

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2002 AT 10.30 AM**

Agenda Item No.

**4**

**OPERATION COACHMAN 2002**

Report of the Director of Children Schools & Families

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Executive Member: Robert Gordon

**1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the details of Operation Coachman 2002.

Cliff Broadhurst asked a question at the last Scrutiny Committee meeting (19 June 2002) about Operation Coachman. After receiving an answer from the Executive Member, Mr Broadhurst asked for a more detailed report to be brought to this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

**2. Summary of Report**

The report provides details of the Operation Coachman exercise, undertaken nationally every year, and includes information about the inspection within Hertfordshire.

**3. Conclusion**

Operation Coachman yielded good results in Hertfordshire. The Committee will wish to consider whether further scrutiny of this issue is required.

#### **4. Background**

Operation Coachman is a national exercise, undertaken annually by the Vehicle Inspectorate and the Police. This year it took place between 15 April and 26 April 2002. The operation is designed to check the compliance of Home to School Transport vehicles with the various regulations to help ensure road safety and environmental protection.

Nationally, 1,582 buses, coaches, minibuses and private hire vehicles were checked by Vehicle Examiners. Of these, 80 (5%) received immediate prohibition notices and were not allowed to proceed with their journey until the defects had been rectified. There were also 150 (9.5%) delayed prohibition notices issued. This means that defects have to be rectified within 10 days.

The Vehicle Inspectorate does not normally make individual details of checks public. However, some analysis is provided by area. The relevant area for Hertfordshire is Hertfordshire and Essex. 60 vehicles were checked in this area and 2 (3%) were given immediate prohibitions and 3 (5%) were given delayed prohibition.

Following detailed enquiries, the following figures have now been made available for Hertfordshire.

In all, 23 vehicles were checked at two locations, namely Chorleywood School (10 vehicles) and St Clement Danes School (13 vehicles). In general these checks went well with no vehicles receiving either immediate or delayed prohibition notices.

This good set of results is explained by a considerable input by the PTU's Enforcement Officers who make regular visits to each school (at least once per term to monitor overall quality and general compliance). This is supplemented with an agreed rolling programme of visits to all schools jointly with PTU Enforcement Officers and Vehicle Inspectors. Also, if problems are brought to the attention of the PTU, there are arrangements for special inspections to be carried out with The Vehicle Inspectorate.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications within this report.

#### **6. Conclusion**

Our overall aim is to continue to ensure that children are transported safely to and from their school. The Passenger Transport Unit has good monitoring processes in place and Operation Coachman complements these.

An Officer from the Passenger Transport Unit will be attending the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer any questions. The Committee will wish to consider whether further scrutiny of this issue is required.

Background information referred to by the author:

Minutes of the Children, Schools and Families Committee Meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2002.