

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: KERBCRAFT INITIATIVE, STAFFING
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 8 th June 2005	Ref: HQ/TT/71/58	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks Committee approval to make permanent the post of Child Pedestrian Scheme Co-ordinator.

2. Background

- 2.1 Kerbcraft is a child pedestrian training programme developed by Strathclyde University. It is designed to teach basic pedestrian skills to 5 to 7 year old children by means of practical roadside training rather than classroom instruction. The programme is built around three skills – choosing a safe places to cross, crossing safely at parked cars and crossing safely near junctions. Children are taught by trained volunteers who are given full support and training by the Kerbcraft co-ordinator.
- 2.2 The Scottish Executive funded a three traunch programme of bids to set up Kerbcraft training in Scotland, with nine authorities in total involved. North Lanarkshire's bid was chosen as one of the first traunch authorities and in May 1999 a Kerbcraft Project Co-ordinator was appointed.
- 2.3 The scheme has proved to be an outstanding success in terms of the uptake by schools and the general organisation. All 11 schools taking part in the South Wishaw area are now involved in Kerbcraft training and any anticipated problems have now been overcome.
- 2.4 The following points indicate the success of the scheme locally,
- the 11 schools involved have shown considerable commitment to the scheme
 - around 600 children in a high accident risk area have received training
 - over 100 volunteers have been recruited and trained
 - there is a high retention level of volunteers
 - there has been very positive feedback from those involved in the scheme
 - it has been very high profile creating a positive image for the Council with children being trained at the roadside in high visibility tabards
 - there have been regular features in the local press
 - it received three awards at North Lanarkshire's annual volunteer awards ceremony

3. Assessment

- 3.1 A skills assessment programme has been designed to identify and measure the impact of Kerbcraft training on children's behaviour at the roadside.

3.2 The assessment programme is almost finished and results have been analysed for the first two skills: Safe Place Finding and Parked Cars. The remaining results will be analysed shortly and should be available during May 2005.

- The interim results for the Safe Places skill show that the trained children demonstrated a marked reduction in 'unsafe' behaviour scores and a corresponding increase in 'safe' behaviour scores. This difference in post-training 'safe' scores between trained and control children is statistically significant.
- The Parked Cars training teaches children how to minimise the danger of crossing from between parked cars, when there is no safer crossing place available. As with the Safe Places tests, the interim results for the Parked Cars skill show that the trained children demonstrated a marked increase in 'safe' behaviour scores and a corresponding decrease in 'unsafe' behaviour scores.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 These interim results from the skills assessment indicate that training in Safe Places Finding and Crossing at Parked Cars in current Kerbcraft schemes is having a significant positive effect on children's behaviour and understanding at the roadside.
- 4.2 Kerbcraft is a well researched training programme and forms a key part of the Government's strategy for reducing child pedestrian casualties. The scheme has worked very well in North Lanarkshire and represents excellent value for money i.e. one post at AP3 resulting in hundreds of children being trained by over 100 volunteers.
- 4.3 The present co-ordinators temporary contract finishes in May 2005 and it is recommended that this post should be made a permanent part of the establishment to allow this important initiative to be rolled out across the Council area.

5. Sustainability Implications

- 5.1 Rolling out this initiative across the Council area will lead to reduced child road casualty levels and increased walking on the school journey which will result in a reduction in car journey's on the school run.

6. Financial Considerations

- 6.1 The cost of the post is £30,658 per annum and will be funded from a budget virement to Transportation employee costs from Transportation contractors payments.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Committee are asked to,
- a) recommend subject to the approval of the Planning and Environment Committee and the Policy and Resources (Personnel) and Policy and Resources (Establishment Monitoring) Sub-committees that this post should be made a permanent part of the establishment
 - b) approve the virement detailed in 6.1 above.



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19 May 2005

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact John Marran, on 01236 616253