



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Communities Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 13 November 2024

Creating Safer Roads in Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Ollie Vickers – Cabinet Member for the Economy	
Lead Director:	Dean Sargeant – Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	
Service Area:	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	
Report Author:	Matt Powell – SDM Strategic Transport & Highway Network Management Adam Brookes – SDM Highways, Engineering and Project Delivery	
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Wards Affected:	All Wards	
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision	
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable	
Report considered by:	SMT – 29 October 2024 Communities Scrutiny – 13 November 2024	

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Communities Scrutiny Committee is asked to:-

- 1.1 Note the continued commitment to improving road safety for all users which is underpinned through road safety strategy, education and delivery.
- 1.2 Endorse the tools and techniques used across the borough to improve road safety for all users, including development of the innovative Virtual Reality (VR) headsets while offering suggestion for new areas of focus for potential development.
- 1.3 Endorse the approach, prioritisation and delivery of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) and traffic/road safety scheme delivery while offering suggestions for

enhancement.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report provides Communities Scrutiny with an update on road safety strategy, education and delivery to improve road safety for all users.
- 2.2 In addition, this report outlines the progress that has been made in prioritisation and delivery of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) and road safety engineering schemes.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Telford & Wrekin Council is committed to improving road safety for all users. During the last 5 years the council has invested over £7m in road safety improvements and education which includes safer routes to school and introduction of 20mph zones.
- 3.2 The Council is an active member of the Telford and Wrekin Safer Roads Partnership and works with a number of partners including West Mercia Police and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. The partnership aims to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads across the West Mercia area.
- 3.3 Across the borough, road safety activities are delivered in line with the adopted Road Safety Strategy (2015). Underpinned by data and intelligence, the strategy aims to identify the causes of collisions while focusing to treat their causes.
- 3.4 As shown in the table below, during 2021 and 2023 there was an increase in the severity of road accidents across the borough; despite delivery of measures to improve road safety and education, this increase is a national trend and remains an area of focus for the council and national road safety campaign groups.
- 3.5 Since the peak of 2016, there has been a 44% reduction in the total number of collisions. Unfortunately, fatalities have increased to their highest level since 2014. On further review of these collisions, it would appear that the majority are attributed to driver behaviour such as excess speed or other factor.

Year	Slight	Serious	Fatal	Total
2014	148	16	1	165
2015	168	31	1	200
2016	206	44	2	252
2017	202	47	2	251
2018	122	38	4	164
2019	111	35	2	148
2020	99	30	3	132

Creating Safer Roads in Telford and Wrekin

2021	113	42	2	157
2022	96	27	3	126
2023	95	41	5	141

- 3.6 A key component for improving road safety is education and awareness. Since April 2023 the council has delivered approximately 2,500 road safety education activities and continues to deliver practical interventions with focus on working with schools & colleges in delivering:
- Bikeability Level 1 & 2;
 - Pedestrian Training;
 - Be Bright, Be Seen;
 - Transition workshops – targeted at year 6 pupils;
 - Junior Road Safety Officers; and
 - Targeted campaigns i.e. Don't drink/drug and drive, passenger safety, wear a seatbelt.
- 3.7 The targeted activity enables the council to provide residents and communities with invaluable life skills including road sense awareness and the impact of external influences on driver behaviour. In addition, the focus facilitates reaction to local trends on areas of concern.
- 3.8 Telford Bike Hub in Telford Town Park provides a base for cycling activities which includes training and providing opportunity for more residents to access cycling. The road safety and cycle offer provided by the Hub includes:
- Learn to Ride – children & adults;
 - Adaptive Bikes – available for general hire, tailored sessions and used within schools;
 - Targeted training – Those with specific needs including 1-2-1 sessions;
 - British Cycling Partnership to focus on targeted areas and specifically women & families;
 - Cycle maintenance training and 'Dr Bike'; and
 - Led rides including popular Glow Rides in the autumn/winter.
- 3.9 Building on the success of the Bike Hub, the offer has been extended to support programmes such as Urban Games in taking cycling and cycle training to the heart of the community.
- 3.10 The council has led the way in utilising latest technology to develop and deliver innovative Virtual Reality (VR) headsets to bring road safety education to life. Among the first in the area, this package facilitates use of road safety scenarios to provide training on a broad range of issues including impacts of drink/drugs and

Creating Safer Roads in Telford and Wrekin

driving, speed and in-car distractions. This technology has the ability to develop further scenarios to meet local need.

- 3.11 As part of the roll out, the headsets have been focussed on new & young (under 25) drivers highlighting passenger safety and peer pressure. Furthermore, workshops have been held with mature drivers working in partnership with West Mercia Police and Shropshire Fire & Rescue.
- 3.12 Since launch in March 2024, over 400 people have received VR training sessions. These workshops build on the knowledge from collision data and patterns that show key driver behavioural issues that are becoming more prevalent in the borough.
- 3.13 Feedback from these sessions has been very positive which has attracted local media coverage. Demand continues to increase with more scenarios planned for delivery over the coming year.
- 3.14 A New School Journey was a pilot project working with priority schools over one academic year. The aim of the pilot was to encourage more active travel to and from school, through behaviour change and a greater understanding of how beneficial active journeys are to pupils, families, school and the community.
- 3.15 1,660 children and young people took part in the pilot which started with 51% of pupils travelling to school by car at the start and on completion the most common mode of transport was walking with those being driven all the way to school decreasing.
- 3.16 In parallel to road safety education and engagement, the council continues to deliver improvements to the highway to enhance road safety for all users.
- 3.17 Since 2018/2019, the council has invested £850k into safer routes to school programmes that has seen the delivery of over 35 schemes across the borough which includes measures such as advisory 20mph zones, traffic calming measures and amendments to parking restrictions to better manage traffic movements.
- 3.18 Working with ward members and Town and Parish Councils, the council has delivered on local priorities to overcome community concerns. This has included installation of two speed and one red-light enforcement cameras in Lawley.
- 3.19 The council has, and continues to, deliver road safety engineering schemes across the borough that aim to improve safety for all road users. Schemes are prioritised based on recorded data, such as, personal injury collision information, traffic volume and speed as well as community concerns. To support this, a report has been developed for each Town/Parish area within the borough that identifies known concerns, what works are planned for the current year and what future works are planned. The report has been shared with Ward Members and Town/Parish Council to provide opportunity to input into the prioritisation of schemes and identify additional areas of concern as required.

Creating Safer Roads in Telford and Wrekin

- 3.20 The reports have been well received by Ward Members and Town/Parish Councils which is supporting the development of future capital programmes. The reports will be updated on an annual basis to ensure Members and Town/Parish Councils are kept up to date on progress.
- 3.21 Speed limits, provision of parking restrictions and prohibition of vehicle movements form part of physical measures to enhance road safety. Such projects are, in most cases, underpinned by legal orders in the form of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) and the council has delivered approximately 400 over the last three years.
- 3.22 The council has been working to streamline the process in order to improve delivery. To support this work, a new TRO management system has been implemented that has digitised the councils TROs and moved towards a map based approach. As a result, all current and proposed TROs can be viewed online by the public. This ensures transparency, reduces the need for the public to log enquires in relation to TROs and also supports with a better understanding of proposed measures and engagement with consultations.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The council is committed to is committed to improving road safety for all users. The combination of road safety education and activity alongside delivery of physical improvements strives to reduce road accidents.
- 4.2 The innovative use of Virtual Reality headsets is providing opportunity to engage with road users while providing the ability to develop further scenarios to meet local need.
- 4.3 The new and developing approach to prioritising and delivering TRO's has been well received by Members and Town/Parish Councils which is supporting the development of future capital programmes. The new TRO management system has been implemented that has digitised the councils TROs and moved towards a map based approach. As a result, all current and proposed TROs can be viewed online by the public.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Council could decide not to undertake the activities set out in this report, however given the Council's responsibilities and the effect such activities have on road safety, not undertaking the activities may lead to worsening safety on roads across the Borough.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 A key part of road safety education and training requires engagement and interest. The council will continue to explore innovative and creative ways to continue to engage with residents as part of its continued focus on enhancing road safety.
- 6.2 There is a risk that delivery of physical features do not have the desired effect to improve road safety for all highway users. On completion of installation of physical

features, the council undertakes continual reviews to determine if any further work or modification is required.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The commitment to improving road safety for all users supports the following priorities:

- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community;
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy; and
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 All road safety education and delivery operations are funded via a combination of capital grants and external bid funding when available.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 The Council has the legal powers to undertake the activities in this report, including powers under the Highways Act 1980 to introduce TRO's. The statutory process for introducing TRO's is followed as part of delivering the legal order associated with a traffic restriction.

9.2 There are no HR implications directly arising from this report.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 This report covers the whole Borough with all wards being affected.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 Providing a safe and user-friendly highway network has the opportunity to provide sustainable and active travel modes of transport. Combined with road safety education and training this provides residents with the confidence and ability to use the highway safely while being aware of associated hazards.

11.2 A free flowing transport network contributes to the economic prosperity of an area. In some cases road accidents can cause delays on the highway while placing increased pressure on emergency response services. Reducing the number of road accidents is a priority for the council; investments into physical enhancements will continue.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 Road safety activities aim to provide benefits to all road users. The council tailor's interventions to include all road users whether that be through design of physical measures, or how education measures are delivered.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 Behaviour change activities are often focussed on more sustainable choices in terms of travel mode, and a reduction in driven miles supports the council aim to become carbon neutral.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 Road Safety Strategy 2015
- 2 Communities Scrutiny Report – 15 November 2022

15.0 Appendices

None.

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	04/11/2024	07/11/2024	DRS
Legal	11/11/2024	11/11/2024	RP