors/dentist

- The following suggestions were received when parents were asked to consider what role schools could take in recruiting more Patrols:
 - Circulation of information e.g. newsletters, leaflets
 - To fully support the SCPs
 - Children to design posters
 - Integrate with Midday Supervisors role
- Many schools and parents commented on the need to improve the recruitment process, however, **84%** of parents surveyed were aware that SCPs must have a full criminal background check before being appointed
- Parents suggested a number of ideas for improving the service, including:
 - Enforcement for illegal parking/obstruction
 - Increase pay
 - More crossings
 - Cover for after school activities/available throughout the whole day

School Crossing Patrols

136 questionnaires were completed and returned by Patrols throughout the county from the 277 distributed (Response rate of 49%). Not all those who responded completed every question. In some cases more than one response was given.

Q1 All respondents identified that they knew their designated Area Supervisor

Q2 Do you receive regular visits from your Area Supervisor?

Yes 92%

No 8%

Q3 Do you have a copy of the School Crossing Patrol Handbook?

Yes 92%

No 8%

Q4 Do you carry your handbook with you while on duty?

Yes 45%

No 55%

Q5 How could the service be improved?

The following suggestions were received from the Patrols themselves who completed the questionnaire. The responses are ranked most popular to least popular as follows:

- Increased public awareness and understanding of the work (68) 50%
- Improved issues on site such as speed reduction measures, signing and lights (26) 19%
- Improvements to uniform e.g. waterproof hats (17) 13%
- Prosecution of offending motorists (12) 9%
- Opportunities for job sharing (6) 4%
- Image (4) 3%
- More training/study days to meet with other patrols (3) 2%

Q6 How do you think the County Council could encourage other people to become SCPs?

The following suggestions were received from the Patrols themselves who completed the questionnaire. The responses are ranked most popular to least popular as follows:

- Increase in rate of pay (41) 37%
- More advertising campaigns - TV, radio & other media (40) 35%
- Raising awareness of the important role SCPs play (18) 16%
- Visiting parents evenings at local schools (9) 8%
- Update uniforms (2) 2%
- Paying a retainer to Deputy SCPs (2) 2%

Q7 How did the respondents become aware that the SCP site they now work at became vacant?

- Local knowledge (54) 41%
- Notice board on site (On site vacancy boards) (25) 19%
- School Newsletter (14) 11%
- Already in similar post (12) 9%
- Newspaper (10) 8%
- Job Centre (6) 5%
- DCC Green Sheet (5) 4%
- Police Officer (4) 3%

Q8 What do you enjoy about being a School Crossing Patrol?

- Helping/like children (97) 38%
- Meeting people/parents (70) 27%
- Contributing to road safety (43) 17%
- Helping the local community (30) 12%
- Have school holidays (11) 4%
- Work that is close to home (5) 2%

Q9 What do you **not** enjoy about being a School Crossing Patrol?

- Bad weather (58) 45%

- Abusive/bad drivers (55) 43%
- Inconsiderate parents/carers (9) 7%
- Harassed by senior school pupils (5) 4%
- Isolation from other School Crossing Patrols (1) 1%

Q10 What would be the most likely reason for you to stop being a School Crossing Patrol?

- Ill health (57) 39%
- Retirement age (44) 30%
- Job change for increased hours and/or money (20) 14%
- Responsible for an accident (17) 11%
- Abusive/bad drivers (9) 6%

Q11 Would you like to receive more information about the School Crossing Patrol Service in a newsletter?

| | | |
|-----|-------|-----|
| Yes | (101) | 77% |
| No | (29) | 23% |

Q12 What methods of advertising to recruit Schools Crossing Patrols do you feel would work well?

- School Newsletters (86) 13%
- School Notice Boards (83) 12%
- Job Centres (74) 11%
- Newspapers (69) 10%
- Doctors/Dentists Surgeries (68) 10%
- Posters (67) 10%
- Parish Council Notice Boards (51) 8%
- Exhibitions/Displays (45) 7%
- Internet (35) 5%
- Community Centres/Drop in centres (33) 5%
- Community Groups (29) 4%
- Door to door leaflets (26) 4%
- Other (Village magazines) (2) 1%

Q13 Please add any additional comments that you feel would improve the School Crossing Patrol Service:

- Improvements in uniform - summer coats and (14) 64%

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| footwear | | |
| • Better profile for Patrols and the Service | (6) | 27% |
| • Reduce applicants waiting time | (2) | 9% |

Schools (Served by a School Crossing Patrol)

287 schools, served by a School Crossing Patrol, were asked to complete the questionnaire. In all 141 questionnaires were completed and returned; a response rate of 49%

Q1 Does a School Crossing Patrol Service the school?

| | | |
|-----|-------|-----|
| Yes | (121) | 86% |
| No | (20) | 14% |

Q2 How satisfied were the schools with the School Crossing Patrol service provided?

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----|
| • Extremely satisfied | 50 | 40% |
| • Very satisfied | 46 | 37% |
| • Satisfied | 19 | 15% |
| • Dissatisfied | 3 | 2% |
| • Very dissatisfied | 7 | 6% |

64 comments were received from the schools, in relation to their School Crossing Patrol

Favourable responses:

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| • Excellent service | (9) | 14% |
| • Excellent timekeeping | (6) | 9% |
| • Good rapport with parents and children | (6) | 9% |
| • Very good with children, works well with children | (5) | 7% |
| • Very reliable | (3) | 4% |
| • SCP crosses children safely | (3) | 4% |
| • Friendly and helpful service | (2) | 3% |
| • SCP prompt and effective | (1) | 2% |
| • SCP moderates influence on adult behaviour – especially drivers | (1) | 2% |
| • Area Managers very supportive | (1) | 2% |
| • Satisfied with parents and children using the service | (1) | 2% |

Unfavourable responses:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|----|
| • Relief post vacant | (5) | 7% |
|----------------------|-----|----|

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Vacant posts | (3) | 4% |
| • Require 2 SCP's and have only one | (3) | 4% |
| • Un-punctual, unreliable | (2) | 3% |
| • SCP does not service immediate vicinity of school | (2) | 3% |
| • No cover for absences/sickness | (2) | 3% |
| • Delays due to police checks | (1) | 2% |
| • No SCP for 2 years | (1) | 2% |
| • SCP not replaced due to long term sickness | (1) | 2% |
| • No feedback from SCP about problems | (1) | 2% |
| • School not informed when SCP is absent | (1) | 2% |
| • Occasional conflicts with staff/parents | (1) | 2% |
| • Concerns have been raised about location of SCP but nothing has happened | (1) | 2% |
| • Traffic and Parking problems, with no SCP | (1) | 2% |
| • Have no children who require SCP | (1) | 2% |

Q3 Implications of not having a SCP outside the school.

| | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| • Unsafe | (115) | 80% |
| • Increase in car use | (12) | 8% |
| • Disastrous | (6) | 4% |
| • Congestion | (1) | 1% |
| • Loss of new pupils due to busy roads | (1) | 1% |
| • Children unable to attend as road too busy | (1) | 1% |
| • Position of school does not justify SCP | (1) | 1% |
| • Members of school and teaching staff supervising crossing | (1) | 1% |
| • School staff not insured to do SCP duties | (1) | 1% |
| • Cars parking on zig-zags and children crossing anywhere | (1) | 1% |
| • Less children walking to school | (1) | 1% |

Q4 Ways in which the service could be improved.

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| • Better cover for absences etc | (15) |
| • Increase in pay | (7) |
| • Satisfied | (6) |
| • Link to road safety teaching | (3) |
| • Replacing SCP's more quickly | (3) |

- Police/Traffic Warden back-up to prevent dangerous parking (3)
- Appointment of SCP (2)
- Combining of jobs, such as SCP and classroom assist. (2)
- More crossing patrols (2)
- Better training (especially in counselling and personality) (2)
- Advance notice of temporary change of staff (1)
- Link with school on a weekly/monthly basis (1)
- Controlled crossing preferred (1)
- Filling of vacancies (1)
- Restrict parking near schools (1)
- Higher profile in school (1)
- More support from line managers (1)
- SCPs to work on a Pedestrian Crossing (1)
- Quicker Police Checks (1)
- Speed reduction on roads from 40 to 20 (1)
- Repair of flashing lights (1)
- Full time SCP on split sites (1)
- Provision of a marked dropping off area (1)
- Higher profile in DCC, such as SCP of the month (1)
- Performance management with in service training based on staff needs. (1)
- Police awareness to pupils in schools (1)
- Provision a an SCP (1)
- Guaranteed relief cover (1)
- More advertising & recruitment (1)
- Ensuring dress code is adhered to (1)
- Better liaison (1)
- Circulation of information e.g. names/contact numbers (1)
- In school involvement with children and childrens safety (1)
- Police presence in areas where parents intimidate SCP's (1)
- Puffing Crossing (1)
- Pedestrian Lights (1)

Q5 Schools aware of the following initiatives. Percentage out of 141 replies.

| | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| Walk to School | (136) | 96% |
| Road Safety Educational Resources supporting the National Curriculum | (107) | 76% |
| School Travel Plans | (106) | 75% |
| Walking Buses | (100) | 71% |

Q6 Schools that have taken steps to implement initiatives. Percentage out of 141 replies.

| | | |
|--|------|-----|
| Road Safety Educational Resources supporting the National Curriculum | (80) | 57% |
| Walk to School | (54) | 38% |
| School Travel Plans | (40) | 28% |
| Walking Buses | (22) | 16% |

Q7 Schools who would like to find out more about these initiatives. Percentage out of 141 replies.

| | | |
|--|------|-----|
| Road Safety Educational Resources supporting the National Curriculum | (23) | 16% |
| Walking Buses | (19) | 13% |
| School Travel Plans | (12) | 8% |
| Walk to School | (5) | 3% |

Q8 Methods of advertising, the schools feel would work in their area to recruit SCP's.

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----|
| School Newsletters | (128) | 15% |
| School Notice Boards | (93) | 11% |
| Doctors/Dentist Surgeries | (84) | 10% |
| Newspapers | (81) | 10% |
| Parish Council Notice Boards | (76) | 9% |
| Posters | (69) | 8% |
| Job Centres | (69) | 8% |
| Community Groups | (58) | 7% |

| | | |
|---------------------------|------|----|
| Community/Drop in Centres | (47) | 6% |
| Door to door leaflets | (42) | 5% |
| Internet | (37) | 4% |
| Exhibitions/displays | (35) | 4% |
| Local Libraries | (3) | 1% |
| Free Newspapers | (1) | 2% |
| Supermarkets | (1) | |
| Word of mouth | (1) | |
| Parent rotas | (1) | |

Q9 What the schools see as their role in helping to recruit SCP's. 127 suggestions, were given.

| | | |
|---|------|-----|
| Newsletters | (44) | 35% |
| Advertising, such as posters, leaflets, notices | (29) | 23% |
| Requests to parents | (13) | 10% |
| Whatever is necessary | (6) | 5% |
| Provision of interview accommodation | (4) | 3% |
| Encourage local people to stand in for SCP | (3) | 2% |
| Community links, local businesses, governors | (3) | 2% |
| Promoting role of SCP & school safety campaigns | (3) | 2% |
| Assembly with parents and children | (3) | 2% |
| Keeping parents/families informed of vacancies | (3) | 2% |
| Encouraging applicants, parents, grandparents | (2) | 2% |
| Display information | (1) | 12% |
| Involvement of SCP within school | (1) | |
| Encourage dual roles for part-time staff | (1) | |
| Assisting on selection panel | (1) | |
| Promote SCP in school | (1) | |
| Emphasising the need for children's safety | (1) | |
| Pupil conduct in relation to SCP's | (1) | |
| Asking staff | (1) | |
| Liaison, co-operating , supporting DCC | (1) | |
| Open day events | (1) | |
| School workload too great, no wish to be involved | (1) | |
| Outside speakers about road safety | (1) | |
| Circulate information | (1) | |
| Meetings with PTA to explain role of SCP | (1) | |

Q10 Were schools aware that SCP's must have a full criminal background check and medical before they can start work.

| | | |
|-----|-------|-----|
| Yes | (132) | 96% |
| No | (6) | 4% |

Q11 Additional comments for the improvement of the SCP Service.

- Service received is excellent but lack of pay is reason for no applications.
- Should allow SCP's to start work while police check is being carried out.
- Update uniforms.
- SCP should be involved in other school activities.
- Need to differentiate between road conditions outside schools to prioritise cover.
- Raise profile and importance.
- Improve warning signs.
- Link with school work.
- More training for SCP's.
- Speed up recruitment process.
- Adequate standby's for illness etc.
- First Aid training.
- Make sure that the SCP's know they are valued.
- Pedestrian Crossing.
- Image needs reviewing. Retired person needs changing.
- Local people do not want the job as financially OK. In the poorer areas too far away for public transport.
- Promote Job Share.

Parents/Guardians

1580 questionnaires were distributed to parents through a sample number of schools throughout the county. 347 returns were received; a response rate of 22%.

Q1 How satisfied they were with the SCP service that is provided for their school.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Extremely satisfied | (190) | 55% |
| Very satisfied | (91) | 26% |
| Satisfied | (58) | 17% |
| Dissatisfied | (5) | 1% |
| Very dissatisfied | (3) | 1% |

Q2 Implications of not having a School Crossing Patrol outside school.

| | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| • Dangerous to cross road without SCP | (230) | 68% |
| • Accidents would occur | (30) | 8% |
| • Vehicles would continue to drive at excess speed | (27) | 8% |
| • Loss of confidence for children | (18) | 5% |
| • Children would not be allowed to go to school alone | (10) | 3% |
| • Parked cars would make it more dangerous to cross | (10) | 3% |
| • Increase in illegal parking | (7) | 2% |
| • Chaos | (2) | 1% |
| • Parents would have to leave work to transport children | (2) | 1% |
| • Drivers more likely to ignore flashing lights | (1) | 1% |

Q3 How could the Service be improved?

| | | |
|---|------|-----|
| • Preventing vehicles parking/dropping off near SCP | (65) | 56% |
| • Traffic Calming Schemes and double yellow lines | (18) | 16% |
| • Better cover for sickness | (15) | 13% |
| • More SCP's | (10) | 9% |
| • SCP to stay longer e.g. 10 minutes | (2) | 2% |
| • A friendly person as an SCP | (1) | 4% |
| • Have promotions with company's | (1) | |
| • More flashing signs | (1) | |

- Raise the road outside the school (1)
- Add pelican crossing (1)

Q4 Aware of the following issues.

- Walk to School (264) 68%
- Walking Buses (94) 24%
- School Travel Planning (32) 8%

Q5 Interested in finding out more about these initiatives.

- Walking Buses (87) 40%
- School Travel Planning (78) 36%
- Walk to School (51) 24%

Q6 What methods of advertising to recruit SCP's would work within the area?

- School Newsletters (288) 17%
- Newspapers (201) 12%
- School Notice Boards (199) 12%
- Doctors/Dentists Surgeries (180) 10%
- Job Centres (175) 10%
- Door to door leaflets (160) 9%
- Posters (157) 9%
- Parish Council Notice Boards (117) 7%
- Community Groups (93) 5%
- Community/Drop in centres (62) 3%
- Internet (61) 3%
- Exhibitions/displays (34) 2%
- Radio
- Local Hospitals, post offices, supermarkets etc (10) 1%
- Playgroup and toddler groups
- Local Newsletter

Q7 What do parents/guardians see as a schools role in helping to recruit SCP's?

| | | |
|---|------|-----|
| • Circulation of Leaflets, newsletters etc | (63) | 52% |
| • Help in the recruitment of SCP's | (23) | 19% |
| • To fully support the SCP | (7) | 6% |
| • Introduce Road Awareness Schemes | (7) | 6% |
| • Parents to do a rota or help the SCP (organised by school) | (7) | 6% |
| • Integrate with midday supervisors to give more hours | (3) | 2% |
| • SCP should be on school staff | (3) | 2% |
| • Children could make posters to advertise | (2) | 2% |
| • School to be totally responsible for the right person for the job | (2) | 2% |
| • Provide a friendly relationship | (1) | 1% |
| • Liaison with community groups – mothers & toddlers etc | (1) | 1% |
| • Not the responsibility of school | (1) | 1% |

Q8 Are parents/guardians aware that a SCP must have a full criminal background check and medical before they can start working?

| | | |
|-----|-------|-----|
| Yes | (272) | 84% |
| No | (50) | 16% |

Q9 Additional comments that it is felt would improve the SCP Service.

| | | |
|---|------|-----|
| • Enforcement of illegally parked vehicles on zig-zags etc | (45) | 56% |
| • Increase in salary | (13) | 16% |
| • Additional crossings | (8) | 10% |
| • Parents to temp during periods of sickness of SCP | (6) | 8% |
| • Cover needed for after school activities | (4) | 5% |
| • SCP should be available throughout the day, everyday, as cleaners, midday supervisors etc | (1) | |
| • Have an award system | (1) | |
| • Place "No Parking" signs outside school | (1) | 5% |
| • Walking Buses should be encouraged more | (1) | |
| • Attention taken of comments | (1) | |

Appendix 4

Meeting Re School Crossing Patrols – Matlock - 16 June 2003

Present: Councillor Mrs D Read

1. No police support, in fact quite a number of complaints that the police cars speed past them without stopping. Not setting a good example when not on an emergency.
2. Parents parking same as other meetings
3. Would like more contact with schools. Patrols not being informed about inset days and turning up for work, this is a waste of time and must be sorted in my opinion. The schools must know when they are to be closed it would be only a courtesy to inform the SCP's.
4. A man at Grindleford says his school always informs him of anything they do. They produce a newsletter and he has a copy. Do other schools have newsletters, if so then they should do the same?
5. In general schools have no contact with patrols and they would like very much to do so.
6. This is a curious one, the poles they hold when it rains the water pours down the pole and up their arms to the elbow. This was everyone's complaint. Never heard this at Chesterfield. Is there no way a deflector could be used to stop this?
- 7 SCP's do not like puffin crossings as they say drivers take notice of that and NOT the SCP. I told man for Rowsley we are just about to embark on trying to get a crossing at Rowsley but he did accept that it is needed the rest of the time.
8. The SCP's felt that the general public were not completely aware of their powers and the fact that they can now help non-children across road. They suggested we put a piece in Insight as it gets delivered to all homes in Derbyshire and that would at least help with residents.

Meeting Re School Crossing Patrols – 4 April 2003

Present: Councillors Mrs J A Hill and Mrs D Read
Mr R Ackrill, Ms E Murphy and Ms M Young

Is the recruitment of SCPs limited to a series of events at set times during a year or is it more on-going?

No. Series of other activities including yellow boards advertising vacancies put up on site – very successful. Also leaflet drops, church parish magazines/newsletters, interior bus adverts. 18 –70 age limit.

Have regular contact with schools through Road Safety Section and Education Intranet. Try to involve school children on road safety and environmental issues – examples ????. Avoid putting pressure on teaching staff.

10-15% vacancy rate. More problems in the more affluent areas. Nationally recruitment is a problem. Not a problem of resources.

Are you aware of any good practice policies in other authorities that you would be interested in introducing in Derbyshire?

Not aware of any, the Department is very supportive. Often seen as the lead authority. Derbyshire has a high profile. Received PSA funding for initiatives, approx £25-30k. How we sustain them in the future is a problem. Used interior bus adverts.

Does the County Council know who typically becomes SCPs and if so are they targeted deliberately?

Broad cross section. Majority mums with children at the school. Seeing a rise in the number of 50+ men becoming SCPs – now men make up about 35% of total.

What do you think are the main barriers to people becoming or staying on as SCPs? (Small number of anti-social hours etc)

Abuse is a problem – both from motorists and parents. If parents, try to address through the school. Good practice from other authorities is to undertake roadside parent surveys – looking to develop this in Derbyshire. SCPs are encouraged to report incidents.

Main reasons for leaving are benefit problems, other employment and retirement.

Section have invested significantly in quality of uniforms which was previously source of complaints. Emphasis now on team working which SCPs appear to appreciate. Group meetings very well received.

Training

Hold annual training days which are again appreciated by SCPs. Agreed that the Working Group attend one of the sessions.

Criminal Record Checks

Delays are getting shorter. Eileen working directly with SCPS when completing questionnaire which speeds the system up.

How many schools have school transport plans?

10 Adopted in 2002/3 with 10 more to adopted the following year.

School Transport Plans/Safer Routes to Schools/Walking Buses encourage community involvement in getting children to school safely. Do you think this community support could be utilised to help solve the recruitment problems with SCPs?

Yes. Possibility discussed of working jointly with the Governor Support Unit in their work in the community to attract LEA governors. There are overlapping issues/opportunities that are worth pursuing.

School Safety Officer, Kevin Senior, appointed on a 3 year contract doing valuable work on road safety and setting up STPs etc.

Schools willing to adopt STP would if possible get SCP cover if they did not already have it.

Advertising

Looked at the possibility of advertising/sponsorship in the past. Not considered feasible at present.

Meeting Re School Crossing Patrols – 9 June 2003

Present: Councillors Mrs J A Hill and Mrs D Read
Kevin Senior – School Travel Plan Co-ordinator
Mr R Ackrill – Improvement and Scrutiny Committee

Can you tell us about School Travel Plans?

STPs involve a series of measures designed to make travel to school safer. They are very much partnership and community based. DCC are looking to introduce 10 STPs a year with schools being invited to apply. Applications are scored and the top ten scoring are chosen. Any school with new build is required to have an STP as a planning condition.

STPs raise awareness of all concerned, parents, pupils, the school and the local community. They raise sustainability and health issues and may also involve physical measures such as the introduction of School Safety Zones. Their aim is to give parents the confidence to allow their children to walk to school.

They are very time consuming to introduce involving considerable community consultation. Hence the target to only introduce 10 per year. They require an on-going commitment. If they are simply introduced then forgotten about they will not work. STPs are therefore included as Ofsted documents.

SCPs will at some stage be involved in the drawing up of the Plans. The Police are not likely to be involved. Maybe if they were it may help solve the problems of a lack of support from the Police. Previously there have been dedicated Police teams for road safety but roles and responsibilities have changed.

Once funding runs out in March 2004 the ability to introduce new plans will be limited. Hopeful that Department of Transport wants them to continue so funding may be extended.

Meeting Re School Crossing Patrols – 26 June 2003

Present: Councillors Mrs J A Hill and Mrs D Read
Inspector Paul Berry and David Skinner – Derbyshire Constabulary
Mr R Ackrill – Improvement and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting had been convened to consider claims by SCPs that they do not receive support from the Police in dealing with bad/abusive motorists, and to look at ways the problem could be addressed.

The Police indicated that resources and priorities were an issue, although it was accepted that as much as possible should be done to support SCPs in their work.

At present, SCPs report incidents through their supervisors, who then decide whether or not the Police should be involved. The Police noted that this may lead to delays which was important given that they only had 14 days from the date of the incident to initiate proceedings. It was agreed that there was scope for looking to change this system. Incidents could possibly be “graded” with the more serious ones being reported directly to the Police by the SCP.

All agreed that locally based action was required to tackle the problems. SCPs needed to know their local officers with action being co-ordinated through Section Inspectors. The Beat Manager system when rolled out across the County should help achieve this.

As a means of ensuring that the Police and SCPs have a better understanding of the problems each faces, it was suggested that it would be appropriate for local officers to attend the annual SCP training events.

It was agreed that following the review, the Police and the SCP Service should work together to develop a joint protocol on how the problems of bad/abusive motorists could be tackled.

Appendix 5

Notes of a School Crossing Patrol Training meeting – 5 June 2003 at the Leisure Centre Alfreton.

Present: Councillor J A Hill and Mr R Ackrill

What are the main problems with being an SCP which would most likely make you give up the job?

The main problem is a lack of support from the Police in dealing with dangerous driving and abusive motorists. SCPs feel very let down by the lack of response from the Police. Abuse often from parents. Some areas better than others.

In some cases the school will look to assist SCPs, but in others they do not want to know. Contact with schools varies from a good relationship to virtually no contact.

No SCPs present had heard of School Travel Plans. Following an explanation, SCPs felt that they would welcome plans, particularly the increased involvement from schools, parents and the community as a whole.

All present felt that the Service had improved since it transferred from management by the Police. SCPs were now listened to and received better supervision and support. Uniforms had improved significantly.

All welcomed contact with their supervisors and would take more if it could be achieved.

SCPs at Secondary schools usually male as suffer abuse from pupils.

Suggestion that may be ideal job for students wishing to supplement income.

Notes of a School Crossing Patrol Training meeting – 5 June 2003 at the Leisure Centre, Alfreton.

Present: Councillor J A Hill and Mr R Ackrill

What are the main problems with being an SCP which would most likely make you give up the job?

The only reason given was a lack of support from the Police in dealing with abusive/problem motorists. Problem varies but generally SCPs felt let down at the lack of support they receive from the Police and Traffic Wardens. They only address problems when requested to do so and even then this may vary.

One secondary school SCP (there are very few) complained of abuse from pupils as being a problem.

General view of good support from schools in dealing with problems and work in general.

Good things about the job?

Working with children gives good job satisfaction. The situation has improved markedly since the service transferred from the Police. Better quality uniforms and also a feeling that they are being listened to in the way in which the service is managed. Training is good and the group sessions are appreciated.

Meeting Re School Crossing Patrols – Matlock - 16 June 2003

Present: Councillor Mrs D Read

1. No police support, in fact quite a number of complaints that the police cars speed past them without stopping. Not setting a good example when not on an emergency.
2. Parents parking same as other meetings
3. Would like more contact with schools. Patrols not being informed about inset days and turning up for work, this is a waste of time and must be sorted in my opinion. The schools must know when they are to be closed it would be only a courtesy to inform the SCP's.
4. A man at Grindleford says his school always informs him of anything they do. They produce a newsletter and he has a copy. Do other schools have newsletters, if so then they should do the same?
5. In general schools have no contact with patrols and they would like very much to do so.
6. This is a curious one, the poles they hold when it rains the water pours down the pole and up their arms to the elbow. This was everyone's complaint. Never heard this at Chesterfield. Is there no way a deflector could be used to stop this?
- 7 SCP's do not like puffin crossings as they say drivers take notice of that and NOT the SCP. I told man for Rowsley we are just about to embark on trying to get a crossing at Rowsley but he did accept that it is needed the rest of the time.
8. The SCP's felt that the general public were not completely aware of their powers and the fact that they can now help non-children across road. They suggested we put a piece in Insight as it gets delivered to all homes in Derbyshire and that would at least help with residents.

Action Plan

Appendix 6

The table below sets out the recommendations outlined in this final report.

| Recommendation | | Implement Yes/No | What action has taken place? | Lead Officer | Timescale |
|----------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | That the Director of Environmental Services prepares a further report to Cabinet on the Management arrangements in the SCP Service. | | | | |
| 2 | Formal employee exit procedures and monitoring be introduced for SCPs | | | | |
| 3 | That priority should continue to be given to the advertising and awareness campaigns which have resulted in the reduced vacancy rate. | | | | |
| 4 | That new promotional material be designed and produced for use by the Service. | | | | |
| 5 | That an annual newsletter be produced for circulation to all SCPs. | | | | |
| 6 | The Road Safety Section and the Governor Support Section further pursue the possibilities of joint working on community involvement in the recruitment processes of SCPs and LEA Governors. | | | | |
| 7 | The Highway Safety and Performance Manager work with the Police to develop a protocol on addressing the problems experienced by SCPs relating to abuse and inconsiderate motorists. | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| Recommendation | | Implement Yes/No | What action has taken place? | Lead Officer | Timescale |
|----------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 8 | The Highway Safety and Performance Manager develop a protocol to encourage a closer working relationship between SCPs and schools. | | | | |
| 9 | Should Department of Transport funding not be extended beyond March 2004, the review supports the case for the post of School Travel Plan Co-ordinator to be made a permanent post within the Environmental Services Department establishment. | | | | |

