

Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date	18 March 2024
Report title	WMCA Road Safety Review 2023-2024
Portfolio Lead	Transport - Councillor Mike Bird
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Report has been considered by	Passenger and Road Safety Membership Engagement Group – 1 February 2024

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Scrutinise the review of road safety activity delivered during 2023 and 2024.

1. Purpose*

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide a review of road safety activity delivered and support by WMCA/TfWM during 2023 and 2024.

2. Background

Two years in the making, the Regional Road Safety Partnership, through coordination from TfWM, have developed and launched a Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030. Launched on the 15th September 2023, this aligns with the 6 Big Moves of the Local Transport Plan and sets out our transition to a systematic approach with a target to reduce killed and seriously injured (KSI) road traffic casualties by 50% by 2030. This will be followed by a new Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030, which is now out for public consultation until 10th May 2024

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

Below is a summary of road safety outputs and delivery enabled, supported and facilitated by the Combined Authority through TfWM during the 2023-2024 financial year:

- **Commitment to Vision Zero:** The strategic approach includes an aspiration for Vision Zero (a long-term mission aimed at eliminating all road death and serious injury in the region). We have fought hard to not indicate a date for achieving this mission as there is a long way to go and if the forecast for delivery is not robust, we run the risk of reducing the credibility of the approach.
- **Data analysis:** All road safety activity must be evidence-led. This work is a collaborative task between TfWM's Road Safety and Data Insight teams, West Midlands Police and local authorities, although further insight has been developed through the use of AI technology such as VivaCity's near miss sensors. Data provides an assessment of performance against the 2030 casualty reduction target with actual numbers of KSI casualties rising. However, when undertaking a proportionate analysis between KSIs and billion miles travelled in the region, we see a decrease in casualty rates.
To expand the road safety evidence base, we have recently reviewed collisions and casualties by time of day and more recently in terms of areas of deprivation. While there are many factors involved, the top two deciles of deprivation in the region cover 33% of land mass and account for 44% of all roads. However, 54.3% of all KSIs occur on these roads. We intend to work with regional and external partners to better understand these figures.
- **Partnership engagement:** TfWM facilitated four Road Safety Partnership Away Days in 2023-24. These brought all partners face to face to enhance the strategic approach for road safety across the region and plan for a collective approach. This work included development and delivery of the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 and the Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030, which is currently out for public consultation.
TfWM's engagement work has been significantly expanded this year targeting activities with charities, faith organisations and community groups. These organisations/groups play an important role in improving road safety, having direct influence over at-risk road users.
- **Enforcement:** The Combined Authority has worked across both civil and criminal enforcement agendas in 2023. WMCA funded a project to support local authorities to formulate their applications for the powers to enforce moving traffic contraventions. Birmingham, Coventry and Walsall received their Designation Orders in July 2023 and have started implementation. The remaining four authorities applied in October 2023 and will receive their Designation Orders in March 2024.
All Working Agreements between the local authorities and West Midlands Police for the regional Average Speed Enforcement scheme had expired by the end of March 2023. TfWM has been working directly with all partners to secure agreement on an Interim Working Agreement for the 2024-2025 financial year. We are also working collaboratively towards a longer-term Agreement from April 2025. This will involve the development of a new Business Case, identifying potential expansion, undertaking performance reviews and assessing financial sustainability.
- **Campaigns:** May 2023 saw a spike in vulnerable road user fatal and serious injuries with a high proportion of them occurring as a result of dangerous and anti-social driving

behaviour and hit and run incidents. This led to the establishment of a series of urgent partnership task and group meetings to identify collaborative actions to address the problem.

Operation Triton was formed by West Midlands Police which brought the Road Safety Partnership together to deliver a multi-agency approach which including targeted enforcement and education events and development and launch of the Beep Beep campaign. The aim of this campaign, jointly funded by WMCA, West Midlands Police and Birmingham City Council, focussed on the trauma experienced by vulnerable road users due to dangerous driving and called upon drivers and communities to protect pedestrians and cyclists from harm on the road.

- **Innovation:** Innovation is key to a successful Safe System approach. To address high non-compliance for seat belt use, we used innovative behaviour change techniques to influence those road users most at-risk of death and serious injury. Fasten Up Your Future was an extension of a project in East Birmingham where non-compliance of seat belt wearing was 6 times higher than the national average. Using a series of still and short video campaign assets, we delivered cost-effective messages on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube to over 600,000 young people (72.5% of young people living in the West Midlands). Following the campaign, our post-evaluation showed that 82% of people who responded to a post-campaign survey, stated that previously they did not always wear a seatbelt, but that they had increased compliance after viewing the campaign.

We will continue innovating and using the region as a test bed for new techniques through European funded projects (Project Phoebe and Project Ivory), further use of AI technology and seeking funding to support the delivery of projects targeting emerging themes.

What Next

- Finalising and delivering the new Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030. This includes a public consultation, further partnership discussion and a launch event.
- Working tirelessly with West Midlands Police and all 7 constituent local authorities to establish a new Working Agreement for the average speed enforcement asset, and the potential of expanding our speed enforcement programme.
- To address the biggest contributory factor in the severity of collisions and injury, a new Speed Management Policy will be produced. This will include guidance on appropriate, Safe System speeds.
- The establishment of a new Community Champions group to ensure that residents, community groups and road users have an influence on how we are collectively improving road safety.
- Securing more funding and investment to ensure that the West Midlands remains at the heart of road safety innovation and best practice.

4. Financial Implications*

This paper provides a review of the 2023-2024 financial year's road safety activity only. There is no request for revenue or capital related funding.

5. Legal Implications*

The Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority has concurrent powers with constituent authorities, for the purposes of Promoting Road Safety under Section 39 (2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 by virtue of Part 2 of the West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017.. These powers are exercisable by the West Midlands Combined Authority in relation to the WMCA area. Accordingly, there are no further legal implications flowing from the contents of this report.

6. Single Assurance Framework Implications

The Single Assurance Framework is not applicable to this report.

7. Equalities Implications

The review acknowledges the differences of individual road user needs and across communities ensuring that road users of all types feel safe when operating on the road network, as well as adopt safe practices. Actions and interventions provide a safe and inclusive road environment within the region, which reflects the needs of all users.

8. Inclusive Growth Implications

The review supports delivery of a fairer, greener and better-connected region by ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of residents, enabling them to live longer and healthier lives and to play a productive role in the regional economy.

9. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

This report is relevant to the West Midlands Combined Authority area.

10. Other Implications

None applicable.

11. Schedule of Background Papers

Enc. 1 for Regional Road Safety Annual Review 2023-24 Presentation