

Communities Committee

Report title:	Recommendations from the Casualty Reduction Member Task and Finish Group
Date of meeting:	7 November 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services

Strategic impact

The members' task and finish group for road safety have reviewed a range of national, regional and local information. They recommend a realignment of priorities in line with good practice elsewhere. These findings will set the strategic direction of the road safety function in Norfolk, with recommendations which take the county council principles and vision into account. This includes:

- Joining up our work so that similar activities and services are more easily accessible, done well and done once for example by integrating the highways and road safety communications.
- Being business like and making best use of digital technology to ensure value for money by promoting online use of resources.
- Using evidence and data to target our work where it can make the most difference, by introducing a new package of data and intelligence that will provide a more meaningful outline of our actions and progress regarding road safety.

Executive summary

On 17 January 2018 the Communities Committee agreed to establish a member task and finish group on road safety. This paper presents the findings from the group and outlines a series of recommendations which set the strategic direction going forward.

The task and finish group primarily reviewed policy developments in road safety to form a vision around what is needed to create a step change in the system. This has led members to recommend adopting a "safe system" approach (See Appendix 1) that considers all the factors (road, vehicles, road use and speed) to prioritise initiatives focused on prevention and reducing risks. This would mean that all partners would be encouraged to shift attention away from a single focus on influencing road user behaviour recognising wider opportunities to improve outcomes

Members considered the variety of factors which contribute to an incident. Members also examined the data related to how we measure and monitor casualties and how we compare with other areas. Keeping road users safe is a responsibility shared by all and there is scope to refocus all our efforts and integrate better where we can, and to utilise resources more effectively.

Recommendations:

- 1) **As a council develop a wider strategy for road safety based on the safe system approach.**
- 2) **Recommend the adoption of the Safe System Approach to partner agencies with a new partnership approach to take it forward.**
- 3) **Support the Highways Department to continue the prioritisation of maintenance programmes whilst seeking opportunities for safety improvements through developer and maintenance schemes.**
- 4) **Support the Highways Department to identify sources of funding to enhance and innovate local safety schemes in accordance with the new Safe Systems**

Approach.

- 5) **Seek to agree a shared approach to the management of speed which considers limited resource - aspire to shift efforts to proactive prevention and not just reactive responses.**
- 6) **Highways engineers support members to prioritise the use of their highways budget on schemes across their division.**
- 7) **Integrate Highways and Road safety communications to promote a single Safe Systems Approach.**
- 8) **Introduce a new package of data and intelligence that identify local risks and include data from a range of partner agencies.**
- 9) **Members will be informed of bids submitted by Norfolk County Council to the Safety Camera Partnership funding pot.**
- 10) **Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) Parish council coordinator and Highways continue to communicate effectively with local members and town and parish councils**
- 11) **A review of the campaigns and communications strategy in road safety.**

The task and finish group proposes that it has two further sessions to consider the developing strategic plan, with a focus on key aspects such as the intelligence and data dashboard, and campaigning with partners. This also allows for time to engage with road safety partner agencies and encourage the adoption of the safe systems approach. The task and finish group will present a final report in the spring of 2019.

1. Proposal

1.1 A new strategic approach

The current approach of focussing just on road user behaviour has not produced the outcomes we need and therefore this report sets out what we will do differently. A Safe System Approach acknowledges that people will always make mistakes; it requires a shift in thinking from a focus on who caused the incident, to which part of the system failed (See Appendix 1). Members of the task and finish group have made a series of recommendations outlining our future approach with actions which will take into account the four pillars of the Safe Systems Approach - safe roads, safe vehicles, safe speeds, and safe road users. (See recommendation 1)

1.2 Safe roads and roadsides - understanding crashes and risks

In recognising the many factors involved in an incident, national policy does not require a local target, and many other authorities do not have one. The group reviewed the existing monitoring approach and targets and considered ways to provide more meaningful intelligence and data.

It is proposed that we withdraw the existing monthly vital sign which currently provides limited data on absolute numbers of killed and seriously injured and replace with monitoring casualties and comparator areas, in a dashboard which will include data from a range of partner agencies. This package of measures will be reported regularly to members. (See recommendation 8).

1.3 Safe roads and roadsides – creating an environment which takes human error into account

There may be opportunities to test pilot approaches that are grant funded. We therefore recommend supporting Highways in seeking opportunities to source funding for the enhancement and innovation of local safety schemes. (Recommendation 4).

Members receive many requests for schemes, both from members of the public and parish councils, and we continue to encourage highways engineers to

support members to prioritise the use of their highways budget on schemes across their division. (See recommendation 6)

The Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) Parish council coordinator and highways staff will continue to communicate effectively with local members and town and parish councils in keeping with the local member protocol. (See recommendation 10).

1.4 **Safe Roads and Road sides - Post-Crash Responses**

International guidance recommends that post-crash responses may contribute to the survivability of a collision. We recommend that further monitoring and potential actions are agreed with Constabulary, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Trust bearing in mind the key influencing factor is the size of the county. Norfolk has the second largest road network in the country.

1.5 **Safe Speeds - human tolerance of collisions**

We have a limited budget for highways work, therefore the system wide budget must be prioritised. Realism is needed around likely levels of investment in local safety schemes balanced against maintenance costs. Therefore, we recommend that the Highways department continues the prioritisation of maintenance programmes whilst seeking opportunities for safety improvements through developer and maintenance schemes. (Recommendation 3)

1.6 **Safe speeds – legislation, enforcement and engaged communities**

It is proposed that the existing speed policy remains, and in addition, we aspire to shift efforts to proactive prevention and risk reduction; not just reactive responses which involve making changes because of an incident (Recommendation 5). The existing speed policy is in line with national policy and allows for flexible approaches to speed management, which includes the appropriate use of speed cameras. A full review of the policy is not recommended as there would need to be careful consideration of the potential financial implications balanced against expected outcomes, it would also require support from the Constabulary.

Norfolk County Council is a proactive member of the Safety Camera Partnership, which is led by and accountable to the Constabulary. This partnership manages funds from court diversion courses which are reinvested into road safety initiatives across Norfolk. This includes payment for and the placement of speed cameras which are deployed where they have the best potential to reduce injury. It is recommended that members will be informed of bids submitted by Norfolk County Council to the Safety Camera Partnership Fund (Recommendation 9).

1.7 **Safe Vehicles – Inform and educate**

It is critical that we encourage better informed road users by giving choice through access to information. Choosing a car or a car seat according to safety ratings for example, could have a significant and positive impact. In drawing attention to existing safety solutions such as cruise control, we can remind people that simple, safe choices can be made. Integrating our messages and streamlining information (such as that on our website) between services internal to Norfolk CC will be a key priority (See recommendation 7) as well as developing our common approach in partnership.

1.8 **Safe Road User - Behaviour change**

The focus of partner agencies has been on working with road users based on their personal characteristics e.g. age, with limited evidence of impact on road user behaviour. It does not specifically target behaviours that are important especially the fatal four: speed, using mobile phones, wearing seat belts and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. As such our recommendation is that a review of the effectiveness of existing wider interventions is undertaken, followed by the development of a communications and campaigns strategy

which reflects the principles of the safe system approach. (See recommendation 11). This recommendation to ensure our approach to behaviour change campaigns will be developed in partnership. It does not negate the important role the police have in enforcing road safety regulations. Nor does it propose any changes to our participation in the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS)

2. Evidence

- 2.1. As part of their review of road safety, the member task and finish group assessed relevant evidence, as well as national and local data, and guidance. Further details are outlined below in Section 5 - the background.

We are developing a safe system approach framework including how it can be applied in Norfolk. It will include a communications framework, a summary of findings on road safety behaviour change initiatives, a proposed partnership structure, and an example partnership dashboard of measures.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. Existing resources may be realigned and reviewed, where necessary.

4. Issues, risks and innovation

- 4.1.
- Changing the focus of our efforts will take time to embed.
 - There may be a lack of engagement and support from internal and external partners due to resource constraints. The existing partnership is a positive one which can be built on.
 - Although there is a lack of resource to implement prevention focussed programmes - creative, innovative and coordinated solutions may be explored.
 - There is a risk that councillors in representing their local communities may challenge Safety Camera Partnership decisions. The partnership is enforcement led and accountable to the Chief Constable. A protocol describing the decision-making process including councillor engagement will be submitted to EDT committee in January 2019, as installation of speed cameras is undertaken by Highways teams.

5. Background

- 5.1. The group is made up of:

- Cllr Margaret Dewsbury (Chair)
- Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
- Cllr Ron Hanton
- Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton, and
- Cllr Sarah Butikofer.

- 5.2. The group was supported by a group of officers from public health, transport strategy, network safety and Norfolk Fire and Rescue.

- 5.3. The group covered the following topics during their sessions

Date	Theme	Members present
21 st February 2018	Terms of Reference, Key issues and outputs	Margaret Dewsbury Mark Kiddle-Morris Julie Brociek-Coulton Sarah Butikofer Ron Hanton

18 th April 2018	Casualty reduction dashboards and data Safe Roads	Margaret Dewsbury Mark Kiddle-Morris Ron Hanton
7 th June 2018	Safe road user	Margaret Dewsbury Mark Kiddle-Morris Ron Hanton Julie Brociek-Coulton Sarah Butikofer
17 th July 2018	Review and draft recommendations. Safe speeds and safe vehicles	Margaret Dewsbury Ron Hanton
3 rd October 2018	Review the draft committee report	Margaret Dewsbury Julie Brociek-Coulton

5.4. **Overview**

The first session focused on an overview of the key issues, the options for improving understanding across organisations of the variables which influence road safety, how we monitor performance, plan our communications and influence road user behaviour. It also gave the context to the KSI target set in 2009 of 308 for 2020 and introduced the safe systems approach.

5.5. **Safe roads**

The second session focused on the Norfolk road network and the council's responsibilities and challenges. It examined how we influence the behaviour of users through the design of the road and considered the restraints which limit resources to prioritise road maintenance over other considerations. It also highlighted the need to innovate and test low cost road safety improvements. Potential actions considered were how we communicate highways and network functions more effectively by coordinating with and integrating road safety messages and the introduction of wider intelligence and data on 'safe roads'.

5.6. **Safe Road User**

This session considered the complexity of road user choices, behaviours and characteristics. Much of the road safety activities across the partner agencies are focused on road users. It explored options for improving resources in the community, changing the focus of the existing multi agency groups which are split around road user types, and finding ways to influence commuters and review and refresh the campaign focus.

5.7. **Safe speed and safe vehicles**

Consideration was given to the level of resource required to review the speed policy, which adheres to the national policy. The session focused on how a better public understanding and acceptance of existing speed limits could reduce casualties, and how costly engineering measures can be. The use of cameras and enforcement on site is effective but limited due to the size of the network and stretched enforcement resources.

Another consideration was area wide trials. We briefly reviewed the model that the council had hoped to pilot in North Norfolk, and the potential to test new approaches and evaluate their impact, which would be possible within the context of the existing speed policy.

Recommendations:

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Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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Appendix 1 The safe system approach

