

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Council Motions

Portfolio Holder: Various

Officer Contact: Various

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22 July 2020

Reason for Decision

To note the action taken in response to motions which have been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Executive Summary

Motions and other topics have been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for recommendations and comments. Officers have prepared briefing notes on motions have been referred to Overview and Scrutiny from Full Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.9h). The attached reports outline those motions and provides recommendations. The decision of Overview and Scrutiny will then be provided to Full Council and other bodies as appropriate.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the update and recommend the information be sent to Council.

Motion 1: Tackling Speeding

1.1 At the Council meeting on 20th March 2019, the following motion was debated:

“Council notes that speeding continues to be a factor in road collisions and that a pedestrian is four times more likely to die if they are hit by a vehicle travelling at forty miles per hour than they are at 30 mph.

It is therefore imperative the Council working with the Police and residents seek to reduce excessive vehicular speeds in this borough, especially outside schools, on minor residential roads and in rural areas.

Council believes that we should work with our residents’ groups to deter and catch offenders and that we should employ mobile technology in order to do so.

Full Council resolved that the Overview and Scrutiny Board be asked to:

- Identify, with the assistance of District Executives, local police and the Council’s highways officers, locations not currently equipped with a speed camera which might benefit from one for consideration by the Drive Safe Greater Manchester Casualty Reduction Partnership.
- Explore the availability of funding to purchase and deploy mobile speed cameras to catch offenders, change driver behaviour and improve road safety.
- Investigate how the Council and the police can work with community and residents’ groups to establish Community Speed Watch schemes and Community Concern speed enforcement sites in the Borough
- Explore the merits of establishing ‘bus gates’ at sites outside schools and look at establishing a pilot project. (‘Bus gates’ limit vehicular through traffic outside schools to cycles and local buses at the start and end of the school day, with a fixed penalty for transgressors.)

1.2 The Board convened a workshop on 24 September 2019 and discussed the motion with Highways officers.

1.3 The following information is provided in response to the above:

1. *Identify, with the assistance of Districts, local Police and the Council’s highway officers, locations not currently equipped with a speed camera which might benefit from one for consideration by the Drivesafe GM Casualty Reduction Partnership.*
In response members were informed that the introduction of any new safety camera was controlled by Drivesafe who must apply a stringent set of criteria based upon guidance issued by the Department for Transport before any new installation can be considered. It was understood that for a successful application to be made the number and severity of road traffic injury collisions, along with the degree, nature and extent of speeding must be of a particular magnitude. The criteria was laid out in the ‘Safety Camera Handbook’ compiled by Transport for Greater Manchester Safer Roads Partnership.
2. *Explore the viability of funding to purchase and deploy mobile speed cameras to catch offenders, change driver behaviour and improve road safety.*

Owing to the strict Governance in place that controlled the deployment of fixed and mobile Safety Cameras and the associated issuing of Penalty Charge Notices or Summonses to errant drivers. there were currently no means available to Oldham or any other District within Greater Manchester to consider this option.

However, if a particular site, suggested by a GM District, for example Oldham, met the criteria laid down in the 'Safety Camera Handbook' then Drivesafe could consider its introduction as part of a future year's programme. Following a successful application, any costs associated with the purchasing or installation of a camera would fall to Oldham. The costs could be in the region of £35,000 to £40,000 and Oldham would not directly receive any income generated by the camera. In Oldham, as in the rest of the Greater Manchester, fines generated by the various Speed and Red Light cameras godirectly to the Government's Treasury Department. However, when drivers were offered a Speed Awareness as part of the National Drivers Intervention Scheme (NDIS), the monies that are collected are used to support the actual driver improvement courses themselves. In the event of a surplus, the Joint Road Safety Group allocated funding to data-led, evidenced Road Safety Intervention across Greater Manchester. In recent years, Oldham had successfully bid for this funding stream and had introduced a number of Casualty Reduction Schemes that had resulted in reducing the number of injury collisions at sites across the Borough.

3. *Investigate how the Council and Police can work with community and residents groups to establish Community Speed Watch schemes and Community Concern speed enforcement sites in the Borough.*

Currently, the Traffic Management Team at Unity receive speed related correspondence from elected members, businesses, local communities and the general public on a regular basis. Each query is considered on merit by experienced Traffic and Road Safety specialists. Any subsequent investigations will take into account the injury accident record, the availability of speed survey data and the highway conditions on site. In the event of obsolete or absent data, additional surveys are often carried out. If the speeding issue corresponds to the location of an injury collision problem, the matter is given a greater priority often resulting in a bid to the Council's Highways Capital Programme for funding of some form of intervention measures. Most of the complaints that we receive about speeding do not have a road traffic injury problem associated with them. In these instances, the results of the speed surveys are forwarded to the Police for them to consider action. This could result in increased enforcement activity and/or consideration by them as a Community Speed Watch scheme or Community Concern Site.

4. *Explore the merits of establishing 'bus gates' at sites outside schools and look at establishing a pilot project. (Bus gates limit vehicular traffic outside schools to cycles and local buses at the start and end of the school day, with a fixed penalty for transgressors).*

Bus gates have been used across the country, primarily in town and city centres at the start of a bus only route, segregated bus lanes or guided bus routes. These facilities rely upon significant highway engineered interventions coupled with a robust system of back office enforcement that usually employed CCTV control,

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and/or the use of rising hydraulic bollards to ensure compliance.

Consequently, the financial implications for the introduction of a pilot scheme is significant (possibly into six figures). Alternatively, consideration of a much reduced scheme that rely solely upon traditional road signing systems are unlikely to be viable options owing to the lack of Police enforcement and their ability to issue Moving Traffic Offences, leading to driver non-compliance resulting in Road Safety issues.

Apart from Enforcement there is also the matter of safely dealing with:

- i) U-turning and diverting traffic which would put pressure on the existing highway infrastructure that, in turn, may require some form of engineering intervention.
- ii) Exemptions for residents with vehicles within the bus gate
- iii) Emergency vehicle access
- iv) System failure – route closure

Highway, Traffic and Road Safety officers supported the ethos to improve pedestrian and child safety particularly around schools.

Further information has been received as an update as follows:

In this year's Highway Capital Programme, there has been a small allocation of funding provided to enable the commencement of a replacement of a number of vehicle activated signs across that borough that had been installed around 10 years ago as part of previous speed management and road safety interventions.

These signs were introduced as part of a previous capital programme following an evidence based, data led investigation and should not be confused with other similar solar powered devices funded in 2010/22 by Councillor budgets. The initial tranche of replacements will focus on the VAS introduced on the higher speed rural routes including the A62, A635, A672 and A671. As all of the signs were funded by Councillors in 2010/11 are now in disrepair, beyond design life and outside warranties, ward members will be asked if they wish to fund a modern replacement, Traffic and Road Safety officers will be contacting members on this in the year ahead.

Motion 2: Keeping Our Villages and Rural Areas HGV Free

2.1 Background:

At the Council meeting on 12th September 2018, the following motion was debated:

“Council notes that:

- HGVs and large vehicles can bring small villages and rural areas to a standstill when these vehicles are too large to navigate smaller roads.
- This has happened most recently on April 26 in Delph when a large articulated lorry blocked the junction of Grains Road and King Street bringing chaos to the village for four hours.
- These situations often occur because drivers of these vehicles chose to ignore displayed weight or width restrictions or fail to use a satnav system specifically designed for lorries.
- The Police do not always have the resources to enforce these restrictions, yet Councils outside London and Wales are currently prevented from doing so because the Government has failed to bring Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 into force for Councils in the rest of England.
- Lorry satnavs are like normal car satnavs, but they include bridge heights, narrow roads, and roads unsuitable for trucks. In addition, they allow the driver to enter the lorry’s dimensions – height, width, weight and load – so they are only guided along suitable roads. Their cost is slightly more than that of a standard car sat-nav.

Council further notes that, in several parts of England, Lorry Watch schemes have been established. These are run by local residents who record instances of vehicles flouting weight and width restrictions, and report them to a Parish Council Coordinator, the Police or their Council Trading Standards Department.

This Council:

- Supports the position of the cross-party Local Government Association that the Government bring Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 into force for all relevant English councils with immediate effect and legislate so all HGVs and large vehicles are required to install suitable satnavs designed for lorries and large vehicles.
- Believes that establishing Lorry Watch Schemes in various parts of the Borough is worthy of consideration.”

Full Council resolved to ask the Overview and Scrutiny board to examine the merits and practicalities of establishing a Lorry Watch scheme in various parts of the Borough, in conjunction with the District Executives, the Parish Councils, residents’ associations, and the Police.

- 2.2 A workshop was held on Tuesday, 8th January 2019 to which representatives from residents’ associations in conjunction with the District Executives, parish council representatives and relevant officers from Public Protection and Highways were invited to attend.

2.3 Update

Traffic Engineers have not been able to make as much detailed progress as anticipated on this matter this has been partly due to the recent Covid-19 epidemic that has put greater pressure on our Traffic Management resources. Highways have been able to put together an outline budget cost for the work required to bring the current road traffic signs up to a standard such that Police enforcement could take place. The costs reflect the requirement of the Department for Transport's Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions whereby the signs have to be illuminated to allow enforcement.