

The School Crossing Patrol Service	2014
Annual Report	
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School Crossing Patrol Service Review 2014

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review sets out the current level of service delivered by Bath & North East Somerset Council's School Crossing Patrol Service, and lists the management functions required from the SCP Co-ordinator to deliver this service successfully.

The review then goes on to outline the issues currently facing the Service, and a number of policy items that came into effect 1st April 2014 to address these.

Finally, Appendix 1 details the actions required as a result of these policy changes, which will inform the priorities for the SCP Co-ordinator in year 2014/15.

2. BACKGROUND

The Council currently operates a School Crossing Patrol service at 42 sites across the authority supporting 37 educational establishments. The SCP personnel are managed by a full time School Crossing Patrol Co-ordinator, who is a member of the Road Safety Team.

Although it is not a statutory duty to have an SCP service, it is greatly valued by children, parents and other members of the public using patrols every school day. Many people hold the service in high regard and the service is offered in locations where the provision of a 24hr controlled crossing may not be appropriate. The School Crossing Patrol Service often exists on some of the most difficult road environments where an alternative controlled crossing may not be an option to serve local residents on a desired route.

A patrolled crossing site is informal and is often less intrusive than a formal controlled crossing. The management of a congested road location is essential for the safety of vulnerable members of the community as the patrols give priority to pedestrian movement, over that of vehicles. They contribute not only to road safety, but by making routes feel safer they encourage parents and children to walk to nursery and school. This in turn supports sustainable travel and positively adds to the environmental and health benefits within our communities.

Bath & North East Somerset Council has employed staff as School Crossing Patrols (SCPs) since 1937. Nationally, School Crossing Patrols were established by the School Crossing Patrol Act 1953 and instituted on 1 July 1954 through the School Crossing Patrol Order 1954. Section 270 of the Transport Act 2000, which came into force on 30 January 2001, amended the Regulations to allow SCPs to operate “at such times as the Authority thinks fit”. Therefore, SCPs may now work outside the hours of 8.00am to 5.30pm, and can stop traffic to help anyone, children or adults, to cross the road.



Kingsmead 1937



UK Lollipop of the Year 2010

Safety

The safety record of B&NES SCP sites is excellent, and the Patrols themselves are generally well respected by the driving public. In some cases, unfortunately, drivers behave inappropriately and in ways which may put the Patrol and pedestrians at risk. B&NES takes these incidents very seriously and works closely with the Police to address such issues.

Failure of a vehicle to obey a School Crossing Patrol, known as a “Fail to Stop”, is an offence, exactly the same as failing to stop for a red traffic light and subject to prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000 and 3 points on the driver’s licence. Fail to Stop offences occurred at two sites in 2013. One site, St Michaels School in Twerton, has had four Fail to Stops in three years and it has been a mandatory 20 mph location for that period of time. This site has been reviewed with the Area Traffic Engineer, and, as a result, the patrol has been relocated and the site is now subject to monitoring. This site is also to be considered for additional traffic calming measures on the B&NES 2014/15 works programme. The second site, St John’s Primary, Midsomer Norton, is located between a secondary school’s main entrance and drop off point, and the primary school’s own entrance. The offending driver in this case was taken to court, and received a fine and points on their licence.



3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES SUPPORTED BY THE SCP SERVICE

Key Corporate Priorities

- Building communities where people feel safe and secure
- Sustainable growth
- Addressing the causes and effects of climate change
- Improving transport and the public realm

Key Service Priorities

- Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone
- Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live
- Building a stronger economy
- Developing resilient communities

4. CURRENT POSITION

Bath & North East Somerset Council has adopted the use of the Road Safety Great Britain (RSGB) national guidelines to deliver the School Crossing Patrol Service in 37 educational establishments at 42 sites. Of these, three are funded externally by private schools and one by a Parish Council. The guidelines provide criteria for the assessment and provision of a School Crossing Patrol site based mainly on the numbers of vehicles passing and pedestrians crossing at that site. Together with environmental factors as multipliers, a PV² is calculated and needs to achieve a total value of 4,000,000 before an SCP site can be justified.

The management functions currently carried out by the SCP Co-ordinator are set out below. This review also aims to offer a more efficient approach to service delivery in the provision of existing and new sites. All sites are reviewed biannually, and the latest review has highlighted some issues in existing SCP provision. These issues, and recommended policy changes to address them, are set out in Section 6.

The RSGB National Guidelines for SCPs and Bath & North East Somerset Council require the following management functions:

- Police reporting of traffic offences and support of requests to internal services such as Parking Enforcement.
- Six monthly monitoring and assessment of the patrols in their road crossing procedure and in health and safety practices and personal protective equipment requirements.
- An annual review of the service risk assessment and each site specific risk assessment.
- A biannual review each site's PV² count.
- Regular reviews of safe working practices and provision of staff with up to date information. An update of the SCP Handbook when necessary.
- Management of the budget, spending and recharges for services. Organisation of the storage, ordering, issue and distribution of replacement uniform and personal protective equipment items, in line with British Standard and health and safety regulations.

- Management of corporate policies and procedures in recruitment selection and training; disciplinaries; sickness absence; biannual medical assessments and Occupational Health referrals.
- Planning and delivery of training team meetings, service awards and events such as the SCP Diamond Jubilee; liaison with the Chair's Office, the Mayor and Local Councillors.
- Design and develop PR communications for the service including for newspapers, radio interviews and the design of publicity materials for campaigns and events.
- Use of the council's administrative systems in finance and Human Resources to manage internal and external payments, payroll requests and further pay entitlements. Reporting of sickness absence and maintenance of the records for reports to People Services. Managing the cover of sickness absences using the casual patrols.
- Communication with customers via the telephone, email and face to face.
- Communication with patrols via telephone, letters, email, text messaging and six monthly newsletters.
- Liaison with schools regarding access to the school site, the location and duty times of the patrols and use of their newsletters to communicate road user information.
- Liaison with internal services in Highways – i.e. site requests for engineering measures and requests for highway maintenance and parking enforcement.
- Liaison with the Street Lighting Team for hazard warning light timings, faults, new programming requirements and relocation of light units. Informing GIS Mapping of changes to locations, timings etc. Requests to Transportation Team for Speed data at sites. Liaison with the Road Safety Team for accident data and independent safety audits of sites.
- Liaison with the South West local authorities to review and improve the service's performance.

Managing Recruitment – The current recruitment procedure is to advertise posts on the Council's website. This is supported by placing publicity banners at school entrances and sending out letters to parents/carers. Schools also use their weekly newsletters to promote recruitment. Schools are active in promoting the job to existing part-time employees, such as caretakers. Parents help by distributing small posters for placement on community notice boards. In the future, we will request the help of the relevant Parish Councils in the provision of volunteers to help ensure that the service can be delivered on a consistent basis i.e. five mornings or five afternoons a week during term time. The service currently looks to relocate patrols to vacant sites where appropriate and is advertising to fill two vacancies for casual patrols in the Bath area.

Engineering - As a consequence of disestablishing sites, revenue funding will be reassigned to the establishment of new sites. Furthermore, biannual service reviews are an opportunity to identify engineering improvements to existing sites or as an alternative aid to crossing where an SCP site has been disestablished. Normally such proposals would be added to the Traffic Management Task Register for funding through a future Capital Programme, or by Section 106 developer funding where appropriate.

Sponsorship - The Council continues to operate sites at private schools that are recharged for the service and is proposing to charge primary schools who take on academy status.

Working with Partners - The Council will continue to review the sites against the PV² criterion, and where the count falls beneath the level required to justify a school crossing patrol site, information held in the school's Travel Plan will be used to support engineering solutions and/or alternative pedestrian measures. Also, schools will be encouraged to provide road safety educational training and publicity where sites are being disestablished.

5. FUNDING

The SCP Service is currently assigned a Revenue Budget of £93,884. Due to the level of vacancies for both permanent and casual relief posts, there is an annual variance of an approximate, 10% underspend. The variance allows the level of spending for casual staff to fluctuate in order to cover sickness absence.

Funding for signs, carriageway markings and other engineering measures comes from the Council's Transport Capital Programme. Although small signing and lining works can be funded in the short term, larger works need to be added to the Traffic Management Task Register, where they will compete with other proposals for future funding.

Other funding streams for service provision and sponsorship are considered when they arise. Section 106 agreements with developers can identify new capital funding opportunities, for example, to upgrade crossing facilities at sites with high PV² counts or where a new development impacts on the local highway network.

Potential budget savings have been identified through the biannual review of sites. These savings can be made by disestablishing existing sites or charging schools with Academy status for their SCP provision. Details are given in Section 6.

Another area for potential savings is the Council's current policy on medical reviews, which requires a biannual medical check at the BUPA medical centre in Bristol. This requirement adds additional salary and travel costs to the budget therefore, it is recommended that this requirement be reviewed.

The current salary scale rises from £6.69 to £7.11 per hour after two years. The opportunity for making the salary more attractive will be reviewed over the next year. Salaries are 48p higher than the national minimum wage of £6.31 per hour and below the proposed national living wage of £7.65 per hour. The recruitment process has identified that this pay level deters people with a pension as the tax on their income is greater than the salary. Costs of changes to the salary scale will be looked at over the coming year. Other comments that have been made concern the level of pay in respect to the level of risk and responsibility required for working in a live road environment.



6. POLICY AS OF 1ST APRIL 2014

RSGB National Guidelines

The Council will continue to implement the guidelines' nationally agreed criteria for the establishment and retention of authorised School Crossing Patrol (SCP) sites.



Sites where PV² criteria are not met

Any vacant established site no longer meeting the PV² criteria was disestablished from 1/4/14. The site will be subject to an independent safety audit, and appropriate engineering solutions to address safety concerns, where identified, will be added to the Traffic Management Task Register for implementation when resources permit. Sites which are currently patrolled, but where the PV² count is not achieved, will be considered for disestablishing when they next become vacant.

Sites with long term vacancies

Although recruitment of new staff is vigorously pursued by the SCP Co-ordinator some sites remain difficult to fill. There are currently three sites with long term vacancies of over six months. Clearly such sites cannot operate if no-one is available to fill the post, so a preferred way forward may be to disestablish the site, and provide safer crossing facilities through engineering measures. Each site with a long term vacancy will, therefore, be subject to an independent safety audit. Any appropriate engineering solutions to address identified safety concerns will be added to the Traffic Management Task Register for implementation when resources permit.

Sites at controlled pedestrian crossings

Some SCPs operate at sites where a formal pedestrian crossing has since been introduced, however as formal crossings are high standard pedestrian facilities, it is difficult to justify the provision of a SCP at these sites. All vacant SCP sites that operate at formal controlled pedestrian crossing facilities will have been disestablished as of 1/4/14. Sites where a SCP currently operates on a formal crossing will be disestablished when they become vacant. Where, in future, a formal crossing is introduced at an existing SCP site, that site will be disestablished when the crossing becomes operative.

Schools with Academy status

Where schools adopt Academy status and are provided with a School Crossing Patrol, the Council will recharge the Academy to recover the costs. The costs will be as for schools that sponsor SCPs (see below), i.e. the normal running costs of the Patrol, plus a management charge. There will be a contractual requirement to finance the service for three years, to allow periodic reassessment of the site criteria against the national guidelines. This policy will apply from 1/4/2015 to allow schools to make budget plans to accommodate this change.

Schools which voluntarily sponsor an SCP

In some cases, where the Council cannot justify provision of an SCP for numerical or financial reasons, schools have arranged to pay for the service to ensure a SCP is provided. The current sponsorship arrangements will remain unchanged.



Reference Documents

SCP Management

Best Practice in Service Delivery

- RSGB SCP Service National Guidelines
- RSGB Survival of the Service
- Bath & North East Somerset Council Code of Practice in Sponsorship

Health & Safety Policy

- Generic Service Risk Assessment: <http://intranet/cms/risk-assessments>
- Safer Working Practice Patrol's Handbook: <http://intranet/cms/safe-working-practices>

General Risk Assessments:- [School Crossing Patrol Risk Assessment](#)

Site Information (held by SCP Co-ordinator)

PV² Information

- All Site Records and Site Summary

SCP Information Data (held by SCP Co-ordinator)

Spreadsheet Worksheets

- Patrol Information: Duty Times, Monitoring Records.
- Fail to Stop
- Site Information
- Uniform Issued
- Leavers

