

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 18 SEPTEMBER 2001

“A SAFER PLACE”: REVISITED – A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN PROPERTY RISK MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Report by the Director of Educational & Social Services

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The report asks members of the Education Committee to note the contents of the Accounts Commission Report, “A safer place”: revisited, published in June 2001.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 1997, the Accounts Commission published “A safer place: property risk management in schools” reporting the findings of a national value for money study of property risks in schools. This report follows up that study and reviews Councils’ progress in implementing the 1997 report’s recommendations.
- 2.2 The 1997 report:
- Identified that crime is the major risk to school property, and the annual cost in schools was £12,000,000,
 - Encouraged councils to adopt a corporate commitment to risk management, and
 - Set out a framework for action, making specific recommendations on how losses could be reduced by protecting the most vulnerable properties.
- 2.3 Subsequently the Audit Commission issued information on risk and property risk management

3 PROGRESS IN GENERAL

- 3.1 The cost of school property crime has reduced from 1994 to 2000, from £12m to £8m, especially in respect of fire related incidents in the Strathclyde and Lothian & Borders Fire Brigade areas.
- 3.2 East Ayrshire Council is ranked 12th in Scotland in considering the total cost of vandalism [where rank 1 is the highest cost], with an annual spend in 1999/2000 of approximately £113,000 or £6 per pupil.
- 3.3 Most headteachers perceive the problem of property crime as staying the same [50%], or getting better [33%] in the period.

3.4 All Councils have taken steps to improve security and reduce property crime although there is no clear link between the level of vandalism experienced and the progress made. East Ayrshire Council is noted as having medium levels of vandalism and having made good progress on some recommendations but less progress on others in line with most other authorities].

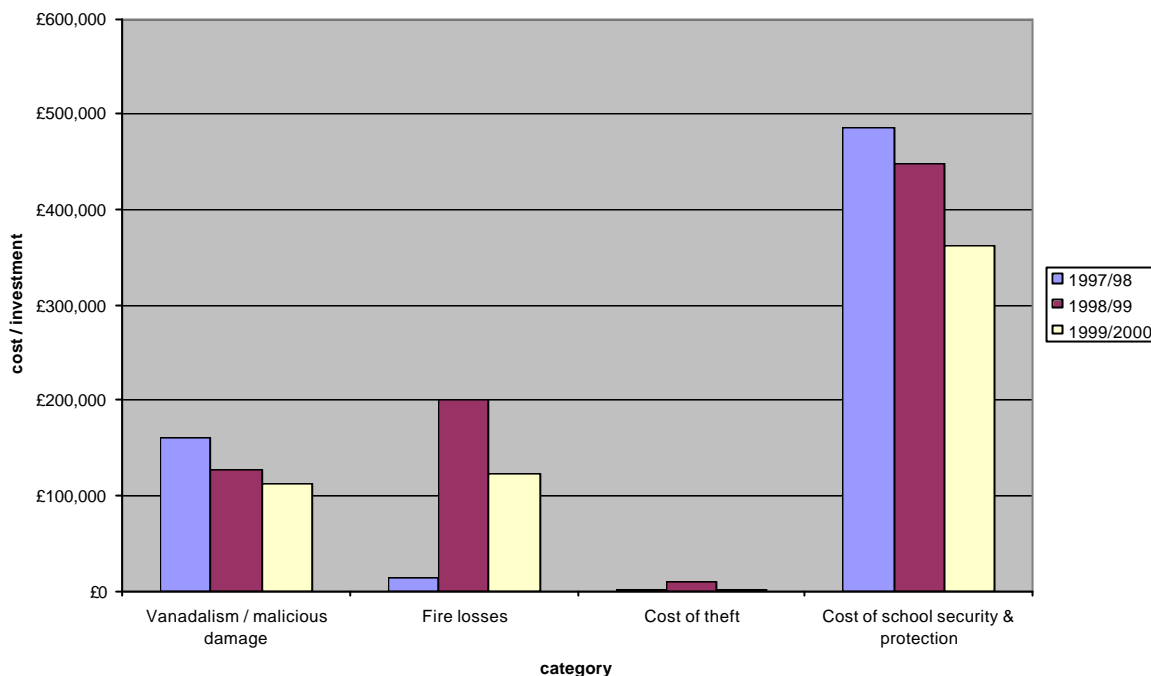
4 ASSESSMENT & SCORING

4.1 The table below is a summary of the Council response to the review, based initially on self-assessment and subsequent examination by the Accounts Commission. Assessments are based on a marking system from one to four, where 1 equals no progress and 4 equals compliance.

	Recommendation	Maximum score	Actual Score
<i>Recommendation 1 relates to the council's corporate approach to risk management in general, and to property risk management in particular. All other recommendations relate only to risks to school property.</i>			
1	Adopt an organisational commitment to risk management	16	13
2	Improve risk-management education, training & awareness	12	9
3	Identify specific risk areas	12	9
4	Develop effective information systems	12	7
5	Provide corporate support for local solutions	12	10
6	Improve controls over access to schools	8	7
7	Take steps to counter vandalism in schools	12	8
8	Design crime out of new and refurbished schools	12	9
9	Minimise the incidence of false / faulty alarm calls	8	5
10	Resource the programme to tackle school property-related crime	8	5
		112	82

4.2 The graph below notes the insurance losses from 1997 to 2000 on the four main categories of property crime and prevention, in East Ayrshire. Further information on the details of this report is available from the Head of Resource Support.

Insurance costs & investment



5 FINANCIAL / LEGAL /POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Members of the Education Committee are requested to note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Services
28 August 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

“A safer place”:revisited, A review of the progress in property risk Management in schools, Accounts Commission, June 2001

Members requiring further information please contact Allan Y McDougall, Head of Resource Support Tel: 01563 576090.

AGENDA

Implementation Officer : Allan Y McDougall