

REPORT: Environment and Urban Renewal
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21st January 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report.

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2012 and to recommend a continuance of road traffic collision reduction work.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **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) concerns with regard to the achievement of further casualty prevention, as a result of resource reductions, be noted.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Appendix 'A' sets out full details of the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in the year 2012, and compares these figures with those for previous years. Due to problems with the availability of data, this report has been delayed. These results are mixed, with large reductions in the numbers of people being slightly injured but with the overall numbers of those killed/seriously injured (KSI) remaining the same as in 2011. Within the stable KSI total, adults fell in number but children increased again amid concerns that coalition government funding cuts could be adversely affecting the delivery of road safety education, training and publicity work.

3.2 In summary during 2012:

- There were 278 road traffic collisions involving personal injury in Halton, this being the lowest number in over 20 years and the same as in 2011. These incidents produced 377 casualties, a large reduction on the 422 recorded in 2011;
- 36 of the casualties were classed as serious, and there were 4 deaths, giving a total of 40 killed or seriously injured (KSI), the same as in 2011, which was the lowest in over 20 years;

- The child serious injury (CKSI) total of 10 is three more than in 2011, but there were no child fatalities in 2012. This number is in line with the trend for more CKSI casualties over the past four years;
- The number of people of all ages being slightly (SLI) injured fell to 337 from 382 in 2011.

3.3 In terms of the overall casualty numbers, the results confirm the success of our casualty reduction work, supported via revenue funds and the Local Transport Plan with targeted enforcement and local road safety education, training, publicity and traffic management initiatives undertaken independently and jointly with partner organisations

3.4 Halton's KSI totals of 41, 41, 40 and 40 over the years 2009 to 2012 indicate that achieving further savings is going to be extremely challenging, all the more so given the Coalition Government decision to cut road safety funding and abandon national casualty reduction targets. Whilst Halton's KSI numbers remained almost the same over these four years, nationally over the same time the KSI numbers have fallen by 8%.

3.5 Within the KSI total, an increase in child serious injury (CKSI) totals of 4, 7, 7 and 10 over the years 2009 to 2012 is disappointing and at odds with national CKSI rates which have fallen by 15% over the same period. The Department for Transport 2012 comprehensive annual report on road casualties is available via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

3.6 Locally, Halton seems to be now falling behind the KSI reduction rates being achieved nationally.

4.0 TARGETS

4.1 In 2010, the ten year casualty reduction targets set in 2000 expired and the new government published its Strategic Framework for Road Safety in May 2011 based on what the government described as the "key principles" of localism, the "Big Society", non-regulatory approaches and deficit reduction. The Coalition Government aims to maintain on-going reductions in casualty numbers, whilst tackling specific issues such as those of cyclists and children from deprived areas.

4.3 Within the Government's Strategic Framework is an Outcomes Framework which does set out an expectation for progress on road casualty reductions. Without providing specific targets, and quoting a central KSI reduction forecast of 40% by 2020 based on a 2005-09 base average, the Framework sets out a belief that reductions can be made by encouraging best practice amongst local authorities and comparing local progress with national trends. The only other countries in the EU that do not have targets as part of their road safety strategies are Luxembourg and Malta. The national focus of future casualty reduction work remains unclear.

4.4 The Coalition Government's "Strategic Framework for Road Safety" is available at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/strategic-framework-for-road-safety/>

5.0 FUNDING CUTS

5.1 Since April 2011, Halton has suffered the loss of annual Government funded capital and revenue Road Safety grants of £75k and £396k respectively. This has resulted in a halving of the number of Road Safety Officers in Halton and loss of

funding for a wide range of projects and initiatives. The cuts have also meant Halton no longer provides any financial contribution to the local safety camera partnership.

- 5.2 Halton's 2012 casualty figures are not universal good news and the fear grows that these cuts are beginning to have an impact on our ability to continue achieving year on year reductions, despite the best efforts to maximise resources through running initiatives jointly with our neighbours from Warrington Borough Council and other partner organisations such as Cheshire Police and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service (CFRS) – organisations which in turn have had resources removed, most recently CFRS, which is now facing cuts requiring a re-focussing of its core activities.
- 5.3 Locally, Halton seems to now be falling behind the KSI reduction rates being achieved nationally.

6.0 CHESHIRE ROAD SAFETY GROUP

- 6.1 In 2011, the loss of the Road Safety grant saw the Cheshire Road Safety Group (CRSG) being formed to replace the former Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRPP). Its purpose is to operate the safety cameras within Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester, Halton and Warrington. Halton's previous contributions to this partnership were funded through the Road Safety Grants that were cut in 2010/11 (see 5.1 above). Since that date, Halton has not contributed financially to the Group but continues to participate in joint safety initiatives locally as resources permit.
- 6.2 In not contributing financially to the partnership, there is a strong possibility that camera enforcement in the borough will be adversely affected, with the worst case scenario being that no enforcement at fixed sites would take place in the future. There is an obvious reluctance on behalf of our partners to keep the cameras and enforcement operation going in a borough that does not offer any financial support to these operations. Discussions are currently on-going as to whether and how Halton finds the necessary resources to commit to the partnership but indications are that if it does not contribute financially, fixed speed camera enforcement could reduce significantly or indeed, entirely in the borough in the coming months.
- 6.3 The CRSG is having to replace its outmoded wet film equipment with digital cameras at considerable cost. As part of this exercise, a review of all existing camera sites is underway to establish which will be retained/replaced and which are no longer justified. Halton is actively engaged in this process, but initial indications are that it may be difficult to justify the retention of a number of them in the Borough based on current criteria. However, it should be remembered that the presence of speed cameras does serve as a useful deterrent to speeding drivers and consideration would need to be given as to whether one or more should be retained in this regard.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The work on casualty reduction is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's third Local Transport Plan.
- 7.2 There are no other direct social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES.

8.1 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.

8.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

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

8.3 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.

8.4 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.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

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

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES.

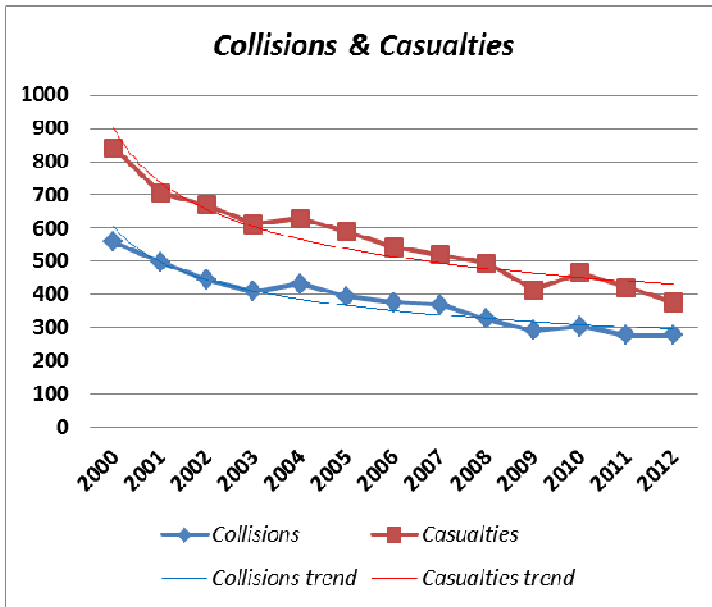
9.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 The Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report to the E&UR PPB considered on 21 November 2012

Halton 2012 Traffic Collisions Review

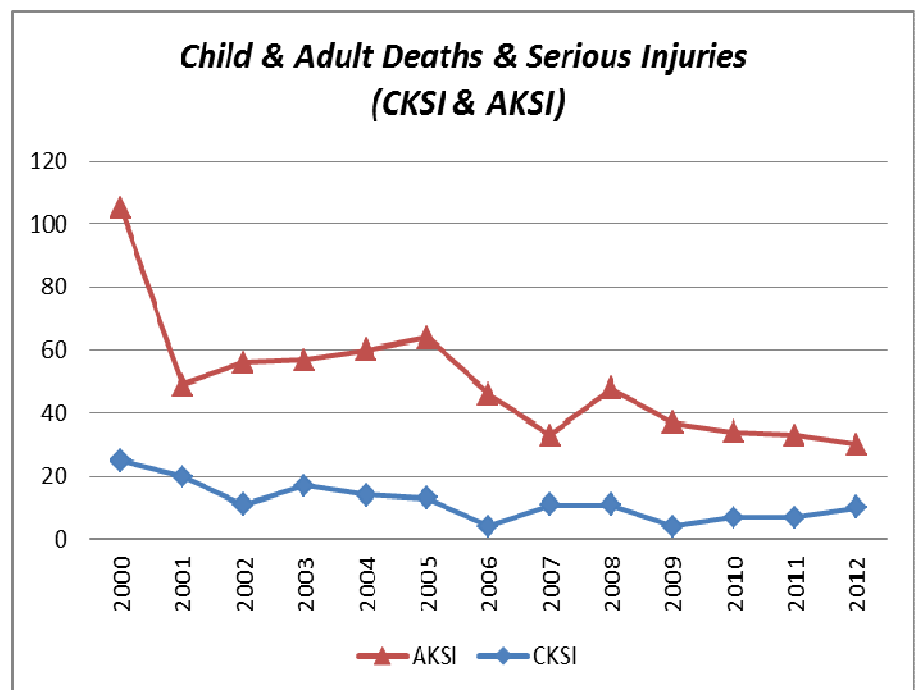
2012 saw a marked decrease in the number of road traffic *casualties* in Halton relative to the previous year and the general levels were in line with the overall trend for progressive, if fluctuating, general reductions stretching back over a decade. However, *collision* numbers remained the same.



Year	Collisions	Casualties
2000	558	842
2001	497	706
2002	444	670
2003	409	612
2004	432	629
2005	394	590
2006	377	543
2007	370	521
2008	326	494
2009	291	415
2010	303	464
2011	278	422
2012	278	377

Whilst casualty numbers fell, all the reduction was in the number of people slightly injured (SLI) as the number of deaths/serious injuries remained the same at 40 for all ages. Within this total of 40 KSI, adult deaths/serious injuries (AKSI) fell for the fifth year running, but child serious injuries increased once more.

Year	Child Deaths/Serious Injuries (CKSI)	Adult Deaths/Serious Injuries (AKSI)
2000	25	105
2001	20	49
2002	11	56
2003	17	57
2004	14	60
2005	13	64
2006	4	46
2007	11	33
2008	11	48
2009	4	37
2010	7	34
2011	7	33
2012	10	30



Local Indicators

Killed & Seriously Injured, All Ages (KSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 9*)

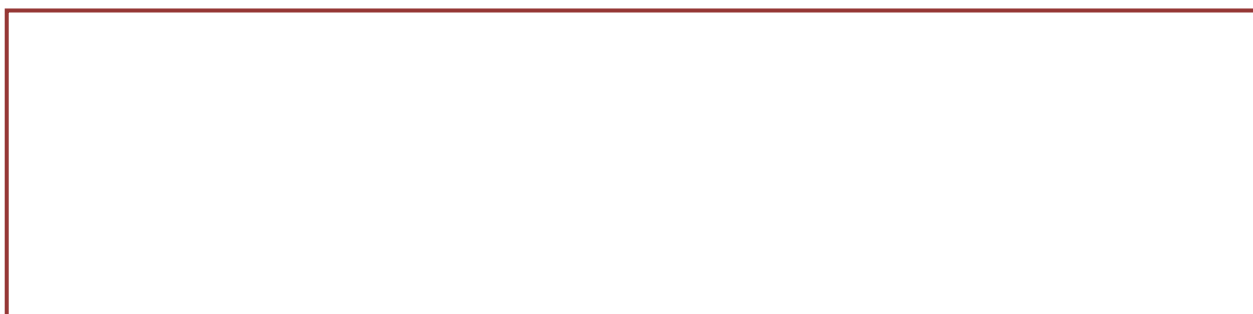


Children (Under 16's) Killed & Seriously Injured (CKSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 10*)

10 in 2012.

Road Safety education work with children relies heavily on direct contact, mainly in the classroom, and this involvement is an area of contact that has been most severely affected by cuts in the numbers of road safety officers resulting from the Coalition Government austerity measures.

Slight, All-Age Casualties (SLI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 11*)



Strategic Framework for Road Safety

The Strategic Framework for Road Safety published by the Coalition Government in May 2011 set out a proposed outcomes framework designed to help government, local organisations and citizens to monitor any progress towards improving road safety and decreasing the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties.

The framework included six key indicators which relate to road deaths, that were intended to measure the key outcomes of the strategy but in Halton the number of road deaths is small and subject to fluctuation. For this reason, KSI rates were proposed as key indicators locally and KSI numbers can be used to compare Halton's performance relative to its neighbours:

	2005-09 average	2011	2012	2012 change over 2011	2012 change over 2005-09 base average
Cheshire East	284	242	245	1%	-14%
Cheshire West & Chester	238	228	214	-6%	-10%
Halton	54	40	40	0%	-26%
Knowsley	58	41	64	56%	11%
Liverpool	218	195	243	25%	11%
Manchester	222	174	195	12%	-12%
St. Helens	65	73	70	-4%	8%
Warrington	104	107	111	4%	6%

Whilst at present Halton may appear to be comfortably placed under this new measurement regime relative to its neighbours, the reality is that the year to year KSI performance fluctuations that this authority has experienced in the past undermine the validity of this method of comparison. Given the removal of the Council's Road Safety Grant support and reductions in road safety staff and resources, it is difficult to see how Halton can continue to achieve reductions in KSI casualties to reach the government's central projection figure of a 40% cut by 2020, relative to the 2005-09 average figures as a base.

Intensive work with children can affect their behaviour on the roads for the rest of their lifetime, and falling levels of involvement could be storing up problems for future years.

As has been pointed out to the DfT in the course of earlier consultation exercises, those authorities that achieved the highest rates of casualty reduction under the previous government's 2000-2010 Road Safety Strategy – such as Halton - are now in a very weak position to achieve further reductions and they will compare badly with others that achieved little up to 2010. It is the view of officers that the basis of the new Key Outcomes indicators is therefore flawed.