



ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 16 March 2021

REPORT TITLE:	ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP - FINAL REPORT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

Further to a motion at Council on the 21 October 2020 on 'reducing road casualties' Council Resolved to task the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee so that it may review and refresh earlier work that was undertaken on the introduction of 20mph speed limits on all residential roads across the Borough with a view to making progress with their introduction. An additional motion on road safety was considered and withdrawn on the proviso that the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee also consider the existing Road Safety Strategy and make suggested recommendations based on evidence received by the panel and input by various stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is requested to:

1. Consider and comment on the final report of the road safety working group and,
2. Approve the recommendations of the Road safety Working Group Final Report attached as appendix 1

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The working group produced recommendations which will produce better, long-lasting results, impacting significantly on road safety for Wirral residents. The aim of the review is to address both actual road safety and the perceived risk. The feeling of safety within the community increases confidence and participation in active travel.
- 1.2 The recommendations contained in the attached report will work alongside and compliment Wirral's Climate Emergency action plan and the Community Safety Strategy which is currently being developed.

The Council Motion on 21 October 2021 was referred to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee due to the terms of reference which charge it with the following:

a) in co-ordinating the response to cross-cutting sustainability issues such as reducing carbon emissions, air quality issues, climate change response, improving resource efficiency and developing sustainable energy.

(b) in relation to all highways matters and as highway authority, street authority, bridge authority, including but not limited to public open spaces, street furniture on the highway and open spaces or parts of open spaces immediately adjacent to the highway;

(c) in relation to traffic management and transport and as traffic authority, including but not limited to public passenger transport and the co-ordination of transport for service users, traffic orders and rights of way issues.

(d) in relation to parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement.

- 1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, Community Safety in its entirety falls under the remit of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. However, the governance and implementation of road safety strategies includes improving the built environment by providing the community with safer road design, pavements, road crossings, lighting and safe bicycle lanes. This also cross cuts into education and enforcement. Good road safety provision should support synergy between health, wellbeing, a safe and pleasant environment, and the reduction of carbon emissions.

As such, a politically balanced working group was convened comprised of 7 Members, and two sessions were held in January and February 2021. The full findings of this working group are found in Appendix 1 to this report.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Members of the working group considered the existing road safety plan based on concerns around road safety in the borough. The working group also wanted to include insight from partners and the community safety team whilst revising the plan and seeking recommendations. The alternative option was to continue with the existing road safety strategy and not put forward any recommendations. This was discounted by the panel based on the outcome of discussions.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Information contained in the Council Motion of the 21 October 2020 raised concerns among Members of the Council. These are:
- In the last ten years, there has been no significant decline in the number of people killed and seriously injured on Britain's roads, after decades of reducing casualties.
 - According to Department of Transport figures, there are still on average five fatalities and 68 serious injuries in England and Wales every day.
 - In the preamble to the consultation published by the Department of Transport in July this year, the Under Secretary of State for Transport said the review sought to 'build the fairest and most operationally effective enforcement capability in police and other agencies to deliver the best outcome for the safety of all road users.
 - In the same month, the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary published a damning report which predicted an increase in road deaths because,
 - according to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, there has been a 34% cut in funding in real terms for road policing between 2012/3 and 2019/20, leading to a reduction of police officers available for these duties.
 - these officers receive insufficient training and operational support.
 - road policing is 'seen as less of a priority than it should be' in most local plans and there is an 'unclear national strategy.'
 - The HM Inspectorate called for urgent action as 'roads policing is not optional.'
 - In September 2020, Merseyside Police and the Merseyside Road Safety Partnership participated for five days in 'Project EDWARD' (Every Day Without a Road Death), as part of the welcome initiative to reduce road deaths.
- 3.2.1 This report also builds on the collaborative approach developed throughout the current COVID pandemic. Community partnership work during the pandemic has achieved real results and the aim is to harness the road safety recommendations and policy to build an outcome-rich, prioritisation of Road Safety-related projects within Combined Authority Transport Plan; and to Consider new Road Safety Action Plan proposed content, outcomes, and objectives; and feed into a more inclusive Community Safety Strategy.

3.4 The Community Safety Strategy is currently being consulted on, but the thematic drivers include the following:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Crime and Violence Reduction
- Hate Crime
- Modern Slavery
- Community Safety
- Domestic Abuse
- Emergency Planning
- Road Safety

3.5 Each of these themes will develop its own sub-strategy that will feed into the overall Community Safety Strategy. Road Safety will feature in this strategy as it does not just consider technical and engineering aspects of our highways but also keeping pedestrians and road users safe, tying into the Neighbourhood Engagement theme. It may range from traffic flows and traffic signals, installing new crossings, ensuring adequate street lighting, traffic calming measures, road user education, improved partnership working including and enabling residents to report any faults/concerns at the earliest opportunity.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report is to summarise the findings of the road safety working group and recommendations to be included in the Road Safety Action Plan. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report, however the recommendation contained within will have capital and budgetary implications.

4.2 The estimated cost of providing a speed limit review of all roads may be up to £200,000 revenue impact cost for external suppliers fees, which is currently not budgeted. The estimated cost of implementing 20mph zones in all the Council's residential and retail areas is up to £1.5million capital impact. This may be funded from the Council's Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP) Integrated Transport Block funding, supplemented with Council Capital Programme funding where applicable, over a period of up to three years. The financial impact of additional active travel and School Streets infrastructure will depend upon scale but will be financed from future CATP programmes where not already programmed, and other available applicable grant funding. Staffing impact to support the recommendations would need to be met from the Neighbourhoods service review and remain cost neutral.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is a summary of the working group and recommendations and there are no direct legal implications.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 This report is to summarise the findings of the road safety working group and recommendation. There are no direct resource implications because of this report, however the recommendation contained within may have some implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Road safety plans and strategies need regular review and oversight to reduce the risk of fatalities and incidents.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The primary aim of this report is to share the findings of the Road Safety Working Group and panel members were intent in delivering a fully rounded and formed recommendations. Members consulted with their communities and sought to engage with as many stakeholders as possible during the meetings of the working group.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

This report is of information and summarises the findings of the working group. Future development of the recommendations may require equality impact assessments.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 In developing the recommendations, environmental and climate considerations are at the forefront, especially around the reduction of vehicle use and promotion of safe active travel.
- 10.2 Any specific Environment and Climate implications from individual schemes will be considered in reports and decisions relating to their implementation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Final Report
Appendix 2 – Merseyside Safer roads watch
Appendix 3 – List of groups in Merseyside Safer Roads watch
Appendix 4 – Existing action plan 2020/21
Appendix 5 - Working Group Presentation

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Road Safety Strategy 2020/21

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council	22 October 2020