

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
	COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE	
date	20 October 2006	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

MAKING ALL CHILDREN SAFE (MACS) DAYS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the recent outcomes of the MACS days initiative in Retford.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 MACS (Making All Children Safe) days is an experiential safety event for children in Year 6 that has been delivered at Retford Fire Station since 1999. The event runs over five days and is a multi-agency partnership with the following partners :

- § Nottinghamshire Police ;
- § Nottinghamshire County Council – Road Safety Team and Trading Standards ;
- § British Transport Police ;
- § Central Networks Electricity Suppliers ;
- § Bassetlaw District Council ;
- § St John's First Aid ;
- § Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service.

2.2 MACS was developed following a conversation with a local Head Teacher during a schools liaison visit by White Watch at Retford fire station. During the visit the topic of Safety Zone was raised and the Head Teacher explained why her school did not attend, mainly due to the logistics of transporting thirty pupils on a round trip journey of close to a hundred miles within the school day. The Watch Manager then spoke to every primary school he was responsible for and ascertained that they were not attending Safety Zone for similar reasons.

2.3 MACS days were then developed in conjunction with local schools to fill this gap in service and work in conjunction with Safety Zone. Sponsorship came from the local McDonalds at Markham Moor and the first event ran over three days with over three hundred children attending.

3. REPORT

3.1 Over the five days in 2006 more than six hundred children attend the event with two sessions being delivered each day, morning and afternoon. The event has been organised by Bassetlaw District colleagues who ensure the smooth running of each session as well as the transportation of the children to and from the schools.

3.2 This year the catchment area has been extended to four schools in the Worksop area with over a hundred and ten children attending. This was only possible due to funding through Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership – Safer Stronger

Communities fund. The event is also dependent on the support it receives from private and voluntary sector partners.

- 3.3 The evaluation of MACS days is extremely positive with teachers from every school attending completing an evaluation questionnaire. The event consistently receives a 90% satisfaction rating which is an excellent outcome given that the responders are all professional educationalists. The overall cost of the event is £5 per child attending.
- 3.4 Colleagues in Bassetlaw are already in negotiation with a possible partner regarding a venue close to Worksop town centre to deliver an additional three days of MACS next year. The plan would be to continue with the five days at Retford and ensure that all the capacity is utilised, up to eight hundred children, and deliver the additional three days in the final week of the school calendar. This approach does present a risk that will have to be managed, in that the final week of the school calendar is extremely busy, with school plays, sports days and similar events. Feedback when developing MACS days in 1999 was that it would be very difficult to accommodate another event that took the children out of school for half a day during the final week of the school year. This is why MACS always runs in the penultimate week of the school year.
- 3.5 Members will recall, as outlined in an earlier part of this report, that MACS days were initially developed to fill an identified gap in delivery of safety information and to add value to the Safety Zone event that is run at Stoke Bardolph near Burton Joyce. Any extension of MACS should follow this rationale of adding value and being complementary to Safety Zone. To achieve this it would be important to survey take up of the Safety Zone event by schools in any district area proposing to introduce a MACS style event.
- 3.6 From extensive discussions with teaching professionals it is clear that the current National Curriculum and the focus on the SATS testing of Year 6 pupils leaves very few spaces where a number of schools could organise collectively to attend a safety event over one week, other than the penultimate week of the school year. It is clear from discussions with partner agencies that an issue of capacity to deliver would arise from a number of MACS style events organised to take place simultaneously. Many agencies have small safety teams that are only capable of facilitating one event at any one time. Any extension of MACS would need to be carefully co-ordinated across the whole organisation to avoid any conflict.
- 3.8 In October 2006 Risk Watch will be rolled out to schools in the Bassetlaw area. This will provide an opportunity to link the activities undertaken in schools with the experiential learning opportunity of MACS. Colleagues in Bassetlaw will be working with partners to ensure that all the areas covered in the Risk Watch programme are included in the relevant partners presentation/activities during MACS.
- 3.9 Within the Safety Services directorate a number of scoping projects are being undertaken to identify improvements to the delivery of experiential learning opportunities, that will complement the Risk Watch programme and initiatives such as the Impact Roadshow programme and Caring for the Carers programme. This will include the possible development of static risk reduction learning centres or the use of mobile facilities similar to the Street Scene initiative.
- 3.10 The Service will continue to focus on embedding Risk Watch and the Impact Roadshow into all schools in the County. There is an opportunity in the coming months to consider options for further Community Safety engagement with young people including experiential learning.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

No additional financial implications have been identified which cannot be accommodated within current budgets.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A full equality impact assessment has not been undertaken with regard to this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

8.2 That Officers continue to scope the possibility of extending the Service's capacity to offer experiential learning opportunities to all members of our community. Officers will report to Community Safety Committee its findings and further recommendations in early 2007.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

None.

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