

REPORT:	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12 th June 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Policy and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Transportation
SUBJECT:	Elected Members Guide to Road Safety
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on a booklet that was produced in January 2013 by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, entitled "Road Safety: A Guide for Local Councillors in England", attached as Appendix '1'.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board note the report and that the guide be circulated to all Councillors.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 In January 2013, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) published its booklet "Road Safety: A Guide for Local Councillors in England". Whilst stressing the enormous cost to the community of road traffic accidents and the substantial budget and spending restrictions that have been introduced in recent years, the guide sets out to inform local Councillors as to how their authorities can continue to deliver effective road safety services that are:

- Evidence informed
- Co-ordinated with other public services
- Designed and delivered in partnership
- Evaluated to ensure effectiveness

On average, 4 people are killed on Halton's roads each year. Nationally 5 people a week die and the numbers are no longer reducing year on year. A full report on Halton's collision and casualty position was presented to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board in November 2012.

- 3.2 Local government is the main delivery agent of road safety and local authorities have a statutory duty to "take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents" (see page 4 of the Guide) yet action on this responsibility is being weakened by recent budget cuts (including removal of the specific Road Safety Grant and School Travel Plans Grant which has resulted in the number of Road Safety staff within Halton being reduced by two thirds (six to two)) and the lack of any national road casualty reduction targets in the DfT "Strategic Framework for Road Safety" published in 2011. The budget cuts have reinforced the need to work in partnership with other agencies such as the Police and Fire & Rescue Services, although most local authorities retain direct control of the road safety function in order to ensure quality control and flexibility of delivery. This is the case in Halton.

3.3 The ability of partner agencies to contribute to road safety work is also being undermined by budget cuts to these organisations, who are having to review their activities and focus on their core activities at the expense of their ability to participate in road casualty reduction work. It is increasingly the case that whilst road safety professionals have a clear understanding of the work they would wish to undertake in this area, the shortage of resources is preventing this being carried out.

4.0 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

4.1 Of particular note in the RoSPA guide is the section relating to health services. Translating this to Halton and the transfer of public health responsibility to the authority, new opportunities exist for the provision of funding to the road safety function. Halton's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment includes "Number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents" as an indicator, a particular category of casualty which has increased serially over the years 2009 to 2012. This principle of health services contributing to measures to reduce casualties is already established, with Liverpool City Council & PCT, for example, jointly funding the widespread introduction of 20mph areas as a casualty reduction initiative.

4.2 Building on the content of the RoSPA guide, it is worth noting that the independent National Institute for Clinical Excellence has published formal guidance to directors of public health on strategies to prevent unintentional injuries. This covers 20mph speed limits and engineering measures to reduce speed or make routes safer and support for coordinated working between health professionals and local highways authorities to promote changes to the road environment.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the RoSPA guide in itself, however implementation of some options will require funding.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Road safety casualty reduction work is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

6.2 There are no other direct social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES.

7.1 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.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

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 A Safer Halton

The RoSPA guide presents ways in which to deliver effective road safety services, fundamental to a Safer Halton.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal' priority.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 Any failure to follow the advice and recommendations in the RoSPA guide risks increasing the number of casualties on Halton's roads.

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.0 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 21st November 2012 for Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report.