

From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member – Environment & Transport
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To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 24 April 2014

Subject: 14/00024 – Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All electoral divisions

Summary: This paper updates Members on the proposed new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020. The Strategy has been developed following a workshop involving key stakeholder groups and representative organisations and has been subject to a full public consultation.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment adopts the Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020 and the policies and actions contained therein.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Keeping our roads as safe as they can be and tackling death and injury is a key priority for the County Council, both in respect of our statutory duty to promote road safety and act to reduce the likelihood of road casualties from occurring (Section 39, Road Traffic Act 1988). There is also a moral and a significant financial imperative, particularly in respect of preventing long term disability and ill health.
- 1.2 In Kent the number of people killed or seriously injured in road crashes fell by 50% between 2000 and 2010. Up to 2020 we have a target to deliver a further 33% reduction. Whilst the long term trend in our county is down, 50 people died and 474 people were seriously injured in 2012 and the figures for 2013 (subject to validation by the Department for Transport) appear to be increasing further.
- 1.3 As part of our commitment, the County Council has produced a new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent. The Strategy proposes drawing on a wide range of data to better define risk (including damage only records from the insurance sector), to use this to refocus the type and location of interventions, to

improve how we integrate our education, enforcement and engineering measures, and to improve how we engage with our partners and stakeholders.

- 1.4 The Strategy was developed from a workshop held on 13 November 2013, to which key stakeholders, including all County Council Members and representative and interest groups, were invited. The resulting Strategy was then subjected to a full public consultation from 23 December 2013 to 24 February 2014.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Strategy makes the case for targeted funding to help achieve casualty reduction targets and reduce risk on Kent's roads. The Strategy includes a set of measures, presented in a Delivery Action Plan, which represents a refocusing of existing budgets. There are no additional pressures on current budgets. Budgets will be agreed through the County Council's Medium Term Financial Plan process from 2015/16.
- 2.2 It should be noted that the case for prioritising additional funding in future spending plans is strong, where this will most likely impact on reducing the risk of future casualties. The established average cost of dealing with a fatal crash is £1.9m and the average cost of dealing with a crash involving injury is £75,000 (*Road Casualties Great Britain Annual, 2012*). These figures include the wider impact on the public purse through the emergency services, the NHS and Kent County Council Social Services over the first 18 months.
- 2.3 More specifically, in 2012 there were 10 children (0-15 years) with serious head injuries resulting from road crashes in Kent. Research indicates the life time care cost for each child equates to £1.428m to be funded by Kent County Council (*The Cost of Road Traffic Injuries in Kent, 2014*).

3. The Strategy

- 3.1 The proposed Road Casualty Reduction Strategy is presented at **Appendix 1** to this report. In summary it:
 - underlines the importance of policies to improve road safety and reduce death and injury on Kent's roads as a **key action area** for the County Council in the context of international, national and other Kent policies, particularly financial pressures and public health objectives;
 - reaffirms **targets** to reduce the number of people Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) by 33% by 2020 as well as a 40% reduction in child KSI, and proposes new targets for all casualties and vulnerable road users;
 - emphasises taking a **data led** approach using a wide range of information sources (including damage only crashes from the insurance sector) to improve how we identify risk and to use this to prioritise and better target our interventions;
 - highlights the fact that 76.6% of injury crashes occur solely as a result of **behavioural factors** and proposes a range of education and training initiatives targeted at influencing road user attitude and behaviour and to promote individual responsibility;

- sets out **education** measures, including *Licence to Kill* presentations and *Speak Up* and *See the Hazards* campaigns, to address emerging trends in data for *at risk* groups such as young drivers and vulnerable road users;
- proposes extending the range of **training** courses, including expanding provision of driver and rider courses, on behalf of Kent Police, as well as a new *elective* awareness raising and practical driving course;
- stresses the importance of data-led **enforcement** of road traffic legislation by Kent Police, to tackle offences (particularly inappropriate and excess speed) which contribute to road casualties, in combination with the County Council's education and engineering initiatives;
- outlines the ongoing digitalisation of safety cameras, decommissioning of fixed sites in favour of more flexible mobile sites and the important role of community led *speed watch* initiatives in line with the Police and Crime Plan for Kent;
- proposes improved targeting of **engineering** schemes and maintenance to address risk, to extend the introduction of low cost mass action measures and the introduction of further 20mph zones in residential areas to encourage active travel and address public health issues; and
- underlines the importance of effective **engagement** with partners and stakeholder groups, both in co-ordinating initiatives through organisations and in raising awareness through media organisations and focusing and supporting action by community groups.

4. The Consultation

The Strategy was subject to a two month consultation up to 24 February 2014. There were 66 responses from a wide variety of organisations, interest groups and individuals. A report on the consultation responses is included at **Appendix 2** and an updated Equalities Impact Assessment at **Appendix 3**. The value of holding the workshop prior to developing the Strategy was highlighted, in that each of the proposed policy action areas was supported by the majority of respondents. The comments provided by the respondents have been reviewed and been used to make some adjustments to the structure of the document, to update the text and the Delivery Action Plan as well as the Equalities Impact Assessment. Overall, the pre-consultation Strategy is broadly what is now recommended for approval.

5. Conclusions

Death and injury on Kent's roads must continue to be tackled as effectively as possible by all agencies involved. The County Council has produced a new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy which highlights the financial imperative to improve road safety and reduce casualties. It proposes taking account of new data sources to better define risk and to use this to target a comprehensive and integrated programme of interventions, including improving how we work with our partners and stakeholders. The Strategy was developed from a workshop of representative and stakeholder groups and a consultation has demonstrated widespread support for the actions contained therein.

6. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment adopt the Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020 and the policies and actions contained therein.

7. Background Documents

A wide range of policy, data and research documents have been considered in the development of the Strategy. The majority are available for review online and these are all referenced, including their web links, in Appendix 2 of the Casualty Reduction Strategy.

Appendix 1 – Draft Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020

Appendix 2 – Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent 2014-2020 consultation report

Appendix 3 – Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Appendix 4 – Draft Record of Decision - 14/00024

8. Contact details

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