Overview and Scrutiny Report to Cabinet

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Review into Buckinghamshire County Council's Casualty Reduction Service

Date: 7 June 2010

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Electoral divisions affected: All

Portfolio areas affected: Communities and Built Environment

Executive Summary

Each year, almost 3,500 people are killed and around 320,000 are injured on Britain's roads. Many of these accidents could have been avoided if road users had taken more care. Reducing the number of casualties on our roads is a national concern, primarily because of the personal and sometimes tragic nature of the events, but there are also significant financial costs to the community as a whole.

Casualty reduction services nationally carry out a statutory responsibility to put measures in place to help reduce the number of casualties on roads. These can range from speed camera enforcement and implementation of local safety schemes, to the use of community based initiatives partly run and supported by the community. As a local authority, our success in this area is measured in part by central government national indicators.

This report contains the findings and recommendations of a brief review by Overview and Scrutiny into the activities that Buckinghamshire County Council's casualty reduction service undertakes to fulfil its statutory obligations. The review was carried out by a task and finish group made up of members from Buckinghamshire County Council. The main purpose of the review was for members to find out:
- What activities the County undertakes to reduce casualties
- How funding is currently used by the service
- How well the Council is working with partners in this area.

The work has been carried out in the context of a wider review into statutory, mandatory and discretionary services at Buckinghamshire County Council. The purpose of the overarching review is to identify options for change in the way services are delivered in order to support the Council’s drive to find efficiencies.

Members are conscious that the Council is already undertaking a number of change programmes to provide the most cost effective service for residents, which means that the recommendations from the review are made at a time of significant and continuing change.

The recommendations from the review are as follows:

**Local Safety Schemes**

1. Reconfigure budgets to increase the focus on local ‘invest to save’ initiatives such as safety schemes which have been shown to reduce casualties in the area. (Paragraph 43)

**Use of Resources**

2. Carry out a cost benefit analysis of funds allocated to the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership, before any further agreement is entered into, so that efficiencies can be made and funding targeted to where it can make most impact. (Paragraph 60)

**Community Involvement**

3. Place a greater focus on innovative speed reduction initiatives that are cost effective and supported by the local community. (Paragraph 68)

**Collaborative Working**

4. Explore further opportunities to work collaboratively with the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership on education and training initiatives, with a view to harmonising activities, avoiding any duplication of effort, and maximising funds in this area. (Paragraph 76)

**Governance Arrangements**

5. Ensure there is elected member representation in the governance of the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership when any further arrangements are entered into. (Paragraph 78)

**Monitoring of Recommendations**

6. Bring a summary of progress against recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee in 9 months time.
Introduction

1. Overview and Scrutiny members completed phase 1 of a review into statutory, mandatory and discretionary services in October 2009. At that time members compiled a resource pool of information about statutory and discretionary services and minimum levels of service provision, resulting from evidence provided by Heads of Service at the County Council.

2. Following on from this phase of the review, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee decided to form two Task and Finish Groups to look at two service areas in more detail: Achievement and Learning and Transport. The more detailed scope for phase 2 is attached at Appendix 1.

3. A workshop based planning meeting took place in November 2009, where members identified which parts of these services they wanted to focus on. This report covers the work of the Task and Finish Group for Transport into one of these areas: the casualty reduction service.

Methodology

4. The review into the casualty reduction service took place between December 2009 – April 2010. Frontline members were appointed to the Task and Finish Group for Transport as follows:

- Peter Cartwright – Chairman
- Avril Davies
- Netta Glover
- Bill Lidgate
- Roger Reed
- David Schofield
- Ruth Vigor-Hedderley

5. The review was carried out using the following methods:

- Desktop research
- Reviewing performance data
- Speed enforcement site visits
- Evidence gathering Task and Finish meetings
- Written information from a variety of sources including Thames Valley Police, Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership (TVSRP), Swindon Borough Council and the Casualty Reduction Service.

Background

6. Under the Road Traffic Act 1988, all local authorities have a statutory duty to carry out studies into the cause of accidents on roads in their area and take appropriate measures to prevent accidents. These must include:

- Distribution of road safety information and advice
- Provision of practical training for road users
- Use of measures for controlling and assisting the movement of traffic on all roads
- Use of appropriate measures for reducing the risk of accidents when constructing new roads (i.e. collision investigation, prevention and safety audit).
Whilst recognising the personal cost of any casualty, there are also financial costs that are spread across the public sector as a whole, e.g. police, ambulance service, NHS, local councils etc. This means that, alongside the statutory duty, there are cost savings involved with reducing the number of casualties on roads.

The Department of Transport (DfT) has carried out an analysis into how these costs can be broken down, using an approach which encompasses all aspects of a casualty including pain, grief and suffering, as well as the lost output and medical costs associated with road accident injuries.

Information contained within the DfT’s Transport Analysis Guidance estimates the average amounts per casualty saved to the community as:

- Fatality: £1.6m
- Serious Injury: £185,220k
- Slight Injury: £14,280k

The Department of Transport estimate that overall, the average cost per casualty saved is £52k, as shown in Table 1 of Appendix 3.

The following table shows the number of casualties on Buckinghamshire’s roads in 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Casualty</th>
<th>Number of people affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously injured</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly injured</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost to the Buckinghamshire community: over £85m per annum

Members note that the number of road casualties above includes those on roads that are under the responsibility of the Highways Agency. Additionally, not all those affected by road traffic collisions in the County will be Buckinghamshire residents, but could be people who are passing through the area.

Research carried out during the course of the review has found that it is not currently possible to clearly identify the costs from road casualties that are directly attributable to local councils. However, the types of activities that local authorities carry out when a road casualty occurs and associated estimated costs have been identified by officers within the casualty reduction team as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs of road casualties to Buckinghamshire County Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeping away debris and setting up traffic management whilst the police or fire service are dealing with the incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making area safe and erecting temporary signing where a vehicle has impacted a road sign</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Department for Transport (DfT) Analysis Guidance, April 2009.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordering and replacing a new road sign</td>
<td>£600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making the area safe where a street lighting column has been damaged</td>
<td>£600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacing a street lighting column</td>
<td>£1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage to structures e.g. making safe a bridge parapet</td>
<td>£2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete repair to bridge parapet</td>
<td>£5,000 depending on extent of damage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Officers advise that in the event of a fatality or near fatality, the road where the collision occurred is likely to be closed for several hours while the police conduct a forensic collision investigation. A collision of serious or slight severity may also necessitate the closing of the road to recover the vehicle, extricate vehicle occupants and clear away debris. A diversionary route may also need to set up and signposted.

15. As the police are only required to attend personal injury collisions, the casualty reduction team is not always made aware of non-personal injury collisions that cause damage to council property.

16. There are also hidden costs that are sometimes associated with road casualties. These include the emergency call out of crews at night, the ordering of specialist equipment and the diversion of crews away from their normal duties when a collision occurs.

**Targets**

17. The casualty reduction service has two national indicators NI: 47 (people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents) and NI: 48 (children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents) which measure casualties on all roads within Buckinghamshire.

18. Currently, central government sets targets for casualty reduction. The ten year targets to 2010 are:

   1. Reduce killed / seriously injured (KSI) by 40%
   2. Reduce child killed / seriously injured by 50%
   3. Reduce slight injuries by 10%.

19. New targets will be set by the Department for Transport for 2011-2026 in the forthcoming new strategy, ‘A Safer Way: Making Britain’s Roads the Safest in the World’ due to be published by the end of 2010. During the review, members noted that increases in government targets for KSIs are the same % for those authorities who have met or exceeded their targets as for those who have not, which puts increasing pressure on authorities, such as Buckinghamshire, who have improved their performance.

20. The targets are contained within the County Council’s Corporate Plan and link to the priorities ‘Provide the highest value for every pound we spend on your behalf’ and ‘Find new, better ways of doing things’. They are also key components within a number of plans which sit within the Bucks Strategic Partnership:

   - Safer and Stronger Bucks Partnership
   - Health Communities Partnership
• Children and Young People’s Trust
• Bucks Drug and Alcohol Strategy
• I:on Bucks
• Older People’s Strategy
• Sustainable Communities Strategies.

21. Members also learnt that casualty reduction targets feature within integrated risk management plans for the Bucks Fire and Rescue Service and Thames Valley Police, and are reported to District Council Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs).

Funding and Delivery Arrangements

22. As part of the Transformation Programme for Buckinghamshire County Council, the Transportation Service carried out a procurement process which resulted in agreements with the companies Ringway Jacobs and Amey to provide all transportation services. From 1 April 2009, this new structure has been branded as ‘Transport for Buckinghamshire’ (TfB).

23. Amey delivers Home to School Transport and Ringway Jacobs delivers the rest of the service including Road Safety, on behalf of the County Council. Members were told that the alliance has produced total savings in year 1 of £2,234,372 with restructuring underway to deliver further savings of £528,722 during 2010/11. Members were advised that this equates to 13 posts.

The Casualty Reduction Service

24. Highway authorities such as Buckinghamshire County Council receive money through a government area based road safety grant. The four year grant is intended to support road safety partnerships and local road safety initiatives. Funding for the Casualty Reduction Service in 2009/10 was largely drawn down from the Area Based Grant (ABG) as detailed below, and to fulfil its statutory obligations, the service is split into four areas:

• Speed Limit Review: £250k
• Local Safety Schemes: £188k
• Education, Training and Publicity: £150k
• Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership: £822k.

25. Members were informed that no decision has been reached on the future of this funding beyond 2010/11. If the funding were to be withdrawn, the service has advised it would look to recast its current budgets via the Medium Term Planning (MTP) process to ensure necessary safety programmes continue to achieve Corporate Plan and Department for Transport (DfT) targets.

26. Since 2006, the Casualty Reduction Team has been reduced in number by:

• 1 Group Manager
• 1 Collision Investigation Team Leader
• 1 Local Safety Schemes Team Leader
• 1 Transportation Specialist
• 1 Transportation Officer
• 3 Transportation Graduates.
27. The four previous teams that existed in the service have been integrated into one team with one leader. A chart showing the current casualty reduction team structure is attached at Appendix 2.

Performance

28. Members were informed that, in spite of the reductions in budget and staff numbers the merging of the teams under the direction of one team leader has enabled synergies to develop between the teams resulting in further reductions in road casualties. The following graph showing Buckinghamshire’s progress towards its 2010 target of no more than 248 killed and seriously injured casualties.

Figure 1: Progress to Targets - People KSI

![Figure 1: Progress to Targets - People KSI](image)

29. The graph below shows Buckinghamshire’s progress to its 2010 target of a reduction in child casualties from 44 to 22. In 2009, there were 12 child KSIs. Whilst the information points to good progress, Members are cautious about the interpretation of data relating to such small cohorts.

Figure 2: Progress to Targets – Child KSI

![Figure 2: Progress to Targets – Child KSI](image)

30. The following graph provides some evidence to suggest that specific, targeted investment in casualty reduction initiatives shows a corresponding decrease in casualties. Members were told that the challenge to the service is to sustain a decrease with lower investment.
31. Officers from the casualty reduction team have advised members that the benefits of investment in casualty reduction and road safety through education, engineering and enforcement are not immediately realised. They told members that collisions are rare, random, multifactor events and annual fluctuations are to be expected.

32. Members noted the concern within the team that any reduction in investment now, based on recent success, might affect the general downward trend in casualties and could make it difficult to meet forthcoming casualty reduction targets.

Service Activities and Findings of the Review

- Collision Investigation and Analysis (CIA) and Local Safety Schemes

33. Members were told that the purpose of the CIA function is to carry out collision investigation and analysis within Buckinghamshire County Council to inform others of collision trends, improve routes and sites to reduce casualties, and to avoid safety problems being designed into new schemes.

34. Activities include:

- Identifying sites / routes within the County that are of concern and putting in to place a variety of measures to reduce casualties.
- Informing other teams of the results of collision analysis
- Identifying vulnerable user groups to help inform road safety initiatives
- Developing cycling, walking and school travel plans
- Carrying out road safety audits for both internal and external clients.

35. Members were particularly impressed by reductions in casualties and the potential costs savings across the public sector that can be achieved through the introduction of local safety schemes. They were told that sites in Buckinghamshire are prioritised each year for engineering measures to be implemented, based on the number of fatal, serious and slight injury collisions that occur there. Members were told that in 2009/10, 8 schemes were completed and that for 2010/11, 13 schemes have been proposed, subject to investigation.
36. A study into the contribution of local safety schemes to casualty reduction was carried out in April 2009 by the Department for Transport. The study examined 408 locations across 22 local highways authorities where local safety schemes had been carried out. Collectively the schemes cost approximately £16.6m to build, which the study estimated was about 15% of the local safety schemes’ expenditure by local authorities in England (outside London) recorded for 2004/05. The study concluded that the local safety schemes definitely reduced both the total number of road casualties and the combined number of road deaths and serious injuries at the locations treated at a rate greater than the general national casualty reduction.

37. The study indicated that the average safety impact per scheme was a reduction of about one collision or 1.6 casualties per year. This is equivalent on average to reducing collisions at the sites by half, and reducing causalities by about a third. The study concludes that the schemes represent very good value for money. Comparisons before and after implementation suggest an average first-year value of savings of between 1.4 and twice the construction costs.

38. The report also found that the sites of the 408 schemes as a whole had not only fewer casualties and collisions after their implementation, but the average severity of the casualties had fallen. Previously about 16% of casualties and 17% of injury collisions were fatal or serious. Following the implementation of local safety schemes, this had fallen to about 9% of casualties and collisions.

39. During the evidence gathering process for the review, members were given an example of a local safety scheme in Buckinghamshire at the A41 Woodlands Roundabout at Aston Clinton, that has brought about significant cost savings. The scheme, which was implemented in April 2008, was put into place at a cost of £14k. Members were told that Woodlands Roundabout is very near to the by-pass and that prior to the local safety scheme being implemented, there had been a number of traffic incidents due to late recognition and excessive speed carried onto the roundabout.

40. The casualty reduction service introduced various measures to address this. These included yellow bar markings, advanced warning roundabout signs, improved chevrons on the roundabout, and a new directional arrow sign.

41. Prior to implementation there had been an average of 2.6 collisions per year, resulting in an average of 4.3 casualties. Since implementation there has been an average of 1.2 collisions per year, and an estimated 1.2 casualties. Using an average cost per casualty prevention of £52k, this had led to a saving of £161k per year for a £14K investment.

42. The following table gives two further examples of local safety schemes in Buckinghamshire that have reduced casualties:

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Local Safety Scheme Examples

**Scheme C98 Chalkpit Lane, Marlow:** Queens Road Junction with the Royal Oak Public House (implemented July 2008) – Cost £21000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collisions:</th>
<th>Measures introduced:</th>
<th>Result:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Loss of control on bends, head on collisions, speed and layout of road contributory factors | Improving skid resistance, renewing carriageway markings, additional markers and new warning signs | Prior to implementation there had been an average of 3 collisions per year, with an average of 3 casualties.  
Post implementation there have been no recorded collisions up to 28.02.10 |

Saving to the community using average casualty costs of £52k: £156k per year

**Scheme B488 Tring Road Pitstone:** B489 junction to Aldbury Road junction (implemented August 2008) – Cost £5700

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collisions:</th>
<th>Measures introduced:</th>
<th>Result:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Loss of control on bends, head on collisions and impacts with street furniture | New warning signs on posts, additional carriageway edge lining and vegetation clearance | Prior to implementation there was an average of 3 collisions per year, with an average of 4.6 casualties.  
Post implementation there have been no recorded collisions up to 28.02.10 |

Saving to the community using average casualty costs of £52k: £239k per year

43. It is important to stress that the costs for local safety schemes are incurred by the County Council, but the savings are spread amongst public service providers as previously highlighted in the report. Even so, in light of the evidence provided showing how local safety schemes in the area have reduced casualties and of the savings to the community (including the Council) that can be achieved through their implementation, Members of the task and finish group are keen that the focus on this area is increased through the reconfiguration of budgets.

**Recommendation 1:** Reconfigure budgets to increase the focus on local ‘invest to save’ initiatives such as safety schemes which have been shown to reduce casualties in the area.

- **Speed Limit Review**

44. Buckinghamshire County Council’s review of speed limits on all of its roads began in 2002, as part of its Speed Management Strategy, in advance of the Department for Transport’s 2006 request, (Circular 01/2006), for A & B roads to be reviewed by 2011.

45. The purpose of the review is:

- To reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads.
- To reduce the speed of traffic through villages and other communities to improve quality of life
- To make speed limits more consistent countywide
- To ensure that speed limits take into account everyone who uses the roads
46. To aid the process, the task is managed through 14 geographical areas each overseen by a working group comprising county and district councillors, the police and county council officers, whose role is to make recommendations on proposed speed limits for public consultation and implementation. The Cabinet Member for Transport makes the final decision on final changes.

47. Other activities that are part of the Speed Limit Review include:

- Establishing a comprehensive database of existing speed limit orders
- Developing a Geographical Information System (GIS) map accurately showing speed limits on all roads countywide, with active links to the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders
- Ensuring all speed limits are correctly signed
- Encouraging compliance with speed limits
- Increasing public awareness of speed limit issues
- Responding to correspondence about speed limit and speeding issues.

48. The Speed Limit Review in Buckinghamshire has been a significant and complex task covering almost 2000 miles of roads. Members of the task and finish group note that the process is 80% complete, and the most recent timetable indicates that the main review will be finalised by summer 2011. For this reason they have not made any recommendations relating to this area of work as part of the scrutiny review. They note however that the service will be carrying out post-implementation reviews for areas 8-14, and that the government is proposing new 20mph guidance which is likely to have significant delivery implications.

[Post-review note: The Portfolio has advised early indications are that the Speed Limit Review has contributed to a reduction in collisions]

- Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership (TVSRP) - Background

49. Buckinghamshire County Council is a member of the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership and a significant proportion of the casualty reduction services budget (£822k in 2009/10) goes to help fund the partnership. Other core partners involved are included in Appendix 5.

50. Members were told that the TVSRP was established in 2000 to enable the ‘netting-off\(^3\) of fine revenue from safety camera equipment. Between then and March 2007, the partnership reported directly to the Department for Transport (DfT) and was able to reclaim costs relating to enforcement cameras. In April 2007, fines were no longer automatically returned to the partnership ending the netting off agreement. Instead, the dedicated road safety grant was set up by the government with individual grants being awarded to highway authorities over a four year period. At this point Partnerships were given the freedom to tackle any road safety issue they deemed important.

51. TVSRP activities in Buckinghamshire focus on 51 fixed camera and 58 mobile enforcement locations, and include a dedicated road safety constable carrying out road safety checks. Joint activities include driver education courses, ‘Safe Drive Stay Alive’ events for young drivers, and area-wide campaigns targeting the driver behaviour of other road user groups.

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\(^3\) Reclaiming of expenses relating to the use of enforcement cameras (speed and red-light). 2010 – 2011 Funding – Supporting Information to Buckinghamshire County Council TVSRP.
TVSRP Funding

52. In Thames Valley the nine highway authorities, Thames Valley Police, Her Majesty's Courts Services, the Highways Agency and the three Fire and Rescue services agreed to form a road safety partnership. The partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2007, to be effective for the duration of the four-year funding period. This is due to end in March 2011.

53. Members were informed that the amount proposed to be spent by BCC on the Partnership is likely to decrease from £822k (2009/10) to approximately £742k (2010/11), but it still forms a significant portion of the casualty reduction service budget. For the 2009/10 figures, it equates to approximately 70% of the Area Based Grant funding for the service.

54. Members learnt that TVSRP receives additional income from Diversionary Education Courses such as the National Speed Awareness Scheme, which is operated on behalf of the police by a company called DriveTech, as an alternative to points and a fine for an offence. Thames Valley Police receives administration fees for each offence that results in a course being taken and this is returned to the Partnership. The figure estimated to be received by the Partnership from the courses in 2010 – 11 is £600k. A recent newspaper report\(^4\) raised concerns about the amount of profit made by DriveTech: £2.8m in 2008, although it is not clear how much of this is raised through road safety schemes.

Use of Safety Cameras

55. A study conducted by PA Consulting Group, University of Liverpool and Napier University in 2005, concluded that overall, safety cameras have continued to reduce collisions, casualties and deaths\(^5\). This is backed up by data produced by the TVSRP in its Camera Site Report 2009, which demonstrated that where cameras were installed, they contributed to reduced collision rates. Currently the costs associated with the maintenance of cameras are met by the Partnership through its budget. Signs and lines are the responsibility of the individual partner. TVSRP estimates that the camera maintenance bill is approximately £150k per annum with around 26% of spend taking place in Buckinghamshire.

56. If there is a change in government the shadow Secretary for Transport has indicated that they may have a change in attitude towards installation of new fixed or average safety cameras. A Conservative government has indicated it would stop central government funding for new fixed safety cameras and switch to other ways to make roads safer, such as vehicle activated signs (VAS). It would also encourage Councils to pilot innovative schemes, such as ‘turn left on red’ for cyclists.\(^6\)

57. One authority that has recognised the need to develop further alternative measures to safety camera enforcement is Swindon Borough Council. It made a decision to deactivate its four fixed safety cameras from the end of July 2009, and replace them with temporary vehicle-activated warning signs (VAS). The move followed the decision by Swindon Borough Council to take a fresh look at the measures it used to combat road accidents. The estimated £320,000 the safety cameras cost to run is being put into other measures that the Borough Council hopes will cut crashes, such as the use of warning signs.

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\(^4\) Evening Standard, 19 March 2010, ‘My Lesson in How to Beat a Speeding Fine’ – Sebastian Shakespeare


\(^6\) ‘Stopping the March of the Fixed Speed Camera’ Conservative Party Website news story, October 6 2009
58. It needs to be stressed that Swindon Borough Council is still using mobile cameras and the fixed cameras are still in place (although bagged) with the original associated signage remaining. Also – Swindon has a very small number of fixed cameras compared to Buckinghamshire. It is too early to assess the impact of the switch off at this point, but Swindon is monitoring traffic flow and accidents rates around the affected areas very closely. The authority has gone on to review its partnership arrangements and develop a specific plan for casualty reduction.

59. Whilst members of the Task and Finish Group acknowledge that speed cameras have a definite and proven role in reducing speed and casualties – they are concerned that a large amount of money (70% of the ABG for the casualty reduction service) is currently allocated primarily to the operation and maintenance of safety cameras, through the TVSRP. The TVSRP itself has stated that over 80% of its funding pays for the operation and upkeep of cameras and related offences.

60. As the memorandum of understanding with the Partnership is coming to an end in March 2011, there is an opportunity to review the arrangements with the Partnership and ensure that best use is being made of the funds.

Recommendation 2: Carry out a cost benefit analysis of funds allocated to the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership, before any further agreement is entered into, so that efficiencies can be made and funding targeted to where it can make most impact.

- Site Visits – Enforcement Checks

61. The TVSRP employs a road safety constable dedicated to Buckinghamshire. As part of the arrangement, regular roadside enforcement / education checks are undertaken.

62. During the review, members of the task and finish group were invited to visit two speed enforcement site checks run in association with the partnership at Mursley and Whaddon. At the time the members visited, officers present at the site checks were as follows:

- 2 Police Community Support Officers (to carry out checks on car registrations)
- 1 TVSRP Road Safety Constable (to use the laser camera)
- 1 Buckinghamshire County Council Casualty Reduction Road Safety Officer (to direct people to the speed awareness courses and provide an educational role)
- 2 Thames Valley Police Officers (to stop cars and formally issue tickets).

63. Buckinghamshire County Council road safety officers attend the roadside events to support the police on an ad hoc basis. The checks could continue without their attendance, but the casualty reduction service feels that in the spirit of partnership working, it is important to support the police and educate drivers who have offended.

64. There was some concern expressed by members that the checks they observed were resource heavy in terms of the number of people present, although it is noted that there was a special police operation taking place that day.

- Community Speedwatch

65. Community Speedwatch is a traffic monitoring scheme that is co-ordinated by the police and supported by Buckinghamshire County Council but managed and run by volunteers in the community. The volunteers are trained to use a detection device to monitor the

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7. Swindon’s Strategic Plan for Road Safety and Accident Reduction – 2010 and Beyond – Swindon Borough Council
speeds of vehicles travelling through their local area. The registration number of speeding vehicles is recorded. Warning letters are then sent out by the police to the registered keepers stating that their vehicle has been reported as speeding. Locations for monitoring speed are selected from sites suggested by the community, based on where there is most local concern about speeding traffic, or the impact of speed.

66. The majority of Community Speedwatch work undertaken in the Thames Valley has been in Buckinghamshire, although in recent months both Oxfordshire and some of the unitary Authorities in Berkshire have embraced the scheme. The initiative was piloted in the village of Swanbourne in the summer of 2007. Other community groups who have signed up to the campaign include: Richings Park, Princes Risborough, Cheddington, Aylesbury Town Council, Marlow Bottom, North Marsden, and Hambleden and Great Missenden.

67. Members were told that the effectiveness of Community Speedwatch is as much a result of having a visible physical presence by the side of the road with a speed detection device and an information sign, as it is a result of sending warning letters to motorists caught by speeding. Use of speed reduction initiatives such as Community Speedwatch are particularly important in rural areas as fewer than eight percent of UK road fatalities (around 2,800 a year) occur on motorways while 54 percent happen on rural roads.  

68. Members of the Task and Finish Group are keen to support initiatives that both allow local residents to take an active part in campaigns that benefit their community, and which demonstrate innovative ways of reducing speed. Members recognise that their effectiveness must be proven and that the use of these kinds of initiatives needs to be part of a co-ordinated speed management strategy.

**Recommendation 3: Place a greater focus on innovative speed reduction initiatives that are cost effective and supported by the local community.**

- **Education Training and Publicity**

69. Members were informed that 95% of collisions nationally contain an element of human error. Only 3% are attributable to vehicle fault and 2% caused completely by the highway. They were impressed by the range of activities carried out through the casualty reduction service to provide education on road safety issues, and by the obvious enthusiasm of officers who support this area of work.

70. Education and training is concentrated on the particular groups who make up the largest proportion of casualties. Activities include work around:

- Young drivers
- Rider / driver assessments
- Seatbelt compliance
- Mobile phone checks
- Driving for work
- Drink / drug driving
- Speeding.

71. Members were told for instance that motorcyclists make up 24% of KSI’s in Buckinghamshire. Through their ‘Be a Better Biker’ campaign, the casualty

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8 Evening Standard, 19 March 2010, ‘My Lesson in How to Beat a Speeding Fine’ – Sebastian Shakespeare
reduction team part-subsidise motorcycle assessment days. Each day consists of a 2 hour classroom theory followed by a 3 hour on-road assessment, at a cost to the motorcyclist of £35.

72. The day is designed to greatly improve safety on the road by concentrating on such topics as positioning for safety, view, observation and correct use of speed. Riders are taken out on rural roads in Buckinghamshire where there has been a history of motorcycle casualties.

73. A further speed reduction initiative is the ‘Make the Commitment’ campaign. This initiative asks the motorist to make a personal written commitment to drive, or encourage others to drive, at an appropriate speed for the environment and road conditions and always within the legal speed limit; to practice ‘safer speed behaviour’. In the last three years in Buckinghamshire, excessive speed was a contributory factor in at least 14% of all crashes where someone was killed or seriously injured\(^9\).

74. 3,000 local people have signed up to the campaign, giving the casualty reduction team a database of residents that it can promote & raise awareness of other road safety initiatives with. Members were told that this campaign is an essential part of the implementation of the speed limit review to reinforce new speed limits, and it is supported and promoted by local communities.

75. The service cannot directly prove that a casualty has been saved or a collision prevented through educational initiatives, but there has been a corresponding, overall decrease in injuries in the target groups when considering figures from 2004 – 2008. Officers within the casualty reduction service have stated that the ‘Be a Better Biker’ campaign has been instrumental in reducing the number of motorcycle fatalities from 13 in 2003 to 1 last year. The service has stated that partnership working with the police, fire service, schools and business is vital for education and training in road safety to be successful.

76. As driver error is the key factor in collisions, there is a strong argument for increased education and for people being encouraged to take more responsibility for their actions. For this reason members would like to see an increased emphasis on education, though more combined working with TVRSP, (who also carry out education and training initiatives) and who have the potential to stretch campaigns across the Thames Valley area.

Recommendation 4: Explore further opportunities to work collaboratively with the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership on education and training initiatives, with a view to harmonising activities, avoiding any duplication of effort, and maximising funds in this area.

Governance Arrangements

77. During the course of the review, members were keen to find out more about the governance arrangements for the Partnership. A chart showing the current structure can be found at Appendix 5. Members were advised that the Head of Transport for Buckinghamshire sits on the Strategy Committee, but that there was no direct member representation on this or the Partnership Board, which is chaired by the Transport for Buckinghamshire team leader. During the course of discussion with officers both from the Partnership, and from the casualty reduction service, members felt that there needed to be a stronger governance model with more member involvement.

\(^9\) Buckinghamshire County Council data
78. Members are keen that when any further memorandum of understanding is entered into with the partnership that the opportunity is taken to identify where member representation can take place.

**Recommendation 5:** Ensure there is elected member representation in the governance of the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership when any further arrangements are entered into.

**Conclusion**

79. Throughout the review, members were impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of officers within the casualty reduction service, and by the range of activities they carry out. They could see that efficiencies have already been made in the service area, and were unable to identify where further significant efficiencies could be made. As casualty reduction is a statutory responsibility, it was particularly hard to identify where there is flexibility to save money. However, they have made recommendations for the potential better use of funds within the service, where further ‘invest to save’ initiatives can be supported, for continued cost-effective working with partners such as the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership, and the strengthening of governance arrangements for the Partnership.

**Acknowledgements**

80. Members are very grateful to all those that contributed towards the review. They would particularly like to thank Sue Brown from the casualty reduction service, for her assistance in providing detailed information and for her liaison on behalf of members with the TVSRP and Thames Valley Police throughout the review.

- Sue Brown – Casualty Reduction Team Leader
- Nigel Spencer – Road Safety Officer, Casualty Reduction
- Peter Chapman – Collision Investigation & Safety Schemes Officer
- Anne James – Network Resilience Manager
- Val Letheren – Cabinet Member for Transport
- Richard Owen – Partnership Manager, Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership
- Superintendent Rob Povey – Thames Valley Police
- Officers from TVSRP and Thames Valley Police (during the speed enforcement site visits).
- Jim Stevens – Head of Transport for Buckinghamshire
- Neil Gibson – Strategic Director Communities and Built Environment

**Background papers to the review are available on request from the Contact Officer.**

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**Your questions and views**

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 4 June 2010. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 383627 or 383610), Fax (to 01296 382538), or e-mail to cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of the Review</th>
<th>Review of statutory, mandatory and discretionary spend at Buckinghamshire County Council – phase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Chairmen              | Peter Cartwright – **Transport**  
Brenda Jennings – **Achievement and Learning** |
| Review members, including co-optees | **Transport** – Avril Davies, Netta Glover, Bill Lidgate, Roger Reed, David Schofield, Ruth Vigor-Hedderly  
**Achievement and Learning** – Margaret Aston, Noel Brown, Roy Davey, Niknam Hussain, Martin Phillips, Brian Roberts |
| Officer contact       | Transport - Claire Street  
Achievement and Learning – Jane Burke |
| Purpose of the Review | In the light of the national economic context, the greater squeeze on the public purse and potential tax rises, Overview and Scrutiny is undertaking a review of what obligations the Council has to provide through specific services and what level of discretion exists, in order to inform future decisions in the medium term financial plan. |
| Anticipated outcome(s) | Phase 2-  
• To make recommendations to Cabinet that may help inform their decisions around possible different delivery methods  
• Options for additional savings identified in order to meet anticipated £27 million deficit in funding pressures for the County Council  
• To have modelled a process for reviewing services that could be transferable throughout the authority  
• To have identified best practice in other authorities |
| What is the potential impact of the review on |  
• Residents  
• Equality issues, e.g. access to services, vulnerable groups  
• Health inequalities  
• Adding value to the organisation  
• Partners  
• A change in the level or method of frontline service delivery  
• Wider use of some partners  
• Change in the revenue raising approach |
| Link to Council Corporate Plan priority |  
‘Provide the highest value for every pound we spend on your behalf’  
‘Find new, better ways of doing things’ |
| Consideration of Local Area Agreement targets |  
Key Issues for the review to address  
• Levels of provision  
• If services can be provided differently  
• The impact of changes in delivery of services on |
| **key stakeholders** | • The risks associated with different ways of doing things  
• If alternative funding can be found or services charged for |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Methodology**     | • Investigation – task and finish  
• Desk-based research  
• In-depth discussion with two services  
• Comparisons with other authorities  
• Focus groups if appropriate |
| **Risks to Success**| • The work required to produce factual recommendations  
• Crossover/Duplication with other programmes, e.g. Transformation and Medium Term Financial planning |
| **Press & Publicity**| To include Members E-Newsletter |
| **Key background papers** | Extract from MTP report (confidential) |
| **Use of demographics/ needs data** | |
| **Written evidence to be provided by:** | To be identified |
| **Oral evidence to be provided by:** | Heads of Service and relevant officers  
Key stakeholders |
| **Potential partners** | None |
| **Resources required** | Policy Officer Support  
Democratic Services Officer Support |
| **Timetable** | Phase 2-  
• November 2009 - April 2010 - detailed work examining the two services identified |
| **Reporting mechanism** | Cabinet |
Cost of casualties/accidents

These are to be found in a document entitled “The Accidents sub-objective TAG (Transport Analysis Guidance) unit 3.4.1” published in April 2009 by the Department of Transport. Values for casualties and accidents are shown below. This document also gives values for prevention of accidents during daylight and night-time.

Casualties

Table 1 Average value of prevention per casualty by severity and element of 2007 £ June 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury severity</th>
<th>Lost output</th>
<th>Human costs</th>
<th>Medical and ambulance</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>556,660</td>
<td>1,080,760</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>1,638,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>21,830</td>
<td>150,180</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>185,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>2,310</td>
<td>10,990</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>14,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average, all casualties</td>
<td>11,200</td>
<td>39,300</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>52,850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Average value of prevention per road casualty by class of road user

2007 £ June 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of road user</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>£ June 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>84,690</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal cyclist</td>
<td>53,630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus and coach occupants</td>
<td>27,750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods vehicle occupants</td>
<td>53,620</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car and taxi occupants</td>
<td>40,980</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorised two-wheeler rider and passengers</td>
<td>100,050</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All motor vehicle users</td>
<td>48,020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average, all road users</td>
<td>52,850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the variation in value between classes of road user is due to differences in proportions of fatal, serious and slight casualties among each class of road user.

Accidents

Table 4a Average value of prevention per road accident by severity and class of road: all hours

2007 £ June 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accident severity</th>
<th>Road Class</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>£ June 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Built-up</td>
<td>Non Built-up</td>
<td>Motorway</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>1,769,900</td>
<td>1,930,740</td>
<td>2,145,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>207,120</td>
<td>231,110</td>
<td>235,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>24,750</td>
<td>29,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All injury</td>
<td>59,240</td>
<td>121,420</td>
<td>91,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage only</td>
<td>1,840</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>2,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cost per injury accident including an allowance for damage on accidents</td>
<td>91,810</td>
<td>142,640</td>
<td>111,810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1 Built-up roads are those roads other than motorways with speed limits of 40pmh or less |
| 2 Non Built-up roads are those roads other than motorways with speed limits greater than 40mph |
Since 1993, the valuation of both fatal and non-fatal casualties has been based on a consistent willingness to pay (WTP) approach. This approach encompasses all aspects including pain, grief and suffering, as well as the lost output and medical costs associated with road accident injuries.

The methodology used for valuing non-fatal casualties was described in an article in *Road Accidents Great Britain* (RAGB) 1992, and was updated in 1994. More detailed descriptions of methods and the underlying research have been published by the Transport Research Laboratory (Hopkin and Simpson, 1995).
Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership – Core Partners

- Bracknell Forest Borough Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Her Majesty’s Courts Service
- The Highways Agency
- Milton Keynes Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Slough Borough Council
- Thames Valley Police
- West Berkshire Council
- Wokingham Borough Council.