



*A Vehicle Activated Sign displaying a 30 mph warning when triggered by vehicles travelling at excessive speed.*

## FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL ON ROAD SAFETY MEASURES



*A Driver Education Workshop for speed related offences.*



## FOREWORD

Leicestershire County Council manages and maintains 2,575 miles (4,145 km) of roads across the county. It aims to prevent accidents and reduce casualties by working towards the road safety targets set by Government and by following its casualty reduction strategy laid out in the Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011, which identifies the following four key themes:

- Providing a safer road environment;
- Managing speed;
- Improving safety for vulnerable road users;
- Encouraging safer driving.

The Panel is pleased to note the progress in Leicestershire against the following 2010 national targets, set by Government in 2000, which are all either exceeded or on track:

- a 40% reduction in the numbers of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road accidents;
- a 50% reduction in the numbers of children killed or seriously injured (KSI); and
- a 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

In noting this progress, the Panel has sought to analyse the effectiveness of the County Council's approach to road safety, through both physical and behavioural means, and how that approach reinforces and changes the public's actions and attitudes on our roads.

Arising from this analysis, the Panel's overall conclusions are that at present, physical work on the highway is very much focussed on analysis of recorded accidents involving personal injury and is funded from the Transportation Capital Programme. Schemes resulting from this are designed to eliminate or reduce features which are identified as likely contributors to the accidents that have occurred. They usually seek to meet specific concerns of the public, supported by council officers' professional judgments, related to improving road safety.

Behavioural work is funded from revenue allocations and is centred around publicity campaigns, road user training, and (with support from the police through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership) enforcement. It is seen as more general but can have a more wide-ranging benefit, although this is very hard to measure directly. A combination of the two is considered best practice and should include campaigning in the vicinity of specific places where physical work is also envisaged.

Further work needs to be done to establish whether a significant change in driver behaviour and attitudes can be achieved such as to make physical work less important. Whilst work can be, and is, done on this subject locally, it is a wider national and cultural matter. The Panel notes this point and believes the Council should look forward to the results of further research and possibly

legislation. Subject to and within the constraints of capital versus revenue funding streams, these in turn may lead the Council to consider a re-allocation of resources between physical and behavioural measures.

The Panel has also made the following specific recommendations for continued improvement:

#### Assessment of Casualty Reduction Performance

*The development of monitoring processes for local safety schemes implemented from 2004 onwards should be afforded greater emphasis and built into routine arrangements to allow the Authority to maintain more useful records, including through participation in the Department for Transport Database for the 'monitoring of road safety engineering schemes' (UKMoRSE);*

#### Speed Limits

*The Panel supports the approach of the County Council to casualty reduction in creating 20 mph zones, usually in conjunction with physical speed reducing measures. However the results of a Portsmouth City Council alternative for such zones using only signs and no physical measures should continue to be monitored as, if successful, this could potentially reduce the costs of the Authority's own schemes.*

#### Street Signage

*It is considered there is nowhere in Leicestershire that presently justifies the necessary investment to remove street signage and furniture in order to lead to a more harmonious environment whilst not increasing road casualties. However the amount of street signage in the County should be kept under review and where it is considered an area can be 'de-cluttered' with no adverse effects on safety this should be done in the interests of efficiency.*

#### Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)

*The County Council's use of simple and effective VAS which delivers improved safety levels over alternative models whilst directing resources in a cost effective way is to be commended.*

#### Blind Spot Mirrors in the Highway and other Highway Obstructions

*Following a review of the County Council's policy on the use of blind-spot mirrors, the Panel believes there is insufficient evidence to suggest they make a positive contribution to road safety and therefore recommends that the County Council policy for not allowing their use be retained.*

*The Authority should be more assertive in raising awareness of the responsibilities of landowners and developers in relation to road safety. The return of powers of direction to the Highways Authority, withdrawn in previous years, in relation to planning and road safety may be an area in which the*

*Local Government Association should be requested to lobby Government in future.*

### Road Safety Education

*The innovative ways in which road safety education and awareness is undertaken for offenders, young drivers in the 17-24 age bracket and for young children by the County Council should be commended.*

*A target of 100% participation in the Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme, which enlists the help of primary school children to tell their schools about road safety should be established in Leicestershire and the Chairmen of Leicestershire Highways Forums should be asked to write to those schools not currently participating, to encourage them to do so.*

### Emerging Technologies and Greener Driving

*The County Council should be urged, as part of its fleet management review, to incorporate 'Green Driver and Fleet Driver Defensive Programmes' for the benefit of both employer and employee in efficiency savings and safer driving initiatives. It should also encourage its partners, such as the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO), whose vehicles formed part of the fleet on the County Council's Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence, to do so.*

*Having developed and incorporated 'Green Driver and Fleet Driver Defensive Programmes' for its own and partners' fleets, the County Council should also be urged to commend such programmes to the wider business sector through appropriate provision of promotional and training services.*



**Mr R J Shepherd CC,  
Chairman of the Panel**



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