

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF  
THE EXECUTIVE  
HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2018 FROM 7.30 PM TO 8.35 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Charlotte Haitham Taylor (Chairman), Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, Stuart Munro and Anthony Pollock

**Other Councillors Present**

Parry Batth  
Laura Blumenthal  
Prue Bray  
Rachel Burgess  
Gary Cowan  
Andy Croy  
Lindsay Ferris  
Helen Power  
Angus Ross  
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey  
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

**41. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Richard Dolinski, Pauline Helliars-Symons, Philip Mirfin and Simon Weeks.

Councillor Laura Blumenthal attended the meeting on behalf of Councillor Richard Dolinski. In accordance with legislation Councillor Blumenthal could take part in any discussions but was not entitled to vote.

**42. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received

**43. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

**43.1 Annette Medhurst asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

**Question**

As part of the consultation exercise for the removal of school crossing patrollers' local schools were contacted, presumably in order to reach a wide distribution of people who regularly use these services. Meadow Nursery School on Murray Road, who provide a statutory service in early years' education was not contacted nor was there a tick box on the consultation for parents to state that their child attended Meadow Nursery. Why were early years' settings not considered important voices for the local authority to seek out their opinion during the consultation process?

**Answer**

The purpose of the school crossing patrol service is to assist the safe journey of school aged children through providing a safe crossing facility to enable them to access schools.

Early years' children should be accompanied by appropriate adults who will have the benefit of new 24/7 crossing facilities. I also understand that many pre-school children attend nurseries for half day sessions and the new proposals will assist them and their appropriate adults to cross the road safely at the end of morning sessions and the beginning of afternoon sessions.

I have been unable to find why you were not contacted but my understanding is that all of the LEA schools were contacted.

### **Supplementary Question**

So on that basis if you are saying that local authority settings were contacted but early years' settings were not for the reasons that you outlined. You talk about the safety of lots of people but why were those individuals not considered? I don't really see why that group of individuals are not considered to have an important voice in this type of exercise.

### **Supplementary Answer**

I did not say that early years' settings were not contacted. The only one I am aware of that was not contacted is yours and I believe that in the assessment of the requirements that early years' settings have been taken into account in the design and considerations undertaken by the Council.

## **43.2 Alexandra Fraser asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

### **Question**

Please can you advise under what conditions in the consultation that was carried out what parents and residents could have said for a school to keep their School Crossing Patroller even alongside a new crossing?

### **Answer**

If the consultation responses had demonstrated that there had been factors of which the Council was unaware that would undermine the ability to enable safe crossing of the roads close to school crossing patrol locations, this would have resulted in the Council considering alternative proposals. However this did not happen through the consultation process.

### **Supplementary Question**

We want to encourage people to walk to school. If this was a consultation just about installing a crossing why was there not the option of keeping the lollipop ladies?

### **Supplementary Answer**

Last year we had a number of schools where they already had a crossing, and they had crossing patrollers on them, and we consulted with their removal and they were removed last year and there is no evidence of anything getting worse; in fact the accident statistics got better. I do not see anything from our experience that the removal of crossing patrollers last year, who were on fixed sites, that would imply that we could not do it again.

## **43.3 Sally Cairns asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

### **Question**

My particular concern about replacing the school crossing patroller at the Murray Road site with a fixed crossing is that, whilst the school crossing patroller can keep everyone moving, if the site is changed to a fixed crossing, I think there will be times either when there is a big build-up of people on the (relatively narrow) pavement, or times when the traffic ends up queuing back a long way – in both cases, leading to safety issues. At the Scrutiny Committee meeting, it appeared that the key point of the consultation process was seen as being to identify such safety concerns. However, the actual question asked was much more general “Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to safe school crossings?” I think that is just one of the reasons why the consultation was not meaningful – and if the Council seriously wants to get people’s views on the proposed changes, we need to see exactly what the proposed crossing looks like, including whether there are going to be any changes to the pavements or parking arrangements. In the light of the concerns raised, how are the plans for the Murray Road site going to be taken forward?

### **Answer**

Having undertaken detailed feasibility studies, the Council is satisfied that a permanent formal crossing can be provided in the vicinity of the school site that would not compromise the safety of school children. However, I understand the concerns raised and will work with our Highways Department and Transport Officers to consider any additional measures that could be put in place to improve the access arrangements at Murray Road. This issue will be dealt with in addition to the issues raised by the removal of the school crossing service and responses to the consultation.

I would add that I have particularly taken care on this site including visiting it. I have consulted with some of my local Members and I have listened to the debate that we had and all of the questions and comments that have been made. I have taken those on board in considering this decision and I have taken them on board in consideration of other matters that may be required to make this a better and safer access to the school so I think I have done that and I will continue to do that. I will continue to be committed to providing safe access to this school and I am aware of the issues that have been raised.

### **Supplementary Question**

I very much appreciate that you are taking the issues at this site seriously however I think the overwhelming message of the consultation was that the majority of people did not agree with the Department’s decision that it was a safe thing to do. So my question now as in going forward you are saying that it is going to be something a bit different to what we said anyway and if you have a requirement to consult on significant changes to the safety arrangements out of school are you therefore going to do another consultation? Are you going to enable the people who use the site every day to have some input into whether the proposed changes are actually going to be adequate for the vast numbers of people who cross that road?

### **Supplementary Answer**

The main consideration I have had is that the proposal was for a zebra crossing and I have been persuaded that the possibility I need to look at is a puffin crossing. I do not consider that to be a major change. There have been issues raised around car parking particularly at the end of Oxford Road. That is a different matter and is separate from the school crossing patroller situation and if changes to the parking regimes are required they will follow the normal Council processes. I am aware of the situation and I have listened and

will continue to listen but I think the principles that we have outlined previously are still valid.

**43.4 Alexa Stott asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

**Question**

At the Extraordinary call-in meeting on September 3rd Cllr Pollock stated that when he visited Murray Road on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July he was impressed by the courtesy of drivers and that he did not see behaviours that would challenge the Council decision to replace the school crossing patrollers with permanent crossings. Given that this date was the end of term and the Nursery School had already closed for the summer the footfall of pedestrians and number of drivers along Murray Road was lower than usual. Does Cllr Pollock have plans to visit the site again, both morning and afternoon to obtain a more realistic picture of the challenges faced by the school community on this site?

**Answer**

While I attended the site on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, the site had already been fully considered by professionally qualified Highways and Transportation Officers at this point. This had informed the feasibility study of the crossing facility at Murray Road to enable the Council to be satisfied that a safe crossing could be provided in the vicinity of the school crossing patroller site. I have also been in close contact with the relevant Ward Member, who knows the area very well, about this proposal and he has informed the decision.

While the Council has already identified a safe crossing design for the Murray Road site, I am aware of the concerns that have been raised and will work with Ward Members, the school itself and our highways experts to consider any additional measures that may be put in place to improve the access arrangements at Murray Road. I will also consider revisiting the school at an appropriate time.

**43.5 Diane Burch asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

**Question**

*2 c "The original 2015 decision was taken without an underpinning Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and the subsequent April 2018 EIA did not contain detailed information about consultation with specific groups and did not reflect the individual circumstances relating to each of the proposed crossing sites"*

An EIA usually refers to discrimination on the basis of race, gender or disability. As we are concerned with School Crossing Patrollers who deal with children – assuming a more detailed EIA needs to be undertaken may I suggest that these younger residents are considered; on the grounds of age discrimination?

**Answer**

Under equalities legislation the Council has a duty to integrate considerations of equality impact and to supply this in the decision to remove the discretionary school crossing patroller service. A single Equalities Impact Assessment to inform this decision to remove a school crossing patroller service was appropriate in line with this duty.

The design standards of each crossing incorporate the needs of all users including all of these groups protected under the equalities legislation which are: race; age; gender;

disability; ethnicity; sexual orientation; religion and beliefs; gender reassignment; pregnancy; and maternity. This is further tested through the safety audit process. Each of the crossings has been assessed on the basis of their individual circumstances to ensure that they are safe and fit for purpose for all residents who may use the crossing. The purpose of the school crossing patroller service is to assist the safety of school aged children by providing a safety crossing facility to enable them to access schools. Early years' children should be accompanied by appropriate adults who will have the benefit of the new 24/7 crossing facilities.

### **Supplementary Question**

Although we have heard many Councillors, including yourself, say that they wish to implement safe crossings can you please say why you believe that static crossings that are unmanned can possibly be safer at school times than those with lollipop men and ladies currently on them and tell us where your statistics come from for such a sweeping generalised statement?

### **Supplementary Answer**

About 15 years ago we implemented a Government programme called 'Safer Routes to School' where we implemented putting crossings at most of our schools at that time. Those crossings have been in for at least the last 10 years and so we have extensive experience of school fixed crossings at schools as well as all the fixed crossings that exist around the country. These are designed nationally and the evidence in Wokingham is that they are safe and that is why I am satisfied with that.

### **43.6 Helen Shah asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

#### **Question**

Are there any budget implications from the correct procedure not being followed initially, and if there are, where will any shortfall come from?

#### **Answer**

The Council has undertaken due diligence in assessing the financial implications of the proposal to remove the school crossing patrol service and has correctly assessed the impact on the Council's budget. The maintenance of the crossings will not have a significant impact on revenue budgets as the additional crossings only represent less than 5% of the increase in the number of crossings in the Borough.

The financial implications of the call-in process has had budgetary implications as school crossing patrollers will potentially have to operate for a longer period at school crossing patroller points. This will be met through the revenue budget which will be diverted from other service areas. The process has also impacted on Council staffing resources but the cost of this has not been quantified. I believe that the correct procedures have been followed however as a result of the call-in there will be additional costs in the 2018/19 budget.

### **Supplementary Question**

So is that the impact on the Council being able to provide other things in the area?

### **Supplementary Answer**

In theory possibly. In practice probably not.

**43.7 Keith Malvern asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

**Question**

In the light of the wide ranging discussion held at the Overview and Scrutiny call in meeting, can I ask whether consideration has been given to a 'horses for courses' approach that would allow, for example, the school crossing patroller to be retained at Murray Road?

**Answer**

I would consider retaining the school crossing patroller if the design and safety issues arising from the crossing design indicated that a safe crossing could not be provided.

**Supplementary Question**

I am disappointed that previous Leaders have considered 'horses for courses' as being an appropriate thing to use. What I would like to ask is that it seems to me that the Council is in a hole at the moment and if you are in a hole there are two things that you can do. You are doing the wrong thing you keep digging. Overview and Scrutiny have done you favour as they have provided you with a ladder to get out of this hole by saying that there are other options.

I would like to ask that in the light of this coming document, the proposed 'Borough Plan 2025' a gripping read and I have only reached page 7 so far and the vision is wrong I can tell you that. What I want to know is page 7 refers to the key areas of focus for Wokingham Borough. What I want to understand from you that includes support at vulnerable times. Do you feel that a school crossing patroller provides support at vulnerable times?

**Supplementary Answer**

When there isn't a fixed crossing yes.

**43.8 Paul Fishwick asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

**Question**

What site assessments have the Council undertaken at each individual location such as pedestrian counts between 7am and 7pm; corresponding traffic flows between 7am and 7pm during the average day and month as recommended by the Department of Transport's Local Transport Notes because I am unable to find any evidence whatsoever in your reports.

**Answer**

My understanding from what I have seen is that we have done exactly that. As Mr Fishwick had evidence that his question had been submitted within the relevant timescales but had not been received by Democratic Services it was agreed that a written response would be provided.

**44. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

#### **44.1 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

##### **Question**

Cllr. Ferris in Member questions (26 July Executive minutes para 24.3 refers) challenged the quoted random £600.00 per site for upkeep. He also challenged why there was no replacement costs. My question is including school crossings how many pedestrian crossings in total has WBC got and are they all budgeted at £600.00 per annum for maintenance?

##### **Answer**

As of September 2018, there are 61 controlled pedestrian crossings in the Borough that are managed by the Council.

Each crossing has the following budget for the purpose of ongoing maintenance.

- Tele-communications charges: £57
- Electrical Power: £100
- Routine maintenance and cleaning: £419
- Total Cost: £576

##### **Supplementary Question**

I would say that with over 20 years as a Borough Councillor I have seen many call-ins and I must say that when I look at this one with 3½-4 pages with what looks like 28 initial elements raised I have never seen so many for a call-in in my whole period at the Council. Just randomly picking on one; no consultation with the Ward Members.

Should we not be worried by this Executive's views on consultation when 3½ pages worth of comment and observations and rejections from the Overview and Scrutiny referring it back to here has taken place. I think all the public here should listen to this very, very carefully as I see it there is no note of consultation taken by this Borough Council.

##### **Supplementary Answer**

If you actually read the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny they don't actually challenge or say that we should not replace school crossing patrollers with fixed crossings. There are three items that I will talk about later. We have consulted in 2017 on phase one and we have consulted in 2018 on phase two.

As I have repeatedly said the key piece here is to put in safe crossings at these school sites. I have actually asked for improvements to the crossings that were originally proposed at a number of sites which is why they haven't currently been built and I will continue to look at and take cognisance of the need for safe crossings at all off these school sites. So I dispute your statements Gary.

#### **44.2 Lindsay Ferris asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

##### **Question**

At the call-in meeting on Sept 3rd, Cllr Anthony Pollock clearly indicated that he had given authority for the works on the Pedestrian Crossings to continue after the call-in was submitted on 31st July. At the meeting it was established that Cllr Pollock as a single Executive Member did not have that authority and no IEMD was issued. Later in the

meeting Josie Wragg confirmed that she gave the authority. I have since discovered that this authority was given retrospectively on 17th August, on her return from holiday. I therefore wish to know who authorised the works to continue in the absence of Josie Wragg to cover the period 31 July through to 16 August as the call-in submission put the decision taken at the 26th July Executive on hold until the issue was resolved?

### **Answer**

The Director of Customer and Localities has the delegated responsibility to authorise works through the Council's capital programme. In the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director has this delegated authority passed to her.

As the current Director was on annual leave when the call-in submission was received by the Council, the Assistant Director authorised the continuation of the works on the pedestrian crossings having discussed this with the Executive Member and I suspect that was what I was referring to when I was asked by the relevant Officer to agree with their view that we should carry on with the work.

### **Supplementary Question**

Sorry but I am going to have to query that. The answer I had from Josie Wragg was that she retrospectively authorised the decision not that her Assistant Director had authorised it in her absence. She specifically said retrospectively so there is a mistake or an error here because the Director would not say retrospectively. Retrospectively means to me either nobody made a decision or somebody made a decision who did not have the authority to do it so why would she use those words? So I question that answer.

### **Supplementary Answer**

I have spoken to Josie myself and I have raised this issue with her. I have asked her if she is comfortable with the answer I have given you and she has told me that she is and therefore as far as she is concerned what she has said to me is that the process has been properly followed. I cannot answer for your conversations with her I can only answer from my conversations with her.

## **44.3 Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

### **Question**

When precisely and by whom was the decision made to make the School Crossing Patrollers redundant, the only place I can find is a note about finding an alternative source of funding in the 2015 Medium term financial plan?

### **Answer**

The formal notification was made on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 after which statutory staff consultation took place.

### **Supplementary Question**

I was told that the original decision was actually made in a Tory party meeting, rather than by an Executive Member that this was going to happen, and this was the original decision as well.

### **Supplementary Answer**

I am simply saying to you and I will repeat what I said. The formal letters of notifying the staff of redundancy were made on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June; any other discussions are not valid.



#### **44.4 Imogen Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

##### **Question**

As part of the call-in meeting we received all of the comments that were sent in as a response to the WBC consultation. The people who responded to this consultation thought that they were being consulted on whether the Lollipop Ladies should be replaced with automated crossings or not. Our Highways Engineer made it clear that the only thing that they were looking for on the responses were legitimate safety considerations regarding the physical installation of the crossings.

In the subsequent report provided to the Executive, this consultation shows the concerns about bad parking, bad driving, children's safety etc were disregarded. Very clearly, the rare visit from a CPE Officer is not enough to replace the daily presence of a SCP. Two of the schools who had their SCP removed last year have now had to install special holding pens at their gates because of the safety concerns for their children.

We certainly do not feel that the public is being listened to. Please can you advise what will be done to satisfy all of the concerns in the consultation, before the School Crossing Patrollers are actually removed?

##### **Answer**

In line with the Council's Consultation Protocol, consultation was undertaken about the removal of the school crossing patroller service. The responses were reported to and fully considered by the Council's Executive. Prior to this in consultation with Officers I visited and reviewed each of the crossing sites in detail which resulted in two crossings being changed from zebra to puffin and one site provided with a zebra crossing where previously no facility was proposed. In line with the protocol other relevant information was also considered by the Council's Executive including highway safety issues, the financial implications and the wider benefits of the proposed new crossing facilities for all residents. The Executive considered that the safety benefits of the new crossings, to serve all residents throughout the day and year, outweighed the concerns raised by the respondents; many of which related to poor parking and driving which are not factors that the school crossing patrol service is designed to address.

In line with the adopted Consultation Protocol the Council is committed to listening to its residents but in line with this document it also acknowledges that *"a consultation should not be the sole means by which information should be gathered when making a decision. .... this information is considered alongside other relevant evidence or information about an issue ..."*

##### **Supplementary Question**

According to our WBC consultation approach we are legally supposed to consult at the formative stages of a change of service. It is actually a legal requirement which provides sufficient reason to allow us to give intelligent consideration in the response. I would like to know when we are actually going to get a consultation on the removal of the lollipop lady service because this seems to be a consultation just about whether we should install a crossing or not?

### **Supplementary Answer**

No this was a consultation in connection with the removal of the service and the replacement with safe crossings.

#### **44.5 Helen Power asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

##### **Question**

At the call-in on the 3rd of September we heard that there had been only one Equality Impact Assessment for all of the crossings. There appears to have been no consultation with disability groups or the schools about the needs of their children. Input from parents of children with additional needs has not been considered even when they responded to the consultation. Hopefully you are aware that there are different types of disabilities that could be affected by this, including hearing, sight, mobility, learning disabilities, cognitive processing disabilities especially when dealing with children who will have not learned to compensate for these issues yet. As no location is the same, why have these assessments not been done on a location, by location, basis?

##### **Answer**

Under equalities legislation the Council has a duty to integrate considerations of equality impact and supplied this in the decision to remove the discretionary school crossing patroller service. A single Equalities Impact Assessment to inform this decision to remove the school crossing patroller service was appropriate in line with this duty.

The design standards of each crossing incorporates the needs of all users, including all of those groups protected under the equalities legislation: race; age; gender; disability; ethnicity; sexual orientation; religion and belief; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity. This is further tested through the safety audit process. Each crossing has been assessed on the basis of their individual circumstances to ensure that they are safe and fit for purpose for all residents who may use the crossing.

##### **Supplementary Question**

In which case why were the Equalities Impact Assessments not done earlier on in the process than April 2018?

##### **Supplementary Answer**

The individual Equalities Impact Assessments were done during the design process and that would have been done earlier than April 2018 or they were commenced earlier than 2018 so they are a big part of the design process and that would have been included in the design process.

#### **45. CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL SERVICE - CONSULTATION REPORT 2018**

The Executive considered recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee who met on 3 September 2018 to consider the 'call-in' of the Executive decision relating to the item entitled School Crossing Patrol Service – Consultation Report 2018 which was approved at the Executive meeting held on 26 July 2018 with the following recommendations:

**“RESOLVED that:**

- 1) *WBC continue with its proposal to provide safe, permanent crossings at the seven locations that currently have a school crossing patroller, and, following*

*their installation, remove the school crossing patrol service once the permanent crossings are complete as set out in Option 2, Appendix 1 of the report;*

- 2) *all affected schools be reminded that they have access to the Council's road safety and My Journey teams who can facilitate further road safety training for pupils if requested."*

The Leader of Council thanked all the questioners, representatives from schools and the school crossing patrollers who had taken the time and effort to be part of the process and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for their consideration of the decision. Councillor Haitham Taylor also thanked Councillor Pollock for the time he had spent on the matter, including visiting the different sites.

The Leader of Council invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, Parry Batth, to present the findings and recommendations of the Committee. The reasons for the 'call-in', as set out in the Agenda, were considered at the Management Committee meeting held on 3 September 2018. A number of witnesses attended the meeting and gave evidence following which the Management Committee considered its findings and agreed the following resolution:

***"RESOLVED That:***

- 1) *the Executive be requested to review their 26 July 2018 decision on the School Crossing Patrol Service in light of the evidence presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee;*
- 2) *the request to the Executive for a review is based on the following reasons:*
  - a) *the original 2015 decision to remove the School Crossing Patrol Service was taken prior to the consultation, and, with the substantive decision having been taken, subsequent consultation exercises were not seen as meaningful;*
  - b) *the original 2015 decision was taken without an underpinning business case and the 26 July 2018 Executive report did not contain detailed information showing the current costs of the service and the full financial implications relating to the proposed implementation, maintenance and future replacement of the new permanent crossing facilities;*
  - c) *the original 2015 decision was taken without an underpinning Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and the subsequent April 2018 EIA did not contain detailed information about consultation with specific groups and did not reflect the individual circumstances relating to each of the proposed crossing sites."*

In presenting the recommendations, Councillor Batth clarified that the purpose of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was not to challenge the decision made by the Executive but was to scrutinise the procedures and processes used by the Executive to make the decision.

Councillor Batth highlighted that the Committee had felt that the Executive should review the following areas in relation to the decision it made and bear these in mind for future decisions: consultation; the business case and the Equality Impact Assessment all of which were related to the actions taken in 2015. It was noted that consultation had taken place in 2018 and it was felt that more information would have been helpful in the form of a business case. The Leader of Council thanked Councillor Batth for presenting the recommendations of the Management Committee.

The Executive Member for Highways and Transport reminded the Executive of the process that had been followed in reaching this decision. In 2015, due to the reduction in Government funding, the Council had decided to look at alternative sources of funding to pay for the school crossing patroller service but unfortunately this did not materialise. Therefore in 2017 a decision was made, following consultation and an impact assessment, to remove a number of school crossing patrollers where fixed crossings existed. In 2018 consideration was given to removing the school crossing patrol service and replacing the service with fixed crossings. This was consulted upon including the design aspects relating to the equality impact assessments. Councillor Pollock explained that the key dates were actually 2017 and 2018 when consultation took place and the Council's procedures were followed.

In response to a number of questions from Executive Members Councillor Pollock confirmed that there had actually been a reduction in the number of accidents on crossings where school crossing patrollers had been removed but pointed out that the number of accidents had been low in the first place. In addition the crossings would be available 24/7 so would be available for children entering or leaving schools at other times of the day e.g. breakfast and after school clubs and other people accessing schools at all times of the day.

With regard to the fact that some people said that school crossing patrollers take responsibility for bad parking and bad driving Councillor Pollock confirmed that school crossing patrollers had authority from the Council, as the highways authority, to step out into the road and stop cars to allow children to cross the road on their way to school. They did not, however, have any statutory duty or responsibility to undertake any other roles.

Councillor Haitham Taylor asked whether school crossing patrollers would be reintroduced if it was subsequently found that it was proved that school crossing patrollers were required for a safer operation of fixed crossings? Councillor Pollock stated that serious consideration would be given to the reintroduction if it was found necessary however it was expected that if there were to be an issue this would have been highlighted in the design process.

The Executive Member for Highways and Transport responded to the recommendations of the Management Committee and in relation to the first recommendation reiterated the information he had provided earlier in the meeting in relation to the process that had been followed. Councillor Pollock reminded the meeting that following the consultation in 2018 a number of safety enhancements were made to some of the sites eg changing a pelican to a puffing crossing. In addition, with regard to the Murray Road site, a lot of work had been done to ensure that the issues and matters raised were addressed and he confirmed that he would continue to visit the site and talk to the Headteachers about the issues in that area. With regard to the issues and concerns raised by Overview and Scrutiny in relation to the consultation process that had been followed, Councillor Pollock stated he would be mindful of these when undertaking any future consultation.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris disputed Councillor Pollock's comments about the 2015 decision as on many occasions at the call-in meeting it was stated that the decision to cease the school crossing patrol service was made in 2015 and this was not challenged by anyone at that meeting and this was clearly stated in the minutes. Councillor Bath, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, stated that recommendation 2b) was more about the decision being taken without an underpinning business case and the report not containing sufficient information on the current costs of the service.

Councillor Pollock reiterated that the Executive report considered on 26 July 2018 had contained information around the business case and the decision to cease the service was actually made at that meeting and not before. The proposal may have been considered and consulted upon and other options may have been considered but the decision was not taken until 26 July.

In relation to the recommendation concerning the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Councillor Pollock felt that the Council had abided by the requirements of the Equality Impact Assessment Legislation as an EqIA was completed on the proposal to remove the service and each of the designs incorporated all the features relating to the EqIA of each individual site.

Councillor Ferris challenged the Executive Member for Highways and Transport's assertion that pedestrian crossings were safer as he didn't feel that the statistical information that was available accorded with DfT standards. Councillor Pollock confirmed that there were 61 crossings in the Borough and the evidence from those showed that these types of crossings were safe.

In conclusion the Leader of the Council stated that she welcomed the Overview and Scrutiny Management's recommendations on consultation which showed that in future there was a need to ensure that consultations were more meaningful for all residents. The recommendation about business cases highlighted that these should be presented in a way that was clear and understandable to all residents and accessible EqIA statements should also be included.

To summarise, Councillor Pollock stated that he taken on board the concerns raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee but felt that the Executive had complied with the criticisms raised and would be happy to take away the comments made about consultation and EqIAs because they could always be improved. He therefore asked the Executive to confirm their original decision.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) having considered and taken into account the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee the Executive confirmed its decision of 26 July 2018. That:
  - a) WBC continue with its proposal to provide safe, permanent crossings at the seven locations that currently have a school crossing patroller, and, following their installation, remove the school crossing patrol service once the permanent crossings are complete as set out in Option 2, Appendix 1 of the report;

- b) all affected schools be reminded that they have access to the Council's road safety and My Journey teams who can facilitate further road safety training for pupils if requested.
- 2) the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee be noted.