

Impact Assessment completed by:		Responsible officer:	
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1. Background

1.1 Title:

Budget Reduction Savings affecting the School Crossing Patrol Service

1.2 Description:

In common with the majority of other UK local highway authorities, Devon has a School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Service. It is managed by the local authority's Planning, Transportation and Environment service.

The SCP Service is delivered under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Chapter 27, Part III, Section 26 which permits that 'Arrangements may be made by the appropriate authority for the patrolling of places where children cross roads on their way to or from school, or from one part of a school to another...by persons appointed by or on behalf of the appropriate authority'.¹

Provision of the SCP Service is **non-statutory** and **parents are assumed to have primary responsibility for getting their children to school irrespective of whether a service is provided, or a site is actively being covered**. However, where a service exists there are responsibilities for the highway authority, including ensuring that the service is delivered safely and compliant with the requirements of the Act.²

In electing which modes and routes to use for school travel, both children and parents typically cite fears about road safety as a key factor in their decision making.

"In Devon, SCPs are provided by a mix of local authority, school and volunteer provision.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27>

² As [above](#) Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Chapter 27, Part III, **Section 28**

Only around 10% of authorities in the UK have this similar arrangement. There are currently³ 102 SCP sites in Devon of which 45 are in the eastern area, 24 are in the north and 33 in the south. Of these, 11 are funded by schools or rely on a service delivered by volunteers.

In all cases the local authority, Devon County Council, provides training, quality assurance, insurance, site assessments and personnel management. The management arrangements for back office and on-site support is 1.5 FTEs comprising 1 FTE service manager supported by 0.5 FTE (FTE = Full Time Equivalent).

Area support is provided by sub-contractors and this model has proved cost efficient and operationally effective.

This impact assessment considers the impact of moving to a new community or school-pays model delivered by a third party provider. Feedback from initial consultations in 2015, via the Devon Association of Primary Headteachers (DAPH) suggests that if school communities paid for crossing patrols, they would prefer to have a third party service provider employing and managing the patrol, rather than employing them directly. An outcome of this would be to change the role of Devon County Council, from service provider to service enabler. This would involve DCC permitting the delivery of service by a third party, and supporting that organisation through the provision of standards setting, training support and quality assurance services.

1.3 **Service users:**

Principal users are primary school age children in areas where the combined volume of children and vehicles is currently thought to make an SCP viable for local highway authority funding. It follows that this is not a service benefiting all schools and currently there are around 100 patrol sites in Devon, with some schools having multiple sites. Sites funded by Devon County Council amount to crossing patrol cover for around 25% of Devon schools.

Whilst the criteria for funding a site is restricted to the needs of primary school children it is nevertheless the case that older children, parents and the elderly also benefit from the service. SCPs are permitted to, and do in practice, serve these and other groups.

The school is also a beneficiary. The School Travel Plan process requires that schools assess their travel needs and manage demand for car use on the school run. The presence of an SCP will be one of the factors that enables a school to demonstrate to parents that non-motorised journeys are viable, and safety has been considered, which in turn offers leverage to schools wishing to dissuade parents from arriving by car.

1.4 **Describe any reasons for change and intended aims and benefits:**

The County Council and Public Services are going through a period of transformation. The outcome of this is the Council will be an enabler of services rather than a provider. Together with this there is considerable pressure on budgets.

The SCP service is a non statutory service and could be carried out by the school or Local Community where they consider it worth while. This would also allow the Council to reposition itself as an enabler and have a much needed revenue saving.

³ January 2016

The SCP service current cost approximately £350,000. This is made up of £100,000 in administration and supervision and £250,000 in paying for and administering the crossing patrol staff. If the crossing patrol staff were paid for by the Community or school then there would be saving of approximately £250,000, depending on the blend of the service.

Whilst the budget reduction would prevent Devon from funding crossing patrol provision directly it is nevertheless proposed that the service is maintained using a different funding and management model.

Traffic congestion on the school run is a significant issue for Devon It would not be possible to distinguish the singular contribution made by SCPs in encouraging non-motorised modes but it would be reasonable to assume that SCPs do encourage some people to walk to school and thus reduce congestion.

The proposed approach maintains the opportunity for a flexible blend of service and enables schools to purchase a SCP service according to their needs. Devon County Council would in future relax the criteria for SCP provision, permitting schools to pay for more patrols if they feel this is necessary (subject to some safety and traffic management criteria). Some SCPs may be lost due to the school's inability or lack of willingness to fund a service. Whilst we should anticipate the loss of some sites other sites may arise that would not have been viable under the current funding regime.

A clear aim of this undertaking is therefore to create a more flexible and demand led service that may result in more patrols than currently exist. The risk associated with this approach however is that passing the responsibility on to schools and communities to decide whether to establish SCPs, this may result in the loss of patrols at sites where safety needs were identified or where the SCP makes a contribution to reducing traffic volume. In such cases DCC would need to decide, on a case by case basis, what action may be required of it in discharging its duties as a local highway authority.

1.5 **Overlap with other policies, services etc:**

Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Chapter 27, Part III, Section 26

School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines (2012)

Equality Act 2010

Public Health – relationship between SCPs and walking and the relationship between walking, childhood obesity and economic deprivation.

The Sustainable Schools Travel Strategy – this is a statutory requirement under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The SCP service is implicit throughout the document and therefore by extension is linked to the following:

- The Local Transport Plan
- The Children and Young People's Plan
- Admissions policies and arrangements for primary and secondary schools
- The Education Transport Policy
- The Council's Strategic Plan – promote green travel, improve roads & reduce congestion
- Extended Services in and around Schools
- School place planning
- Devon's Sustainable Community Strategy

Existing policies and procedures on the establishment of zebra and pelican crossings and traffic calming.

1.6 **The following stakeholders have been involved in this assessment:**

Cabinet has had an opportunity to consider an earlier report proposing a similar school-pays model but affecting only those schools no longer meeting our funding criteria⁴. In this current proposal the changes would affect any school with a patrol or vacant patrol site.

In September this proposal was put to schools through the Devon Association of Primary Head Teachers.

Most recently, proposals have been subject to a Tough Choices public consultation which included an earlier copy of this Impact Assessment.

1.7 **The following research or guidance has been referred to, or advice sought, in order to inform the assessment:**

Detailed studies have been undertaken of crossing patrol sites and collisions involving children both on and off the school journey. A summary of the five year casualty trends for children aged 0-15 years, in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, looks at casualties occurring at school travel times and at existing crossing patrol sites. Over a five year period, the number of collisions resulting in minor injuries is reducing, in line with the national trend, however, more serious injuries are increasing and this is different from a national trend that shows improvements in reducing child injuries of all severities.

Analysis of journey times and dates suggests that of the 144 incidents in 2014 involving children aged 0-15yrs, 44 occurred on school journeys. None of these involved an incident on a crossing patrol site during operating hours.

In terms of research on alternative models that might achieve the budget savings, there is a mix of management and funding arrangements in the UK although the most typical model is for the local highway authority to fund and manage the service. However, in 2013 over 45% of local highway authorities had either experienced, or were scheduled to undertake, service reductions and/or changes. Funding sources variously include the schools, parishes, private sector sponsorship etc. and funding models range from contributions for clothing, sponsoring engineering works, part funding of sites and/or whole funding for sites that fail to meet the criteria for a LHA paid patrol.

Recently, Plymouth City Council has moved its 36 sites to a school-pays model with charges covering the SCP salary and back office support costs. The national survey conducted by Road Safety Great Britain indicated this was one of the measures also being considered or undertaken by other local highway authorities.

In Devon, whether or not there is an expressed demand for a SCP at any particular school, walking remains the single most popular mode of travel for primary age children of both sexes – as identified by school census and hands-up surveys in schools.

⁴ http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/decision_making/cma/cma_document.htm?cmadoc=minutes_exc_20150114.html

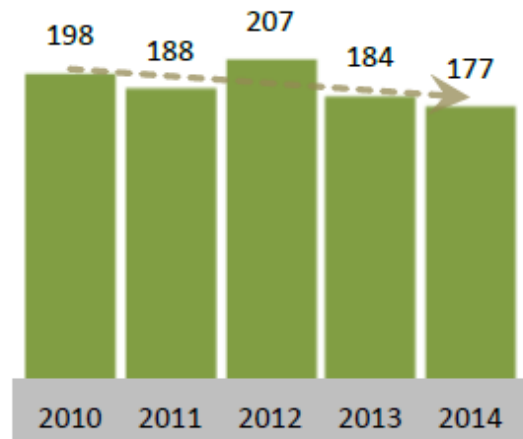
Safety related evidence:

Child (0-15yrs) Casualties

The five year trend (2010-2014) for child casualties in Devon reflects the national trend for a decline in casualty numbers over time:

Devon Child Casualties Trend By Year

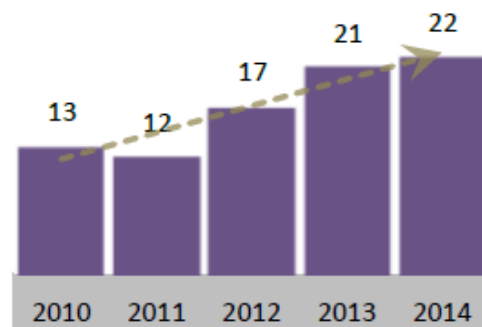
There were fewer child casualties in 2014 compared to the previous year and previous five year average. The trendline on the graph indicates that casualties of all severities are decreasing over time.



The trend for the most serious injuries involving children, however, shows an increase over time that does not reflect the national trend.

Casualty Trend

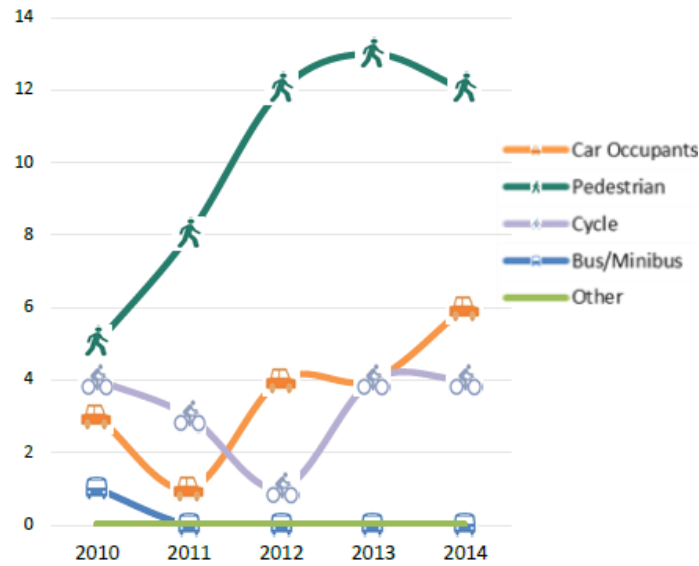
KSI casualties have been increasing in the last four years. The number of KSI casualties in 2014 statistically speaking is showing a borderline significant change. This will be an area to closely monitor in future. Over the last five years (2010-14), 2 of the 85 KSI were fatal casualties, these occurred in 2010 and 2014.



Whilst the majority of child casualties occur when the child is a passenger in a car, KSI casualties (Killed or Seriously Injured) are more likely to occur when the child is a pedestrian.

Mode Of Transport

Devon Data



Devon Data

- 🚶 Children were most likely to incur more serious injuries as a pedestrian than any other mode. Pedestrian casualties accounted for 55% of all KSI child casualties in 2014.
- 🚶 Although casualties went up in 2014 compared to the previous five year average, this increase was not statistically significant according to the Poisson test.
- 🚗 The car casualties trend shows a recent increase and the 2014 Poisson significance percentage is getting close to being borderline significant (21%) which means this is an area to monitor closely.
- 🚲 Cycle casualties were up but not significantly.
- 🚌 There have been no recent KSI bus casualties.

Child (0-15yrs) Casualties at school journey times

2014 Term Time Only Collisions

0001-0630	0631-0700	0701-0730	0731-0800	0801-0830	0831-0900	0901-0930	0931-1000	1001-1030	1031-1100	1101-1130	1131-1200	1201-1230	1231-1300	1301-1330	1331-1400	1401-1430	1431-1500	1501-1530	1531-1600	1601-1630	1631-1700	1701-1730	1731-1800	1801-1830	1831-1900	1901-1930	1931-2000	2001-2030	2031-2100	2101-2130	2131-2200	2201-2230	2231-2300	2301-2330	2331-2400	TOTAL	
			5	13	3	2		1		2	2	1					1	3	9	6	8		6	4	3	2	3	3		1		1					79

AM
drop off
time = 18

AM+PM = 44

PM
Pick up
time = 26

44 or 56% of the term time collisions occurred during school drop off and school home time periods of the day; it is very likely they were travelling to/from school at the time of the collision.

Of those 44 assumed to be travelling to/from school at the time of the collision, the modes of transport undertaken at the time were:

- 50% pedestrians.
- A small minority were cyclists (11%).
- The remaining were vehicle passengers (39%).

These are all modes affected by car drivers.

Of the 79 collisions 1 occurred within 50 meters of a school crossing patrol site, however it occurred outside of patrol times – at 2pm in the afternoon. The child injured was a car passenger.

The overall picture for school related journey casualties in Devon is an encouraging one when seen in the context of the tens of millions of journey miles made to and from school in Devon each year. The proportion of those incidents occurring at an SCP site suggests that the service is making a contribution to that level of safety for young people.

The evidence base for the contribution of school crossing patrols to sustainable and active travel is more varied. Studies do however suggest that, whilst the presence of a patrol is in itself unlikely to persuade motorist parents to engage in active travel, the patrol does encourage safe travel behaviours by those who do already walk.⁵

2. Analysis

2.1 Social impacts

Giving Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights

The local authority must consider how people will be affected by the service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relations.

We must take into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief (where relevant).

This means considering how people with different needs get the different services they require and are not disadvantaged, and facilities are available to them on an equal basis in order to meet their needs; advancing equality of opportunity by recognising the disadvantages to which protected groups are subject and considering how they can be overcome.

We also need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/unavoidable death).

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<http://www.travelwest.info/sites/default/files/documents/Essential%20Evidence%20No%20125%20Effectiveness%20of%20School%20Crossing%20Patrols.pdf>

The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are:

- Informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.
- Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
- Fair
- Necessary
- Reasonable, and
- Those affected have been adequately consulted.

	In what way is this characteristic relevant, or not relevant, to the service, policy or practice?
Age:	<p>Children and young people at schools currently receiving a Patrol service</p> <p>The average ages of school crossing patrols by sex are: Male 62 years and Female 55 years. Around 20% of patrols are age 65 years or over.⁶</p>
Disability:	<p>Although it is likely that young people with more pronounced disabilities will be accompanied to, or have alternative transport arrangements for school there is potential for people with mobility related needs or visual impairment to be affected by not having support.</p> <p>There is one existing school – King Edward VI Community College in Totnes – where a patrol is employed specifically to ensure that wheelchair users unable to use the footbridge are given safe access to the school. This patrol is already employed directly by the school.</p>
Gender/Sex (men and women):	<p>Males tend to engage in active modes of travel to school more than females. However, the gender differences in choice of mode is most pronounced at secondary school age so the effects of a possible reduction in service on gender will be limited.</p> <p>Crossing patrols currently in post largely comprise women (70 women as compared to 23 men).⁷</p>
Marriage and civil partnership:	Not applicable
Pregnancy and maternity:	Not applicable

⁶ 2014 data

⁷ 2014 data

Race/ethnicity:	Dependent upon profile and demographic of children and young people attending a school currently receiving a patrol service
Religion/belief:	Dependent upon profile and demographic of children and young people attending a school currently receiving a patrol service
Sexual orientation:	Not applicable
Trans-gender/gender identity:	Not applicable
Other (e.g. socio-economic, general health and wellbeing, geographic communities, human rights, safeguarding):	<p>There is no clear evidence that the <u>introduction</u> of an SCP will in itself result in modal shift towards walking. However, surveys indicate that safety fears do positively influence the choice of motorised travel and it therefore follows that, in the event that a service is withdrawn, some families may perceive that the journey to school is unsafe and will insist upon driving their children to school. As it could reduce the amount of daily exercise some children are doing, this could impact on their health and wellbeing and could disproportionately impact on children living in more deprived areas or areas where there is an identified existing problem with childhood obesity, although these households are more likely to be lower car ownership and captive walk. With increased numbers of children being driven to school, increased traffic levels at or near the school gates could potentially present a greater safety risk to vulnerable road users.</p> <p>There is a correlation between road traffic collisions and areas of social and economic deprivation. Where the SCP is in a deprived area we may expect a higher level of risk to (certainly unaccompanied) children on the school journey.</p>

2.1.1 Positive impacts:

The proposition is to try to achieve the required budgetary savings without ending the crossing patrol service. However, a service based on a blend of community or user-pays model (and universally applied to all schools wanting a patrol) is considered the only model likely to achieve the 2016/17 budget reduction targets and offer longer term stability for the crossing patrol service, albeit one that is smaller in scale.

Rather, it is to devolve the cost of supplying the service to the school community. A potentially positive outcome is therefore that schools can increase the numbers of patrols they use without the restriction of pedestrian / vehicle counts, which is one of the current indicators the local highways authorities use when considering funding a patrol.

The reduction in revenue costs may be accompanied by increased capital investment in some sites where the patrol may be replaced by a formal crossing facility. This is likely to be in a small minority of cases. However, it may be possible to invest in upgrading facilities at existing sites as part of an overall package of measures to encourage schools to accept the cost burden.

2.1.2 Negative impacts and mitigations or justification:

Where schools are unable or choose not to pay for a patrol the site is likely to be decommissioned. Although consultations have taken place with schools it is not possible at this time to predict how many schools will elect to take up a user-pays service as feedback suggests schools will base their decision in part on the cost of the service. Service costs will not be available until a service supplier is found.

School crossing patrols sites have a good track record for safety and, in general terms, there is a rise in serious injuries involving young pedestrians in Devon. The loss of a service is therefore likely to see risk increase in two ways: firstly, at the decommissioned site for children attending the school on foot; secondly, those children who consequently travel to school by bus or car will reduce their skills and experience of independent travel. This is a factor which contributes to increases in child casualties in the 11-15 year age group.

Reduced daily activity may have an impact on childhood obesity and associated health risks.

However, the intention is to alter the financing model for the service rather than end it so the opportunity to maintain a site will remain, albeit with the option to retain resting with the school.

Where necessary there will be opportunities to upgrade or refresh physical measures at the site to support or replace a patrol. In the former, this will have the effect of further increasing safety at the site. In the latter, a formal crossing facility is likely to have wider community benefits. These types of interventions will require additional capital and revenue funding and will be subject to prioritisation. One outcome is likely to be that, since risk assessments will inform choice rather than being the final arbiter of provision, sites may be less reflective of need as a greater emphasis is placed on willingness and ability to pay.

2.3.4 Neutral impacts:

Where the school pays for a patrol there should be no interruption of service.

2.2 Economic impacts

	In what way is this factor relevant, or not relevant, to the service, policy or practice?
Impact on knowledge and skills:	<p>There are currently 102 SCP sites in Devon. Of these, 11 are funded by schools or rely on a service delivered by volunteers. Part time patrols are supported by 1.5 FTE admin/ /manager roles. The proposals ultimately seek to withdraw funding for all the SCP officers and there is also likely to be a restructure of the officer roles and number of these posts in order to reduce £250,000 from the SCP budget.</p> <p>Where schools choose not to pay for the service, the existing patrol would face possible redundancy from DCC.</p>
Impact on employment levels:	
Impact on local business:	

2.2.1 Positive impacts:

The proposed 'school-pays' model enables a SCP service to continue if schools do indeed elect to pay for a patrol. The positive impact could be a relatively small change in patrol levels as patrols would be volunteers or employed by a third party provider. (Consultation outcomes however suggest that a number of sites would close, although some of these will include sites that would have ended anyway under current funding policies). A further positive outcome is to have in place a service that is scalable according to demand and available resource and more or less unrestricted by the current criteria. The number of patrols may, as a consequence, increase.

2.2.2 Negative impacts and mitigations or justification:

In reality, some schools may decide not to buy in the service. Also, as the service will be more demand led, there may be a disconnect between the patrols that exist and the areas of greatest, objective, safety need.

Schools using a service provided by a third party may be paying full commercial rates for such a service (although the cost and pricing structure will be a matter for the supplier to set).

However, it is this model which offers the greatest opportunity for a scalable service, reducing the likelihood that DCC will reject future requests for crossing patrols on the basis of increased supervision and training costs.

The negative impact of motorised home-school-home journeys on overall traffic congestion at peak flow times is widely accepted and, previously, through its School Travel Planning service and (about the end) DfT grant funding, Devon has invested in trying to reduce journeys to school by car for the wider economic good. The loss of patrols in areas at risk from, or already subject to, congestion may marginally exacerbate the situation and have a small negative impact on the economy. In these situations, where there is a wider strategic need to maintain the efficiency of the network, engineering measures may be considered in lieu of a patrol if such measures are thought to be safe and effective.

2.3 Environmental impacts

2.3.1 The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please select and proceed to Section 2.3, otherwise complete table below):

N/A	Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process for permitted development highway schemes.
N/A	Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).
N/A	Strategic Environmental Assessment under European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment".

	In what way is this factor relevant, or not relevant, to the service, policy or practice?
Reduce waste, and send less waste to landfill:	Not relevant
Conserve and enhance biodiversity (the variety of living species):	Not relevant
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:	Not relevant
Conserve and enhance the quality and character of our built environment and public spaces:	Not relevant
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:	Not relevant
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	Where a decision is taken to withdraw the SCP service from a school, it may see an increase in traffic where parents perceive the 'walk-to-school' alternative less safe. Where traffic conditions are already busy in a particular location, this could have a small negative impact on air quality and carbon emissions.
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):	
Contribute to reducing water consumption:	
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):	Not relevant
Other (please state below):	

2.3.2 Positive impacts:

The proposed financial model for the service permits for increases in the numbers of crossing patrols which may in turn positively affect the number of vehicles in use for school travel.

2.3.3 Negative impacts and mitigations or justification:

Where services are withdrawn completely and result in a shift from pedestrian to car-based travel, this may have a slight adverse impact on the environment, depending on the existing local traffic conditions.

2.4 Combined Impacts

2.4.1 Linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts:

There is a correlation between road traffic collisions and areas of social and economic deprivation. Where the SCP is in a deprived area we may expect a higher level of risk to (certainly unaccompanied) children on the school journey.

2.4.2 'Social Value' of planned commissioned/procured services:

2.4.3 Potential impact on partner agencies:

Potential increased burden on public health arising from reduced levels of activity amongst obese or potentially obese children.
Potential increased demand for parking enforcement arising from increased car use at congested sites.

3. Actions and risk management

3.1 Actions:

Summarise any actions that will be taken to enhance positive impacts and prevent or minimise negative impacts and remove potential for unlawful discrimination. Name the relevant business or project plans for implementation and monitoring. Make sure actions are SMART:

All patrol sites will be examined for potential capital investment in more permanent crossing facilities or improvements to existing infrastructure.

Risk assessments will be reviewed for sites subject to decommissioning and for sites where patrols continue to operate. Support will be made available to schools that are considering a crossing patrol and who require a professional and objective assessment of risk.

The funding model proposed allows for the future expansion of the service where demand (and/or need) and resource are identified.

3.2 How will you monitor the actual impacts of recommendations/decisions (consider what service user monitoring and consultation is necessary)?

Collision and injury numbers will be monitored by age, journey type and crossing patrol location, including those locations where the SCP has been decommissioned.

Injury collision numbers and locations related to school sites will be monitored and made available to schools through our school eco-check service. This will enable the school to make year-on-year judgements about their investment in crossing patrols.

The School Travel Plan support will, where available, be used to monitor and assess concerns from schools, parents and children about safety on the school journey and the school's response to those concerns.

Customer service complaints and comments will be monitored.

3.3 Risk assessment

Inherent risk (mark an X in one box).

The risk **without** mitigating actions in place/prior to any changes.

Severity	Catastrophic	5					
	Major	4			X		
	Moderate	3					
	Minor	2					
	Negligible	1					
				1	2	3	4
			Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain

Likelihood (in a 5 year timeframe)

Current risk (mark an X in one box).

The risk **with** mitigating actions/changes in place.

Severity	Catastrophic	5					
	Major	4		X			
	Moderate	3					
	Minor	2					
	Negligible	1					
				1	2	3	4
			Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain

Likelihood (in a 5 year timeframe)