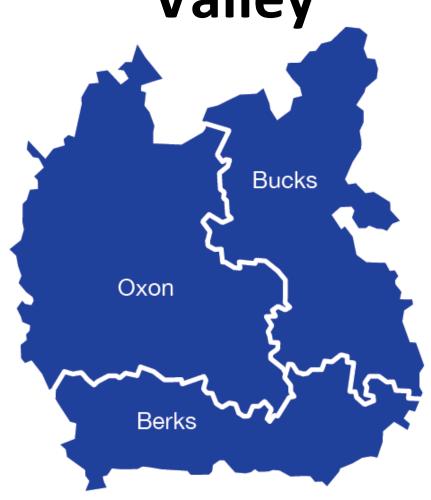# Road Safety Task and Finish Group Report into Road Safety in Thames Valley

Chair's Foreword

The Panel assigned the PCP's Road Safety Task and Finish Group to examine Road Safety in Thames Valley and how the PCC is overseeing the Chief Constable's performance.

Road Safety partnership work is a joint effort to lower the frequency and severity of road traffic collisions and their outcomes. It involves various organisations, such as the police, local authorities, and Community Speedwatch volunteers, who all contribute to ensuring road safety. By collaborating, they can pool resources, expertise, data, and best practices to devise and implement effective measures that can deter speeding and address the causes and effects of road crashes.

I appreciate the assistance of the PCC and the witnesses who participated in our sessions, which gave Members a better insight into Road Safety in the region and the work of different agencies in safeguarding our roads.

I would like to especially thank the Officers of the Roads Policing Unit who invited some Task and Finish Group Members to join them on patrol (Ride Alongs), which enhanced the understanding of the work they carried out to keep our roads safe.

Background

At the Police and Crime Panel meeting on 15 September 2023 approval was given to the setting up of a Task and Finish Group to look at how the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was holding the Chief Constable to account in relation to Road Safety in Thames Valley.

Councillors Brazier, McLean, Rowland, Shaik and Webber were appointed as Members.

Three witness sessions were held where oral evidence was received from Thames Valley's Police and Crime Commissioner, Jacob Nurdan – Office of PCC, Mike Bettington - Chief Inspector for Roads Policing Unit, Cheryl Evans - Senior Road Safety Officer, West Berkshire Council, Neil O'Leary - Network Safety Team Leader, Buckinghamshire Council, Mac Cleland - Slapton Community Speedwatch, Derek Phillips - Speedwatch co-ordinator for Astwood and Hardmead, Milton Keynes, PC Lee Turnham – Thames Valley Police Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator and Richard Owen - Agilysis Chief Executive Officer.

Reference was made to the National Police Chiefs' Council National Roads Policing Strategy for 2022-2025 in which all stakeholders who have a role within roads safety or roads policing could align to, that will make roads safer for everyone and can help reduce death and serious injury on our roads.

This strategy is built around four key pillars of activity:

• Preventing harm and saving lives

• Tackling crime

• Driving technology and innovation

• Changing minds.

The Task and Finish Group's Terms of Reference were:

1.   To look at the work of the Roads Policing Unit which is joint force between Thames Valley Police and Hampshire Constabulary.

2.   To receive information on the progress made in developing the PCC Road Safety Strategy.

3.   To understand the role that TVP, local authority highways' teams, local authorities, schools etc have in relation to road safety.

4.   To look at how the PCC is holding the Chief Constable to account to align to the National Policing Strategy of preventing harm and saving lives, tackling crime, driving technology and innovation and changing minds.

5.   To review the PCC's Community Speedwatch (CSW) schemes which operate throughout Thames Valley and to understand what makes a successful CSW scheme.

6.   To understand the current challenges and barriers which prevent the successful delivery of CSW schemes with positive outcomes.

7.   To understand the partnership work and communication which takes place between CSW volunteers and TVP to prevent speeding and improve safety.

8.   To look at what improvements need to be made to the CSW scheme to improve outcomes.

9.   Given concerns for community volunteer's safety and privacy, is Community Speedwatch, which can put volunteers at risk, the best or only answer for monitoring speed.

10.   What resourcing would be needed for the TVP to be able to sufficiently monitor speed themselves and remove the community volunteer element?

11.   How best can 20 mph zones in small residential areas be monitored as the lowest level of priority for police enforcement in terms of traffic speed issues? This aspect can greatly aid with bringing confidence back to neighbourhood policing at a local level.

12.   To receive information on the strategy to deal with the problem of "car cruising" which take place throughout Thames Valley.

Road Safety Strategy

Police and Crime Commissioner

The work on the road safety strategy has been led by the Office of the PCC. The draft has been circulated internally but would be finalised within the next month (end of December) to share with stakeholders and having considered some of their priorities through the consultation.

The challenge was around where value could be added, such as improving the communications and links between highways authorities and the police operationally.

Reference was made to the very good local links in different parts of Thames Valley, but they did not always work as well as sometimes they could. The different types of local authorities in the Thames Valley, particularly two-tier systems, presented challenges in terms of ensuring the right people were together at the right operational and strategic level.

A definite recommendation from the review of the strategy would be the better coordination and communication to the different local authority tiers in Thames Valley as well as including National Highways in any discussions. There was always a fine line between policy setting and enforcement.

In relation to speed limits, for example, this could be a little bit challenging, The PCC said he wanted to be very clear on the policy around the position on enforcement because he was well aware that some individuals within Thames Valley Police gave confused messages to the public and to local authorities, around enforcement.

There were also others who may misinterpret a message and may read the message the way they wanted to interpret it.

For 20 mph speed limit roads, the Police will enforce these like other speed limits, however, the Police had to operate with the same resource which meant they could not enforce all contraventions.

What it does mean is that if a Roads Policing Officer, with a calibrated camera was at the site when a motorist was doing 30 mph in a 20 mph speed limit zone, this should be enforced. This would be in the same way as someone doing 40 mph in a 30 mph speed limit zone. However, TVP did not have the resource to police every road, or to update all of the old cameras that would need to be replaced because they cannot calibrate to 20 mph where they existed.

TVP would enforce where it was feasible but the conversation between highways and police was really important because, where possible the risk required designing out as opposed to just enforcing the way out of the risk.

There was a balance around what local authorities wanted to do, within their remit around different ways of getting people to travel e.g., cycling and walking. This was not a police responsibility. The police needed to work around whatever the strategy was locally and whatever people were doing.

The PCC said he would share some of the performance reports (collision data, KSI data, data on how resources were used) and would be happy if Members of the Police and Crime Panel attended the Joint Collaboration Governance Board, which was the meeting which was held jointly with Hampshire and Thames Valley which looked at the Joint Operations Unit.

The PCC also pointed out that roads policing officers were also involved in other crimes which was enabled through the road network and were picked up by ANPRs. Around the Thames Valley borders, negotiations took place with neighbouring forces on the positioning of ANPRs.

This was reflected by 19% of arrests made by Roads Policing officers which were not related to roads policing. Quite understandably, the public attention was naturally around speeding, but there were crimes of driving with no insurance, no licence, noise, reckless driving etc.

Unfortunately, there were road accidents due to speeding or reckless driving which resulted in fatalities. It should also be noted that any strategy moving forward should come in line with national recommendations, a strategy based on a Safe System DOES NOT focus on fatalities alone which is historically what the police always revert to.

In conclusion, the Road Safety Strategy would soon be published. This would be scrutinised, and the PCC would hold the Chief Constable to account on the performance of the Roads Policing Unit in meeting the objectives and on performance.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Road Safety Strategy be shared with the Police and Crime Panel.
That better coordination and communication take place on the strategy to the different local authority tiers in Thames Valley, to Highways / Road Safety Teams within local authorities and National Highways.

There was some complexity about balancing some of those issues which are local authority issues versus what are policing issues, but this would be resolved through the consultation with individual stakeholders.

Issues raised

- Data on performance statistics would be helpful, particularly around the enforcement of 20 mph in urban areas. In response, Members were informed that most local authorities will be able to access speed data collected by Ordinance Survey as part of their mapping licencing agreements. Buckinghamshire Council have added it as a layer on GIS and have been reviewing this over the last few months and data does correspond reasonably well to data collected **Speed Data added to NGD | News | Ordnance Survey**
- Road accidents and serious accidents - Road accidents and serious accidents - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) provided data.

- Reference was made to "Objective Three – Effective" from the Joint Operations Unit "Keeping our Roads Safe" strategic document and effective visible policing patrols to provide visible public presence to reassure motorists.
- The officer representative from West Berkshire Council commented on the consultation which had taken place on the strategy and that the consultation had not addressed the highway statutory duty significantly enough for West Berkshire Council to be able to provide an informed decision. There was significant movement back to partnership working across the country with successful partnerships having obtained advice from experts like Agilisys and the Road Safety Foundation and the PCC should be leading in a fact-finding mission along the same lines as Warwickshire and Cambridgeshire.
- West Berkshire felt the rating scale and success criteria was confusing as there were different levels of agreements with the area of work where the questions were being asked which would mean that the data received analytically would be inconsistent and not meaningful.
- The consultation did not separate highway authority responsibilities from parish and town council responsibilities.
- The notification to complete the consultation was too short and some of the questions were confusing.

In response to the issues raised about the consultation on the Road Safety Strategy, it was acknowledged that there had been issues around the consultation timescale. It had been extended further by a week and a half. All comments made on the consultation had been documented and taken on board. The partner consultation was live from 4th – 18th September. The Thames Valley Road Safety Working Group were given 20-29th September to respond.

Issues Raised

- Reference was made to the Road Safety Working Group where the terms of reference have not been reviewed since 2018. Some of the discussions which took place in the working group meetings, did not meet some of the operational challenges within local authorities in line with activities of the police. This was why fundamentally things were getting done wrongly, such as 20 mph zones.
- Speed camera sites were being decommissioned without local authority knowledge. There were no joint discussions on such things as enforcement hours where technically a local authority has a huge amount of data resources to ask the police to do more.
- A high proportion of fatalities and serious injuries on roads are caused by younger drivers and it would be interesting to see data, both nationally and in Thames Valley on the relationship between the age of a driver and the likelihood of them being involved in a serious accident. From Berkshire group dashboards – there were younger driver statistics via Reported road casualty statistics in Great Britain: interactive

dashboard, from 2018 (dft.gov.uk). Also, there was further road collision data available to councils on the Agilysis platform. https://agilysis.co.uk/acuity/

- The impact of driving awareness courses which motorists took when convicted of motoring offences were important in terms of reducing offences such as speeding.
- "Drive to Stay Alive" is a safe driving scheme which had been around for 18 years. This has been recently superseded by a new young driver intervention scheme called GoDrive. https://www.godrive.org.uk/ GoDrive offers new drivers and passengers the information, advice and practical tips they need to stay safe on the roads. This would be available to all schools and colleges within the Thames Valley and Hampshire. It will also have the capacity to reach wider bespoke audiences relating to young driver offences under a section 59 or court justice system. The evaluation of this project will be available around April 2024.
- Car cruising was a problem in areas across Thames Valley, but this would be covered in another witness session.

Police and Crime Commissioner Response

Thames Valley has got the biggest motorway network in the country. National Highways has withdrawn resources away from coverage of A Roads, such as the A34. The A404 was their main focus because there was a service level agreement in place which put more pressure of the Roads Policing Unit.

Fatalities and serious injury incidents had reduced yearly from 2020; fatalities down from 44 to 28.

There needed to be a balance of public perception of speeding enforcement demand against where the real risk was, urban areas. Of course, that is not to say there is no risk to those in town centres and in the villages. Fatalities took place mainly on main roads and not outside schools where there were 20 mph speed limits.

Car cruising – There was a definite risk and there was some definite criminality, but there was also a nuisance factor, so "car meets" resulted in complaints. Enforcement around car meets were generally complaints about anti-social behaviour, although there were undoubtedly some elements of criminality within them. Thames Valley Police had an escalation process for this. Task and Finish Group were informed that Car Cruising would be covered in greater details at another witness session.

There was engagement from Police Community Support Officers to escalate to local policing, if there were issues, such as road traffic offences which were more likely to be committed at those meets.

The PCC commented on the importance of education, and schools' intervention as he agreed that statistically, younger drivers were at greater risk to themselves. There were officers within local policing areas, who went into schools to deliver messages, although this needed to be better co-ordinated and joined up better.

Thames Valley Police and Hampshire Constabulary Joint Operations Roads Policing Unit

The Thames Valley Police & Hampshire Constabulary Joint Operations Roads Policing Unit is a collaboration between the two police forces to provide a specialised unit for road policing. It is the largest non-metropolitan joint specialist unit in the UK. The unit is responsible for delivering targeted enforcement and education to make the roads safer and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured. The unit covered Hampshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire.

The aim of the Roads Policing Unit was to deliver targeted enforcement and education providing a deterrent designed to make the roads safer and reduce the numbers of persons killed or seriously injured. The unit aims to deliver a high-quality roads policing service in accordance with the National Police Chiefs' Council 'Policing our Roads Together 2018 – 2021' paper.

Mike Bettington, Chief Inspector for Roads Policing in Thames Valley reported that the Roads Policing Unit covered the three counties of Thames Valley and was located in two bases for each county, Bicester and Abingdon in Oxfordshire, Three Mile Cross and Taplow in Berkshire and Milton Keynes and Amersham in Buckinghamshire.

The Unit covered the motorway network of the Thames Valley which was the biggest in the country as well as the local policing areas.

There was also a Serious Collision Investigation Unit that managed most of the fatal road traffic collisions investigations, a small Road Safety Tasking Team, a small proactive team and a small Commercial Vehicle Unit. Each county had an Inspector in charge of the response resources. There was also an Operations Inspector and an Investigations Inspector.

Roads Policing also provided support to all the local police stations and supported them. This was in addition to the road safety work and partnership work.

There were three teams at each base, and each team had only got six or seven officers, so the resources were limited.

The Serious Collision Investigation Unit covered the whole force area and dealt with the serious collisions and those which resulted in fatalities.

They were Family Liaison Officers within the department who had effectively, a secondary role and supported all families through the process.

Whether a case was either going to the Coroner's Court or through a Criminal Justice route, usually to Crown Court, there were lots of those investigations which would last between 12 months and two years, depending on the complexities and the scale of the investigation.

There was a proactive team which consisted of a sergeant and eight police officers, to cover the whole of Thames Valley and who were spread across locations around the Force area. They were also involved in supporting local police initiatives.

Murder investigations were looked at, which included work with South East Regional Organised Crime Unit, the National Crime Agency or Border Force.. This was because of the flow of vehicles around Thames Valley on certain strategic road networks of organised criminality on journeys around the country.

There was another small team within the Department of Specialisms which was a commercial vehicle unit comprising of a sergeant and four police constables.

The Unit looked at things like immigration crime, which was of an organised nature, and looked at the enforcement of illegal activities which involved commercial vehicles moving illegal goods such as drugs, firearms, etc.

Included in this was looking at the enforcement side around long-distance lorry drivers, for example you could have a UK registered lorry with a foreign cab driven by a foreign driver that is travelling anywhere in the UK from another country. This could be complex and involved knowledge of legislation and regulations.

There was the Tasking Team, which consisted of a sergeant and six police officers and covered the whole Joint Operations Unit and were involved in road safety. They moved around each day and each week to different bases around Thames Valley or down into Hampshire to support the local base teams with road safety initiatives.

Thames Valley Police followed the National Police Chiefs Council Road safety calendar, with every month a different theme. The messaging was put out to the public followed up normally by a week or two of enforcement action around that key theme.

The demands on the base teams, if they were not at a collision or supporting local police areas with criminality, would be on their core enforcement work.

There was a performance regime imparted to the team in terms of the expectations, so there was a set level for them to go out and enforce the fatal 4 (speed, seat belts, phones and drink or drug driving).

Every month, an analysis is undertaken of all the collision figures for the past month and the three months prior to that to see which roads present the greatest risk to the public and road users around Thames Valley. This determines where resources would be concentrated.

The Chief Inspector for Roads Policing commented that there was a perception issue of speeding versus the reality sometimes. It was his job to try and manage people's expectations on preventing speeding, particularly with a limited resource at his disposal.

Reference was made to work which was taking place with Oxfordshire County Council and the City Council on serious injury collisions on the A420 in Oxfordshire. Work was taking place around plans for roads, the design, layout changes and where suitable cameras might be positioned in the next 12 months or so, because there was evidence to show that there were speed related, fatal collisions. Speed cameras alone were not always the solution.

There had to be a mix between TVP, the local authorities and highways working on the layout of roads.

Statistics for the Roads Policing Unit

Officers from Roads Policing and response teams attended 3,228 road traffic collisions last year. 1,007 arrests were made relating to drink driving, 1,220 for driving whilst distracted by a mobile phone and enforcement action was taken against 1,862 people for not wearing a seatbelt.

The detection of distraction offences, such as driving while using a mobile phone, have increased by 78%, while seatbelt offences are up by 72% when compared with the same six-month period of last year.

In terms of speeding, 48,794 offences were detected as speeding by officers in camera vans, while 38,821 were detected speeding by fixed cameras.

Detection of speeding offences has increased by 91% from the same period last year, while fatal collisions are down slightly on this time last year and down even further on the previous year.

Issues Raised

- The Road Safety Officer from West Berkshire Council referred to the importance of collectively working as a partnership with local authorities, with transparency required on which were chosen for police attention. Understanding why there was a collision at a certain point based on a perspective of all partners needed to be a much wider conversation rather than just basing around a fatality at a certain site, this means following a Safe System approach.

The causation factors around that investigation looked at what has led to that collision taking place. It could be excess speed, road layout or a combination of factors.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That better coordination and partnership work take place between Roads Policing and local authorities on sites chosen for Police attention.

- Reference was made to parts of the Thames Valley where Sentinel was used. This was a device to capture data compared to using handheld guns or static SIDS. The Task and Finish Group was informed that there would be a separate witness session providing details on current technology which can assist in improving road safety.
- The work of Community Speedwatch (CSW) and the proposal in Milton Keynes for Police Community Support Officers getting involved. The Task and Finish Group was informed that there would be a separate witness session on CSWs. Reference was made to funding being available in the PCC's Road Safety Fund which could potentially fund for support for CSW.
- If there was an ongoing issue of speeding in an area, how could a local authority tackle this? Prevention was the key and speed cameras would be a preventative measure.

Patterns of speeding would be looked at through speed data from handheld devices from CSW volunteers before consideration was given to the deployment of cameras. Escalation could be done through calls to 101 or reported online. Alternatively, the local route could be speaking to the local sergeant.

- There appeared to be a discrepancy between what local authorities were doing in relation to speed data. With CSW schemes and SIDs there was a lot of data which could be used by the Police.

Feeding this data to the Roads Policing Unit would be useful and provide more evidence to initiate possible mitigation measures.

RECOMMENDATION 3: That all speed data from local authorities, CSW volunteers and SIDS be fed into the Roads Policing Unit.

Chair of the Task and Finish Group's experience of taking part in a "Ride Along" with the Roads Policing Unit

The Chief Inspector for Roads Policing invited Members of the Task and Finish Group to come along on a Roads Policing Unit "Ride Along". Here is the Chair of the Task and Finish Group's, Cllr Peter Brazier's account of his experience of taking part in a "Ride Along" –

"8th December I went on a ride along with PC Alistair Bennett on the TVPRP evening shift 4pm until 1am. I met Alistair at Amersham and after doing his routine checks he took time to show me their approach to roads policing and the technology they use. I was surprised how much

time he has to spend writing reports, filing paperwork and then having to follow up cases. It was 2 hours of paperwork before getting in the car.

We left Amersham and headed for Beaconsfield and up the M40 towards Wycome. It was quiet on the roads for a Friday commute.

He was called to an incident in Aylesbury, so we made a blue light run from High Wycombe and got as far as Stoke Mandeville where it was called off. It was a thrilling experience but at no time did I feel unsafe. My take away from this is that this is a vital skill for the drivers to have as they have to cover such large areas and be able to respond to incidents some distance and on mostly single lane A & B roads is paramount. We did that journey in under 10 minutes, it would normally take over 30. It reassured me that they can get from one end of the county to the other very quickly.

I was generally impressed how well the public responded to our vehicle on the blue light run. However, some seemed hesitant to react in an affirmative way. There were times Alistair had to hesitate while the driver was trying to get out of the way but was clearly dithering. I wonder if how to act when seeing vehicle on blue lights should be part of basic driver education. If it cannot be incorporated into testing for obtaining a licence, it might be a worthwhile addition to speed awareness training.

We were then called to an injury collision where a motorbike rider was knocked off by an inattentive driver in a residential area of Aylesbury. We were second on the scene after a fire unit. Ali secured the scene by closing the road while the fire officers administered first aid. Alistair also started doing basic scene analysis recording witness statements taking pictures etc. The ambulance arrived and the patient dealt with and taken to SMH. However, we had to remain at the scene until the recovery truck arrived to remove the motorbike. While the time spent (90 minutes total) 30 was sat in the car waiting for the recovery, while Ali was able to use this time to fill out paperwork we should really have been on the road. Local PCs came and perhaps could have done that but left the scene.

We took a short break at Aylesbury Station for a meal and headed back out to patrol Aylesbury as it was now gone 10pm. We made several traffic stops gave a warning for no seatbelt, eventually we spotted a driver reverse out of a side road onto the main road and drive erratically, he was pulled over, blew 88 at the roadside and arrested, he also had Cocaine on him, no insurance, a suspended licence. This time, we had to wait for a local PC to come and recover his vehicle, this took at least 20 minutes sitting at the roadside. Then, despite being literally 100 yards from Aylesbury Police Station, we were told the custody unit was full and he had to call Wycombe, there was some negotiation but eventually we got allowed to take him there, I do not know what would have happened if they said no. We had to drive him to Wycome police station at normal speeds which took 45 minutes as we had to stop for a crashed van to check it was OK.

We arrived at 11:45 and had to sit in the car for the custody Seargent to come out. Still didn't have him booked in after 30 minutes. I left at 00:15 and Alistair said he didn't get back to Amersham until 4am. He was worried about the elapsed time but the arrested driver still blew 77.

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Observations.

Aylesbury custody being full before 11pm on a Friday night (two weeks before Christmas) is surely a concern. It resulted in this officer and his vehicle being off patrol for hours. In this 12 hour shift, he took one drink driver off the road. Is that good? We did help manage the collision scene but even there, the time dealing with it seems disproportionate. I felt like we should have done more.

I think that there must be an opportunity to get these officers "low cost" administrative help with the paperwork and admin which would have them spend more time on the roads, doing what they should be doing.

On a positive note, I was impressed and reassured by the professionalism and attitude of the entire team I met that evening. As a guest, I was looked after and felt safe at all times. I've thanked Alistair personally, but my thanks also goes to the wider TVP team".

PCC's Community Speedwatch (CSW) scheme

What are Community Speedwatch Schemes?
https://communityspeedwatch.org/FRONT-v2-Home.php

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH is a national initiative where proactive members of local communities join with the support and supervision of their local police to record details of speeding vehicles using approved detection devices.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator pointed out that community speed watch online had not been adopted by all police forces in England and Wales.

Registered keepers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit are contacted - initially with a letter explaining the potential risks and consequences of their dangerous behaviour. Repeat offenders will receive a visit from the Roads Policing officers.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator commented that there is currently no formal agreement with other police forces to carry out home address/business interventions. Beyond these friendly gestures, focused enforcement and criminal prosecution follow based on the collated evidence.

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CSW Online is open to all police forces nationally, on behalf of the police and communities, to organise and join up to Community Speedwatch activity. The organisation coordinates responses based on the collated data from all groups involved. Speeding is not just a local phenomenon - and neither is Community Speedwatch.

Police and Crime Commissioner

In relation to the Community Speedwatch initiative, this is a scheme of which empowered volunteers monitor the speed of vehicles in their local areas. Community Speedwatch provided communities with equipment and training to monitor speeding in their area.

Championed by the Office of the PCC, in partnership with Community Speedwatch UK, speedwatch groups in the Thames Valley are provided with a starter kit on a permanent loan basis, including a speed detection device, to help volunteers assist in the battle against speeding concerns. **https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-speedwatch/**

Community teams undergo a few training sessions online and police risk assessments of sites for carrying out sessions are undertaken to ensure safety at the roadside.

An online platform allows group-related activities to be self-regulated via an online calendar and provided vehicle make and model recognition training. DVLA pre-checks logged registration numbers for authenticity before automatically passing data on to the police for further processing.

Speedwatch starter kits provided by the Office of PCC included: - a Bushnell Velocity Speed gun, a Tally counter, 3 Hi-vis Jackets, a Clipboard, a large plastic container, tuning fork and a roadside sign (to display whilst conducting sessions).

This is currently procured via Community Speedwatch Online, except for the roadside sign which is locally procured.

The PCC was keen to support the scheme because it provided a good opportunity for escalation, where repeat offenders can be identified and pursued by the police. Reference was made to the example of West Berkshire Council's Traffic & Road Safety Team, where the local authority has taken a lead in the scheme, and this was the benchmark that all local authorities should aspire to.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator commented that West Berkshire Council do not conduct Community Speedwatch in the same way that individual groups do. They did not have a visible deterrent as no operators are at the roadside and monitoring equipment (Sentinel) is used in a different way (pole mounted).

It should also be noted that CSW within West Berkshire Council is data led and focusses on roads within the district where data identifies vehicles travelling at above 25% ACPO guidelines. This forms part of the council's Speed Intervention Strategy, it also considers the

health and safety of volunteers in their area as these groups should NOT be exposed to sites where they are at high risk. Pre and post intervention data determines success as well as ensuring local groups understand how they contribute to a wider strategy to tackle community.

> **RECOMMENDATION 4: That West Berkshire Community Speedwatch Scheme should be considered as good practice by other local authorities to support local volunteer groups. As such ensuring all stakeholders are fully on board with community concerns around speeding.**

As of 19 December 2023, there are currently 279 active groups operating across Thames Valley; with 1,918 Community Speedwatch volunteers registered on the system.

The PCC referred to Community Speedwatch sitting within the policing portfolio where support is given to the generation of letters to motorists who had been found to be exceeding the speed limit. There were the benefits of streamlining the process of sending letters to speed drivers and reducing the human dependency on it.

The Partnerships Delivery Officer of the Office of the PCC shared some figures on the positive outcomes of Community Speedwatch and mentioned the strategy document that he had drafted, which included a consultation piece with the Community Speedwatch members and a data analysis piece with other partners.

In the past year, in excess of 54,000 vehicles have been reported to Thames Valley Police; and of that 94.86% of those drivers who have received a first letter regarding their speed have not gone on to receive further correspondence (over the last 12-months). This would suggest that they have not been detected speeding within this period. However, the lack of repeat offences could be due to either to the effectiveness of the speedwatch system, or simply because of the limited time spent by CSW Volunteers monitoring traffic.

> **RECOMMENDATION 5: It was agreed that there was potential for more consistent monitoring and follow-up to improve the CSW system's effectiveness and the PCC was asked to implement this with TVP.**

The PCC referred to the potential benefits of linking the DVLA data with the Community Speedwatch data, and how that could enable more tailored and effective letters to the drivers who speeded near schools or other sensitive areas. He also mentioned the idea of having police staff with calibrated cameras among the speedwatch volunteers, to increase the deterrent effect and the possibility of enforcement. This could be progressed through the Road Safety Fund.

> **RECOMMENDATION 6: That the PCC be asked to investigate linking DVLA data with Community Speedwatch data and using police staff with calibrated cameras alongside the Community Speedwatch volunteers to improve the scheme.**

There were also plans to launch a new initiative to increase the credibility and support of Community Speedwatch groups in 2024.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator, who managed the volunteers, would be moved from Roads Policing to Citizens in Policing to work with a larger team and provide holiday cover.

The PCC commented that signage could be provided for the Community Speedwatch groups, depending on the location and the number of roads. He said that he has identified a supplier and wants to have a consistent brand for the signage.

The PCC acknowledged the aspiration of some groups to get a fixed or mobile speed camera, but he also challenged them to focus on reducing the speed and stopping the speeding, rather than counting the tickets.

Volunteers were praised for their work and said that they were a deterrent for speeding drivers, who slow down when they see the high-visibility jackets. He also said that he supported the escalation process, which involved sending warning letters and tickets to repeat offenders, but that the ultimate goal is to achieve safer road speeds, not just to issue penalties.

Senior Road Safety Officer of West Berkshire, a local authority that is involved in the community speedwatch initiative presented details of some of the challenges and successes of the initiative. These included: -

- Using data from different sources to identify the problem areas and the driver behaviour patterns.
- Moving from Community Speedwatch to mobile camera sites where the speeding is persistent, and education is not effective.
- Working closely with Thames Valley Police and other partners to improve the letter process and the enforcement actions. Currently it was taking TVP 5-6 weeks to send out letters.

The PCC responded to this, and his aspiration was that letters be sent out within 2-3 days and that the automation of the system is the key to achieve that. He also suggested improvements could be made to the process, such as linking the registered keeper's postcode to the letter. The current system is based on human limitations and volunteers, and that the letters are taking about three weeks to be sent out, which is better than before, but still not ideal. The system should be integrated with the community messaging service to inform the residents about the Community Speedwatch activities.

At the 19 December meeting of the Task and Finish Group, the TVP Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator added that letters cannot be sent out in the timeframe of 2-3 days as there needs to be a period allowed to when submissions are uploaded onto the system. No letters can be processed for a minimum of 4 days so that date order of the letters and offending times is in the correct order.

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Reducing the time period down would add more time issues to the roadside volunteers. There has always been a 3-week period in which letters are produced.

Discussion took place on a new system upgrade that would significantly speed up the processing of letters. The current delay of four to five weeks could be reduced to two to three days with this new platform. TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator has been working on this system for about 18 months, conducting extensive testing to ensure it does not interfere with the criminal justice system. Once approved, the new system can process up to 100 letters per minute.

Community groups can access their data, which is GDPR compliant, within about three to four hours. However, there are challenges with coordination in Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, and in Berkshire, with West Berkshire being the only area on board.

Neighbourhood policing teams were removed from the Community Speedwatch organisation due to their dynamic workload. The new platform empowers people to manage their own workload.

- The formation of a Community Speedwatch forum group to share information and updates with the community groups and get their feedback.
- There were large numbers of speeders who were not resident in the target villages of West Berkshire, which meant that education and publicity related to CSW only reached a small proportion of the overall target audience. It should also be noted that CSW is not operated by other Thames Valley authorities which made co-ordination difficult.
- CSW originally designed as a "low level speed solution to a low-level speed problem", but there is evidence that the resources available (financial and human) are close to capacity under the existing arrangements.
- In some cases, community members can be resistant to evidence which suggests there is no speeding problem.
- Some drivers are not influenced by letters or even getting points on their licence.
- Difficult to get time commitment from neighbourhood police officers given their other priorities.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator added that neighbourhood policing teams were taken out of CSW organisation due to the dynamic workload they encountered.

- Inability to account for the wider impacts of CSW regarding driver behaviour elsewhere and over time.
- Local community buy-in – this is a key factor in the success of CSW as changing the behaviour and perceptions of local people has been one of the main objectives of the pilot schemes.
- The involvement of the police has been critical for the delivery of CSW, both on-site and through the data analysis procedures.
- In Durham, there were schemes, where the police used Community Speedwatch vans as part of their strategy.

- The initiative is led by TVP, and that the signage information is available on the Community Speedwatch website. Local authorities should be consistent and work alongside TVP in tackling speed.
- There were concerns about the disconnect between TVP and the local authority, and the unrealistic expectations of some community groups who want more camera sites. TVP are not asking the local authority to get involved and there is a confusion about who is responsible for the issue.
- There was frustration with the lack of communication and cooperation from some community groups, who do not seem to value the team's support or follow the aims and objectives of the scheme. Groups relied too heavily on TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator. Some groups became discouraged when they do not see any changes or results from their efforts.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator commented that this is all available on their platform with full analysis, and data available to them. Recently, long-term analysis has been added to each group, enabling their efforts to be seen.

Reference was made to the postcode data which West Berkshire used to create a map of the origin of speeding drivers. The data was obtained from the police stations before the current system was in place, and that it was very useful for identifying whether the drivers were local or passing through, and for initiating mobile camera sites based on Community Speedwatch data. However, this postcode data was no longer available under the new system.

The Senior Road Safety Officer of West Berkshire expressed her frustration with the lack of data sharing and visibility of the Community Speedwatch programme. Community groups used to be able to see the local issues and escalate them, but now they cannot access the system or the data. Neighbourhood policing teams also cannot access the system either. She says that they have offered to plot the postcode data of the speeding drivers, but the police have not taken it up.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator in response said that working within GDPR rules, the postcode data is a bone-of-contention, by supplying post codes this then can identify a person/house to a small area, even smaller if the postcode is to a hamlet or rural farm etc. It is important to note that other road safety platforms use postcode plotting to establish trends and clusters without any GDPR issues of course any data released needs to be handled responsibly and at a level where identification can not be obvious.

To supply postcodes there is also an issue of those vehicles, which are either leased or on personal payment plans, as the vehicle will not be registered to them. ISAs (information sharing agreements) would need to be addressed, agreed, and signed prior to this taking place. However, only information for policing purposes can be shared within any one agreement.

> **RECOMMENDATION 7: That the PCC be asked to look at the use of data sharing (postcode data) between TVP and local authorities and CSW schemes.**

Reference was made to the College of Policing's document, Routes to speed safety: Understanding and measuring the contribution of Community Speedwatch, which explored the effectiveness and impact of the national Community Speedwatch. The project undertaken by Staffordshire University aimed to inform evidence-based practice for tackling speed by providing an evaluation of the use and effectiveness of CSW in reducing speeds, empowering communities and influencing perceptions of legitimacy/safety in Gloucestershire. https://www.college.police.uk/research/projects/routes-speed-safety-understanding-and-measuring-contribution-community-speedwatch

The **network safety team leader of Buckinghamshire Council** agreed on the importance of postcodes for identifying and targeting the speeding issues in different areas. In Buckinghamshire most of the complaints about speeding are redirected to TVP and that they suggested the option of Community Speedwatch.

Community Speedwatch needed to be regular and sustained to have an impact and that Buckinghamshire Council support it but had limited input in terms of monitoring the results.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator added that Buckinghamshire Council have full access to the results of every group registered within Buckinghamshire.

Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) and engineering works programmes were shared with TVP to coordinate their efforts, but other than that, they operated separately.

In relation to the relationship between the Community Speedwatch and the local authority in terms of speeding issues, they operated mostly separately, except in terms of funding. The local authority mainly relied on enforcement data to deal with speeding complaints, and that speed cameras and traffic calming were not their priority.

There was support for the use of speed indication devices (SIDs) and mobile vehicle activated signs, which are funded and maintained through the Community Board programme.

Community Speedwatch Volunteers

A voluntary member of the **Slapton Community Speedwatch** (CSW) team, which monitored the traffic speed on the B488 road that runs through their village provided details of the scheme.

- There were two cameras in this Ward. There are six teams, Ivinghoe, Ivinghoe Aston, Ledburn, Cheddington, Marsworth and Slapton (Horton) and each team have the camera for seven days at a time. TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator added that these teams have separate groups on the platform.
- There were seven volunteers in the team, and he attended at least one session, lasting about an hour, per day during our week.
- They were required to operate in pairs not solo and only in daylight. Volunteers wore high visibility jackets and the road approaching the camera has a triangular
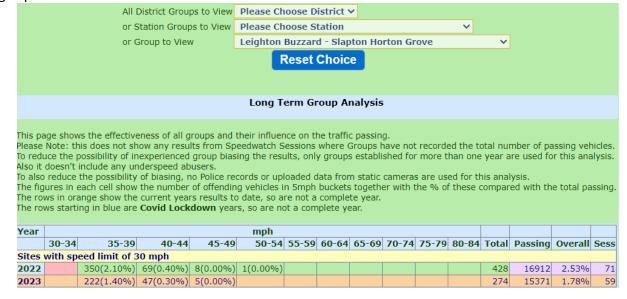
'Speedwatch' sign to give fair warning to oncoming traffic that they are approaching a Speedwatch area.

- Volunteers did not operate when it rained, for safety reasons.
- With the device, volunteers collate a log of HGVs that pass through and the results are inputted into a spreadsheet with the data later inputted into the Community Speedwatch programme.
- The report is looked at by TVP. Reports were also made on vehicles with no road tax to TVP. This information is gleaned during the vehicle checking process.
- There is an assumption that all vehicles that are recorded get a letter appraising the driver that they have been observed exceeding the speed limit, where and when.
- Having collected three such letters, the final letter should be delivered by a uniformed police officer who will emphasise the errors of his/her ways in stern terms.
- There is an add on in that if someone is caught speeding by a roadside camera or a police speed van, he/she will receive a fine or sentence reflecting his/her repeat offender habits.
- How could it be improved? It would be good to receive feedback on submitted reports of motorists who received letters. This would provide motivation to the team.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator added that the groups have access to all of this, however TVP do not use the online lettering system, it is conducted in-house.

- Dissatisfaction was expressed with the new forms which had to be filled in for each session, which were time consuming and did not reflect their work.
- In the village, there was a high average speed and a high percentage of vehicles above 35 mph.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator countered this and said, as can be seen, the group has reduced the excess speed down to 1.78% above 35 mph and reduced the number of high speeds offenders.

All District Groups to View	Please Choose District ∨
or Station Groups to View	Please Choose Station ∨
or Group to View	Leighton Buzzard - Slapton Horton Grove ∨

Reset Choice

Long Term Group Analysis

This page shows the effectiveness of all groups and their influence on the traffic passing.
Please Note: this does not show any results from Speedwatch Sessions where Groups have not recorded the total number of passing vehicles.
To reduce the possibility of inexperienced group biasing the results, only groups established for more than one year are used for this analysis.
Also it doesn't include any underspeed abusers.
To also reduce the possibility of biasing, no Police records or uploaded data from static cameras are used for this analysis.
The figures in each cell show the number of offending vehicles in 5mph buckets together with the % of these compared with the total passing.
The rows in orange show the current years results to date, so are not a complete year.
The rows starting in blue are **Covid Lockdown** years, so are not a complete year.

Year	mph											Total	Passing	Overall	Sess
	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84				
Sites with speed limit of 30 mph															
2022		350(2.10%)	69(0.40%)	8(0.00%)	1(0.00%)							428	16912	2.53%	71
2023		222(1.40%)	47(0.30%)	5(0.00%)								274	15371	1.78%	59

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The coordinator of a **Community Speedwatch team in Astwood and Hardmead** made the following points:

- The team had seen some positive results, but also some challenges, such as belligerent offenders, delayed warning letters, and increased speeding in the summer months. He suggested that the police could help by reducing the time it takes to send out the letters and enforcing the speed limit more effectively.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator reported that this group's activity records have been forwarded to the mobile enforcement vans which now operate in the area.

- A report was used, to show the results of their sessions to the parish council and the community.
- There were issues with the online form and the lack of police enforcement for speeding drivers.
- Team was becoming disenchanted as regular speeding data was provided to TVP (12% above 36mph threshold) and not seeing positive outcomes. There were metrics and evidence for prosecutions.

The PCC replied that he would investigate the problems on the form and the escalation of policing. He acknowledged the shared responsibility of the police and local authorities to tackle speeding. By providing the data through communities which have Community Speedwatch schemes will help local authorities.

> **RECOMMENDATION 8: That consideration be given to the creation of a forum for Community Speedwatch volunteers to enable them to give feedback, to share current good practice and to receive refresher training on the full functionality of the on-line system.**

Reference was made to the use of TruCAMS, a Home Office approved piece of equipment, which could be used by Thames Valley Police to tackle speeding. This was a portable device that does not require any hard standing. However, the PCC explained that it was expensive to train officers to use it and there was only one officer who was trained to do so and there were three pieces of equipment available. Thames Valley Police has recently removed this device from their toolkit leading to additional pressures on Roads Policing and Mobile Camera Van teams. It also will disadvantage more rural areas where a mobile camera van cannot be sited.

> **RECOMMENDATION 9: The PCC be asked to explore the use of funding from the Road Safety Fund for training officers to use TruCAMS and update the current equipment (3-6 devices available).**

There was a discussion on using TVP officers in schemes, and the PCC reported that neighbourhood policing could be involved in Community Speedwatch, but it is not mandatory. An LPA Commander had also offered support for PCSOs to use the database and the speed

gun. This area has been addressed and a meeting with the PCSOs has been arranged, however police email addresses cannot be registered on the CSW platform.

20 mph Zones

The PCC was asked about the effectiveness of Community Speedwatch in urban areas, especially in 20 mph zones, where enforcement did not take place. The PCC acknowledged that some improvements need to be made to Community Speedwatch.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator commented that CSW has always been possible in 20 mph limits, however, there is a difference between zones and limits, some zones do have to have a TRO (traffic regulation order) in place, but those that revert back to a 30 mph after certain periods must be treated with caution. The setting of speed limits was the responsibility of the highway authority and required TROs.

In relation to TROs and Community Speedwatch, there was a lack of engagement between TVP and the local authority to get that information, therefore the volunteers feel that they lack information and this needs to improve.

Community Speedwatch is mainly about education, and escalating them to the appropriate stakeholder to consider any additional action (enforcement or engineering) . The PCC commented that it is better to have Community Speedwatch than not, and that it is a valuable tool for visible community engagement.

The PCC gave his views on speed enforcement and education and reported that he is not in favour of enforcing 20 mph zones across urban areas, as he does not think they are fit for purpose and do not address the real problems of dangerous and reckless drivers.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator provided information on the long-term analysis of speed limits across Thames Valley. In 2021, 18.36% of vehicles were above the speed limit

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threshold. However, through efforts in 2022 and 2023, this figure has been reduced to 15.18%, indicating a 3% drop despite the increase in total vehicles.

It was also noted there had been a significant rise in 2022 due to the introduction of 20 mph speed limits, but this has since decreased as people have adapted to the changes. For the 30 miles per hour speed limit, there has been a slight decrease, showing progress in speed management.

The Senior Road Safety Officer of West Berkshire acknowledged the interest of TVP in an overall analysis of speed limits on roads but as the highway authority responsible for setting speed limits it is something that is the responsibility of the local authority not the police. They highlighted the need for local authorities to consider the specific roads and the number of CSW groups involved in schemes across a district but without any communication between the police and local authorities it is easy for one intervention to counteract another and data sets being skewed .

It was important that each individual site was examined, and that Community Speedwatch is not a blanket solution. It was advocated that there be a more nuanced approach to help communities effectively.

The majority of people do not speed, their intent is often changed based on 'in the moment criteria' this is often addressed with driving awareness courses or CSW. Enforcement should be targeted at those who drive speed without consideration of the safety of themselves or others and particularly when under the influence of drink or drugs, or who drive dangerously or maliciously.

A Member from Reading Borough Council expressed the view of her doubts at the effectiveness and purpose of Community Speedwatch, a scheme that allows volunteers to monitor the speed of vehicles in their area. There were doubts and challenges about implementing the scheme in urban environments, where there were angry and frustrated residents who demanded more enforcement and less education.

The impressive results of a drop of speed over two years was impressive but she questioned whether the amount of work put into achieving this was justified and whether Community Speedwatch was appropriate within urban settings.

The PCC acknowledged that Community Speedwatch worked well in rural areas, but admitted it needed some adjustments for urban settings.

TVP's Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator commented that the health and safety risk assessments for location authorisation must be rigorously implemented as a lot of urban areas have parked vehicles and in some cases no pavements, leaving CSW operators to be in the carriageway, which will not be allowed under any circumstances.

Reference was made to CSW volunteers having to be on the same side of the carriageway as the oncoming traffic, which is always from the right. However, in rural areas with single track roads, the only safe location might be on the opposite side of the carriageway.

Current technology which can assist in improving road safety, e.g. Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS), Speed Indicator Devices (SID), Sentinel, ANPR based average speed checks

Chief Executive Officer – Agilysis

There were different types of speed cameras, including mobile speed cameras, overt ones, covert ones, and Gatso cameras.

The first fixed speed camera was installed in the UK in 1992, over 30 years ago. This was a Gatso camera, and it was initially set up in a 40 mph zone, but fines were only issued for speeds over 60 mph. This camera caught over 1,000 offenders per day when first installed in London.

In 2000, a cost recovery scheme, sometimes referred to as "netting off," began. This allowed police forces and local authorities to claim back some of the fine revenue. This scheme ended in 2006, and management of speed cameras became the responsibility of individual police forces and local authority partnerships.

The number of fixed cameras increased from 1,600 in 2000 to nearly 5,000 by 2007.

New technologies have been introduced since the original Gatso cameras, including average speed cameras and mobile vans. The focus in Thames Valley has been on deploying a fleet of mobile vans to supplement the fixed cameras.

The adoption of "speed on green" cameras, which function as speed cameras when traffic lights are green and become red light cameras when the lights turn red. This dual-purpose technology is used in places like London and Bracknell.

They also provided a timeline of speed camera management in the UK. The government-managed scheme ended in 2007, followed by a four-year period where local authorities received funding. Since 2011, a police run cost recovery system has been in place, funded by

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fees from speed awareness courses. This shift represents a move from a government-funded system to a more locally run and independent one.

There were around 2 million speed awareness courses in the UK last year, which significantly contribute to the funding of speed cameras.

Reports by the Department for Transport and University College London, among others, show a 42% reduction in killed or seriously injured casualties at sites with fixed and mobile cameras, and a 22% reduction in all casualties. The research also shows a 50% reduction at fixed camera sites and a 35% reduction at mobile sites.

Reference was made to work carried out for the RAC Foundation in 2016, which used a more advanced methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of average speed cameras. This study showed a 36% reduction in fatal and serious collisions.

Fixed speed cameras have been shown to reduce casualties and speeds by changing driver behaviour. This is achieved through long-term reduction in vehicle speed.

Speed cameras are most effective in urban areas with lower speed limits, showing an 8% reduction in speeds in 30 mph zones.

A study commissioned by the University of Reading analysed speeds 300 metres before and after speed camera sites. It found a significant drop in speeds at the camera, followed by a slight increase in speed after the camera.

The study also found that in the unenforced direction, there was virtually no change in speeds, indicating that motorists adjust their behaviour based on their knowledge of the technology and its location.

However, when cameras are turned off, as happened in Oxfordshire in 2010, offender rates gradually increased from 1% to nearly 4% over a month.

This analysis suggests that while speed cameras can be effective in reducing speeds and casualties, their impact is limited to their immediate vicinity and is dependent on them being operational. It also highlights the importance of driver behaviour in the effectiveness of these technologies.

Reference was made to a study conducted in 2005 that examined the impact of placing a bag over speed cameras on vehicle speeds at three different locations. The study found that when a bag was placed over a camera, indicating it was not in operation, vehicle speeds increased significantly. When the bag was removed, suggesting the camera was operational again, vehicle speeds decreased.

Also, a similar study conducted in Sussex in 2007, which looked at the impact of damaged speed cameras on vehicle speeds. The study found that when a camera was damaged and presumably not operational, vehicle speeds increased. When the camera was repaired, vehicle speeds decreased again.

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In relation to the use of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) and Speed Indication Devices (SIDs), both were activated by vehicle speed. These devices can display messages like "slow down" or show a happy or sad face depending on the driver's speed. Studies have shown that these devices can lead to a reduction in vehicle speeds, but this effect diminishes over time and disappears completely when the devices are removed.

In conclusion, whilst these measures can have a temporary impact on reducing vehicle speeds, they do not result in long-lasting benefits.

Reference was made to a study by the University of Greenwich; "Safer roads through citizen partnerships: Enhancing road safety through improved use of community speedwatch volunteers" **https://www.roadsafetytrust.org.uk/small-grants-awarded/university-of-greenwich**

A question was asked whether traffic signs might be more effective in rural areas due to less noise and fewer signs, this was a reasonable assumption; however, it was emphasised that these measures have different effects and roles within an overall speed management system. These measures can control people's speeds for a short period of time, but they are temporary and should not be expected to reduce casualties.

It was important to use the right technology for the right reason in the right place. It was suggested that if the goal is to reduce casualties or permanently reduce speeds at a specific location, enforcement measures are necessary. SIDs and VASs can be good for community assurance, especially if one SID can be moved around several villages.

There needed to be a blended speed management approach, understanding the specific goals of the technology, and using overt solutions that drivers can see. There was value in Community Speedwatch for community assurance and education, but not as a long-term speed reduction programme.

The viability of the implementation of average speed cameras in rural villages was considered. In linear rural villages, particularly those on busy roads, it is challenging to introduce cost-effective engineering solutions due to the long, straight nature of the roads. Enforcement is a very cost-effective method for reducing casualties, but it does place a burden on the police to carry out the enforcement and maintain the technology.

There was no support for privately backed speed enforcement as it could lead to enforcement being carried out based on who can afford it, rather than where it is most needed. It was acknowledged that speed cameras are effective in reducing speeds over longer stretches and reducing casualties.

What was the impact of indicated devices on 20 miles per hour limit areas? - There currently was no answer to this question, but suggested that future research might provide insights, particularly from Wales where many 20 mph zones have been installed.

The funding of speed cameras for individual council areas? In Scotland, a fine system is still in place and is managed by the Scottish Government. In other areas, it is up to individual

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police forces and local authorities to make decisions. In Thames Valley, the police lead on this, managing all work, budgets, and risks associated with the system.

The funding primarily comes from the fees from speed awareness courses. There are opportunities for local authorities to discuss with the police if they want to implement new systems, but this is done on a case-by-case basis.

A Member from Milton Keynes shared his experience as a cabinet member of highways in 2014, where approval was given to the purchase of 10 SIDs, which were divided into five teams and rotated around the villages. The initiative was successful but faced two main issues. The data collected by the SIDs was sent off, but there was no feedback or visible outcomes.

Milton Keynes City Council did not take out any maintenance contracts for the SIDs, leading to disrepair when they broke down due to lack of funds for repair. It was advised that the use of SIDs should be under a contract which ensures their continuous use and maintenance. There was the need for feedback to those who install and manage the SIDs.

Car Meets / Cruising, Pavement Parking and Enforcement Of 20 Mph Zones

Car Meets / Cruising

Car meets are "not generally considered illegal" but dangerous driving and anti-social behaviour can be considered offences.

If the manner of driving were to be below that which would be expected of a careful or considerate driver, then that may constitute a road traffic offence.

Generally, organisers of such car meet should notify police and the relevant local authority. This was to make sure that the event runs smoothly and peacefully, considering the local community.

There are car meet enthusiast organisers who believe that there is a place for car meets, providing they are organised in a proper manner and the public are not put at risk.

Therefore, if the behaviour of the group could be construed as antisocial, police have the power to arrest. For example, if those involved are performing stunts, that could cause fear to the public, the police may be called.

As mentioned, car meets themselves are not illegal but, if they start to intimidate the public, causing a fear or concern for their safety, they may slip into this category - illegal.

West Midlands Police are working with local councils to use injunctions to ban car cruising.

These injunctions define car cruising as the act of drivers meeting on the public highway on an organised or impromptu basis to race or show off in their cars. The court injunctions ban

a number of activities and typically linked with car cruising, including speeding, racing or driving in convoy, performing stunts, obstructing the highway, excessive noise, and causing the risk of harm to people or property.

Anyone who breaches the injunction risks being in contempt of court, for which they could face up to two years in prison and a fine.

Officers can also take action against individuals for traffic offences including driving without due care and attention, driving without insurance or driving an un-roadworthy vehicle. No insurance policy covers illegal street racing so many could be uninsured.

Drivers risk losing their vehicle or licence, a fine or even a prison sentence for their involvement in car cruises. Any spectators who refuse to leave could also be arrested.

There are Interim High Court Orders currently in place banning street cruising or street racing across Birmingham and the Black Country.

Any driver, rider or passenger breaching the order could be arrested immediately, and could face up to two years in prison, a fine, or have their assets seized.

Milton Keynes has a city-wide car cruising Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in place, however, due to resourcing constraints both TVP or MK City Council officers are able to attend these events. Reference was made to Sunday evenings at the Network Rail HQ car park where car cruises take place.

Reference was made to licensed car meets, which took place in Northamptonshire, which were run properly, were safe and were ticketed events. This enabled the police to monitor who was there, so effectively there was a blacklist of people that the police have concerns about attending these events because of their involvement with criminality or dangerous driving. These could be effectively banned from those events because those details can be provided to the event organisers in advance. This was an interesting model to operate.

Wokingham Borough Council has passed a PSPO, which it says aims to reduce "anti-social behaviour vehicle use". Between January 2021 and January 2022, the council said, 82 incidents were reported.

The order gives officers new powers to hand out fixed penalty notices (PCNs) of up to £100, or a summary offence fine of up to £1,000, to those who fail to comply with conditions.

Signage totalling £2,000 will be installed in the areas so the order can be legally enforced.

Wokingham Borough Council said it installed CCTV at Carnival Pool car park last summer. Public consultation by the council on the PSPO, carried out between June and July of this year, revealed that 75 per cent of respondents were in favour of implementing it.

The order was approved unanimously by the Council at the meeting of the executive on 29 September 2022.

Pavement Parking

Pavement parking could be banned in England (March 2020)
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51844446

Parking on pavements could be banned in England to help pedestrians, the Department for Transport has said. With the exception of London - where a ban already exists - only lorries are currently prevented from pavement parking.

A consultation took place on Pavement parking: options for change https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking/pavement-parking-options-for-change

As of yet, there has been no legislation in England to prohibit pavement parking.

Enforcement of 20 mph Zones

A pilot initiative in which drivers breaking the speed limit could be issued fines by the council instead of the police is underway. Wandsworth is the first local authority in the UK to be piloting this type of scheme.

Once in force motorists will be penalised if they exceed the 20 mph limit on two busy residential roads in the borough - Wimbledon Park Road and Priory Lane - which are both the subjects of numerous complaints from local people about excessive vehicle speeds.

The Wandsworth pilot is designed to support and not replace Metropolitan Police enforcement of excessive traffic speeds in the Borough – and is a direct response to complaints from local people who support greater levels of enforcement.

The Wandsworth scheme will continue for upto eight months using an experimental traffic order. Offences will be caught on camera and for an initial period only, warning letters will be sent to the vehicle's owners. After this initial period expires, penalty charge notices (PCNs) will be sent instead. The PCN will impose a fine of £130, with a 50 per cent discount if paid within 14 days. Under the council scheme, however, offenders will not receive penalty points on their licence.

Money received from fines will be 'ringfenced' and ploughed back into road safety initiatives in the Borough.

Local authorities in Thames Valley would have to take this forward if they so wished.