
**Meeting of Executive Members for City
Strategy and Advisory Panel**

16 March 2009

Report of the Director of City Strategy

SIX MONTHLY REVIEW OF SPEEDING ISSUES

Summary

1. This report gives an update on collaborative work, with the Police and Fire Service, to streamline and widen the agreed prioritisation framework. This will ensure that speed issues are considered, and acted on, through partnership collaboration, giving a stronger and more robust response to the issues raised.
2. The report advises Members of the locations where concerns about traffic speeds have been raised, and provides an update on progress towards assessing these against the agreed prioritisation framework.
3. It also gives an update on the use of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) as a speed management tool around the City.
4. This report recommends that Members support the continuation of a partnership approach to dealing with speeding complaints which has been working in trial operation for a few months. This is a joint initiative by North Yorkshire Police, City of York Council and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
5. Secondly, this report recommends that Members support an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of existing VAS signs in the city and a review of the current criteria for identifying new sites.
6. Thirdly, this report recommends that Members support the provision of a funding allocation to be made for speed management schemes in the Transport Capital Programme budget for 2009/10.

Background

7. Casualty reduction is a principle objective of the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its Road Safety Strategy. Speed is known to be a significant causal factor in at least one third of all road casualties, and therefore the targeted use of effective speed management measures has the potential to make a significant contribution to this objective.

8. The Council receives many complaints about speeding vehicles from a number of sources including residents, elected members and representatives of local groups, such as resident associations. To help manage this, a data led method of assessing all speeding issues in York was approved at the Meeting of the Executive Member for City Strategy and Advisory Panel on 30 October 2006. This established that speeding issues should be assessed against certain criteria. See **ANNEX A**.

Progress on Speed Review Process and Partnership Collaboration

9. Often this data led method highlights that there is not a casualty problem, suggesting that a lot of community concerns around speed are of “perceived danger”. This can result in the various individual agencies (CYC, Police, Fire & Rescue) all getting the same complaints and an overlap of work which is not a cost effective way of dealing with these community concerns.
10. However it is acknowledged that encouraging drivers to moderate their speed to suit the prevailing conditions is particularly important, since driver error is the major contributory factor in many accidents. Lower speeds reduce the chances of a collision occurring, and the severity of resulting casualties.
11. To this end, as documented in the last Speed Review update (EMAP July 08) there has been on going work to join with other partners to improve and stream line the way we handle speeding complaints and issues across the city.
12. A small but dedicated cross agency team with one representative from CYC, one representative from North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and two from North Yorkshire Police, has been working over the last year to produce a process for dealing with these complaints in a united way. The basis for this process is the existing Speed Review Criteria, documented in **ANNEX A** which has been widened out and now takes into consideration, not just casualty reduction, but also community concerns about the issues. As part of this work, we have been exploring ways in which we can provide other options for speed concerns, where the existing data led process results in a low score, meaning that engineering interventions are not appropriate.
13. North Yorkshire Police made the decision to actively take the lead and start a trial of the process in York with a view to using it right across North Yorkshire, should it prove to be successful. They began this trial in November 2008.
14. A simplified diagram of how the process works is included at **ANNEX B**.
15. All 3 agencies are actively involved in the mechanics and delivery of this process but from a CYC point of view casualty reduction does stay as our main priority.

16. In particular the new process adds the following benefits:

- A standard form for speed concerns to be reported on (copy of which can be found at **ANNEX E**). This helps in two ways:-
 - a) To ensure officers are identifying the correct location for the speed concern. Under the old system it has not always been clear exactly where the issues have been, thus adding extra costs in terms of work and speed surveys.
 - b) It enables information to be standardised and easily shared with partners.
- More speed surveys can now be undertaken as the Fire Service have agreed to undertake extra work in this area. CYC will still continue to fund speed surveys in areas highlighted (by the criteria) as “high” accident locations as part of the ongoing commitment to cut killed and seriously injured (KSI’s) as detailed in National Indicator 47 (NI47). However the Fire Service will now undertake speed surveys in areas identified as not having an injury issue, but where there are community or individual concerns about speed.

17. As there is a joint approach to this process – issues can now be looked at in more detail, and will provide a joint approach to the solutions. We are actively exploring possibilities to widen the “tool box” of initiatives for dealing with the results of the process.

18. For those locations that score highly on the criteria (i.e. category 1 or 2) engineering will still be considered but we are also assessing the use of more innovative education and enforcement schemes that will provide something to address the identified issues, whatever they score (through the criteria).

- A Speed Indicator Device (SID) is a temporary mobile interactive sign that can detect the speed of an approaching vehicle and will display the speed digitally along with a happy face or a sad face on a dot matrix screen. One SID has been trialed at Dunnington and is now ready to be offered to those areas where appropriate.
- A speed matrix sign is similar to a SID in that it can detect the speed of an approaching vehicle and will display the speed digitally on a dot matrix screen. North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service has access to one speed matrix sign which can be deployed in appropriate areas as determined by the data.
- We are also looking at the possibilities of using Police Community Support Officers in some initiatives and also targeted enforcement which should be possible through more detailed analysis of the data.

19. We are confident that this new process can add flexibility and depth to how we assess and deal with speeding issues, enabling us to target issues that have not been dealt with before.
20. However, we are still in the early stages of the trial, and we are a very small team, of which the Speed Review Process is only part of our remit. In order for us to add the depth and width the process could, initially at least, be slightly longer. However there are information points built into the system, so anyone who has submitted a form should be aware of where their complaint is within the process and the ultimately the outcome.

Prioritisation of Speeding Issues Raised

21. Since the last review in July 08 there have been a total of 68 speeding concerns raised about 52 roads by residents, elected members, Ward Committees, or Parish/Town Councils. All 52 roads are documented in **ANNEX C**, page 1. Page 2 documents all those complaints that have gone on to provide a request on the new “standardised form” and those documented in page 3 are those that had come in before the standard form was up and running. Any others highlighted on page 1, but not shown on pages 2 or 3 have had one of the new forms sent out – but it has not been returned.
22. Of all the requests made, and documented on pages 2 & 3, after analysis of the accident data, non have a high casualty score in terms of speed. However it has been agreed that they should all have speed surveys done. As these will be delivered by the Fire Service, who have just commenced this extra service there will be a time delay in receiving these surveys.
23. Where speed surveys have been carried out it can be seen that only one, (at Stockton-on-the-Forest towards York) is over the threshold of 35mph (at the 85% percentile) and this is only over the threshold by 1mph.
24. This means that there are none which score a very high, or high priority, (category 1 or 2) and no locations to go forward to be considered for engineering speed reduction measures. As Stockton-on-the-Forest just comes in above the criteria there is a possibility of speed management measures if the Ward Committee wanted to fund these. After data analysis by the team it may be that we also offer an educational solution to reduce speeds.
25. All locations that have scored a category 4 will now be looked at in more detail by the team and will be offered the appropriate educational solution and/or targeted enforcement may also take place, depending on what a review of the speed data reveals.
26. All individuals that have submitted a form will be informed of the outcome of the process and what solutions can be offered.

Vehicle Activated Signs

27. One of the speed management tools that has been implemented over the last few years are pole mounted Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS).
28. So far, in York, these have only been used where other engineering measures have not been appropriate, to highlight speed limits, but they do have other applications, such as warning of bends, crossroads etc.
29. It was reported in the last EMAP (July 08) that a review of the effectiveness of these VAS signs, as speed reduction tools, would take place. This has now been completed at sites where VAS signs were implemented as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP).
30. The report found that a VAS sign typically had an immediate positive effect on vehicle speeds, lasting for six to twelve weeks. After twelve weeks, the effectiveness of the VAS sign typically began to diminish. The report found that VAS signs tended not to be effective after three years in the same location. See **ANNEX D** for further details.

Update of Safety Camera Feasibility Study

31. On 26th March 2008 the 95 Alive Partnership was formally tasked by the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police with conducting a feasibility study to consider the use of Safety Camera's in York and North Yorkshire.
32. Initially this feasibility study was due in December 2008. Things became delayed when the appointed Project Manger left and key officers were unable to take up the project because of existing workload. There have been delays in recruitment, but the new Project Manager is due to start early/mid March 09 and will aim to deliver the feasibility study by the end of April 09.

Options and Analysis

Speed Review Process

33. Option 1

As stated earlier in the report (at 10) North Yorkshire Police made the decision to use this new process for all speed complaints received by them from November 2008. As the CYC process sits within this wider remit, it would seem appropriate for us to continue to work in partnership. This is recommended.

34. Option 2

To revert back to our own, independent, but smaller process which would leave agencies and systems running concurrently. This is not recommended.

VAS Site Review – ANNEX D

35. Option 1

Annex D, the update on the VAS signs, suggests that after 3 years the usefulness of this equipment as a speed reduction measure is questionable. In view of the fact that, a proportion of existing VAS signs have been purchased by Ward Committees, and some are located in areas of community concern, it is proposed to provide a more in-depth report to review the options available for determining what, if anything should be the next step, for existing VAS sites and if there should be a more robust criteria for installation of new VAS signs. This is recommended.

Members to note that the VAS signs identified through the Speed Review Process EMAP Jan 08 are due to become operational in March–April 09.

36. Option 2

Officers will continue to monitor speeds at VAS sites and update Members as part of the Speed Review Process.

Corporate Priorities

37. The Council's Improvement Priority to increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport is relevant to this report. Fears of being a casualty are a real deterrent to more people walking and in particular cycling. By implementing a robust programme of speed management measures to reduce excessive speeding, which targets the minority of drivers whose driving behaviour poses the greatest risk to others, overall safety can be improved and an increase in active transport use achieved.

Implications

Financial

38. It is proposed that a proportion of the 2009/10 Capital Programme will be allocated to enable the council to take forward a number of speed management schemes. This will be subject to a report by the Capital Programme Manager to this EMAP in March 2009.

Human Resources (HR)

39. There are no HR implications at the present time, but if the volume of complaints were to increase because of a more robust system the current level of staff within the partnership could begin to struggle to deliver.

Equalities

40. There are no equality implications.

Legal

41. There are no legal implications.

Crime and Disorder

42. Speeding is a criminal offence and the Council has a responsibility to deliver an effective Speed Management Strategy.

Information Technology (IT)

43. There are no IT implications.

Property

44. There are no property implications.

Other

45. There are no other implications.

Risk Management

46. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the risks arising from the recommendations have been assessed.

Strategic

47. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Physical

48. Road accidents by their very nature are unpredictable and it is always possible that an injury accident will occur on a route that has been assessed where no action was taken. The data led method of assessing speeding issues ensures that routes with a casualty record are prioritised.

Financial

49. There is a potential risk that demand for speed management treatments outweighs the capacity to deliver. All potential speed management engineering treatments will be subject to budget allocation.

Organisation/Reputation

50. There is likely to be opposition to a recommendation to take no action following the assessment of a speeding issue. However, the data led method of assessing speeding issues enables one to justify instances when no action is deemed appropriate.

Recommendations

51. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to:
1. Give support to any joint working initiatives which result in a wider, more in depth process to tackle speed issues in York (Speed Review Process, Option 1).
 2. Request a VAS report which will take into consideration the findings of the speed surveys taken at VAS sites and will give options on what should be the best course of action at existing VAS sites and possible criteria for sighting of any new VAS signs identified by the criteria from March 2009 (VAS Site Review, Option 1).
 3. Support funding allocation being made within the Transport Capital Programme 2009/10 for speed management proposals to enable any that come out of the process over that period to be progressed.

Reason: To update Members on the locations where concerns about traffic speeds have been raised, and on progress towards assessing these against the agreed prioritisation framework.

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Background Papers

Speed Management Report

Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel, October 2006

Second Local Transport Plan 2006 –11

(Including Road Safety Strategy and Speed Management Plan)

TRL Report 548 Vehicle Activated Signs – a large scale evaluation.

TRL Report 323 *A New System for Recording Contributory Factors in Road Accidents*

Annexes

Annex A – Speed Review Criteria as set out in EMAP report October 2006

Annex B – Simplified diagram of Joint Speed Review Process.

Annex C – Excel sheet of current speed complaint locations.

Annex D – Update on effectiveness of existing VAS signs.

Annex E – Speed Concern Report Form.