

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE –  
25 SEPTEMBER 2000**

**REPORT ON: SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION**

**REPORT NO: 544-2000**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Committee approval for a programme of engineering measures to assist in developing Safer Routes to School projects.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that engineering measures be implemented at five schools in Dundee to assist in developing Safer Routes to School projects for each school: Morgan Academy, Rosebank PS, Clepington PS, Longhaugh PS and SS Matthews & Luke's PS.

2.2 It is recommended that one pair of fibre-optic speed activated warning signs are purchased and that these signs be moved around four locations on main distributor roads outside school entrances on a rotational basis.

2.3 It is recommended that a number of minor works such as school warning signs, flashing amber lights and kerb build-outs be implemented as finance permits.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The Scottish Executive has made available to Dundee City Council £145,000 additional capital consent for the year 2000/01 for Safer Routes to School. The measures that are recommended in this report will fully utilise this finance.

## **4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 One of the aims of Safer Routes to School is to reduce the number of car journeys to school, thereby reducing pollution and improving safety especially at the school gates.

## **5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Safer Routes to School promotes safety for vulnerable road users such as child pedestrians and cyclists, thus ensuring that the local road network meets the transport needs of all road users.

## **6 BACKGROUND**

6.1 In May 2000 the Scottish Executive announced additional £5.2 million for local authorities across Scotland for Safer Routes to School initiatives. From this Dundee City Council have been granted additional capital consent of £145,000 for this purpose for the year 2000/01. Copies of the Scottish Executive's guidance on how

to run Safer Routes to School are available in the Members' Lounge or from the Roads and Transportation Manager.

- 6.2 The Scottish Executive expects that the extra financial resources will enable local authorities to implement a range of engineering measures including traffic calming, crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, provision of cycle lanes and pedestrian footpaths, and traffic free entrances to schools. It is intended that such measures will assist in meeting the national target of reducing child deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2010, compared to the average for 1994-98.
- 6.3 The number of pupils being driven to school has increased significantly over the past decade as the safety of children on their way to school has become a top priority for parents. But the school car run has brought new dangers – increased traffic near our schools (especially at the school gates), increased pollution and less exercise for children.
- 6.4 Safer Routes to School, or a school travel plan, is a multi-disciplinary school based approach which aims to improve safety and encourage walking and cycling to and from school. Engineering measures such as those described in paragraph 6.2 are only one element in developing a Safer Route to School initiative. A wide range of measures may be possible for development, including:
- Road and traffic engineering measures
  - Road safety training and education eg pedestrian training, parent escort training
  - Classroom work eg safe route planning in geography, publicity and promotional work in Health Promotion and Environmental Studies
  - Walking initiatives eg walking buses
  - Cycling initiatives, eg cycle storage, cycle maintenance, cycling awareness campaigns
  - School management issues, eg access restrictions
  - Involving parents eg family cycle training, exploring routes to school, car sharing, walking bus escorts
  - Information regarding parental responsibilities.
- 6.5 Ideally, a school travel plan should be developed prior to engineering measures being installed to ensure co-ordination between all the different elements of the school travel plan toolkit. However, due to time constraints, with finance only being available for year 2000/01, it is not possible to do this and a different approach has been adopted. It is intended that engineering measures will be installed at locations with a particularly poor road safety history, and that as a result of these measures the associated schools may wish to take the opportunity in partnership with parents, school boards, police, health board and appropriate council departments to develop a full school travel plan.
- 6.6 Two methods of identifying locations with a particularly poor road safety history have been used:
- Using the council's computerised accident database, a plan of all road accidents involving children on their journey to or from school was plotted on a road map, which also contained school locations. From this, accident

cluster sites have been identified, as has the associated school, and these have been targeted for engineering measures.

- If a formal report by HM Inspectors of Schools includes reference to the school entrance and adjacent footways/roads being insufficient, the school has been targeted for engineering measures.

6.7 It should be noted that even without full school travel plans being developed the engineering measures alone should reduce child road casualties and help towards achieving the national target of reducing child deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2010.

6.8 The following locations, their associated schools and likely engineering measures have been identified using the methodology set out above:

- Forfar Road (Morgan Academy) – rationalise school entrance
- Constitution Street (Rosebank PS) – improve crossing facilities.
- Longhaugh Road (Longhaugh PS and SS Matthews & Luke's PS) – traffic calming and/or improve crossing facilities.
- Eliza Street/Catherine Street (Cleington PS) – rationalise school entrance

6.9 In addition, fears have been expressed regarding speed of vehicles at a number of schools whose entrances are adjacent to main distributor roads. It is intended to purchase one pair of fibre-optic speed activated warning signs and move them around four locations on a rotational basis. The warning signs will display the 'children going to or from school' sign and a supplementary message – Slow Down – when triggered by drivers exceeding a predetermined speed threshold at school times. Studies have shown that this type of sign can significantly reduce vehicle speeds.

6.10 In pursuance of the partnerships essential for the successful delivery of such schemes, the Road Safety Unit of Tayside Police will provide support to ensure that 'education, training and publicity' are maximised.

6.11 Finally, a number of minor works such as school warning signs, flashing amber lights and kerb build-outs have been requested through school boards, head teachers and Education Department representatives. It is intended that these be implemented as finance permits.

## **7 CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning, Director of Personnel and Management Services, Director of Education, Director of Economic Development, Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection, Director of Neighbourhood Resources and Development, Director of Public Relations, Legal Manager and the Chief Constable, have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

**8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Making it Work Together – Guidance on how to run Safer Routes to School. Joint paper from Minister for Children and Education, Minister for Health and Community Care and Minister for Transport and the Environment.

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4 September 2000

**IFS/EN**

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