

Safer Roads Campaign

Chiltern Local Committee

4 April 2001

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1 Purpose of report

- a To update the Local Committee on the hypothecation pilot project currently being undertaken in the Thames Valley Region.

2 Proposed Action

- b The Local Committee is invited to:
 - i. NOTE the progress of this pilot project so far;
 - ii. REQUEST that all Local Councils inform their representative groups of the details of the pilot project and of the encouraging early results.

3 Supporting Information

- c In 1996 a study into the cost benefit analysis of speed and red-light (safety) cameras demonstrated that, for every pound spent on camera activity, five pounds in benefits were generated in the first year alone. The benefits were generated from savings to society and in also the emergency services and health authorities. It also acknowledged that those agencies funding the camera activity were not receiving any of the income from operating the activity and therefore there was no incentive to reach an optimum level of camera use.
- d In December 1998, the DETR took a policy decision (together with the Treasury, Home Office and other central government departments) that fine revenue from safety cameras could be used to fund the installation and ongoing enforcement. The process was termed hypothecation but is now also referred to as 'netting off'.
- e In 1999, local partnerships were invited to express an interest in bidding to become a pilot area to test the practicality of using a proportion of the fine income from fixed penalties to help fund increased camera activities.

- f In preparing the bids, the local partnerships had to bear in mind the intended aims of the project and the strict rules set by the Treasury. These included:
- A partnership framework must be in existence between the Police, Magistrates' Clerk and Highway Authority(ies) with all parties being signed up to the principles of the project;
 - Must aim to reduce casualties – **NOT** be a revenue generator;
 - Must be based on **additional** effort;
(Note: It was not be possible to recover costs already incurred or any costs it had been intended to occur as part of our ongoing use of safety cameras)
 - Revenue collected must be ring-fenced and must not exhaust fine income;
 - Any start up costs must be found locally.
- g The County Council, in conjunction with the Police, Magistrates' Court and the other eight highway authorities in the Thames Valley Region prepared a business case based on these rules and submitted it to DETR in late 1999. Thames Valley Police led the preparation of the business case and the County Council is the lead local authority representing and co-ordinating the interests of all the highway authorities in the partnership area.
- h The business case was based on using the existing cameras and housings more often and to greater effect rather than introducing new sites. This recognised the concern that the existing housings were not being used to their full potential. The business case target for casualty reduction was that the number of KSI (Killed & Seriously injured) accidents would be reduced by 4% per annum for the duration of the project. This is in line with the national casualty reduction target of 40% by the year 2010.
- i The business case was accepted by DETR in January 2000 and the two-year pilot project began on 1 April 2000. It is one of only eight pilot projects nationally and its success or otherwise will determine whether hypothecation will be rolled out nationally.
- j Since the start of the project, a steering group has been established to oversee the project and a project manager has been appointed to run the project. As it is not possible to increase the use of every camera housing, those sites that have a continuing poor casualty record have been receiving priority for greater use. Approximately 12 of our existing 51 camera sites fall into this category and are now loaded very regularly. The other sites are used less frequently but are still serviced.

- k At the end of December 2000, the third quarter of the first year ended. The following data (for the whole Thames Valley Region) is an extract of that submitted to DETR as part of their ongoing auditing of the pilot projects:

1999			2000			
	Casualties	Accidents	Casualties	change	Accidents	change
Fatal	128	122	135	8.96%	121	-0.80%
Serious	1293	1050	1181	-8.60%	992	-5.50%
All KSI	1421	1172	1316	-7.30%	1113	-5.00%
Speed related			Speed related			
Fatal	32	30	28	-12.50%	26	-13%
Serious	269	213	247	-8.10%	201	-0.56%
All KSI	301	243	275	-8.60%	227	-6.60%

Comparison of the first 9 months of the project against same period in 1999

- l As can be seen, the data is encouraging as KSI casualties have been reduced by 7.30% over the first nine months of the project and speed related KSI casualties by 8.60%. Our target was 4%. Speeds have also reduced and year-end data is presently being collected to more accurately quantify these.
- m In Buckinghamshire, the data for the last nine months is even more encouraging than the regional data as indicated in the table below:

1999			2000			
	Casualties	Accidents	Casualties	change	Accidents	change
Fatal	31	30	23	-26%	22	-27%
Serious	312	253	250	-20%	207	-18%
All KSI	343	283	273	-21%	229	-19%
Speed related			Speed related			
Fatal	6	6	3	-50%	3	-50%
Serious	67	52	64	-5%	49	-6%
All KSI	73	58	67	-8%	52	-10%

Comparison of the first 9 months of the project against same period in 1999

- n Although we are still in the early stages of the Safer Roads Campaign these initial results indicate that the campaign is having an effect. However, no one can afford to be complacent. We all must continue to drive responsibly to ensure casualties are reduced even further as part of the campaign for safer roads.

- o The latest indications from DETR is that the pilots have achieved what they were set up to do and that hypothecation will now be rolled out nationally. There are also indications that the rules will be amended, in the light of the experience gained by the pilot projects, that means that **all** camera activity will in the future be able to be hypothecated. This is potentially very good news and the County Council will continue to work with the other partners to achieve even further casualty and speed reduction as part of the Safer Roads Campaign.

- p Further reports on progress will be reported to the Local Committee as appropriate.