

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Update on roads policing recommendations

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Author: Clare Gray, Scrutiny Officer,
Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel



Roads Policing

At a Panel meeting in April there was an item on roads policing and the agenda and minutes for this meeting are attached via the following link:-

<http://sbdc-spider2.southbucks.gov.uk/democracy/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=289&Mid=2546&Ver=4>

The recommendations made under this item are as follows:-

That a Working Group be set up to look at roads policing and that requests for information on this area be sent to the Deputy Chief Constable. Areas for consideration could include:-

- More transparent documentation on their strategy on roads policing
- Consideration of a business case for average speed cameras
- Improved dialogue between police and local authorities on the siting and decommissioning of speed cameras and the need for a Deployment Strategy
- Consideration of developing a Thames Valley wide partnership to ensure better co-ordination of information across the Thames Valley

Following the meeting Panel Members drew up some questions (set out at the end of this report) that they wanted to ask the Chief Constable on roads policing and suggested setting up a Member Working Group. However, there were concerns about the resourcing of this.

Road Safety Summit

TVP organised a Road Safety summit on the 19th September 2017 to bring together a number of key stakeholders, to include representatives from Local Authorities. 'The aim of the Road Safety Summit was to provide an opportunity to update partners as well as to explore new ideas for improving how to work in partnership to promote Road safety across Thames Valley.' This summit brought together a number of stakeholders to the table as the responsibility for road safety/cameras etc varies across the Thames Valley and TVP want to be as inclusive as possible. The event was a great success in bringing partners together to discuss joint concerns.

Some of the questions asked by Panel Members after the April meeting were considered to be operational rather than strategic but the road safety summit addressed some of the issues within these questions. Following the road safety summit it was agreed that an Officer Working Group should be set up to look at how excellent partnership working could be achieved within limited resources. The terms of reference have yet to be agreed but some of the areas that were suggested were as follows :-

- Terms of reference, membership e.g road safety/engineering
- Calendar for joint campaigns and operations to ensure more effective impact across the Thames Valley
- Drafting a framework for roads policing to provide information for the public and to manage expectations with the limited resources available.
- How best to share data and templates
- Sharing information on the de-commissioning of camera sites, update on trends
- Having joint processes with Hampshire Authorities
- Community Safety Partnerships to link in with road safety
- There is a small pot of funding available which can be used for partnership working

General

- In the last 18 months roads policing had lost 39 road policing officers across Hampshire and the Thames Valley (18 of those were from the Thames Valley).
- Every 2/3 days someone is killed in Hampshire/Thames Valley, with approximately 130 fatal accidents a year and 2000 people seriously injured
- Not only do roads police officers attend and investigate collisions they also deal with serious organised crime (such as county lines where they can deny criminals use of the road) and terrorism.
- If there are no injuries there is no requirement for the police to attend an accident.
- The Transport Laboratory provides an evidence based approach to work and validate the approach used by Thames Valley.
- Police allocate resources according to THOR Threat, Harm Opportunity and Risk as there are more enforcement requests than resources to deal with each one. Enforcement was linked to reducing the number of killed and seriously injured (ksi statistics)
- Some Forces have lost their Road Safety Policing Unit entirely.
- The Highways Agency reported that Government were pushing forward the removal of traffic calming to improve the environment
- There is a likelihood of further savings being required which may mean another reduction in roads policing officers.
- Nationally, there was an increase in the number of armed response vehicles and an increasing number of firearms officers to respond to the terrorism threat.

Published Information/Strategy

Current information on the Thames Valley Police website is as follows:-

<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/vehicles-and-road-safety/road-safety/>

TVP have just starting using a new website which will take time to populate. Roads Policing are planning to publish their Strategy on speed cameras on the new website. However, their Strategy for Speed Cameras is addressed through a Tasking and Co-ordination Group who look at the evidence base for risk and harm.

Structure of roads policing

As such the TVP Roads Policing department is collaborated across both Hampshire and Thames Valley forces. It has not been an easy process to bring the two Forces together with different structures for delivery. There are two main strands, operational (the officers that deploy to incidents) and specialist (the officers that prevent and investigate). The Roads Safety team sits under the specialist strand headed up by Chief Inspector Henry Parsons. They are currently in the process of realigning the management of some teams but the structure chart below gives an overview of what they are in the process of implementing (remembering it is across both Hampshire and Thames Valley). The Armed Response Vehicle Teams and Roads Policing are both located in the Joint Operations Unit which is an advantage in that they can utilise each other's resources for deployment purposes. However, if a Firearm's Officer is attending a collision and is called away to another incident requiring a Firearms Officer they need to abide by Article 2 of the Human Rights Act which requires the police to take reasonable steps to protect an individual's life if they know that there is a real and immediate risk to them.

There is legal guidance that funding from driver awareness courses should be used for cost recovery processes and to promote road safety initiatives e.g Safe Drive Stay Alive. Because of economics of scale and efficiency savings a small pot is available which will be discussed by the Officer Working Group to look at partnership initiatives.

Information on the road policing team:-

Chief Inspector				
PROACTIVE AND INTELLIGENCE	ROAD SAFETY and PARTNERSHIPS	VEHICLE RECOVERY	COLLISION INVESTIGATION	SUMMARY JUSTICE
Inspector		Police Staff Manager	FCIU/SCIU Inspector	For Review
Commercial Vehicle Unit	Safety Camera Unit	4 x Police Staff	Serious Collision Investigation Unit	
1 x PS	1 x Police Staff Manager		6 x PS	
4 x PC	2 x SCU Supervisors		24 x PC	
	20 x SCU Operators		1 x Police Staff Reviewer	
Operations and Intelligence			3 x Police Staff Investigators	
1 x Police Staff Manager	Road Safety Team		2 x Administrators (Job Share)	
5 x Police Staff	Police Staff Manager			
	1 x PS		Forensic Collision Investigation Unit	
Pro-active Unit	2 x PC (RSC)		2 x Police Staff Supervisor	
2 x PS	1 x Senior Analyst		15 x Investigators (Currently 9 PC, 6 PSI)	
16 x PC	2 x Researcher		1 x Police Staff ISO Accreditor	
	1 x Police Staff Admin/FOI			
	Traffic Management		Forensic Vehicle Examination	
	1 x Police Staff Supervisor		1 x Police Staff FVE Supervisor	
	6 x TMO		6 x FVE	
			1 x Administrator	

Prosecutions

In terms of speeding there are three ways to address this; driver awareness course, driving licence points or going to court and it is a balancing act to use resources effectively. Thames Valley Police have a high prosecution rate. There are 150,000 captures per year. The courts are operating at agreed levels. Single Justice Procedures use other measures to relieve capacity in the courts – this has only just been implemented so has not been used yet.

DASH cams were useful for enforcement in the right areas but police forces do not have enough resources to look at all evidence produced by DASH cams (Gwent were using Dashcam data).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-40998946>

Thames Valley Police were interested in the Met Police model who were changing their web platform so that members of the public could make allegations of poor driving and could upload DASH cam material. As there was not enough resources to look at all evidence, this would be reviewed on a risk and harm basis to prioritise.

In France drivers were fined on the spot when they committed a crime on the road so there was no court process.

Enforcement

One Authority expressed concern about resources for enforcement and the need for road side support. TVP reported that because of their limited resources it was difficult to provide a large amount of resource across the Thames Valley. However, it was important that they co-ordinated operations to ensure that the maximum impact was achieved. A suggestion was to bring in neighbourhood policing teams to help with road safety and parking issues and also the Fire Service, particularly as they were now looking to purchase smaller vehicles which could be utilised for roads policing and road safety training through their VR headsets (this could be used for Community Speed Watch).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2016/fire-virtual-reality>

Digital Camera Replacement Programme

The digital cameras replacement programme is only about to proceed and the majority of cameras are still using wet film. This Programme is part of a five year plan. They will speak to each Local Authority on which cameras are de-commissioned and the reasons for this. Siting of digital cameras will be assessed by the highest road safety impact. TVP will liaise with Local Authorities on relevant sites on evidence based information.

The Director of Road Safety Analysis reported that if speed cameras were taken away within day one there was a slight increase in speed but within 4/5 days there were huge increases. A camera being present was enough of a deterrent to slow vehicles down.

Average Speed Cameras

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-36399408>

TVP is looking at mobile average speed camera technology but currently do not think it is cost effective to purchase and are concerned that these cameras may displace the problem elsewhere. The Director of Road Safety Analysis reported that average speed cameras work well for hot spots. The West Midlands PCC has undertaken a project on average speed cameras with West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

[http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/news/news-2016/average-speed-enforcement-\(ase\)-cameras-to-be-switched-on/](http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/news/news-2016/average-speed-enforcement-(ase)-cameras-to-be-switched-on/)

20mph speed zones

20mph zones need to be self-enforcing with appropriate traffic calming. TVP would generally not agree to 20mph zones where there was no evidence on casualties and if this was the case TVP would object to 20mph zones. They would enforce if there was evidence data to support their use.

Community Speed Watch and Community Concerns

Concern was expressed about the speed of data analysis from TVP following a Community Speed watch scheme. There is an issue with the current software being used (it required police volunteers who had undergone the vetting process to analysis the data and resources were limited) and TVP are looking to implement new software which includes a module for community speed watch. This would mean that data would be readily available. This would hopefully be achieved in the next 2/3 months.

Most community concern sites are dealt with quickly by a simple email. If they continue to be a concern the Local Authority representative will be aware of this and will be able to update relevant Members accordingly. Some of these concerns are discussed at Neighbourhood Action Groups

Questions from Panel Members to TVP

Structure of roads policing

- Please could you provide some general information on income and expenditure for roads policing (including income from penalties and expenditure on back office functions)
- PCC spends £0.450 on Safer Roads Partnership last year – do you know what this was for?
- Some background on the structure of roads policing unit would be helpful including no of roads policing officers/constables across the Thames Valley
- Do you know how other areas structure their roads policing – the Panel were particularly interested in how West Midlands, Herts and Northamptonshire PCC have become involved and funded roads policing e.g Herts PCC has a £1.3 million Road Safety Fund which is ring fenced income generated from the Camera, Tickets and Collisions Unit over the past two years.

Prosecutions

- TV is one of the top forces for enforcement prosecutions and often the courts do not have any more capacity to undertake enforcement. Whilst this is a good thing is there an argument for more court capacity? How are Single Justice Procedures used for traffic prosecutions and has this had an impact on numbers ?
- How is Thames Valley doing on prosecutions for fatal collisions?

Partnership

- Do you know how other areas fund RS Partnerships ?
- Have you any views on the most cost effective way of co-ordinating information across the Thames Valley to share good practice?
- Would you consider the benefits of having a published Thames Valley wide Road Safety Framework which could include a deployment strategy for speed cameras ?

Speed cameras

Fixed

- Please provide the review criteria underpinning the assessment of the 300 housings available to the local Highway Authority. The loss of 180 useable speed camera sites by 2020 is significant and for example in Reading they rely on a mix of speed management measures.
- The locations of the fixed speed cameras are important to the overall speed strategy - how does TVP propose funding the removal of redundant housings after 2020?
- Where sites are reviewed annually could this lead to the possibility of a further reduction of fixed sites over and above the 180 already proposed?
- Is there a process for considering additional fixed camera sites which may be funded by the local Highway Authority as part of a wider scheme? If a local authority is willing to provide capital financing how will TVP share in the revenue costs by “recycling” proceeds of penalties?
- Will TVP commit to using the new digital cameras in a 20mph zone?

Mobile

- How can a local Highway Authority request “community concern” sites?
- Can the flow chart used to assess community concern sites be shared with local Highway Authorities and where is this list of community concern sites held?

Other areas

<http://www.hertscommissioner.org/2016-06-pccs-first-successful-road-safety-fund-bid-takes-shape-on-broxbournes-a10>

Mobile average speed cameras have been deployed by the Hertfordshire's Strategic Road Safety Partnership following successful application from Hertfordshire Constabulary. The application was the first to get the green light under the £1.3 million Road Safety Fund in which the Commissioner ring-fenced surplus income generated from the Camera, Tickets and Collisions Unit over the past two years for specific reinvestment into road safety activity across Hertfordshire.

<http://www.northantspcc.org.uk/pcc-to-announce-major-new-road-safety-initiative/>