

WEST OF ENGLAND ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Wednesday 18th March 2009 – The Council House, Bristol

Notes of Meeting

Meeting commenced: 10:00 a.m.

Meeting concluded: 12:00 p.m.

Partners Present:

Cllr Brian Allinson (SGC), Cllr Ap Rees (NS), Cllr Jon Rogers (BCC), Cllr Brian Simmons (BANES), Andrew Pullan (A&S Police), Dick Bowen (SAFECAM)

Officers present:

Derek Baillie (Partnership Coordinator), Adrian Clarke (B&NES), Frank Cox (NSC), Terry Bullock (BCC), Mark Sperduty (BCC), Chris Studley (SGC), Mike Finch (West of England Partnership)

Apologies: Dave Sledge (Highways Agency), Cllr Charles Gerrish (B&NES)

1. Election Of Chair (Agenda Item 2)

Agreed: that Cllr Jon Rogers be elected Chair of the meeting.

2. Welcome/Apologies/Evacuation Procedures (Agenda Item 1,3 and 4)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Council House and drew attention to the evacuation procedures. The apologies above were noted with Cllr Brian Simmons substituting for Cllr Charles Gerrish.

3. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 5)

There were none.

4. Notes of Previous Meeting held on 25th March 2008 (Agenda Item 6)

Agreed: that the notes be approved.

5. Casualty Data Report (Agenda Item 7)

Mark Sperduty introduced this item on the latest casualty data for the Partnership focusing in on the number of people killed or seriously injured (ksi) in 2008, the number of children ksi in 2008 and the progress achieved against the national and Joint Local Transport Plan casualty reduction targets. The Partnership were updated with the full 2008 figures (attached to these notes) but were advised that these remain provisional totals until confirmation by the Department for Transport in April.

All expressed delight that the casualty numbers significantly reduced in 2008 and now appear to be back on track for the casualty reduction targets and that this should be publicised across the Partnership. However, concern was also expressed by all about the total number of casualties that still occur particular with regards to motorcyclists. Andy Pullan confirmed that one third of all fatalities in Avon and Somerset were motorcyclists and whilst some were as a result of dangerous some were the result of other drivers not seeing the motorcyclist. Adrian Clarke identified that the launch of Rider Choice would be a good launch pad for publicising the recent drop in casualties.

Agreed:

- 1) That a press release be issued detailing the recent reduction in casualties but stressing that the Partnership remain concerned about the overall level of road casualties in the area, and that efforts will continue to address this through a series of measures including Rider Choice, Red Light Running etc.
- 2) That resources available to the Road Safety Partnership continue to be focused on trying to achieve further reductions in casualties in the following user groups:
 - Car occupant casualties in all areas
 - Motorcyclist casualties in all areas
 - Pedestrian casualties in Bristol
 - Child pedestrian casualties in Bristol
 - Cyclist casualties in Bristol
- 3) That special attention be paid to reducing motorcyclist and cyclist casualties, to bring these closer to the 2010 targets.

6. Road Policing Report (Agenda Item 8)

Andy Pullan presented the Road Policing Report summarising the road safety related activities undertaken by Avon and Somerset Constabulary in 2008.

In addition to the matters contained within the paper, it was confirmed that:

- graduated fixed penalties for motoring offences are to come into affect in 2009, with Police Officers being able to collect fines on road;
- the levels of people prosecuted for Drink Driving have remained fairly consistent over recent years; and
- a regional motorcycling campaign is being developed due to concerns about motorcycle accidents across the region.

Councillor Allison commented that he was disappointed that the Government had not decided to reduce the drink drive limit, and raised concern that the introduction of fixed penalties for careless driving would be an easy option for Police Officers rather than using existing legislation. He also asked what is done to address those drivers who drive at inappropriate speeds particularly in poor weather conditions. Andy Pullan confirmed that Officers are encouraged to use the Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 to seize and crush cars for appropriate offences rather than making use of the new careless driving option. He also confirmed that Avon and Somerset Police will be joining Devon and Cornwall Police in their week long zero tolerance campaign in 2009. This would address all areas of driver activity including the use of mobile phones, and would run in parallel with a press release/publicity campaign.

ClIr Simmons asked how successful the road signs stating "X casualties in 12 months". Dick Bowen explained that these can have a good road safety benefit but that care needs to be taken in how much and what they say so that they do not become the cause of an incident.

ClIr Ap Rees was concerned that there would be a risk of bad publicity if enforcement of motoring offences is not done carefully and that any publicity on this should concentrate on how the roads are being made safer by the number of unsafe vehicles being removed from the road. He also questioned if the Partnership attended local motorcycle events. Chris Studley reminded the Partnership that South Gloucestershire Council employ a Motorcycle Road Safety Officer who attends events like Bikesafe on behalf of the Partnership on a motorbike with 'Think Road Safety' livery.

Cllr Ap Rees queried why pedestrians who jay walk are not targeted by Officers who could stop them and inform them what they should or should not be doing. Andy Pullan replied that he would look into the current legislation surrounding this.

Agreed:

- 1) Publicity surrounding Police road safety activity to include details of the number of unsafe cars being removed from the highway.
- 2) Consideration to be given to the use of "X Casualties in last Y years" signs.

7. Safecam Report (Agenda Item 9)

Dick Bowen presented this paper summarising the Safecam operations for speed and red light enforcement and detection levels in the West of England for 2008/9. He advised that the Gatso cameras are out of date and need to be upgraded, and that average speed cameras should be type approved for use late 2009. It was reported that the Speed Choice course continues to be well received, and that it is currently being expanded to cover additional speed limits and red light running. It was also confirmed that the course content for Rider Choice has now been finalised with help from Exeter University, and the first courses should be held in May 2009.

Cllr Ap Rees stated that red light cameras are important, but that careful consideration should be given to the use of average speed cameras, though they do work well on motorways. He stressed the need to take into account the Speed Limit Review that each Council is undertaking when reviewing existing or considering new safety camera sites and that in many circumstances Vehicle Activated Signs offer a more effective solution.

Cllr Allison requested that the Speed Limit Reviews and Camera Reviews should seek to minimise the number of speed limit and safety camera signs where possible. Dick Bowen confirmed that all the safety camera signs are not required for enforcement purposes (just those on approach to each camera) and that the additional signs are more about publicity and road safety education. Frank Cox confirmed that the safety camera signs around the Local Authority Boundaries should not be required.

Agreed:

- 1) The report be noted.
- 2) Each Council to consider the safety camera signs in their area and reduce where possible.
- 3) Each Council continues with their Safety Camera and Speed Limit Reviews.

Additional Details following meeting:

Following the meeting further details were obtained regarding the decision by Swindon Borough Council to withdraw from the Wiltshire and Swindon Safety Camera Partnership. The reports surrounding their decision outline that the intention of withdrawing their funding from the partnership is to enable these funds to be allocated to other road safety measures and the fixed cameras will be replaced by vehicle activated signs. In total Swindon had three fixed cameras prior to this decision. Enforcement by mobile cameras and the Police will continue and with the number of sites potentially increased.

8. Partners Reports (Agenda Item 10)

Cllr Rogers welcomed the report from the Highways Agency but queried why they were not present or why reports had not been received from Avon Fire and Rescue and the Primary Care Trust (PCT). Derek Baillie confirmed that whilst there was no presence at the meeting from these members of the Partnership, they had been invited and there is regular contact and ongoing work at officer level.

Cllr Allison questioned if the Partnership should write to the DfT or Government Office for the South West (GOSW) to invite them to future meetings. Cllr Simmons agreed that the chair of Avon Fire and Rescue should be present. Terry Bullock confirmed that under Comprehensive Area Assessment Partnership working is vital and that Avon Fire and Rescue say the same things about working with the local Councils.

Cllr Ap Rees asked about what road safety Avon Fire and Rescue currently undertake. Mike Baugh confirmed that they go into schools as well as Avon and Somerset Police and the local authorities and therefore there is a need to coordinate activities to tell each other what schools they are attending and when. They get to the hard to reach communities better than the local authorities and so are very useful in this regard.

Cllr Rogers asked about whether there is a need to get other teams involved in the Partnership such as Young People Services and the Youth Offending Team. TB confirmed that the Youth Offending team are already involved on a project basis. Mark Spurduty confirmed that the PCT

Agreed:

- 1) That the report from the Highways Agency be noted.
- 2) That GOSW should be invited to future Partnership meeting.
- 3) That further efforts are made to encourage participation from Avon Fire and Rescue, the Primary Care trust and other Partners at the various levels within the Partnership. That notes of this meeting accompanied by a letter should be sent to all partners.

9. UCL/SRA Study Update (Agenda Item 11)

Chris Studley introduced this item to summarise the progress that has been made on the recommendations made by the University of College London and Social research Associates during 2008.

Cllr Simmons stated that there should be further benefits from working with the Hospital Trust and the PCT especially in the area of understanding and making use of available data to support and target future programmes. Cllr Rogers agreed that the Partnership needs to make in roads into this because this can improve understanding of the road safety issues in the area.

Mike Finch asked for confirmation of who to contact for road safety partnership enquiries received by the West of England Partnership Office. It was confirmed that Derek Baillie as Partnership Coordinator would be the appropriate contact for general matters but that matters specifically related to certain partners should be directed to them and that details of the appropriate contacts need to be added to the website.

Agreed:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That work continues into how better use can be made of data from the PCT and Hospital Trust.
- 3) Contact details for each Partner be added to the Road Safety Partnership website.

10. Funding Report (Agenda Item 12)

Adrian Clarke introduced this item setting out the Department for Transport (DfT) funding allocation for each of the four local authorities for the financial year 2009/10. The report also detailed the proposed SAFECAM allocation per local authority, the proposed allocation of funding for casualty reduction per local authority and proposals for the allocation of Speed Choice funding. The report was updated under paragraph 3.4 in that it is now proposed to develop a 3 year business plan for the replacement and upgrading of enforcement equipment, rather than 5 years as previously quoted.

Responding to a question from Councillor Rogers, Cllr Ap Rees stated that it was too early to determine if the North Somerset approach to reduce the level of speed enforcement at their camera sites has had an impact on casualty levels. Cllr Simmons suggested that the Partnership should keep an eye on the impact of Swindon City Council's decision to suspend all fixed camera enforcement. Andy Pullan confirmed that if funding levels reduce significantly further for speed enforcement through Safecam, that this would undermine the ability to provide an appropriate level of enforcement across the region.

Agreed:

- 1) That the proposed allocation of both capital and revenue funding for each local authority within "The Partnership" for the year 2008/09 be noted;
- 2) That SAFECAM be notified of the proposed allocation for 2009/10; and
- 3) A 3 year business plan be prepared for approval.

11. ETP Programme Report (Agenda Item 13)

Mike Baugh presented the report summarising progress with the joint projects coordinated and financed by the Education Training and Publicity Group of the Partnership during 2008. The report also put forward allocations for areas where the 2009/10 ETP funding (£872,744) will be spent. He also outlined a recent successful bid to the DfT for an additional road safety grant to undertake a project with the University of the West of England to evaluate the effectiveness of social marketing towards young drivers in deprived areas.

Cllr Allison questioned if there had been a social changes regarding particular age group's attitudes towards drink/drug driving. Mike Baugh responded that this was not clear at the moment but that recent research in Scotland suggested that 16 to 25 year olds were unsure of the legal alcohol limit and what level of consumption is safe to have prior to driving.

Cllr Ap Rees commented that road safety programmes should not forget car passengers or women. Mike Baugh explained that these groups are included in the programme of activities, but that as women have been proven to be more receptive to existing road safety messages that the new work is focused on male drivers and riders. Mike also confirmed in response to Cllr Simons that whilst male driver casualties were a general concern there is a particular concentration in socially deprived areas.

Agreed:

- 1) That the report be noted.

12. Dates of future meetings (Agenda Item 14)

It was agreed that the frequency of the meetings should be 6 monthly. It was noted that the next meeting September 2009 meeting would be hosted by Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Chair
