

REPORT TO: PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - 9 JUNE 2008

REPORT ON: SCOTTISH ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 264-2008

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines the purpose, content and proposals contained within the Scottish Government's 'Scottish Road Safety Strategy' and Dundee City Council's response.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the purpose, content and proposals contained within the consultation and endorse Dundee City Council's response contained within Appendix 1 which had to be returned to the Scottish Government by 25 April 2008.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Road Safety is an issue that affects everyone in Scotland as we all use the road to get around. The Government is committed to making roads safer and propose to develop a Road Safety Strategy for the next 10 years to reduce road casualties and accidents further.
- 4.2 In March 2000 the UK Government set national road accident casualty reduction targets underpinned by a national road safety strategy. These targets are, compared to the average for 1994-1998, by the year 2010 to achieve a:
- 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI);
 - 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured (KSI);
 - 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate (slight injuries per 100 million vehicles kilometres).

Dundee City Council has made good progress in achieving the above 2010 targets, however the government has now decided that a review of road safety strategy is now required.

- 4.3 The Scottish Government have set up a Panel of Experts to advise on measures that will contribute to reducing fatalities, injuries and accidents on Scotland's roads. They have published a consultation document and have invited all interested parties to give their views on the future direction of road safety and further accident reduction.

The Consultation invites views on the following five themes:

- Theme 1 - What should our principles be?
- Theme 2 - How should we address these priorities?
- Theme 3 - How should road safety be organised to deliver?
- Theme 4 - How could road safety be funded more effectively?
- Theme 5 - What can we learn from others?

- 4.4 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the Council's response to the Consultation document.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

There are no major issues.

6 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Head of Finance and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

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28 April 2008

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Appendix 1

Scottish Road Safety Strategy Consultation Response

The Scottish Parliament established a Road Safety Expert Panel and has now published a consultation document seeking the views of all stakeholders concerned with road safety and this can be viewed on the Scottish Government website at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/02/04143155/0>

The document has been split into five themes:-

- Theme 1 - What should our priorities be?
- Theme 2 - How should we address these priorities?
- Theme 3 - How should road safety be organised to deliver?
- Theme 4 - How could road safety be funded more effectively?
- Theme 5 - What can we learn from others?

The proposed response from Dundee City Council to each of these Themes is given below:

Theme 1 - What should our priorities be?

Dundee City Council has been making significant reductions in road casualties, and it is important not to lose the momentum of our current programmes and priorities whilst also looking to develop new initiatives and projects to go forward. Our priorities should, therefore, be set to include existing as well as new themes.

Nationally young drivers should be a priority. It is clear that all across Scotland there is a disproportionate level of collisions and casualties involving drivers under 25 years of age. They are over-represented in accident statistics, and while the many and diverse education campaigns undoubtedly help, more needs to be done. In order to be effective, it is likely that a radical approach may have to be adopted. For example, the development of a graduated licensing system has been tried in many countries throughout the world and has been found extremely successful in reducing accident involvement amongst novice drivers and could be linked to more comprehensive training and education. Pass Plus is a training scheme for newly-qualified drivers, which was introduced in 1995. The Department for Transport's full evaluation of Pass Plus was due in December 2007 - 12 years after the scheme's implementation. However if the results from the Association of British Insurers' 10 year study are accurate, it could be that novice drivers, and others, are being given a misleading picture of the safety benefits which accrue from undergoing this extra voluntary training. Dundee City Council believes that this type of additional training should be provided nationally and form part of the mandatory driving test.

We should continue to see the enforcement of drink/drugs driving, speeding, seatbelt wearing and mobile phone use as high priorities. At the same time, it is suggested that a review of the drink-driving limit, speed enforcement thresholds and the extension of the current ban on mobile phones to include hands-free mobile phones should be actively pursued.

Elderly road users especially pedestrians should also be a priority. With the age of Scotland's population increasing year on year, we have an increase in the number of elderly

people and it is becoming more important that the road safety strategies and initiatives consider this vulnerable group.

Through School Travel Plans and Safer route to school schemes and initiatives to reduce the impact of 'School Run' on the road network children are being encouraged to be more active and travel to school more by walking and cycling. The Scottish Government through their National Performance Framework have Healthier Safer Stronger Greener Objectives to improve the quality of life for the population of Scotland and again target children to be fitter and more active. This then emphasises that children should be maintained as a very high priority for all Road Safety initiatives especially in urban areas.

Theme 2 - How should we address these priorities?

The successful work undertaken in the Road Safety sector over the last 25 years has been evidence-led and this will be the foundation for the way in which our priority areas should be addressed. Once the key priorities have been set, we need to establish what the range and scale of the problems are before deciding how to tackle them. Research is an essential tool in this and can be used, not only in identifying the problems, but in pulling together all the existing experience that is spread throughout Scotland to gather best practice in each of the problem areas. The latest technology whether it is materials or Intelligent Transport Systems should be investigated to enhance and improve road safety throughout the country.

All agencies charged with tackling road safety issues must put in place a clear strategy to take forward the research, to act on the findings, and to identify funding and resources for taking the necessary actions.

Theme 3 - How should road safety be organised to deliver?

There are many players in the road safety arena, each with their own areas of expertise and interest, for example, Local Authorities, the Emergency Services, Regional Transport Partnerships, the NHS, Government Organisations and Academic Bodies. There are also several groups who bring together these players to gain advice from different areas of expertise and/or to disseminate information. Road Safety Scotland (RSS) is one group in the education and publicity fields, whilst the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) operates in the engineering area. Locally there are Regional and Local Road Safety Forums, which bring together the many groups within each council area. There may be benefits to the delivery of a safer road network through greater integration of expertise, responsibilities and resources, however at present there is a lack of clarity on the roles and responsibility of agencies relating to Road Safety. For example, Local Authorities and the Police have statutory duties and obligations directly related to Road Safety such as Accident Investigation and Prevention and the enforcement of Traffic Regulations, while other agencies have no such obligations. Dundee City Council would welcome any reorganisation of an approach to Road Safety where agencies roles and responsibilities are clarified and structured to enable better delivery of accident and casualty reducing measures.

Theme 4 - How could road safety be funded more effectively?

Currently, road safety is funded from several different sources; directly from the Scottish Government for trunk roads, from local authorities for engineering measures on local roads, from the Scottish Government for education and publicity through RSS, and from local authorities, fire boards and police boards for enforcement and local education and publicity.

The recent reduction in the amount of ring-fenced Government funds may lead to difficulties in the allocation of road safety funding across Scotland should local authorities decide to give a lower priority to road safety. There may, therefore, be benefit in retaining some level of road safety funding that is either ring fenced or that could be delivered through an overarching road casualty reduction strategy, with local authorities having the discretion to “top-up” locally depending on their own requirements. This would safeguard some areas which could otherwise be under threat, while not restricting others.

Maintenance of the Road Network can have direct implications on road safety as lack of good maintenance can have very severe consequences. With the increase in traffic levels and restricted budgets, funding for road maintenance should be increased to assist in achieving further reductions in road accident statistics.

Theme 5 - What can we learn from others?

Experience from other countries is invaluable in deciding how we should progress road safety in this country. However, we must always be wary of importing schemes and projects without due care and attention since many schemes are developed within the ethos of that country and may not work when introduced to the driving environment in the UK.

It has got to be recognised that humans are fallible and make mistakes which can lead to serious if not fatal consequences. Therefore all roads, vehicles and all other equipment should be designed with this fallibility in mind, and where possible implemented to mitigate the seriousness of any accident should one occur.