

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Committee 9th June 2005

Report Title Road Safety and Casualty Reduction

Summary This report explains how the Council is combating death and injury on Warwickshire's roads.

For further information please contact

Estyn Williams
Group Manager –
Road Safety Unit
Tel. 01926 412712
estynwilliams@warwickshire.gov.uk

William Brown
County Fire Officer
Warwick Street
Leamington Spa
Tel:01926 423231
williambrown@warwickshire.gov.uk

Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? Yes/No

Background Papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

Other Committees

Local Member(s)
(With brief comments, if appropriate)

Other Elected Members Councillor C K N Browne)
Councillor Mrs E M Goode) for information
Councillor Mrs J Lea)

Cabinet Member Councillor M Heatley – for information
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

Chief Executive

Legal I Marriott – comments incorporated

Finance

Other Chief Officers

- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION

YES/NO (If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee -
9th June 2005**

Road Safety and Casualty Reduction

**Joint Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and
Economic Strategy and the County Fire Officer**

Recommendation

That the Committee endorses the Council's approach to reducing death and injury on Warwickshire's roads outlined in this report.

1. Introduction

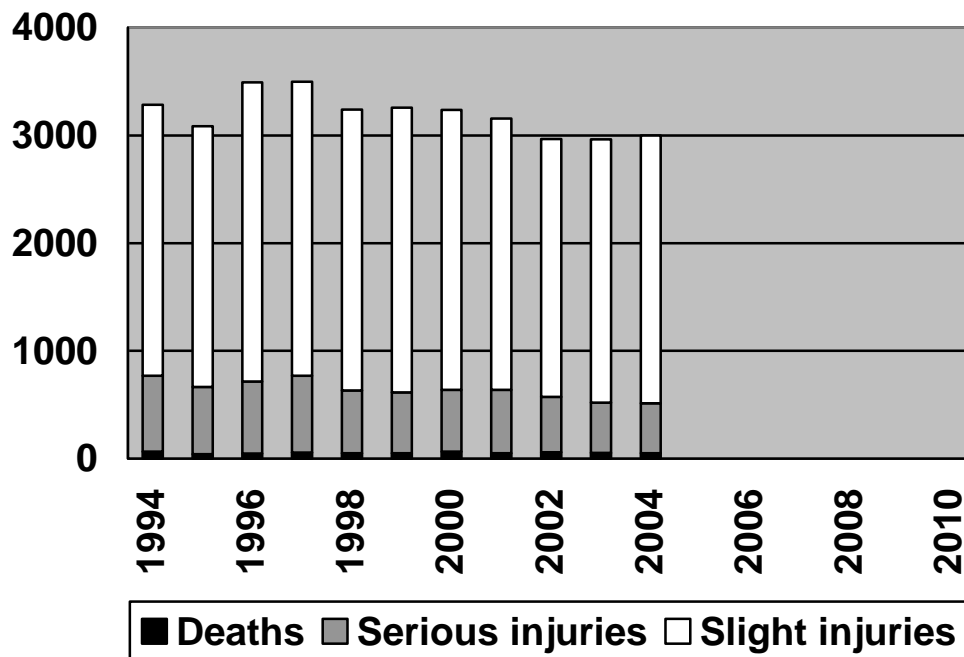
- 1.1 Earlier this year the then Crime and Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked for a report on road safety and casualty reduction to be submitted to its first meeting after the elections. The timing was chosen because the Committee thought it would be useful to acquaint new Members with this important aspect of the Council's work.
- 1.2 It may be helpful to put the issue into context. Table 1 compares road casualties nationally with casualties resulting from criminal acts.

Table 1 Casualties in England and Wales 2002

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------|--|-----------------------|---------|
| Homicides | 1,048 | | Road deaths | 3,431 |
| Woundings | 17,882 | | Serious road injuries | 35,976 |
| Assaults | 234,244 | | Slight road injuries | 263,198 |

- 1.3 In Warwickshire 2,999 people were killed or injured on the roads in 2004. In spite of the substantial increase in traffic, this number has reduced over the last decade. But it still represents an unacceptable level of human suffering. Figure 2 shows more details.

Figure 2 Warwickshire Road Casualties 1994-2004



- 1.4 The County Council has a statutory duty to promote road safety under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and has been active in this field for many years. In 2002/03 the Council carried out a Best Value Review of Road Safety. As a result of the Review the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy (PTES) set up the Road Safety Unit bringing all those in the Department dealing with road safety together under one manager. It is generally accepted that this has produced a much clearer focus on road safety and casualty reduction.
- 1.5 In 2000 the Government set targets to achieve by 2010 (compared to the 1994/98 average):-
 - (i) A 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured.
 - (ii) A 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured.
 - (iii) A 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate.
- 1.6 In 2003 the Council set itself the target of achieving Government’s 2010 targets a year early in Warwickshire; that is by 2009.
- 1.7 In its recent Guidance on Local Transport Plans, the Department for Transport (DfT) proposed new ‘stretching’ targets. These are substantially tougher than the current targets. For example (as shown in table 3 below) the original DfT target called for the number of killed or seriously injured (ksi) casualties to be reduced to less than 426 the new targets call for a reduction to below 360.

Table 3 Present and proposed target for reducing fatal and serious casualties

| | Original DfT Target | Proposed Stretching Target |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Baseline year | 1994/98 (average) | 2004 |
| Baseline figure | 711 | 524 |
| Target reduction % | 40% | 30% |
| Target for 2010 | Below 426 | Below 360 |

- 1.8 The new targets are exceptionally challenging. They are not mandatory but it is expected that the Government's capital funding support will reward authorities that adopt and achieve them. We are keen to adopt the new targets if we can. Aside from any funding considerations, achieving them would reduce human misery. The challenge however is not in adopting the targets but in devising a realistic plan to achieve them. They are unlikely to be achieved by the Road Safety Unit on its own. We will need the further assistance of others including the Highways Agency and the Police and we are at present discussing the position with them. Once we are clear what actions by the Council and others would be needed to achieve the targets we will make a recommendation to Cabinet.

2. The Intelligence Led Approach

- 2.1 Warwickshire's approach to casualty reduction is intelligence led. The first step towards reducing road casualties is to analyse the circumstances in which they occur. Every time someone is killed or injured on the road the police record information about the scene, conditions, circumstances, vehicles involved and casualties. We collect and analyse this data to make decisions about the most effective ways of reducing casualties.
- 2.2 The data is analysed in various ways; for example the number of particular types of crashes, the proportion of particular types compared to the numbers, the trends of particular types over time.
- 2.3 Casualties causing particular concern at present include those involving:-
- (i) Motor cycles (and other powered two wheel vehicles).
 - (ii) Young drivers age 17 to 25 and especially 17 to 21.
 - (iii) Excessive or inappropriate speed.

3. The 3 "E"s

- 3.1 Most casualties are caused by the way we behave. We try and reduce them using the 3 "E"s:-
- (i) Education (including training and publicity).
 - (ii) Engineering.
 - (iii) Enforcement.

We believe the most effective approach is an integrated mix of all these methods.

4. Road Safety Education in PTES

4.1 Road safety education in PTES encompasses education, training and publicity. Activities include:-

- (i) Road safety officers visit schools.
- (ii) Off road cycle skills training for younger children is offered to all the County's schools free of charge and on road cycle awareness training is offered to older children at a subsidised fee.
- (iii) Road safety publicity campaigns are run often in conjunction with the Department for Transport and others.
- (iv) In partnership with the police driver improvement courses are run for those who would otherwise be prosecuted for careless driving and speed awareness courses for those who would otherwise be prosecuted for speeding.
- (v) Training and testing is offered at cost to employees and others who drive minibuses or other vehicles on a car driving licence on Council business.

5. Road Safety Engineering in PTES

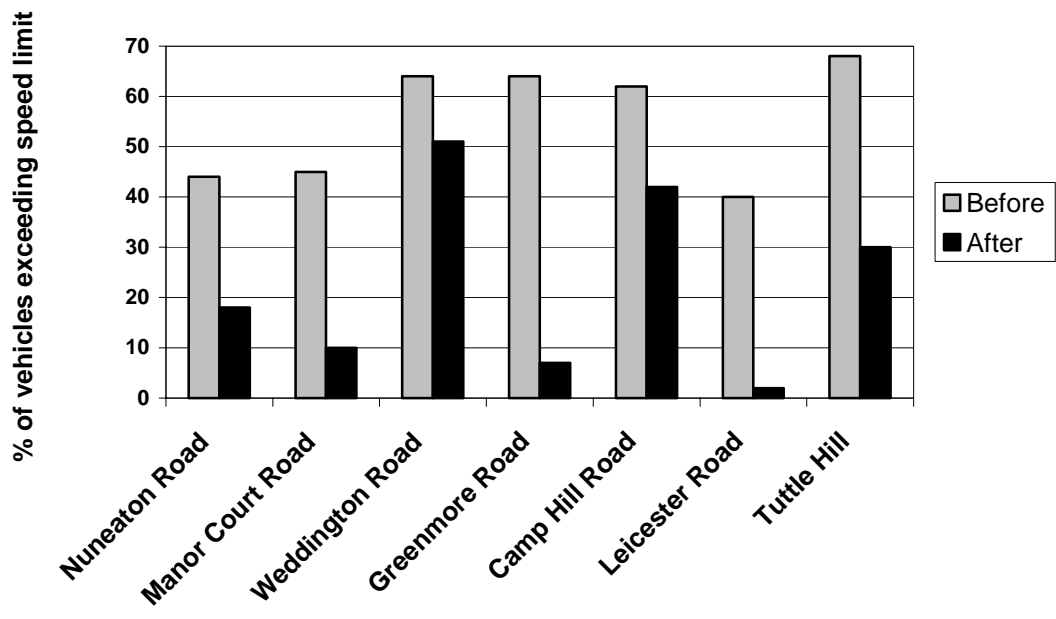
5.1 The budget for casualty reduction (local safety) schemes is £700,000. We analyse 'hot spots' – sites where there have been at least six injury accidents in the last three years. This enables us to make the most effective use of resources by ensuring that investigation is focused on those sites likely to command sufficient priority for earliest action. Consideration of schemes below this threshold would require a substantial increase in the budget. When we investigate a hot spot we look at possible improvements, how many casualties the improvement might be expected to save and how much it would cost. We prioritise schemes by their rate of return; that is the number of casualties they could be expected to save per money spent.

6. Enforcement – The Work of Warwickshire Police Road Safety Unit and Warwickshire Casualty Reduction Unit

6.1 The County Council works in close partnership with Warwickshire Police and continuing cooperation is essential to reduce casualties. The then Crime and Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested an input from the Police to this report and information they have supplied on the role of their Road Safety Unit and their Casualty Reduction Strategy is attached as **Appendix A**.

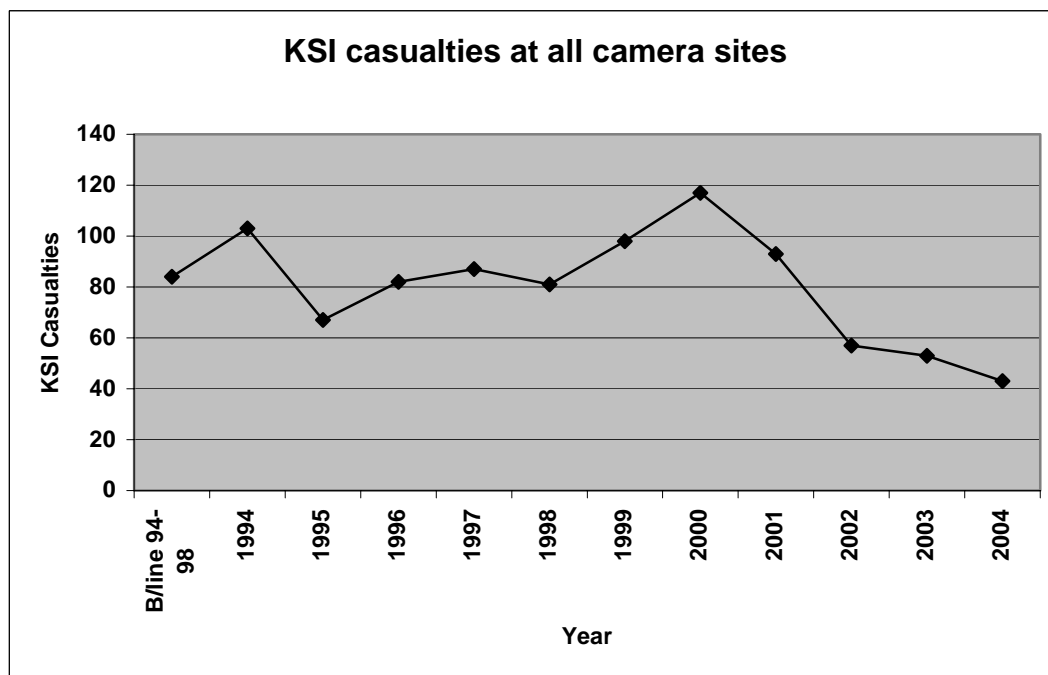
- 6.2 The Police are members of Warwickshire Casualty Reduction Partnership which operates the National Safety Camera Programme in Warwickshire. The other members of the Partnership are: The County Council (through PTES and the Fire and Rescue Service), The Highways Agency, Warwickshire Magistrates Courts, Warwickshire Primary Care Trusts and the Crown Prosecution Service.
- 6.3 The Partnership aims to reduce the number and severity of collisions and casualties on Warwickshire's roads. It seeks to achieve this through a combination of speed education and where necessary enforcement.
- 6.4 Warwickshire Casualty Reduction Partnership operates within a strict set of rules and guidelines published by the Department for Transport. This includes strict criteria for the installation of new camera sites. All fines collected from speeding motorists are forwarded to the Government. The Partnership is able to recover the approved operational and administrative costs of running the scheme.
- 6.5 The Partnership currently operates 27 fixed speed cameras and eight red light cameras. The Partnership also has five mobile enforcement vehicles (four vans and one motorcycle). These vehicles operate at 35 permanent mobile speed camera sites and a number of temporary mobile sites where enforcement is undertaken in response to residents concerns about the speed of traffic.
- 6.6 There is considerable local support for the use of safety cameras. A survey undertaken in March 2005 showed that 64% of Warwickshire residents supported the use of speed cameras as a method of reducing road casualties and accidents and only 19% were opposed to their use. The same survey also reported that 64% of Warwickshire residents agree with the statement:- 'Cameras are meant to encourage drivers to keep to the speed limit and not punish them'.
- 6.7 The Partnership receives a large number of requests from local communities for speed enforcement. These requests are all fully investigated to see if there is a way that the Partnership can help.
- 6.8 Warwickshire's cameras have proved extremely successful at reducing both speed and casualty numbers. This is illustrated in Figure 4 which compares the percentage of vehicles exceeding the speed limit before and after the installation of a number of fixed camera sites in Nuneaton.

Figure 4 Percentage of vehicles exceeding the speed limit before and after the installation of Nuneaton and Bedworth's fixed camera sites.



6.9 The improved level of speed limit compliance at camera sites has been accompanied by a corresponding reduction in both collisions and casualties since the partnership was formed in 2001. Figure 5 shows that the number of people killed or seriously injured at camera sites has reduced since enforcement began. In 2004 there were 49% fewer people killed or seriously injured at Warwickshire's camera sites when compared to the annual average for the period 1994-98. Between 2002 and 2004 there were 331 fewer casualties at Warwickshire camera sites when compared to the annual average for 1994-98.

Figure 5 – People killed or seriously injured at Warwickshire camera sites



7. Partnership with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

- 7.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that a fire and rescue authority must make provision for rescuing people and protect them from serious harm in the event of road traffic accidents in its area.
- 7.2 In Warwickshire the County Council (as Fire and Rescue Authority) fulfils this new duty through the Fire and Rescue Service. However responding to the needs of people trapped in vehicles is a function that the Fire and Rescue Service has been carrying out for a number of years. They have already adapted appliances, procured specialist equipment and trained personnel within a framework of operational procedures to ensure safe scene management and the efficient extrication of casualties in co-operation with other emergency services.
- 7.3 In 2004–2005 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service responded to 628 road traffic accident calls and people were rescued from their vehicle at 201 of these incidents. People who are extricated by Fire and Rescue from vehicles are trapped either due to their medical condition or due to vehicle damage as a result of the accident. At some incidents both factors apply.
- 7.4 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to moving seamlessly away from an intervention focused approach to fire and emergencies to one that has an equal emphasis on providing efficient and effective prevention programmes to the communities of Warwickshire.
- 7.5 To support and deliver this vision within the community Fire and Rescue has developed the capability and capacity to deliver effective community safety education programmes and risk reduction initiatives. Fire and Rescue already deliver a range of community safety programmes that go beyond just preventing or protecting people from fire. Examples include its work with young people, 'Prison-me-no-way', child car seat inspections etc.
- 7.6 These programmes are targeted towards 'at risk' groups or are delivered countywide to improve community safety through a reduction in the risk of fire or other emergencies. These transferable community engagement skills when coupled with Fire and Rescue's positive image can be utilised to reduce the risk of road traffic accidents in Warwickshire.

- 7.7 A joint working protocol has been developed between Warwickshire Fire and Rescue and the Road Safety Unit in order to ensure that this experience and knowledge of engaging with the community can make a positive contribution to achieving a sustainable reduction in road traffic accidents in the future.

JOHN DEEGAN
Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy
Shire Hall
Warwick

WILLIAM BROWN
County Fire Officer
Warwick Street
Leamington Spa

26th May 2005