

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2011

THE TRANSFER OF ROAD SAFETY TEAM TO THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Report by the Chief Fire Officer

Introduction

This report is designed to provide an update on Oxfordshire County Council's involvement in road safety education and explain the context, journey and position since the transfer to Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service in April 2011. It aims to provide context and information at multiple levels in order to understand the evolution of existing programmes and local delivery methods.

1. International UN decade of action

The International UN General Assembly launched its 'Decade of Action for Road Safety' programme this year. The goal is to stabilise and then reduce the forecasted level of road traffic fatalities around the world by 2020. The aim is that millions of deaths could potentially be prevented as a result. It should be noted that whilst all UN members are expected to be involved and benefit, the target of significant activities is largely in the developing world.

Every six seconds someone is killed or seriously injured on the world's roads. Nine in ten casualties occur in developing countries, many are children.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 in a landmark Resolution co-sponsored by 100 countries. Officially launched on 11 May 2011, the Decade of Action has the official goal of 'stabilising and then reducing' global road traffic fatalities by 2020.

2. Department of transport – road safety strategy.

The Government previously produced a road safety strategy in 2007 and the department for transport (DfT) published a new national strategic framework for road safety in May 2011. The framework document identifies current issues and challenges and provides the government's vision on road safety education and enforcement.

There has been a large reduction in road deaths in recent years in the UK and while the numbers of fatalities have been falling for several decades, there has been an unprecedented and very welcome reduction of 25% between 2007 and 2009.

There are a range of key themes within the framework. They include activities which are not directly within the County Council areas of responsibilities, e.g. promoting

tougher enforcement. However, other areas are clearly priorities for road safety education in Oxfordshire, including:

- Better education and training for children and for learner and inexperienced drivers.
- More local and community decision making from decentralisation and providing local information to citizens to enable them to challenge priorities.

3. National road safety - Fire and Rescue Service involvement

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) provides national leadership and coordination on a number of programmes across the UK. The national CFOA road safety group launched the fire sector support to the UN “Decade of Action” by coordinating events over the entire major roads network of the United Kingdom. Locally the OFRS, working in conjunction with the dedicated Road Safety staff, participated in this event.

Road safety campaigns and ideas within the fire sector are shared and discussed at national, regional and local levels. A road safety catalogue has been produced by CFOA which provides a number of programmes and initiatives for Fire & Rescue Services to share across the UK.

It is intended that this resource, exploiting the unique trusted and visible “brand” of the Fire and Rescue Service is partnered with the Road Safety Staff’s dedicated expertise to maximise synergy and deliver more effective local outcomes.

4. National road traffic collision (RTC) trends

Great Britain has amongst the safest roads in the world and has the fourth fewest road deaths per million people. It has been in the top performing countries throughout the last decade and was in first place for the safest roads in 2009.

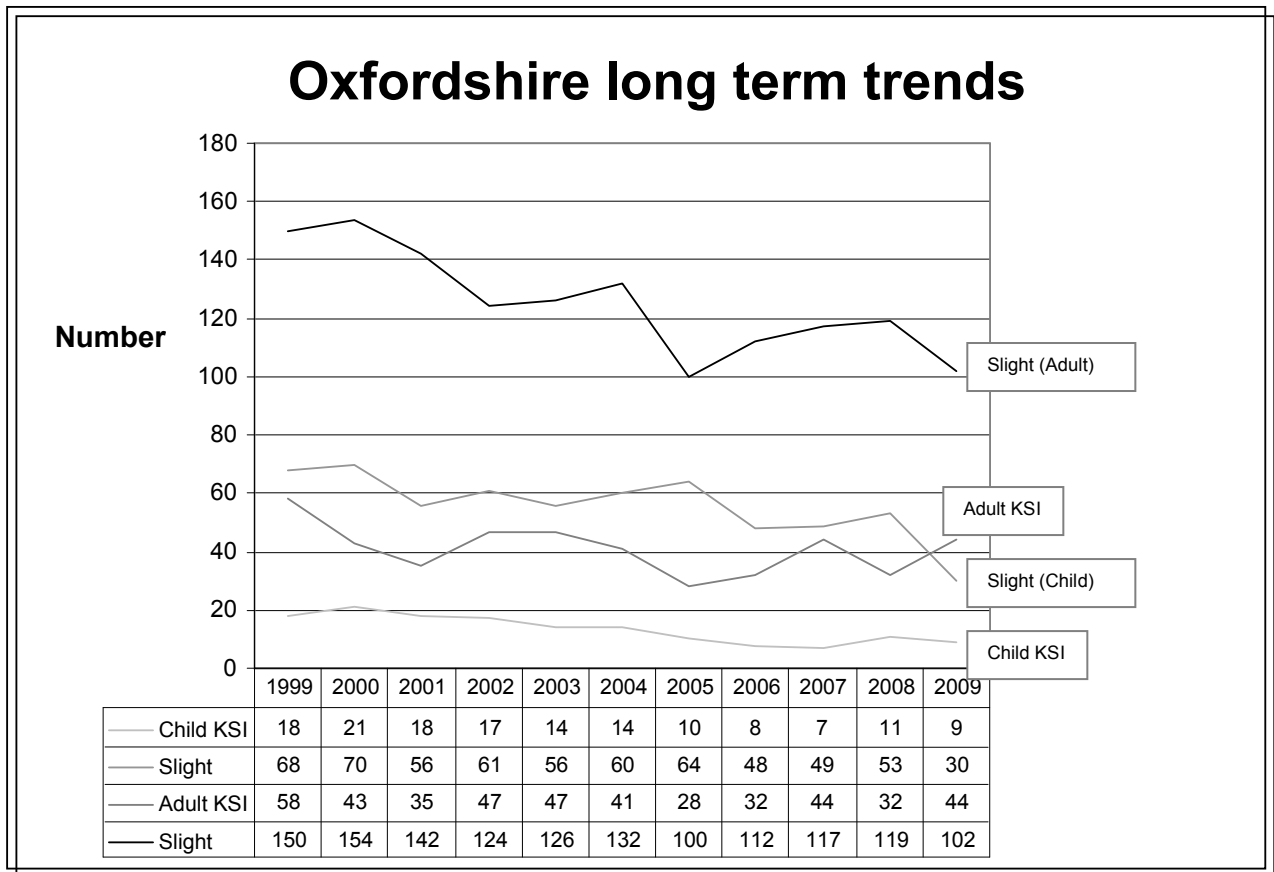
The reduction in deaths between 2008 and 2009 follows a 14 per cent fall between 2007 and 2008, the largest percentage fall in a single year in the post war period.

The number of people reported killed in road collisions was down 38% to 2,222. The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) was down 44% to 26,912. The number of children aged 0-5 reported KSI was down 61% to 2,671.

5. Oxfordshire statistics

The national road safety strategy (published in 2000) provided the overall framework for improving road safety on our roads and included targets for casualty reduction to be achieved by 2010. Progress was reviewed at both national and local level and in 2006 Oxfordshire County Council introduced enhanced targets within its new local transport plan. (The targets were measured from the average annual injuries recorded in the 5 year period 1994 – 1998)

Indicator	94/98 baseline	2010 actual	% change	2010 National target	National status	2010 Local Target	Local status
All KSI	544	396	-27.2	-40	Not Met	-50	Not met
Child KSI	54	23	-57.4	-50	Met	-60	Not met
All Slight	2726	1847	-32.2	-10	Met	-20	Met
Pedestrian	276	168	-39.1	-	-	-50	Not met
Pedal cycle	280	236	-15.7	-	-	-50	Not met
Power Two wheel	295	213	-27.8	-	-	-20	Met
Wet Skid	302	166	-45.0	-	-	-15	Met



KSI = Killed and Seriously Injured

Clearly, whilst the general trend is very much in the right direction, there is further work to be undertaken to achieve the targets set both nationally and locally. The new road safety programme is specifically targeted to address this issue.

6. Oxfordshire Road Safety Educational, Training and Publicity Programmes

Current programmes undertaken by the Road Safety Team are aligned with schools educational philosophy. There are two major programmes which are both well established and are both directed at young children. The programmes involve pedestrian training (Footsteps) and cycle training for children up to Year 6.

The team also promote Theatre in Education (TIE) plays which are followed by a workshop and delivered by a role play theatre education company. These are considered to be one of the few available programmes able to reach children in the traditionally difficult to reach years between Years 6 and 12. The team also has an evolving seat-belt e-learning module which was used for this age group.

The team additionally support the multi agency, Police led, live role play theatre production Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) aimed at 6th form student pre-drivers. This is delivered to a number of venues across the Thames Valley each year.

The "Sitting Tight" programme involves checks on child seat and seatbelt safety usually held at a location where parents and children are likely to be, such as supermarket car parks. These events are usually attended in conjunction with Fire & Rescue staff and vehicles.

A number of local programmes are also developed and delivered such as the STATS 19 programme (the accident fatality form used by the Police) for 6th form student pre drivers and motorcycle training and awareness events at locations frequented by motorcyclists.

7. Risk groups

The national, regional and local statistics within the more detailed review identify that while road traffic collisions and KSI are reducing year on year, the following risk groups are considered to be the priority targets for road safety training and education:

- Car occupants (seatbelts, mobile phones etc)
- Male drivers (17 -24 years)
- Motorcyclists
- Drinking and Drugs
- Pedestrians (children)
- Cyclists (children)
- Speeding

As a result the historic programme has been assessed in relation to these target groups and the proposed programme is intended to meet the specific needs of OCC in further reducing the KSI against the targets identified in section 5.

8. OFRS Road Safety Education

OFRS has been involved in road safety education and awareness for a number of years mainly due to the increase in frequency of attendance at Road Traffic collisions (RTC). It is acknowledged that OFRS only attend a small proportion of RTCs and these are usually where a serious collision has occurred resulting in harm, suffering and in some cases death. This has been a significant and growing area of activity where the entire OFRS workforce recognises their pivotal role in visibly promoting road safety issues. The progressive name change of the “Fire Service” to the “Fire and Rescue Service” is in part a reaction to this situation.

In 2006, to coincide with the launch of the Service’s 10 year “**365 alive**” vision, a hard hitting ‘Choices and Consequences’ education programme based on road safety issues was produced and targeted at Year 11 students. This cohort, the last year at school before some students left education, was perceived as the most appropriate target. However, at the request of the schools due to examination and curriculum issues, this was revised to the Year 10 age group. This programme continues with significant outcomes.

9. Transfer of Road Safety Team - April 2011

The Road Safety education element (ETP team as a sub service) has been restructured from the Environment and Economy Directorate and now forms part of the Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service ‘Safety Team’ structure.

The Safety Team structure has three functions:-

Fire Protection and intelligence – business and commercial fire safety legislation including promotion and enforcement.

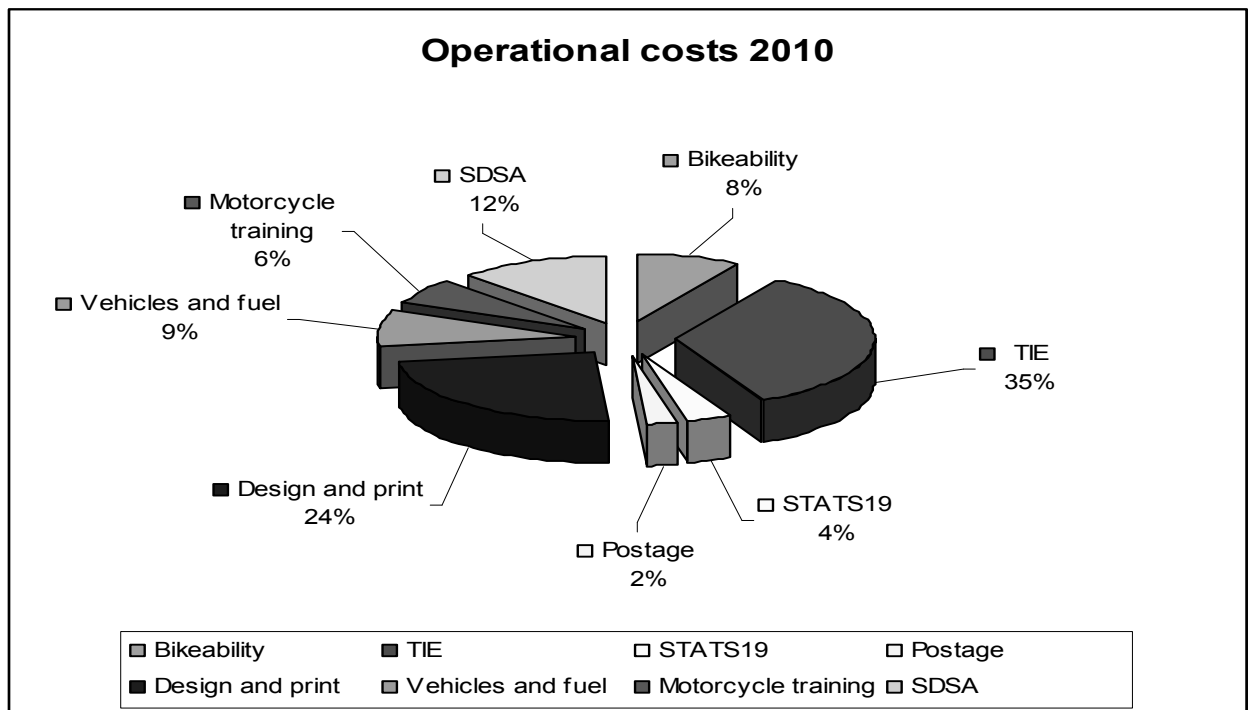
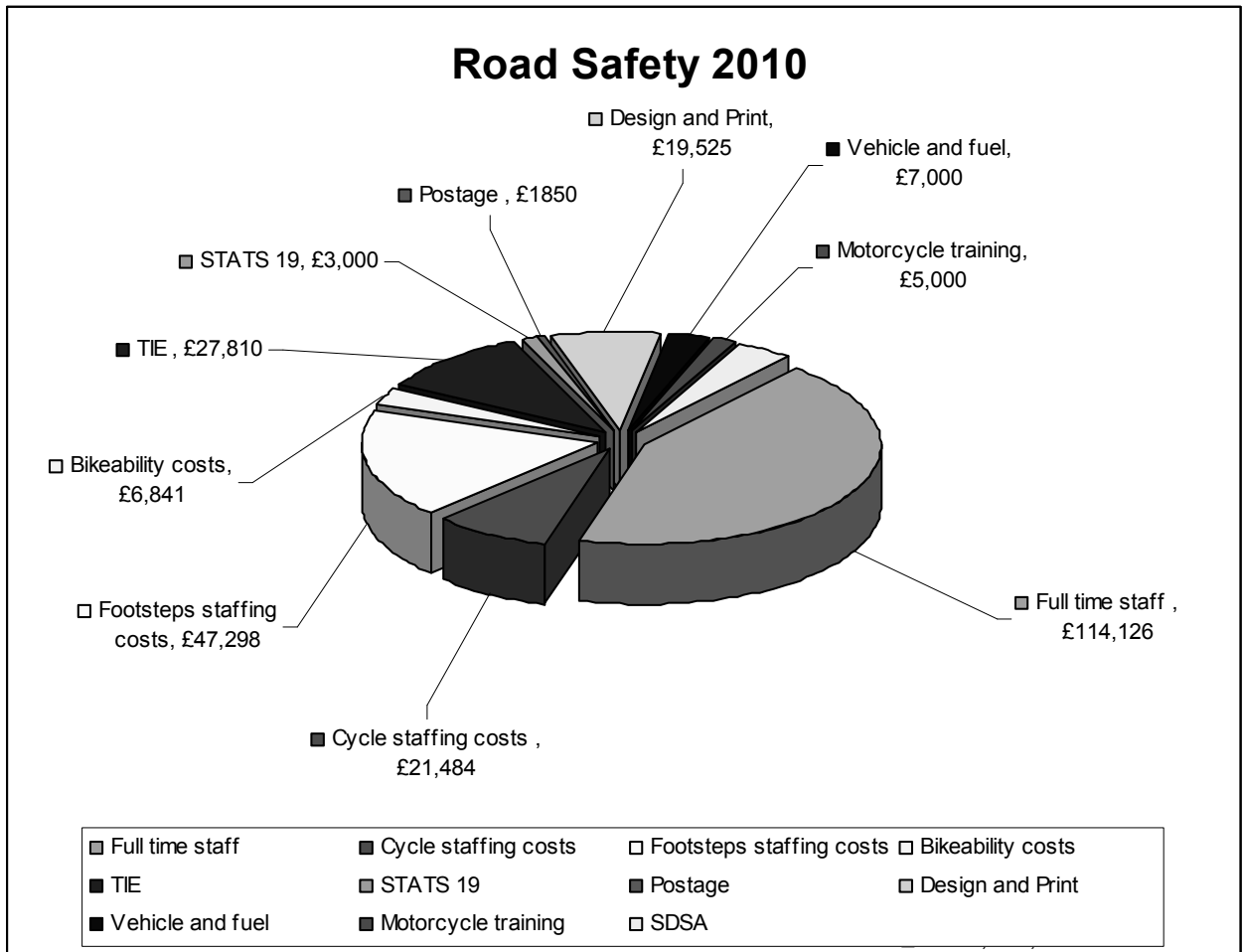
Risk Reduction –specific fire safety prevention education programmes to vulnerable groups and the general public.

Road Safety – specific road safety educational programmes to target audiences and the general public.

10. Budget position

The transfer of Road Safety education function has now occurred. However, this did not include any line management budget or management staff. Prior to transfer, a number of redundancies including staff in the speed indicating team had been made and the budget reduced accordingly. A further £100,000 efficiency savings formed part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, supporting the wider OCC £119M business strategy. These reductions formed part of the Environment and Economy Directorate efficiencies in for 2011/12. In practice the Fire and Rescue Service is in effect delivering these on behalf of E&E via the changes proposed in this report and the detailed staff consultation document.

The following pie charts give an indication of the costs and percentage spend of the budget in 2010.



11. Proposed educational programmes

Road Safety catalogue

Over the years there has been significant investment and development of specific road safety programmes and a number of these programmes are intended to be placed into a road safety “catalogue” for use by the RSO within their locality areas as and when they need them or are requested to undertake a specific programme based on area needs. Examples of these proposed catalogue items are identified in the following table and are diagonally shaded. Programmes that are expected to continue to be delivered on a regular basis are left with white backgrounds. Items identified with darker grey backgrounds are intended to be ceased as direct service provision although they may be able to be continued on a “facilitated” basis with materials, training and support being provided to teachers and parents to deliver these safety messages.

This forms part of a wider intention to move towards a service delivery model in which the Road Safety Staff provide training support and motivation to these groups. This will not preclude direct service provision in certain circumstances, for example particularly vulnerable or excluded groups or communities. However, bearing in mind the financial circumstances faced, it is clear that a modification of the historic service delivery model is required.

The programme restructure is specifically designed to also maintain the current relationships between the Road Safety Team, schools and voluntary staff. These relationships will become progressively more important as the programme moves to have an increased emphasis on others providing direct service delivery.

The programmes and their delivery methods will be reviewed annually for effectiveness.

Primary Schools	Foundation F1 & F2	Sitting Tight	Footsteps			Cycle Helmet Promotion – school assemblies
	Year 1	Sitting Tight	Footsteps	Be Safe, Be Seen Bears	Zig Zag Parking	Cycle Helmet Promotion
	Year 2	Sitting Tight	Footsteps (occasionally)	Be Safe, Be Seen Bears	Zig Zag Parking	Cycle Helmet Promotion
	Year 3	Sitting Tight		Be Safe, Be Seen Bears	Zig Zag Parking	Cycle Helmet Promotion
	Year 4	Sitting Tight			Zig Zag Parking	Cycle Helmet Promotion
	Year 5	Cycle Training		Seat Belt Demo Rig	Zig Zag Parking	Cycle Helmet Promotion
	Year 6	Cycle Training	Junior Citizen	Seat Belt Demo Rig	Zig Zag Parking	StaySafe transition resource
Secondary Schools	Year 7	Bikeability	TIE Chicken			
	Year 8	Seat Belt e-learning	TIE The Decision			
	Year 9	Seat Belt e-learning	TIE Perfect (Seat belt consequences)	Zac's Story Dilemma cards		
	GCSE Year	Year 10		Choices & Consequences (Fire & Rescue)	Zac's Story Dilemma cards	
	GCSE Year	Year 11	Motorcycle - Operation Pit Stop	Zac's Story and Dilemma cards	TIE: Legal Weapon (speed) TIE: Too much Punch (Alcohol Speed)	
	(6th Form)	Year 12	Motorcycle safety – Op Pit Stop	STATS 19 (in development)	Safe Drive Stay Alive (TVP funded)	Yellow Ribbon
	(6th Form)	Year 13	Motorcycle safety – Op Pit Stop	STATS 19 (in development)		Yellow Ribbon

Example	Catalogue	Continue	Cease or facilitated
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Other issues, not specifically identifiable from the above, include the intention to re-examine the structure and number of the “Footsteps” coordinators. In part this reflects changes that have happened since the transfer as a result of natural staff movements.

Curtailing the Footsteps delivery programme to Foundation and Year 1 children will require a positive communications strategy to minimise adverse reputational issues. Wherever possible, teachers, parents and carers will receive support to deliver the content of the programme locally.

12. Team structures to support localities and new programmes.

The Road Safety Team structure is about to be proposed and a staff consultation launched. **Therefore the details in the remainder of this paper should be read with the knowledge that they remain draft proposals at this time.** The timing of the consultation is planned to ensure that the staff, many who work on a part time, term time only basis can be fully and equitably involved in the consultation process.

The preferred organisational model within the Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is locality based and delivers most of its safety programmes via Fire Risk Managers (FRMs). Their geographic areas are coterminous with the District Council boundaries and have general alignment to the OCC geographic localities. They are statutory partners within Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) under the Crime and Disorder Act. They are active partners in solving the wider community problems and are part of the solution to the issues encountered within the city, towns and villages across Oxfordshire. Commonly they are involved in local solutions to fire safety awareness and education, arson reduction, road safety education and reducing anti social behaviour.

Each Fire Risk Manager is responsible for the delivery of prevention, protection and response from the 24 fire stations across the county. They have the staff, resources and have forged essential links within the OCC identified localities within their areas. They are supported and advised centrally and specifically from the Fire Protection and Risk Reduction teams within the ‘safety team’ function.

There are three areas:-

Fire Risk Manager – South / Vale District Council areas (10 Fire Stations)
 Fire Risk Manager – West / Cherwell District Council areas (10 Fire Stations)
 Fire Risk Manager - City Council area¹ (4 Fire stations)

The restructure of the road safety team is intended, under the supervisory direction of one experienced professional Road Safety Officer, to align the three remaining full time Road Safety Officers to the three Fire Risk areas across the county. This will facilitate improved locality working and allow local managers to target local risks,

¹ The Fire Risk City area -includes the management of Eynsham and Woodstock Fire Stations.

concerns and problems within locality areas, town and parish boundaries. This locality working already has a proven successful track record for the OFRS. The use of a dedicated Road Safety Officer within these localities will enhance and support the advice available to the public within these areas.

It is fully recognised that, under existing arrangements, the current Road Safety Officers have specific areas of interest and competence e.g. pedestrian or cycle safety. It is intended to continue to facilitate this model but also integrate these within the above managerial and geographic arrangement. Road safety coordinators and volunteers would be progressively realigned.

13. Risks and uncertainties

The main risks to the proposals include the ability of the OCC to move from a model of “direct service delivery” to a more “facilitated delivery” model. Any potential negative effects on relationships with schools, teachers and parents will be monitored carefully.

The Theatre in Education (TIE) is proposed to cease, at least on a temporary basis. The current model relies on OCC to fund the productions and the schools receive the events at no cost. This is a significant financial expenditure and it is anticipated that the Road Safety Team will still have capacity to facilitate the arrangements if the schools choose to continue with these. In terms of urgent budget reductions this element has specifically been chosen as it is still possible for the services to be delivered, if a school chooses to do so, and should future funding arrangements allow can be reintroduced relatively easily.

It should be noted that students are to receive road safety education and training at a number of other stages throughout their school life. It is not yet possible to be certain on the overall impact of this movement. A specific review, conducted when the budget situation is fully clarified, will be undertaken.

14. Summary of costs and potential efficiencies

Element	£
Theatre in Education (TIE) ‘Chicken’	12,000
TIE ‘The decision’	10,000
TIE ‘Perfect’	10,000
TIE ‘Lethal weapon’ and TIE ‘Too much punch for Judy’	5000
Rearrangement of staffing for Junior Citizens programmes	4000
STATS 19 Year 12	1,500
STATS 19 Year 13	1,500
Mileage reduction (general)	5,000
Footsteps printing reduction	8,000
Footsteps, Cycling and Management potential restructure (net)	12,000
Miscellaneous	2,000
Total	71,000
Further efficiencies to find in 2011(which are currently underwritten by commensurate under spend in the overall Fire and Rescue Service budget)	-29,000

Following full scrutiny of the budget for 2010, areas where expenditure can be reduced if not eliminated completely have been identified. The Road Safety Officers have scrutinised and have already made positive suggestions. They have generated ideas where greater efficiencies can be made by business reengineering within the Fire and Rescue Service. For example, mileage, postage and travel costs have been greatly reduced by the use of the structured programmed Fire & Rescue internal postal delivery service which delivers equipment and supplies to 24 fire stations across the county.

15. Financial and Staff Implications

These will be fully detailed in the final staff consultation. The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee Members will be specifically provided with these details. Until they are available to the staff, it is considered inappropriate to put them in the public environment.

As identified above, the intention to move more into a “facilitated” service delivery model will require further work with partners and volunteers. However, the Road Safety Team have identified the opportunity to develop a multi-tiered volunteer network, where the use of the existing volunteers can be expanded to include cycle training, ‘Footsteps’ training, speed awareness projects etc within the localities coordinated, supported and encouraged by road safety professionals. Whilst this is, in part, still an aspiration, it demonstrates the vision and goal of the team and wider Fire and Rescue Service.

In terms of linkage with the County Council business strategy, the ongoing work directly links to “changing the way we work”, “reshaping of management” and in part, empowering “community self help” strands.

16. Recommendations

The Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Note the contents of this report and background paper and to note the intention to consult the staff and SSC Members on the overall programme and team redesign.**
- 2. To make any initial, immediate comments that could be incorporated into the consultation.**

David Etheridge
Chief Fire Officer

Background papers: Programme Report available in the Members Resource Centre

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