

Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 13 September 2018
By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Title: East Sussex Road Safety Programme – Update
Purpose: To provide an update on the East Sussex Road Safety Programme to reduce the high rates of Killed and Seriously Injured people on roads in East Sussex.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note that between 90% and 95% of road traffic collisions resulting in killed and seriously injured people are caused by driver error and therefore the programme of work undertaken will be varied and targeted to address different high risk groups and roads;
 - 2) to endorse the progress made on the development and implementation of the East Sussex Road Safety Programme which is designed to target the high risk groups and issues to reduce the rate of those killed and seriously injured on roads in East Sussex.
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1 Background

1.1 This section is a summary of information provided in previous reports in March 2016, September 2016 and June 2017. The previous report to the Economy, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Committee which provides this information in detail is attached in Appendix 1 to this report.

1.2 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) agreed to allocate one-off funding available through the Public Health grant to areas where East Sussex was an outlier against indicators in the national Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF). The rate of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) was identified as an area for £1million of funding because rates in East Sussex have been higher than the England average for many years.

1.3 Whilst the rates of KSIs have reduced, the data indicates that they have not reduced as quickly in East Sussex as the national average. East Sussex, in common with the majority of County Councils in England (19 out of 27) has a KSI rate higher than the England average. The average rate of KSIs in County Council areas for the three year period 2012-2014 was 46.5 per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 39.3 per 100,000 population for England overall. The East Sussex rate however for the same period was 64.5 per 100,000 population.

1.4 A report commissioned by ESCC (*Safer Streets*) previously presented in full to Committee, concluded that a more targeted approach to improving road safety was required. Wider measures to address KSIs, including behaviour change and education, were indicated as areas that would have the most impact in reducing the KSI rates in East Sussex as analysis has shown that approximately 90% of all crashes involving personal injury have a human error/action as the main or as a contributory factor (as recorded by the Police as part of data collection through the Department for Transport (DfT) approved STATS 19 reporting system). The decision was therefore made by the East Sussex Road Safety Programme Board, chaired by the Assistant Director of Communities, to use part of the allocation to develop and pilot behaviour change interventions to determine their effectiveness in this context.

1.5 The work undertaken on behaviour change interventions complements work also being developed by the ESCC Road Safety Team. This work, which is designed to focus on road infrastructure and speed management work, is targeted specifically at high risk locations in East Sussex. Thirty-six sections of road that could benefit from further investigation for an appropriate intervention to be introduced were identified and following further work a priority plan for the work was developed (15 schemes in year one 2018/19). The Road Safety Team is now moving to the next set of schemes identified for phase two of this work. Further details on these schemes are attached in Appendix 2 to this report.

2 Supporting information

2.1 East Sussex Road Safety Programme Targets – One way in which we can better assess the success of our road safety work is through the success/outcome criteria set for both aspects of the Road Safety Programme, the behaviour change work and the speed management /road infrastructure element. Each of the projects within this programme will have their own outcome criteria set and will be assessed for interim outcomes during Summer 2019 and final outcomes by Spring 2020.

2.1.1 Whilst we cannot measure actual KSI reductions resulting from these projects we can measure elements such as diversion from courts for offences towards speed management courses, reductions in offences such as speeding as indicators of likely future more serious traffic offences, and reductions in rates of re-offending following any initial offence. All of these types of indicators are known to be strong predictors of safer driving behaviours which over time are likely to lead to less KSI collisions.

2.1.2 We will, therefore, measure reductions in rates of re-offending and diversion from court as these have been statistically evidenced as reducing the risk of a subsequent collision. In addition, we know that whilst the application of behavioural insights to other policy areas is likely to be incremental in terms of behaviour change, it is however sustainable and, therefore, over the longer term we can expect to see reduced collisions and reduced KSIs as a result of this work, together with other road safety initiatives.

2.1.3 Targets have been established for key elements of the Road Safety Programme which have been included in the Council Plan. Whilst the evidence base for both the behaviour change work and the selected road infrastructure projects is sound, there are, of course, other factors influencing KSIs, for example economic factors or weather conditions. Behaviour change is, by its very nature, long term and incremental (though sustainable).

2.1.4 For the behaviour change work a target has been set within the Council Plan of reducing detected speeding reoffending rates by between 10 and 20%. Targets have also been established for the social media work which is being delivered by the ESCC Communications Team. This work, which targets the high risk group of young drivers (17-24), aims to engage 15% of the approximate 22,000 people who fit within this category. The evaluation will measure both extent and persistence of engagement leading to a sustained and measurable shift in attitude to reckless driving and risky behaviour. Similarly the road infrastructure work led by the ESCC Road Safety Team will, through the targeted improvements to the physical road layout, deliver evidence based schemes designed to encourage better driver behaviour, increased compliance and correct alignment, reducing risk for all road users. The targets are detailed in Appendix 3 to this report.

2.2 **Progress in the development and implementation of the East Sussex Road Safety Programme** - As advised previously in this report, the decision was made to develop a series of behavioural insights schemes together with focused speed management to address the rate of KSIs in East Sussex.

2.2.1 Behaviour Change and Education This is an important area as evidence tells us that approximately 90% to 95% of KSIs are due to human error. The Behaviour Insights Team (BIT), formerly part of the Cabinet Office (where they were termed the 'nudge unit') were the world's first government institution dedicated to the application of behavioural sciences (<http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk>), were commissioned by ESCC to conduct in depth data analysis to confirm the target groups and priority issues to identify any treatable trends. This work was conducted over a three month period with the support of and data provided by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) and Sussex Police and enabled a far more detailed analysis than had been previously carried out. This identified three key target groups and suggested that these be prioritised as there was strong empirical evidence for focusing attention in these areas. These are young drivers (17-25), motorcyclists, and drivers in relation to vulnerable road users (cyclists /pedestrians). Issues at particularly high risk of contributing to a KSI included reckless driving and inappropriate levels of speed. These target groups and issues are therefore particularly prioritised within the ESCC Road Safety Programme.

2.2.2 A series of suitable behaviour change pilots to be taken forward under this programme of work were proposed, and were agreed based on both the evidence of successful behaviour change schemes elsewhere and the particular high risk factors for East Sussex. Each project was assessed to ensure that it met the following criteria, prior to approval by the Programme Board:

- Evidence based and focused on the identified priority groups and underlying issues
- Amenable to behaviour change interventions
- Affordable within the budget allocated to this aspect of the programme and deliverable with the support of project partners within the timeframe of the programme of work

- Clear outcomes and success criteria, and be able to be evaluated for effectiveness and value for money at project end to enable next steps in this work to be determined.

2.2.3 Following Board approval, it was agreed with the BIT that support will be provided to the following key behaviour change projects which are currently in the implementation stage.

- Notice of Intended Prosecution (NiP)

A traffic offence is a key touch point for influencing a road users subsequent behaviour. This has the potential to be a powerful teachable moment that may prompt the individual to adopt risk-reducing behaviours and may be the last direct point of contact that the authorities have with the road user before they are involved in a collision. This was supported by local data analysis which showed that a significant proportion of collisions were caused by vehicles with at least one prior speeding offence. This project which is being implemented with Sussex Police and partners will test whether targeting drivers following speeding offences improves future driving behaviour and, therefore, reduces the risk of a KSI incident.

A new speeding leaflet (designed using behavioural insights) against the original and a new simplified NiP will be tested in a full Randomised Control Trial (RCT). The trial which aims to reduce speeding re-offending (as a proxy for reduced risk of collisions) and increasing compliance with the penalty (a measure of efficiency) has been carefully designed to maximise the chances of detecting a statistically significant effect on these outcomes. This project will launch in early Autumn 2018 and will run for 6-12 months (exact timeframes to be dependent on sample size for the RCT based on detected number of speeding offences) with a review period at four months.

- Operation Crackdown

Operation Crackdown allows members of the public to report instances of dangerous or anti-social driving, with Sussex Police sending a letter to inform the road user of the report. Repeat reports to Crackdown are currently above 10 percent. In a previous project BIT worked with DVLA to amend letters to those caught driving without road tax and found use of the vehicle image increased payment rates by 20 percent.

Data reported to Operation Crackdown has been analysed and merged with relevant speeding data to determine the relationship between these offences reported to Crackdown and subsequent offending. The letter which is sent out as a result of speeding reports to Crackdown has been amended by BIT based on behavioural insights and is being tested to assess whether this reduces the likelihood of subsequent detectable offences likely to lead to risk of collisions and KSIs. Using traditional 'treatment and control' samples a full Randomised Controlled Trial will be conducted for this project. The project is expected to launch in late Autumn 2018 and will run for 12 months

- 'Anniversary' Project

It is likely that some drivers will have an aspiration to change their behaviour following a speeding offence or minor collision, but this does not always persist. Currently re-detected rates for speeding are around 8 percent within 12 months with the majority (7.7%) occurring at the 9-12 month mark. This is longest to a re-offence for those who have attended a speed awareness course and shortest for those who have been prosecuted. This trial, currently in development and expected to launch in late Autumn 2018 will test whether there is a positive effect (reduction in detected re-offending) when people are reminded of their offence and commitment to drive more safely at the 6 month anniversary of their initial offence. The trial will also determine which methods and messages reminding them of this commitment are most effective, i.e. text message, letter, email, telephone call etc.

- ESCC Communications and Road Safety Teams are leading on the social media project which aims to promote safer driving among young drivers; in particular young males aged 17-24 who are three times more likely to be involved in a KSI than other age groups. This includes online campaigns and the development of materials designed to specifically engage with this group, particularly young males who are resistant to road safety information. This work is being delivered with the support of an external creative agency who are testing the effectiveness of different styles, tones, approaches and channels for the initial phase of work which is currently taking place. A second phase of campaigning will be implemented based on this evidence, designed to encourage young male drivers to reflect upon and self-monitor their driving behaviours, as studies suggest this is one of the most effective techniques for prompting behaviour change, specifically to reduce reckless driving and risk of serious collision.

2.2.4 In addition to the above projects, BIT will also provide advice to a further piece of work with ESCC and Sussex Police. Annually Sussex Police and partners attend a series of 'biker' events across the county which provide a range of potential opportunities for engaging with this key target group. However this work has not to date been informed by behavioural insights techniques. BIT have attended examples of these events and observed interactions between bikers and Sussex Police, and have developed a list of suggested changes for the police and partners which will be tested and evaluated over events which have yet to take place. The aim of this work is to promote sustained behaviour change and reduce risk amongst this key high risk group who are disproportionately represented in the number of collisions and KSIs.

2.2.5 All of the above projects will be evaluated within the same timeframes enabling an understanding of the success of each element of the programme and the combined impact of delivering these simultaneously. It is anticipated this will not only make a positive contribution to the overall programme of work, but inform the wider work of ESCC and improve the effectiveness of future corporate communications.

2.2.6 Development of speed management schemes - In addition to the behavioural insights projects, which are to be taken forward within this overall programme, work is also taking place to review the high risk locations for collisions and KSIs in East Sussex by the ESCC Road Safety Team. Work has taken place to conduct a range of analysis including speed and road surveys to determine the most effective locations and schemes to improve road safety. A final schedule of works has been developed and will be implemented over the next 2 years. A list of the priority schemes for year one (current year) is attached in Appendix 2 to this report.

It is intended that by delivering evidence based road infrastructure improvements in tandem with the range of behaviour change schemes outlined above will maximise the effectiveness and outcomes from each element of the work.

2.2.7 East Sussex Road Safety Programme delivery. The Programme Board, chaired by the Assistant Director of Communities with Senior Officer representation from the County Council, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, Sussex Police and Highways England, meets bi monthly to monitor project delivery. This representation is essential to ensure the programme has links with all partners involved in this area of work.

2.2.8 Financial Analysis – Currently £615,000 has been allocated to the Behaviour Change and Education projects and £332,000 to the Speed Management Schemes. The balance of £53,000 funded the Safer Streets Report.

2.2.9 Project Evaluation and Reporting – It is expected that the programme of work will conclude with a final evaluation during Spring 2020. Initial findings and emerging outcomes will be available from approximately Summer 2019. A final report on the outcomes of both strands of the work, the speed management schemes implemented and the behaviour change work undertaken with the support of project partners will be produced. This anticipated end date is approximate. The exact length of each trial will differ as both start dates and scope of trials will vary to enable a staggered implementation plan and be dependent on the number of offences committed to enable full Randomised Controlled Trials where appropriate. The final evaluation will be supported by expert analysis from the BIT and outcomes will be shared with all project partners pan Sussex.

2.3.10 Whilst it is recognised that the evaluation of behaviour change projects is difficult as behaviour change is incremental and, therefore, requires analysis over a far longer time frame to account for normal statistical fluctuations, the projects have clear means of assessing their impact. Evaluation in this area is necessarily more nuanced as it requires understanding the type of behaviours which are associated with a higher predictive risk of being involved in a KSI, and assessing whether the intervention has decreased these negative behaviours. Seeing a reduction of these behaviours would suggest that, over the longer term, reductions in KSIs will be seen. The BIT will support this aspect of the work. Evidence suggests that positive changes made as a result of similar initiatives are sustained over the long term.

2.3.11 There is growing interest nationally in the opportunities offered by behavioural insights to tackle road safety issues and ESCC is considered a pioneer in this area. Following the end of this project, opportunities will be sought to communicate this work more widely via national meetings and conferences as there is expected to be a great deal of interest from the wider road safety community. We will work with communications leads within ESCC and partner organisations on this aspect to maximise effectiveness and increase the reach of this work.

2.3.12 In addition to the benefits of delivering sustainable long term improvements to road safety and the reduction of risk of subsequent collisions and KSIs, it is expected that this work will inform the long term direction of future ESCC road safety activity. In addition it is likely that this work will inform wider areas of ESCC work and enable more effective use of ESCC social media work in the future.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 This report evidences that the single most significant factor in reducing KSIs in East Sussex is to target driver behaviour. The programme of work being undertaken is therefore focused on the development and implementation of behaviour change schemes alongside work on targeted and evidence based speed management interventions.

3.2 The Committee is recommended to endorse the progress made since the last report in June 2017 on the development and implementation of the East Sussex Road Safety Programme which is designed to target the high risk groups and issues to reduce the rate of those killed and seriously injured on roads in East Sussex. The Committee is requested to take account, in particular, the targeting of action at those groups and underlying issues which detailed data analysis has indicated pose the highest risks for KSI.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None