

MEETING:	ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	13 SEPTEMBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	SAFER ROADS PARTNERSHIP – UPDATE REPORT
PORTFOLIO AREA:	HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To provide an update to the committee on the work of the West Mercia Safer Roads Partnership and set out emerging issues around future funding.

Recommendation

THAT: the contents of the report are noted and Committee provide comments on the role of speed enforcement and speed cameras in Herefordshire.

Key Points Summary

- Speed enforcement at core sites has resulted in a uniform reduction in drivers exceeding the speed limit.
- Speed enforcement at two pilot community concern sites has provided mixed results with significant improvements at A417 Ashperton but no sustained speed reductions at A4103 Fromes Hill.
- Feedback from the West Mercia Crime and Safety Partnership Survey 2009/10 indicates that Herefordshire residents cite speeding traffic in their neighbourhood as the most common issue to be addressed.
- Funding for the Safer Roads Partnership is at risk as it forms part of the Area Based Grant. An in year cut to the Specific Road Safety Grant has taken place and future funding will be determined through the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Alternative Options

- 1 Not applicable.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Steve Burgess, Transportation Manager (01432) 260968

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 Not applicable

Introduction and Background

- 3 A report was provided to Committee in November 2009, setting out the role of the Safer Roads Partnership (SRP), membership and its relationship to the Council's road safety strategy as set out in the Local Transport Plan. At that meeting Committee resolved to seek a further update of the SRP activity later in 2010.

Key Considerations

Speed Enforcement Performance – Core Sites

- 4 A summary of the performance at the core speed enforcement sites is provided in Table 1, below. The list of sites comprises those which were still active at least until 2008/9.

TABLE 1: Enforcement at Core Sites

Site name	Speed limit	Before enforcement		Most recent data		% change in those exceeding speed limit	change in 85th % speeds
		% exceeding speed limit (%)	85th percentile (mph)	% exceeding speed limit (%)	85th percentile (mph)		
A40/ Pencraig/ Herefordshire	50	36	57	34	54	-2	-3
A4103/ Lugg Bridge to Lumber Lane/ Hfds	60	15	60	2	52	-13	-8
A4103/ Stiffords Bridge to Storridge/ Hfds	50	21	51	12	49	-9	-2
A4110/ Three Elms Rd/ Hereford	30	53	34	13	30	-40	-4
A417/ Parkway/ near Ledbury	40	72	51	66	49	-6	-2
A465/ Allensmore/ Herefordshire	60	20	62	16	60	-4	-2
A465/ Aylestone Hill/ Hereford	30	21	35	11	29	-10	-6
C1319/ Yazor Rd/ Hereford	30	43	34	25	32	-18	-2
A40/Lea, Herefordshire	30	57	36	16	31	-41	-5
A438/ Staunton on Wye, Herefordshire	60	15	58	Follow up surveys to be completed			
A49/ Harewood End/ Herefordshire	40	55	47	46	45	-9	-2
A49 Callow, Herefordshire	60						
A49 Moreton-on-Lugg, Dinmore and Queenswood	60						

- 5 All sites where enforcement has taken place have seen a reduction in drivers exceeding the speed limit. The biggest reductions were seen at A40 Lea and Three Elms Road in Hereford. In addition, all sites had seen a reduction in 85th percentile speeds ranging from -2mph to -8mph (at the A4103 Lugg Bridge).

Speed Enforcement – Community Concern Sites

- 6 Preliminary data is available for the pilot 'community concern' sites which have been trialled at A4103 Fromes Hill and A417 Ashperton. Community concern sites are locations where there is a proven speeding problem, typically in villages, but unlike 'core sites' these sites do not require a history of accidents for their justification. The SRP established a number of trial sites across the West Mercia Constabulary area in 2009/10 and into 2010/11 to help develop its approach to providing enforcement at such locations. The preliminary data for these sites is provided in Table 2 and 3 below.

- 7 The preliminary surveys which have been carried out at both locations present a mixed view of their performance. There has been a significant reduction in vehicles exceeding the speed limit at Ashperton (Table 3).
- 8 The community concern site at Fromes Hill (Table 2) has not been effective in terms of reducing speeds. The SRP noted that site was very different in character to the Ashperton site and introduced clearer signing to identify the potential for enforcement activity. However, consultation with local residents carried out by the SRP indicated support for the enforcement but locals noted that it was only effective when the mobile camera was present. There was an expression of interest in a fixed camera.

Table 2: Preliminary Data for Fromes Hill Community Concern Enforcement Site (40mph)

A4103 Fromes Hill			
Site launched 12,Oct,2009 (Speed limit = 40mph)			
Data collected	85th percentile* (mph)	Mean speed (mph)	Vehicles exceeding speed limit (%)
29 July to 06 Aug 09	46.5	39.8	35
15 Jan 2010	47.3	40.5	43.2
Vs pre launch by %	1.7%	1.8%	23.4%
Vs pre launch by mph	0.8mph	0.7mph	
Note data collected in January affected by weather and RTC, not reliable data, do not use			
27 Jan 2010	45.2	38.7	30.4
Vs pre launch by %	-2.8%	-2.8%	-13.1%
Vs pre launch by mph	-1.3mph	-1.1 mph	
09 Mar 2010	48.9	42.1	49.5
Vs pre launch by %	5.2%	5.8%	41.4%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.4mph	2.3mph	
19 Mar 2010	49.1	42.2	50.1
Vs pre launch by %	5.6%	6.0%	43.1%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.6mph	2.4mph	
31 Mar 2010	48.6	41.6	46.7
Vs pre launch by %	4.5%	4.5%	33.4%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.1mph	1.8mph	
07 Apr 2010	49.1	42.2	49.9
Vs pre launch by %	5.6%	6.0%	42.6%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.6mph	2.4mph	
30 Apr 2010	49.2	42.5	52.3
Vs pre launch by %	5.8%	6.8%	49.4%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.7mph	2.7mph	
13 May 2010	49	41.7	50.4
Vs pre launch by %	5.4%	4.8%	44.0%
Vs pre launch by mph	2.5mph	1.9mph	
21 Jul 2010	47.9	41.4	44.2
Vs pre launch by %	3.0%	4.0%	26.3%
Vs pre launch by mph	1.4mph	1.6mph	
03 Aug 2010	47.9	41.4	43.5
Vs pre launch by %	3.0%	4.0%	24.3%
Vs pre launch by mph	1.4mph	1.6mph	

Table 3: Preliminary Data for Ashperton Community Concern Enforcement Site (30mph)

A417 Ashperton, Herefordshire			
Site launched 22 Feb 2010 (Speed limit = 30mph)			
Data collected	85th percentile* (mph)	Mean speed (mph)	Vehicles exceeding speed limit (%)
12 Aug to 19 Aug 09	44.7	37.2	85.5
30 Apr 2010	43.2	35.2	73.5
Vs pre launch by %	-3.4%	-5.4%	-14.0%
Vs pre launch by mph	-1.5mph	-2mph	
13 May 2010	40.9	34.2	69.1
Vs pre launch by %	-8.5%	-8.1%	-19.2%
Vs pre launch by mph	-3.8mph	-3mph	
03 Aug 2010	42.3	35.4	76.7
Vs pre launch by %	-5.4%	-4.8%	-10.3%
Vs pre launch by mph	-2.4mph	-1.8mph	

* To determine the speed of vehicles travelling on a road we use the industry standard of the 85th percentile speed. This is the speed that 85% of vehicles travel at or below

West Mercia Crime and Safety Partnership Survey 2009-10

- 9 Analysis of the West Mercia Crime and Safety Partnership Survey 2009/10 is now complete and has provided important feedback in terms the public's attitude to traffic as an issue in local neighbourhood areas. The survey was posted to a random selection of over 60,000 residents in the West Mercia Force area and just under 14,000 responses were received. The survey was conducted between June 2009 and April 2010.
- 10 The results of the survey indicate that of a list of 23 provided issues, speeding traffic was cited as the most common concern for Herefordshire residents. This was followed by (in order): rubbish/litter; underage drinking; dog mess; and groups of people loitering. In addition, when asked which three issues would people wish to be addressed first speeding traffic was the top choice followed by: rubbish/litter; people using drugs; cars parked dangerously; and underage drinking.
- 11 The results for Herefordshire are mirrored across the West Mercia Force area where speeding traffic was the most commonly cited issue to be addressed in local neighbourhoods.

Funding Issues

- 12 In June 2010 the new government announced substantial in year savings which would be made through reductions in revenue and capital expenditure for local authorities. The overall savings amounted to £6.2B which would need to be found within the year 2010/11. An indication of how local authorities might make these savings was set out in a note provided by Government and this identified a reduction in the Road Safety Revenue Grants (which were introduced to fund safer roads partnerships throughout the country) of 27%. Table 4 below sets out the previous years' funding provided to SRP and the overall Road Safety Revenue Grant from which the contribution has been made. As can be seen, the contribution to the SRP has taken up most of the available grant. In 2010/11 the grant allocation of £326k was top sliced by the Herefordshire Partnership (as were all grants included in the Area Based Grant) by 6% resulting in available

grant of £306k. When applying the suggested 27% reduction it means that the grant is reduced by a further £87k. Whilst the Herefordshire Partnership still has to determine how the wide range of cuts for 2010/11 will be passed on to various service areas of the Council and delivery partners, the SRP is working on the scenario that its contribution will reduce by the full £87k resulting in a contribution of £197k for the year. The SRP has indicated that it will be able to continue the planned level of activity in Herefordshire by drawing on income from other sources.

Table 4: Herefordshire funding contributions to the West Mercia Safer Roads Partnership

£000s	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<i>DfT Road Safety Revenue Grant</i>	317	329	331	306* 219**
<i>Contribution to Safer Roads Partnership in West Mercia</i>	264	280	275	197

*Represents DfT contribution of £326k with 6% top slice applied by Herefordshire Partnership

**Represents 27% or £87k reduction on original allocation based on Government in year cuts for 2010/11

- 13** Chart 1 (below) provides an indication of the relative contributions to the SRP from the 4 funding highway authorities. These contributions are based on the proportion of enforcement activity which is allocated in each area – Herefordshire has 13% of the activity and hence provides 13% of the contribution. Worcestershire and Shropshire provide significantly greater contributions of around £1.5M per year.



- 14 Whilst most highway authorities appear to be waiting for the details following the Comprehensive Spending Review a couple of authorities have already withdrawn funding from their road safety partnerships. Swindon Borough Council has withdrawn funding to the Wiltshire and Swindon Safety Camera Partnership and Oxfordshire County Council has withdrawn its funding from the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership.
- 15 The government has provided some indication of its thinking on speed cameras through a letter issued in June by Mike Penning – the Junior Minister for Transport. The letter states that whilst camera operations will have a continuing role the government will want to ensure that local partners are accountable to local voters for the decisions they take on the location of cameras and the scale of camera operations and for the financial consequences of decisions. The letter goes on to state the revenue grant for road safety will be reviewed as part of the wider rationalisation of funding support for local authorities.

Next Steps

- 16 The level of contribution to the SRP for 2010/11 is still to be determined following the government's reduction in funding to local authorities in 2010/11. The Herefordshire Partnership Board is due to meet early in October to consider a report which should determine this year's allocations. In advance of this, the SRP has acknowledged that it could continue with its planned level of enforcement for the remainder of 2010/11 if the Herefordshire contribution were to reduce by the full £87k which has been cut from the Road Safety Revenue Grant.
- 17 The future beyond the current financial year is less certain. The government is due to announce its Comprehensive Spending Review on 20 October 2010. It is anticipated that this will provide the overall funding position for local authorities but individual government departments (including the Department for Transport) are likely to need an additional couple of months to set out detailed spending proposals for specific service areas.
- 18 Whilst there is a great deal of uncertainty over the future funding position with respect to the SRP, the SRP and four highway authorities which make contributions from the current Road Safety Revenue Grant (Herefordshire, Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire and Worcestershire) are engaged in ongoing discussions on future options. The SRP is also reviewing its activity and has presented ideas and options for future delivery. It would not be helpful to formally review the options until we have a clearer understanding of the likely future funding.
- 19 The Committee's comments on the role of speed enforcement and the use of speed cameras in supporting the Council's objective to reduce road traffic casualties would be welcomed.

Community Impact

- 20 None as a result of this report. However, the uncertain future of the West Mercia SRP is likely to have community impact, particularly those locations where speed enforcement provided by the SRP has taken place in recent years.

Financial Implications

- 21 None as a result of this report

Legal Implications

- 22 None as a result of this report.

Risk Management

- 23** The Council needs to maintain a range of interventions to help tackle road safety. Engineering and educational interventions can be delivered directly by the Council. The provision of enforcement can only currently be undertaken by West Mercia Police or the Safer Roads Partnership. The uncertainty over future funding for the SRP increases the risk of a reduction in enforcement activity and hence a potential reduction in the effectiveness of the road safety strategy for the County. It will be important to maintain ongoing discussions with West Mercia Police and the SRP over the coming months to clarify how appropriate levels of speed enforcement can be maintained in the County to support our overall strategy to further reduce road traffic casualties.

Background Papers

- None identified.