

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 9th May, 2014 at 10.30 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

A Barnes	J Shedwick
S Holgate	C Wakeford
Y Motala	D Westley
Mrs L Oades	G Wilkins
D O'Toole	

County Councillors Steven Holgate and Yousuf Motala replaced County Councillors Richard Newman-Thompson and Clare Pritchard respectively.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 April 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. Road Safety (Part 2)

The Chair welcomed Mike Kirby, Director of Transport and Environment, and Paul Binks, Road and Transport Safety Manager, to the meeting.

A report was presented on the details of road safety statistics for Lancashire. The report provided the details of the numbers of people who had been killed or seriously injured on our roads and also broke that information down by age group and by type of road user involved. The report also provided details of the progress made relating to the 20mph programme and assessment of the

emerging evidence base, including validation of the research methodology through the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The Committee was informed that in October 2013 the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport announced that an additional £1 million of funding for road safety would be provided, but that this would be spent following a thorough review of the evidence base including independent academic validation of our statistical approach. This was in order to ensure that the funding was allocated to projects that would have the best prospect of further reducing casualty statistics.

The report also set out how the Road Safety Team was addressing the challenging casualty reduction targets to be achieved by 2020. The Committee was informed that the aim was to achieve a casualty reduction target for people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in the County of at least 45%.

In developing the Road Safety Strategy, the team set a stretch target to reduce KSI casualties involving children (0-15) and young people (16-25), aiming for at least a 65% reduction. The team was working with schools and young people on this, and the 20 mph scheme had also aided this. The team was ensuring that it gained as much data as possible from accidents, in order to learn from what happened and also to ensure that it targeted its resources and activity in the most effective manner.

The number of KSI casualties suffered by the 16 – 25 year old age group in Lancashire were substantially reduced from the 2005 – 09 baseline average. Engagement with this age group was continuing in areas and with road user groups which exhibited the highest rates of such casualties.

Compared to the 2005 – 09 baseline yearly average KSI casualties suffered by people aged 65 years and over followed a downward trend up to 2012. However, in 2013 casualties involving older people increased significantly.

Pedestrian KSI casualties continued on a downward trend and were substantially below the 2005 – 09 baseline yearly average. Within this road user group Children and Young People KSI casualties showed strong downward trends, potentially highlighting the on-going benefits of targeted education activity, whilst other age groups remained broadly steady.

The Committee were informed that in 2013 there was a noticeable growth in KSIs that involved pedal cyclists, with the number increasing from 68 to 100 in the calendar year. It was apparent that casualties suffered by the 26 – 64 year old age group showed a substantial increase. This was reflected to a lesser extent by the 16 – 25 year old group, whilst casualties in the 0 -15 and over 65 age groups had remained fairly constant. It could be expected that greater numbers of people cycling more miles per year would have an impact on accident statistics but as active travel continued to be advocated as a means of helping to reduce congestion, improve air quality and improve individuals' long term health benefits, then targeting activity to ensure that cycling becomes a safer option had to be an on-going priority.

The Road Safety Team was targeting a lot of activity in relation to powered two wheelers and was working closely with the police on this. KSI Casualties in the powered two wheeler group exhibited a broadly downwards trend and during 2013 were 16% below the 2005-09 baseline yearly average. In 2013, 34% of powered two wheeler KSI casualties were suffered by 16-25 year olds and 24% by 46-55 year olds.

After announcing a £1 million investment to improve road safety across Lancashire, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport asked for research to establish a robust evidence base on the most effective way to further cut deaths and serious injuries. He also requested that the research methodology should be scrutinised by a local university to establish that robust interventions were developed based upon the evidence. Dr Richard Weston, Senior Research Fellow at UCLan, had been engaged to validate the approaches and support additional research. The work involved:

- Assessing the impact of the 20mph Residential Programme on casualty rates; and
- Developing a methodology to support decision making relating to new target road safety interventions.

In order to accurately determine the impact of 20mph speed limits three years prior to implementation would be compared with the three years post implementation. Their effectiveness and any arising issues would then be assessed on an on-going basis. The impact of 20mph speed limits on accident rates was being monitored by reports obtained from the Police and GIS Mapping Software. Overall there had been a substantial reduction in the number of accidents, a slight reduction in vehicle speed and almost a third of residents felt the revised speed limit had made their neighbourhood a safer place to travel. The Road Safety Team would continue engagement activities, work with police to identify opportunities for targeted enforcement and also identify opportunities for strategic engineering measures and enhanced signing that can be used to reinforce the integrity of the overall schemes.

The development of a robust methodology to determine where to target road safety interventions was important in order that the investment was targeted to areas with the greatest need and where it would have the greatest effect. This would guide the use of existing resources and the additional £1m of capital funding made available in October 2013.

Councillors were invited to ask questions and raise any comments in relation to the report, a summary of which is provided below:

- Members enquired if anyone who was taken to hospital was classified as seriously injured. They were informed that it depended on how the police officer at the scene of the accident considered and recorded it.

- The Committee noted that at the beginning of the implementation of the Road Safety Strategy there was a greater impact in the reduction of people killed or seriously injured on the roads compared to now. It was felt that this partly reflected the way the baseline figure was calculated as an average of a number of years in which performance had already been improving, as well as the fact that those actions and interventions which had the greatest impact had been delivered at the earliest opportunity.
- Members felt it was vital to be constantly working with young people and getting the message on road safety across through schools, youth centres and colleges.
- Some concerns were expressed about what was felt to be a sometimes piecemeal approach to cycling provision. It was felt that better use could be made of the planning system to develop safe provision cycle paths there would be less accidents. Cycling was an issue that the Road Safety Team were taking seriously and it was confirmed that cycling issues were included in the Highways and Transport Master Plans for the County. The team were also working on a high level cycling strategy to work out what needed to be delivered in terms of cycling interventions.
- Members were informed that there had been an increase in the number of KSIs in older road users over the last few years. The Road Safety Team was now targeting increased activity in the 65+ age group and keep older drivers driving safer for longer. There was also going to be an assessment for older drivers and their families and support and guidance was provided for them to help the difficult decision to give up driving and to ensure that stopping driving does not mean stopping being mobile.
- It was noted that more older road users were using public transport and after analysis, the proportion of accidents on public transport involved older people mainly on buses and the Road Safety team was consulting with public transport operators to try and reinforce better practice.
- A number of concerns were raised in relation to how the County Council ensured it was making the best use of local knowledge and Councillor knowledge alongside the statistical information. It was felt that, especially in relation to rural roads, local knowledge was not sufficiently taken into account. It was felt that this could be a particular problem when it came to planning applications heard by districts, and it was important that the responses of the County council in these matters was properly formulated, including taking account of the local councillor's knowledge and understanding. It was agreed that consideration of this should form part of the work of the Planning Task Group.
- The subject of mobility scooters was raised by committee members as there had been a number of accidents with them being driven on roads due to cars being parked on pavements and the footpaths being too

narrow. The Committee wondered whether mobility scooters featured in the Road Safety Teams strategy. The Team informed the Committee that mobility scooters did not specifically feature in the statistics, but that the Team were looking to develop a Safer Travel Guide for users which would give advice and guidance on the law. Members felt there should be regulations from the Government on mobility scooters. There was a publication available which was a Highway Code summary for mobility scooters, and members asked for this to be made available to the committee for information.

- The Committee were informed that there was a Road Safety Partnership which involved both unitary councils, the County Council, the police who engaged heavily in the Partnership, the Fire service, the Court Service, and the Highways Agency. There was a lot of multi-agency work going on. Regarding the Road Safety Partnership, Members were informed that a link to the agendas and minutes of the Road Safety Partnership meetings would be made available to them.
- Regarding cycling, Members complimented the Guild Wheel. Over 100,000 cyclists had used the Guild Wheel. It was noted that analysis was underway of the use of the Wheel and accident data. It was recognised that the Guild Wheel was a good example of how strategic interventions can work, providing both a good leisure route as well as linking communities to employment opportunities.
- The Committee noted that accidents involving powered two-wheelers occurred in two main clusters. There was a cluster that related to peak hour travel in good weather, and a second at weekends connected with leisure activity especially when the weather was good. As part of the analysis the Road Safety Team looked at all the factors and it was noted that accidents with the more mature motorcyclists tended to happen in the afternoon. It was felt that this was often related to fatigue after starting their rides in the morning and coming back in the afternoon, and positive engagement work was underway to talk to motorcyclists about the risks.
- The Committee was informed that there were a number of different methods designed to engage with younger drivers. The Fire and Rescue Service supported the team in the 'Wasted Lives' campaign in schools and colleges. There was a video called 'Vicky's Story' which was for Fire and Rescue, Police and schools to deliver. There was also the 'Beats Campaign' where the team invited schools and colleges to do a fifteen minute drama presentation on road safety. The Team were constantly looking at ways of delivering road safety to young people. Parents helped a great deal in the engagement with young people. The police also target and focus on the worst young drivers in the community.
- Members were informed that legislation had always been in place to enforce the 20mph areas and the police had also undertaken targeted

enforcement. It was confirmed that warnings had been issued and the police were watching the worst drivers. There was also a programme called Community Road Watch where the police through a community officer will work with communities and do speed measuring.

Resolved: That the Committee,

1. Note the current performance relating to road safety in Lancashire and the progress made in reducing road accident casualties.
2. Note the position regarding future activity and independent validation process that has been followed.

5. Work Plan and Task Group Update

A report was presented summarising the work to be undertaken by the Committee in the coming months, including an update on task group work.

Resolved: That the report be noted

6. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be on Friday 13 June, at 10.30 at the County Hall, Preston.

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston