

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, N Buckley, K Dye,
A Hussain, L Martin, M Shahzad,
N Sharpe, J Taylor and P Wadsworth

20 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

21 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

22 Late Items

There were no late items. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 had been distributed prior to the meeting as supplementary information to the Agenda to be considered along with the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2021.

23 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations.

24 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors B Gettings and J Goddard.

Councillor E Taylor was in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also submitted on behalf of Councillor H Hayden, Executive Member and Councillor P Carlill, Deputy Executive Member.

25 Minutes - 29 September 2021

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 16 and 29 September 2021 be confirmed as correct records subject to the following addition to the minute.17, Road Safety Inquiry:

- (Councillor Hayden left the meeting at approximately 10:45 during the discussion of this item.)

26 Road Safety Inquiry: Terms of Reference

A copy of the Terms of Reference for the Board's Inquiry into Road Safety were attached to the Agenda.

RESOLVED – That the Terms of Reference for the Road Safety Inquiry be noted.

27 Road Safety Inquiry

The report of the Director of City Development highlighted the following:

- An outline of the current approach to reduce the number of casualties on the public highway and thus to support the Best Council Plan.
- The national and regional strategies to be considered and acknowledged in our road safety plans.
- The new approach to road safety, Vision Zero and outline the timetable to produce and adopt the strategy and plan.

This was the Board's second session of the Road Safety Inquiry and the main focus was to hear the views of local road safety campaigners.

The following were in attendance:

- Gillian McLeod, Transport Development Service Manager
- Lynsey McGarvey, Principal Transport Planner
- Nick Hunt, Traffic Engineering Manager
- Vicki Franks, Safe and Sustainable Travel Team Leader
- Gary Bartlett, Chief Officer, Highways & Transportation
- John Scruby, Support & Care After Road Death (SCARD)
- David Smith, Victim & Witnesses Service Advisor (WYCA)
- Ian Greenwood, Road Safety Campaigner
- Paula Knights, Road Safety Campaigner
- Jill Walshaw, Road Safety Campaigner
- Superintendent Ed Chesters, West Yorkshire Police Lead on Road Safety
- Inspector Nick Berry, West Yorkshire Police
- Paul Jeffrey, Partnership & Innovation Mgr, Casualty Prevention Bureau

The Board was informed that the Transport Strategy had recently been approved by Executive Board. The aim of Vision Zero was to work collaboratively and innovatively towards a target of seeing nobody killed or seriously injured on the roads in Leeds by 2040. It is a challenging ambition requiring a different approach to the whole system and process of road safety. This would include vehicle manufacturers, housing design and people's behaviour. A shared approach and responsibility.

The Board heard from Ian Greenwood who explained why he had become involved in campaigning for road safety. Mr Greenwood had tragically lost his daughter in a road traffic collision caused by reckless drivers who had been racing at speeds in excess of 80 miles per hour. He spoke about the

subsequent devastating consequences caused by road deaths and avoidable crashes. He also informed the Board of the varying responses he had received from authorities and local leaders.

Mr Greenwood thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. He noted that he was pleased to see the targets set out in Vision Zero as there is an urgent need to do better in terms of improving road safety in West Yorkshire and Leeds. Mr Greenwood reiterated the importance of ensuring regional leadership on this issue is clear and transparent. He highlighted the current complexity of the shared responsibilities for different aspects of road safety between partners and the difficulty for members of the public in determining who is ultimately accountable for taking action to address road safety in the region.

Mr Greenwood highlighted the need to approach road safety as a public health concern that requires a collaborative response from partners as well as culture change in wider society. Ian also underlined the importance of using the right language when discussing road safety, particularly with regard to victims and their families – he highlighted particular concern about the use of the word “accident,” preferring language such as “preventable crashes.”

The availability and presentation of clear, accessible data was discussed, including the importance of capturing ‘near-miss’ data. The Board discussed the value of local knowledge about where ‘near misses’ take place. The Board considered how this information might be captured. It was suggested that the Board may include an inquiry recommendation that seeks to explore how such data might be captured and shared locally.

Further issues highlighted by Mr Greenwood included the following:

- The Transport Plan is inspirational and it is pleasing to see the recognised need for change and to have a published timetable for action.
- The ongoing need to maintain the joint focus on why the work was important.
- Most crashes are preventable and a join-up approach to delivering safety interventions is required.
- Community engagement and people’s knowledge of local issues is crucial in delivering effective road safety interventions.
- The importance of communication with local people about plans and actions.
- The need for all agencies to work together in the same direction and to better use data to improve road safety.
- The need for leadership and commitment which has helped progression in other cities.

Paula Knights addressed the Board. Her son had been killed travelling in a speeding car with a group of friends which had collided with another vehicle. Paula spoke of the devastating consequences for herself and her family, and the need for young people in particular to understand that those

consequences were the result of one bad decision taken in a matter of minutes.

Since the accident, Paula Knights has worked with Brake, the road safety charity and continues to work with Year 11 and 12 children in local schools. She highlighted the importance of capturing the consequences for victims' families in communication with young people and discussed her joint work with the fire service to illustrate the realities of how emergency services respond to road crashes.

Since her son's death Paula Knights has also been involved in campaigning for Speed Cameras in Horsforth where the fatal crash had taken place. Paula outlined her work with Local Councillors and the use of Social Media to campaign for local safety improvements.

Jill Walshaw whose son was also killed in the same accident also told the Board of her experiences following the accident.

Paula highlighted the vital work of the police liaison team both in the immediate aftermath of the crash and in providing support on a longer-term basis. The Board agreed that securing funding to support victims' families following fatal collisions should be a priority regionally and nationally.

She also emphasised the importance of asking young people to "take five minutes" before deciding to get in a car when circumstances suggest it might not be safe to do so.

Attendees discussed the criteria determining the installation of speed cameras, with particular reference to the inner ring road in Horsforth. Members advocated an approach to the installation of camera technology which actively involves local communities.

The Board was reminded of the recently approved Transport Strategy which included Vision Zero and gave the Council the context to move forward. The Department for Transport had supported the strategy and noted its strength in comparison to many other localities. Members were reminded of the size of the challenge and the need for every member of society to be involved in improving safety.

Attendees discussed the regional approach to improving Road Safety and Gary Bartlett noted that proposals for a politically led Vision Zero Board were to be discussed at a West Yorkshire level at the start of December. It was agreed that the experience and voice of campaigners should be represented on that Board, alongside other partners including public health representatives.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following was discussed:

- That it should be recommended that an expert panel which includes witnesses from this meeting and/or board members should inform the Vision Zero approach within the Council.
- The need for proactive community involvement in preventative action rather than interventions being delivered in response to tragic events.
- The use of speed cameras and other traffic calming schemes could polarise opinion.
- Previous road safety measures had focussed too much on learning from experience rather than intervening early to prevent crashes.
- There is an ambition to provide safe mobility for all forms of transport on the roads.
- Speed cameras are only one tactic that can be used – there is a need for a range of solutions to improve road safety in different settings.
- More flexibility in how speed cameras were deployed would be welcomed. Guidance for siting of cameras is restrictive and criteria does not allow a pro-active approach to siting. There is work ongoing nationally to review the criteria.
- The use of average speed cameras and how they could reduce speeds over a distance on roads.
- Use of the Advanced Driving Test and pre-driver training to encourage safer road use. It was reported that graduated driving licences had worked well in other countries but had been decided against in the UK. The Board suggested a recommendation of the inquiry may be to lobby the Department of Transport to adopt a graduated driver licence approach.
- Siting of speed cameras needed the input of local Ward Councillors and local people and should form part of the Board's recommendations.
- Use of resources – making the best value of existing resources and deploying operations on an intelligence led basis.
- The policing of road safety to be considered as important as other police issues.
- Resources for the support of victims. It was agreed that there is not enough support for victims of road traffic collisions. It was noted that some families need long-term support and that funding should be in place to ensure this is provided. Grant funding for victims had been withdrawn by the Ministry of Justice but following lobbying there had been a change in approach and some grant funding is now available from the Department of Transport.
- The role of SCARD which includes support and counselling to victims and families; independent advice and support at inquests. There was an impact not only on families and victims but also friends, colleagues and emergency service workers.
- Education of young and inexperienced drivers. It was requested that road safety education be relevant and use appropriate language and delivery methods for the age group it was targeted towards. It was reported that there was a review of all road safety education in Leeds from nursery age to post 16.

- The opportunity to involve Councillors at a local level with Vision Zero and the potential role of Community Committees.
- Attendees queried whether speed camera criteria looked at the number of collisions that included fatalities rather than the number of fatalities. There was a call for clearer and more accessible data in relation to fatalities. Officers confirmed that they receive detail breakdowns of all information relating to fatalities and confirmed this can be made available if it is not already.

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and valuable contributions to the Inquiry.

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted.

28 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services asked Members to consider the Board's Work Schedule.

A copy of the schedule was appended to the report along with recent minutes of the Executive Board.

It was reported that Members would be consulted with regards to further discussion on the Road Safety Inquiry.

RESOLVED – That the report and Work Schedule be noted.

29 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 24 November 2021 at 10.30 a.m. There will be a pre-meet for all Board Members at 10.15 a.m.