

REPORT: Safer Halton Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 22 September 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report

WARDS: Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To report road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2008 and to recommend a continuance of road traffic accident reduction work.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1) The overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton be noted and welcomed;**
- 2) The current programme of road traffic collision reduction schemes and road safety education, training and publicity be endorsed; and**
- 3) The concerns with regard to the achievement of the Government's proposed post 2010 casualty reduction targets be noted.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The report attached as Appendix 'A' sets out full details of the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in the year 2008, and compares these figures with those for previous years. The report also gives details of progress towards various national targets for casualty reductions and highlights concerns regarding the Government's casualty reduction targets for the ten years beyond 2010, which are set out in its consultation 'A Safer Way: Consultation on Making Britain's Roads the Safest in the World'.

3.2 In summary during 2008:

- There were 326 road collisions involving personal injury in Halton, producing 494 casualties;
- 55 of the casualties were classed as serious, and there were 4 deaths. These results are markedly higher than those recorded in 2006 and 2007, which at the time were considered to be exceptionally low;

- The child serious injury and fatality total of 11 remained the same as that of 2007, in keeping with the general trends of recent years;
- The number of people of all ages being slightly injured fell from 477 in 2007 to 435;
- The overall figures show a large decrease over those for 2007; and
- Casualty numbers in the three key nationally set target areas remain well below the 2010 final target levels.

Overall, the results confirm the success of casualty reduction work, funded through Halton's second Local Transport Plan, the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, supported by targeted enforcement, and local road safety education, training and publicity initiatives.

3.4 There is some concern that for casualties in the children killed or seriously injured category, as can be seen in Appendix 'A', the long term trend is for the numbers to be stabilising at around 11 per year, despite all the initiatives aimed at gaining reductions. This 'hard core' figure, which must be addressed as a priority, means that the CKSI rate in Halton is twice the national average. A child casualty audit is to be undertaken to analyse child casualties in Halton to enable better targeting of resources, with special consideration being given to the influence of deprivation.

3.5 The Government, through the DfT., has recently consulted on a series of road casualty reduction targets that it is proposing to set for the year 2020, based on the 2004-2008 baseline average. The targets are to reduce:

- Road deaths by at least 33%;
- Road serious injuries by at least 33%;
- Road deaths and serious injuries to children and young people (aged 0–17) by at least 50%; and
- The rate of KSI per km. travelled by pedestrians and cyclists by 50%.

These targets appear to be extremely onerous for Halton, given the huge reductions already gained and appear to penalise authorities, like Halton, which have been successful in achieving large casualty reductions against the 2004-2008 baseline. The DfT consultation was in the form of a series of set questions to which Halton has responded, and part of that response is reproduced in Appendix A. The rest of the questions and the replies given are available as background papers to this report.

3.6 There has been a trend over recent years towards distributing casualty reduction funding more widely, into the numerous sites with less intense groupings of collisions. This has resulted from both the success in treating the high-density casualty sites and the realisation that the resilient problem areas could benefit more from measures to address driver behaviour and attitude, rather than further engineering interventions.

3.7 At the sites now being treated, collision patterns are extremely hard to establish and greater reliance has had to be placed on Police advice and consultation to achieve further accident reductions. This approach is being combined with a greater emphasis on Road Safety, Education, Training & Publicity. However, the effectiveness of any casualty reduction approach can only be assessed over 3 and preferably 5 years to ensure that trends are firmly established and firm conclusions can be drawn.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct funding implications of this report. However, the funding for casualty reduction work is derived from a number of sources. These include:

- **The Local Transport Plan** - Provides capital funding for engineering based casualty reduction schemes;
- **Halton's Revenue Programme** – Provides funding for local road safety education, training and publicity initiatives and the School Crossing Patrol Service: and
- **The Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership:** The partnership is funded through Halton's, Cheshire West and Chester's, Cheshire East's and Warrington's Road Safety Grants, which are used to support pan Cheshire safety camera enforcement and strategic road safety, education, training and publicity initiatives. A portion of the Road Safety Grant is retained by Halton to undertake more local safety initiatives.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 Failure to implement an effective annual programme of road traffic accident prevention measures and initiatives will lead to an escalation of accident and casualty numbers.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The work on casualty reduction is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's second Local Transport Plan

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 A Safer Halton

Road safety casualty reduction work of all types supports this priority through the introduction of initiatives and interventions designed to deliver a safer environment.

7.2 Children & Young People in Halton

By helping to create a safer environment, road safety casualty reduction work assists in the safeguarding of children and young people and in the achievement of accessible services.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

A reduction in road casualties will have the direct benefit of releasing health resources and thereby enable funding to be focused on other areas of health care.

7.4 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton.

There are no direct implications for this priority.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal.

There are no direct implications for this priority

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Information held in the Traffic Section, Environmental Services, Grosvenor House, Halton Lea, Runcorn. Contact S.Johnson, ext. 3010.