

# **Report to Communities Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 6 September 2016**

**Subject:** Crucial Crew Initiative



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**Committee Secretary:** M Jenkins (01992 564607)

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Committee notes the success of the Crucial Crew 2016 initiative, which is delivered to all children aged 10 years, at school within the Epping Forest district.**

## **Report:**

1. Crucial Crew is an annual initiative which is facilitated and delivered by the Council's Community, Health & Wellbeing Team in collaboration with the Community Safety Team. It is specifically designed to educate primary school pupils aged 10 (Year 6), in a range of personal safety, health and wellbeing topics, as research has identified that the imminent transition of these pupils into secondary school is a particularly challenging period in their lives.

2. Crucial Crew has been provided in the Epping Forest district for over 11 years and is historically delivered over the same two week period in June, in line with agreed primary school timetables. In 2016 Crucial Crew ran from Monday 6th June to Friday 17th June inclusive. Every Year 6 primary school pupil in the Epping Forest district attends the half-day event and this year 1,358 Epping Forest pupils participated. Additionally, 17 schools from the Brentwood area paid to attend Crucial Crew, bringing a further 429 children into the project, to reach a total of 1,787.

3. Pupils participate in 10 interactive scenarios delivered by a range of agencies, each of which lasts 10 minutes. Scenarios are reviewed and modified on an annual basis to ensure the themes covered are relevant and appropriate and take into consideration emerging trends or issues. In 2016 the scenarios delivered were:

- Online safety, cyber bullying and child sexual exploitation (CSE) – Essex Police
- Alcohol and drug awareness – AlcoHelp
- Bullying and peer pressure – Red Balloon Family
- Healthy eating and physical activity – ACE (NHS)
- Smoking awareness – Provide (NHS)
- Anti-social behaviour and environmental responsibility – EFDC
- Road safety awareness – Essex County Council
- Fire safety – Essex County Fire & Rescue Service
- Safety around construction sites – Mears
- Safety around large vehicles - Sainsburys

4. Having participated in the 10 scenarios, pupils come together for a plenary session and answer a series of key questions which are directly linked to the topics that have been covered. Hand-held monitors are distributed to pupils enabling the percentage of correct answers to be displayed on a screen in real-time. The quiz serves to add to the fun, yet

educational feel of the day and provides valuable monitoring information in respect of the assimilation of the educational messages delivered. Overall, the interactive quiz questions were answered correctly by 96% of participating children.

5. Feedback is sought directly from participating schools in the form of a post-event questionnaire. This information is assessed annually and, where possible, improvements or appropriate changes are implemented as a result of the comments received. Overall, feedback from schools is resoundingly positive and frequently specifically references the relevance and importance of the key messages delivered. With schools reporting that their curriculum time is increasingly tightly programmed, initiatives such as Crucial Crew are seen as a vital mechanism by which pupils are educated in wider health and wellbeing and personal safety issues.

6. Every pupil who attends the event is provided with a Crucial Crew work book in order that the educational messages delivered may be re-visited and explored in more detail post event. Schools are provided with Teachers Information Packs which detail the lesson plans associated with each scenario and provide links to additional resources available in order that follow up classroom work may be facilitated.

7. For the first time, in 2016 Crucial Crew was staged at Debden House in Loughton. For 9 years prior to this the project had been delivered from the Gilwell Park Scouting Headquarters in Epping Forest. The decision to relocate to Debden House in 2016 was taken following notification that there would be an increase in hire costs for Gilwell Park by £2K. The cost and availability of alternative venues is always viewed annually, along with the need to accommodate the ever changing layout requirements for the plethora of different scenarios being delivered including a large assembly area. Debden House proved to be an excellent alternative venue which offered flexible room space and an inspiring setting from which to deliver educational scenarios in an increasingly innovative way.

**Reason for decision:**

This report serves as an information item for the Communities Select Committee.

**Options considered and rejected:**

N/A

**Consultation undertaken:**

Consultation is undertaken with participants, schools and all partners involved in Crucial Crew

**Resource implications:**

With one exception, the individual agencies who deliver scenarios as part of Crucial Crew give their time freely for the full fortnight. The costs of the project are, therefore, as follows:

<u>Expenditure</u>		<u>Income</u>	
Venue hire	£ 8,000	School recharges	£11,262
Transport	£15,000	EFDC	£11,638
Pupil Work Books	£ 3,400	EF Safer Communities Partnership	£ 3,000
Scenario Providers	£ 500	High Sheriff's Award	£ 1,000
	£26,900		£26,900

Budget provision: As above

**Personnel:**

Staff from the Council's Community, Health & Wellbeing Team plan and manage the daily delivery of Crucial Crew, with support from the Council's apprentices and the partner agencies listed.

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Crucial Crew contributes to the safeguarding agenda, as it relates specifically to the safety and wellbeing of all children that live and go to school in the district.

Relevant statutory powers:

Background papers: N/A

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:

As stated above, Crucial Crew plays a key role in delivering safety messages to children in their last year at Primary School and also raises awareness of safe conduct and behaviour.

Key Decision reference: (if required)

N/A