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Buckinghamshire County Council

Casualty Reduction

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Briefing Note

Safety Cameras in Buckinghamshire

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Background and History

Cameras were first introduced in Buckinghamshire in the early 1990's. The first camera site was the red light site at A40/B416 Gerrards Cross. The first fixed speed camera sites were introduced in 1992 following a trial with manned cameras, where road safety advice was sent to those detected exceeding the speed limit. The first three fixed sites remain today at A355 Farnham Common, A404 Hazlemere and A4155 Marlow.

During the 1990's, the County Council had an annual programme for safety cameras with on average six fixed camera sites being introduced each year over a period of about 10 years. All the sites implemented had the approval of the (then) Highways and Public Transport Sub-Committee and all were located where there was a proven record of collisions/casualties as well as a problem with excess speed. Camera sites in Buckinghamshire have only been provided to reduce casualty and with the approval of Thames Valley Police.

The Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership (TVSRP), consisting of Thames Valley Police, Thames Valley Magistrates' Court Service, Thames Valley CPS and the Thames Valley's nine highway authorities* came into being on 1st April 2000 following the policy decision, made by the (then) DETR (together with the Treasury, Home Office and other central government departments), that fine revenue from safety cameras, termed hypothecation or more commonly 'netting off', could be used to fund the installation and ongoing enforcement. The successful operational case, led by Thames Valley Police, was submitted to the DETR in late 1999.

Prior to the formation of the TVSRP, the County Council funded all the infrastructure to provide the camera housing including the pole, base, electrical supply, signing, lining and any other site works such as hard standings. The Police funded the actual camera and all processing costs associated with pursuing any offences detected. In round terms, the cost of the site is approximately £10,000, the cost of the camera is approximately £30,000 and the typical cost to process one film (loading) is approximately £8,000. Up until 2000, all costs were borne by the County Council and Police and all revenue from fines was paid to the Treasury.

*The 9 TVSRP Highways Authorities are:

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest, Reading, Milton Keynes, Wokingham

The Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership

The Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership currently consists of a steering group of all partners to oversee and provide a strategic overview of the project meeting twice a year. It was recognised at an early stage that this group was too large to meet on a more regular basis so a project board was established consisting of five representatives and a project manager who was appointed to run the project on a day to day basis making sure that the rules of the scheme were adhered to. The project board meets at least bi-monthly and receives more regular updates from the project manager as required.

The Secretary of State announced in December 2005 that the ring fenced 'netting off' funding for safety camera partnerships is to end after 2006/07. From 2007/08 safety cameras and their funding are to be integrated into the Local Transport Plan system alongside other road safety measures. This is intended to give greater flexibility to local authorities, the police and the other agencies to pursue which ever locally agreed mix of road safety measures will make the greatest contribution to reducing road casualties in their area.

These changes to funding are welcomed and will provide additional flexibility to target local road safety problems in the most appropriate and cost effective manner, target key areas of policy relating to casualty reduction by integrating road safety into a single approach, whilst maintaining the ongoing costs of speed enforcement.

To further develop our road safety strategy, so as to maximise the benefits of the new funding arrangements when they come into effect in April 2007, we will be working closely with our existing partners (including police and other relevant agencies in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire) throughout 2006. We hope to extend this partnership to include other stakeholders where appropriate; particularly in health and fire safety. It is anticipated that during the period of this LTP targeted enforcement activity will be maintained and developed so as to build on the very positive results achieved by the strategic data led approach of the current Safer Roads Partnership. The Year 4 evaluation study by UCL demonstrated a 44.7% reduction in KSIs at camera sites in the Thames Valley.

It is our intention that the County Council will take a leading role in the development of a new safety partnership. We are meeting with our partners to ensure the new partnership is set up before the new funding arrangements are put into place. With our partners we will consider the wider role of the police to better use the resources in enforcing traffic law aimed specifically at reducing casualties.

By delivering casualty reduction measures, including education, through a coordinated partnership approach it is anticipated that significant cost savings and additional benefits of cross-border collaboration can be achieved. The sharing of information on the outcome of road safety work with our local partners in the Thames Valley area and with regional partners will help further reinforce effectiveness through a thorough feedback process.

Camera sites in Buckinghamshire

There are currently 48 fixed camera sites in Buckinghamshire, 4 of which have 2 camera housings. Appendix A, lists where the cameras are situated. There are two types in use:

- Gatso – rear facing, single or bi-directional – two photographs of rear of vehicle, using radar detection
- Truvelo – front facing, single or bi-directional – single photograph of the front of vehicle, using piezo loops set into the road surface.

Collisions at camera sites.

The Thames Valley Safety Camera Partnership recorded the numbers of collisions that had occurred at each camera location over a period of three years prior to the installation the cameras. These figures revealed that there had been a total of 344 injury crashes along these stretches of road. Once each camera had been in operation for three years, the partnership again recorded the crash data, and this showed that there had been a total of 266 injury collisions at the sites. This equates to a 23% reduction in the number of collisions around the areas where the cameras have been installed (2002-2005).

Highways economic note No 1: 2004

All collisions regardless of their severity will have an economic effect and is measured in terms of the cost benefits to the public in the prevention of a collision. Since 1993, the valuation of both fatal and non-fatal casualties has been based on a consistent willingness to pay (WTP) approach. This approach encompasses all aspects of the valuation of casualties including the human costs and the direct economic costs, i.e. an amount to reflect the pain, grief and suffering and the lost output and medical costs associated with road collision injuries.

The Dept of Transport Highways Economic note No 1: 2004 averages out the cost of a crash where a person is injured. It has been estimated that for every crash that results in an injury, the cost to the community is £62,197. This does not take into account the severity of injury sustained. The cost to the community rises drastically in the event of death or if serious injuries are sustained. (£1.5million & £180,00 respectively). Thames Valley Police do not monitor 'damage only' crashes, but each instance is estimated to cost the community £1,654. Because At the current time, the partnership only report on the numbers of collisions and not their severity, the only estimate we can make is that the reductions achieved at camera sites have saved the community at, based upon the average cost, is at least £500,000.

Camera sites removed in Buckinghamshire

Seven fixed sites have been removed in recent years, listed in Appendix B. In all but one case, the collision record has not increased since removal of the camera housing. The exception is the A418 Oxford Road, Aylesbury – increase due to revised road layout not excess speed. Conditions at these sites are continually monitored to ensure this good record continues.

Department for Transport (DfT) rules for the introduction of new camera sites

In 2002, the DfT produced a handbook for all those who use safety cameras to follow to ensure that cameras were only used as a casualty reduction measure rather than to raise revenue as some of the press seemed to imply. This did not adversely affect how cameras were used in Buckinghamshire as we have always only ever used cameras to address speed related collision sites. The handbook was revised in November 2004 and now contains rules about site selection. All new sites **must** comply with the following rules:

Criteria	Fixed site	Mobile site
Site length	0.4 – 1.5 km	0.4 – 5.0 km
No. of fatal / serious collisions (KSI)	4 per km in last 3 years	2 per km in last 3 years
85 th percentile speed	85 th percentile speed at or above ACPO guidance (10% above speed limit plus 2mph)	
Percentage over speed limit	At least 20% of drivers are exceeding the speed limit	
Site conditions	Loading can take place safely	Location is easily accessible
No other engineering solution	There has been a site survey by a road safety engineer and there are no other obvious, practical measures to improve road safety along this stretch of road	

There are now very few sites throughout the County that meet the rules above for a fixed camera site. This is because most sites already have a fixed camera housing or are unsuitable for a camera. As the conditions to be met for a mobile site are less onerous so more sites fall into this category and therefore there are an increasing number of mobile sites being established throughout the County. Whilst this means a more effective use of available resources, mobile sites are not as popular with customers as there is no fixed deterrent at the roadside. All roads are reviewed twice a year to identify any potential new camera sites and to assess the effectiveness of existing camera sites. However, under the proposed new arrangements after 2006/07 there is likely to be a more flexible approach to the deployment of safety cameras as the DfT have suggested that they will only publish guidelines for the provision of safety cameras.

A review is currently underway to ensure that all sites (mobile and fixed) in this County are signed in accordance with the new rules identified in the 2006/7 handbook and all fixed sites fully comply with the visibility criteria.

Current Funding Arrangements

All monies collected in fines are paid to the Treasury. Partnerships have been able to recover actual running costs from this fine income. For the audited year (Year 4 - 2004/05), £5,561,400 (92,690 Fixed Penalty Notices) was collected in fines in Thames Valley. Running costs for the year were £4,560,943. The additional fine income after running costs (£1,000,457) was retained by the Treasury. Partners are only able to recover those costs actually incurred as allowable expenditure. (Source: *The national safety camera programme: Four-year evaluation report – December 2005*)

The partners in Thames Valley recovered costs that reflect the level of activity undertaken by each partner (excluding CPS) are approximately as follows:

Thames Valley Police	£2.682m	Camera enforcement, processing etc
Magistrates' Courts	£0.588m	Processing offences, payment of fines etc
Local Authorities	£0.930m	9 authorities; provision of sites, monitoring etc
CPS	£0	CPS are not permitted to recover costs
TVSRP Project team	£0.361	
Total	£4.561m	

Over the 5 years of the Partnership so far, the County Council has recovered funding as follows:

Year	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Recovered	£24,747	£59,004	£153,216	£98,345	£146,000

These costs would have been borne by the capital and revenue budget had the scheme not been in place.

Proposed Funding Arrangements

Under the proposed changes the funding for the camera partnership will be allocated directly to the local authority partners through the LTP process. As mentioned above the running costs of the partnership in the audited year (2004/05) were £4,560,943. Therefore to continue the partnership the partners will need to continue to contribute a percentage of the monies given by Central Government.

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Capital	£241,630	£231,125	£221,973	£213,641
Revenue	£1,087,334	£1,040,060	£998,876	£961,382
Total	£1,328,964	£1,271,185	£1,220,849	£1,175,023

Conclusions

Safety cameras in Buckinghamshire have made and continue to make a positive contribution to meeting the national and local casualty reduction targets. All sites in the County are undergoing assessment to fully comply with the new signing and visibility rules imposed by the Department for Transport. Whilst all fixed sites were installed before the new site selection rules, camera sites in Buckinghamshire have only been implemented to address poor speed related collision records. Over £480,000 of operational and maintenance costs for running safety cameras in Buckinghamshire has been recovered from the netting off scheme, through the TVSRP since it began.

We are now working with our partners to develop the partnership to take on a broader role and establish the funding implications of doing so.

Appendix A

Fixed camera sites in Buckinghamshire

Aylesbury Vale		
Road name	TVSRP Site ID	Town / village
A41 Bicester Road	841	Kingswood
A413 Wendover Road	826	Aylesbury
A418	850	Bierton
A418	872	Gibraltar
A4146 Leighton Road	835	Edlesborough
A4146 Fenny Road	814	Stoke Hammond
A4157 Oakfield Road	858	Aylesbury
A4157 Weedon Road	857	Aylesbury
B4009 Aylesbury Road	859	Wendover
C137 London Road	810	Buckingham
C173 Churchill Avenue	894	Aylesbury
Camborne Avenue, Bedgrove	846	Aylesbury
Elmhurst Road (E & W)	843 & 844	Aylesbury
London Road	845	Aston Clinton
Chiltern		
Road name	TVSRP Site ID	Town / village
A404 Amersham Road	805	Little Chalfont
A413 Gravel Hill	801	Chalfont St Peter
A416 Ashley Green Road	834	Ashley Green
A416 Station Road	808	Amersham
A416 Nashleigh Hill	880	Chesham
Waterside	892	Chesham
South Bucks		
Road name	TVSRP Site ID	Town / village
A40 London Road	870	Beaconsfield
A4007 Slough Road	829	Iver Heath
A412 North Orbital Road	864	Denham
A355 Beaconsfield Road	820	Farnham Common
A355 Green Man Hill	827	Farnham Royal
B416 Gerrards Cross Road	853	Stoke Poges
B470 Iver Lane	828	Iver
Thorney Lane	863	Iver

Wycombe		
Road name	TVSRP Site ID	Town / village
A40 West Wycombe Road	804 & 868	High Wycombe
A404 Amersham Road	819	Hazlemere
A4010 Aylesbury Road	891	Monks Risborough
A4010 Chapel Lane	865	High Wycombe
A4010 New Road	832	High Wycombe
A4094 Cores End Road	869	Bourne End
A4094 Hedsor Road	838	Bourne End
A4094 Wycombe Lane	893	Wooburn Green
A4155 Little Marlow Road	818 & 900	Marlow
B474 Elm Road	862	Penn
B482 High Street	871	Lane End
B482 Seymour Court Road	867	Marlow
C86 Main Road	884	Naphill
Desborough Avenue	831	High Wycombe
Hamilton Road	849	High Wycombe
Holmer Green Road	811	Hazlemere
London Road	885 & 886	High Wycombe
The Pastures	861	High Wycombe
Sawpit Hill	833	Holmer Green
Wycombe Road	847	Marlow

Appendix B

Camera sites removed in Buckinghamshire

Road name	Town / village	Speed Limit	Date removed	Reason for removal
A418 Aylesbury Road	Wing	30	08/2000	Roundabout installed
A418 Oxford Road	Stone	40	08/2000	Traffic calming installed
A418 Oxford Road	Aylesbury	30	08/2000	Road widened
C94 Chinnor Road	Bledlow Ridge	40	04/2000	Village gateways installed
A41 Bicester Road	Aylesbury	40	05/2003	Road surface / signing improved
Daws Hill Lane	High Wycombe	30	12/2002	Traffic calming installed
A40 Oxford Road	Stokenchurch	40	12/2002	Continual damage to site