

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 This appendix underpins the Local Road Safety Strategy in its aim to make the road network of West Berkshire safer for all our residents, and for all other people working in, visiting or passing through West Berkshire.
- 1.2 The mix of residential areas and workplaces within the district, plus commuting into and out of the district, place a heavy demand on all the roads in West Berkshire. With the additional activity associated with the leisure and tourist use and the delivery of road safety demands the use of a full range of ideas and solutions to address the hazards that inevitably follow.

The Policy Framework

- 1.3 On a local level other roads have a significant strategic role for the region. Whilst recently 'de-trunked', the A339 forms an important route between Newbury and Basingstoke, as well as between the A34/M4 and the M3. The A4 is probably the busiest road in the area, carrying commuting traffic from Hungerford through to Reading, as well as the growing commercial traffic from the developing business areas to the east of Thatcham. It is also the diversion route in the event of closure of the M4. In addition to the A34, north/south traffic is carried along the A338 through Hungerford and the A340 through Aldermaston and Pangbourne. Vital village distributor roads such as the B4000, B4009 and B4494 have no less a value, and there is evidence of their increasing use by through traffic, commercial and commuter. Across the area, inappropriate use of minor roads by through traffic is one of the major sources of road safety concern.
- 1.4 As a guide to highway authorities, the Government has produced 'Tomorrows Roads – safer for everyone', the national strategy for road safety and casualty reduction through to 2010. It contains information, data, suggestions and requirements for highway authorities to absorb, adopt and deliver, as well as a range of activities which vehicle manufacturers, government departments and agencies and research bodies will undertake. In terms of the 'West Berkshire Council's Local Road Safety Strategy', the requirements set out in 'Tomorrows Roads - safer for everyone' are linked to the 2010 target. Within that overall constraint, the aspirations and targets within this document are more varied. Our plans include ongoing concept and style issues, as well as time-controlled activities. Some will deliver in the short term; others will take longer to reveal benefits. Not everything we do will have a quantitative measure; the more complex qualitative issues will be addressed too. Furthermore, while the targets in 'Tomorrows Roads - safer for everyone' will drive our activities, we will not ignore opportunities that have other beneficial outcomes.

Setting Targets

- 1.5 The central strategy 'Tomorrows Roads - safer for everyone' runs through to 2010. Many local authorities have written their strategies to 2005. This West Berkshire Local Road Safety Strategy seeks to deliver the 2010 targets, but also gives a broader steer to delivery of road safety and casualty reduction in the West Berkshire area. The concepts go beyond 2010, let alone 2005. This document is 'live', capable of review and update without affecting the key strategic thrusts. It creates a 'way of being' approach as opposed to an 'x' Year Plan.
- 1.6 The key national casualty reduction targets are set out at 6.1. West Berkshire Council and its predecessor as highway authority, Berkshire County Council, collate casualty information based on data provided by Thames Valley Police. The recording of that data can result in inaccuracies through transcription or misinterpretation. Additionally, past assessments of collisions by Thames Valley Police mean that the division of casualty severity during the

'baseline' period is inaccurate. Thus the targets West Berkshire will work towards are based on an agreed calculation.

- 1.7 As a comparatively small geographic area, our overall figures are thankfully small. When calculating percentage change, such small figures can lead to wide fluctuations from minor number changes. However, West Berkshire should not be shy of a challenge, so our simple objective will be to meet the national targets for those roads under our management, as demonstrated by our Public Service Agreement (PSA) with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister(ODPM). We will share our efforts with the Highways Agency, who have their own targets relating to roads under their management. By working together we will improve the effect of work done for all roads and road users in the West Berkshire Council area.
- 1.8 In recognition of the issues raised concerning casualty rates and the significance of casualties on Highway Authority roads our detailed targets are set out in the Council's Local Transport Plan and will be reported on through the Annual Progress Report.
- 1.9 Partners will be vital to any strategic road safety activity. The Road Safety Team has developed in recent years to reflect funding opportunities and agreed priorities. The ability of the staff to plan and deliver activities has developed as a result of reorganisations that transferred management from the Transport policy Unit to Highways and Engineering. Retained links with Transport Policy, have ensured that the Road Safety Team is well placed to access internal partners and to share in the existing partnerships West Berkshire Council engages with. Many partnerships already in operation contribute to the road safety function, and will continue to do so.
- 1.10 Outside West Berkshire we can access the activities of other Local Authorities, both neighbouring and further afield, including the 'family' of local authorities within our New Unitary Authority Benchmarking Group. Furthermore, and in addition to the Police, Ambulance, Health etc, there will be non-'Authority' partnerships such as Business Watch and the Thames Valley Partnership. Collectives such as the Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association (LARSOA) and the Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire System for Traffic Accident Recording (BOBSTAR) will also be included. Contact with the Transport Research Laboratory and the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre is established and used for research and information gathering. These groups and many others with like objectives and roles can, and are, used to exchange best practice and expertise.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1 West Berkshire Council has staff to enable delivery of the traditional elements of road safety activity – Education, Engineering and Enforcement (the '3 E's') Each supported by the opportunity for Investigation. The enforcement activities are the responsibility of Thames Valley Police, but effective liaison undertaken between the Council and the Police enables shared workload in all three areas.
- 2.2 Understanding the core principles for each activity will bring clarity to the flexible methodology employed for delivery:
 - Education – The 'Whole of Life Continuum'
 - Enforcement – Effective Partnership
 - Engineering – Maximising Outcomes
 - Investigation – Proactive and Innovative

Education, Training & Publicity

- 2.3 The key concept with our Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) work will be to develop a 'Whole of Life' continuum and present it across the whole community. Appropriate advice,

programmes and materials will be made available for all, from the new born baby and their parents needing help with basic road skills, through to the elderly driver needing to come to terms with deteriorating senses. Such work will require the development of partnerships with existing support groups, and localised information to maximise efficiency and effectiveness. This approach will add 'Enabling' and 'Encouraging' to the traditional '3 E's'.

2.4 As children progress through school, promotion of road safety as a valid education topic will enable curriculum needs and road safety wishes to be met. This will enable all children to be given information and to be involved in road safety issues in a positive, controlled environment, regardless of whether they are pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, passengers or riders. Throughout the formal school life, we will be working with the Education Service, schools and colleges – state and private – to find ways of delivering road safety issues within standard curriculum studies. Examples:

- safe route planning (geography);
- traffic flows & statistics (mathematics);
- braking, cornering and acceleration forces (physics);
- hazard perception (psychology).

This would be in addition to presentations, PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) work etc. We will achieve an agreed standard, and feedback on the matters offered for study.

2.5 Within our Education, Training and Publicity portfolio we will be seeking to make our programmes attractive, effective and efficient. It will not be appropriate to simply count the courses offered, or numbers attending. Evaluation processes will be developed so that, over time, we can demonstrate where our work is producing benefits. Where possible this will be achieved through accessing existing studies, such as the evaluation of Cycle Training Courses being undertaken on behalf of LARSOA. Whilst the prime objective of casualty reduction will always be at the forefront, the value of activities that deal with perceptions will also be acknowledged. An example of this type of work is already in progress, with the plan to develop use of portable Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) to promote awareness of speed to road users.

2.6 Where the need for new courses is identified, they will be judged on individual merit, but a core principle will be that they are self-financing, or funded through grants, sponsorship etc. We will also seek to share expertise with existing providers wherever possible, whether within local government or the private/voluntary sector. The extent to which West Berkshire Council can 'run' courses is limited. However, the extent to which it can *enable* people to undertake training is far less constrained. A simple example would be the voluntary driver/rider improvement programmes – activities we can actively support and encourage, without the burden of staffing, accommodating etc.

2.7 We will conduct a 'live audit' of what is already available and required across the area, in order to identify courses and needs. By creating and maintaining such a database we will be able to focus effort on service gaps. Clients will be directed to existing, quality services wherever they may exist. These services will not necessarily be delivered within West Berkshire, but will be capable of providing for the needs of our communities.

2.8 A similar approach to the courses will be taken with the development of ETP materials. A great deal of information is already available, in a variety of formats. The content of the material is constantly changing, being updated withdrawn, added to and improved. We will develop a database of material available so that we can focus our time on distributing and localising existing information, then creating our own packages for issues that affect our community but are not currently addressed. As with our course plans, costs for materials we need to produce will be managed and kept within budget through partner and sponsorship arrangements.

- 2.9 A certain amount of road safety promotion is undertaken by private business and by groups such as the Driving Standards Agency (DSA). Several local companies offer courses and incentives to their driving employees. Such activity not only contributes to safety on our roads, but also benefits the company in terms of asset value. The DSA have an established programme of education to the pre-driver age group in schools, and West Berkshire secondary schools are included. As with all other parts of the country, activities such as 'Pass-plus', and award schemes such as the Institute of Advanced Motorists are available.
- 2.10 Opportunities exist within West Berkshire Council to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the work it already does to assist and support external organisations' activities. Business, particularly the medium and small traders, will be looking for a business case to commence and develop good road safety practise amongst staff. We will develop the marketing skills to present the case for action to employers.
- 2.11 Detailed analysis of collision data and road safety will identify initiatives for education, engineering or enforcement. Existing data recording systems have a great deal to offer in terms of information for solutions to be developed. Similarly, existing partnerships have potential to enable yet greater progress to be made. An example would be work with Business Watch members to encourage greater participation in road safety schemes by businesses.
- 2.12 Inter-departmental communication will enable West Berkshire Council to deliver a more joined-up road safety package for schools, developers, planners and the like. This will be achieved through proactive involvement of Road Safety Team staff at the early stages of proposals, looking for opportunities to include the road safety issues in as wide a field of activity as possible. The method will involve working smarter, not harder, so that existing processes evolve to absorb and deliver appropriate road safety considerations.
- 2.13 Experience shows that there is already more 'road safety' activity going on within the Council than is currently recognised. (Example: safety checking of the windscreens of cars in the staff car park. While primarily a maintenance programme within the car lease agreements, the benefit is extended to any staff-owned vehicle.) Health promotion advice given to staff includes the benefits of walking and cycling. Road safety information for pedestrians and cyclists can be added into this advice with very little effort. A core principle will be the promotion of West Berkshire Council as a 'centre of excellence'. This principle will act upon both our internal practice and external policy – we will 'Practice What We Preach'. Our own arrangements will champion good practice to internal Service Areas as well as external groups and organisations.
- 2.14 'Tomorrows Roads – safer for everyone' includes a requirement to focus on vulnerable road users, as part of the general approach to casualty reduction. The way in which vulnerability is assessed can be more radical than simply using the traditional age/impairment/social, statistic-based judgement. We have the ability to be inventive, identifying vulnerabilities amongst our road users that might not be obvious. There are those who we have to treat as vulnerable – our casualty groups; those commonly recognised as vulnerable (the elderly, the young, those with physical impairments etc); and those that need to be seen as vulnerable – as discovered from casualty analysis. This latter group is likely to prove the most challenging, as in many cases they will be people who have yet to recognise themselves to be vulnerable, let alone taken steps to protect themselves. However vulnerability is assessed, we will identify needs and offer appropriate solutions.

Enforcement work

- 2.15 A Driver Improvement Scheme is available, in partnership with Thames Valley Police, to drivers responsible for collisions. This scheme is delivered in the whole Thames Valley Police area by an external agent, and is managed through the prosecution process. There is no current

feedback on take-up or outcomes. Work is being done locally to investigate ways of strengthening this scheme, which has value as part of an expanding national programme.

- 2.16 We will be working with the Police to set up a similar style scheme based on Speed Awareness to modify the behaviour of 'marginal' speed offenders.
- 2.17 Partnership work with Thames Valley Police has enabled participation in their Operation Pride (Police Road safety Initiative - Driver Education) – targeting speed offenders and delivered at the time they are stopped.
- 2.18 There is regular participation in timed and targeted campaigns led by the DfT and Thames Valley Police, such as Drink/Drive, Cycle Visibility, Child Seats and Seat Belts and we participate with the Police in the Junior Citizen Scheme.

Engineering

- 2.19 Highway engineers and traffic managers have completed a wide range of work to make roads safer, with particular emphasis on casualty reduction and accident prevention. The area-wide Village Speed Limit programme has been implemented, and is regularly reviewed and refined. This activity has benefits both in terms of actual road safety, with reduced accident rates and severity, and the feeling of safety with an improved quality of life perception for residents. In a similar way the Safe Routes to School/Safety Outside School programmes seek to reduce casualty rates within the 'journey to school' category as well as instilling safer practices to all road users in the vicinity of our schools. We will look to include the private sector schools and colleges wherever possible. Further casualty reduction is delivered through the Local Safety Schemes, with accident locations identified. and engineering solutions applied, in a variety of scenarios.
- 2.20 West Berkshire Council takes a proactive stance at the design stage of road building. Planners and engineers work with developers and consultants to maximise opportunities for safe roads, whether within the new scheme itself, or, through a Developers Contribution, to issues the development will create further away. The Accident Investigation opportunities now available enable additional considerations to be made to 'design in' casualty reduction from the outset.
- 2.21 The Highways & Engineering Service Unit will undertake 'date stamping' of projects, maintenance, Local Safety Scheme works and Traffic Management activities etc, so that the effect on casualty rates can be observed. The amount and range of data held within the Highways Management system (Exor) will increase. Thus more elements can be considered and drawn in to the casualty reduction and general road safety activities.
- 2.22 Within the engineering solutions environment, the existing practices of achieving casualty reduction through identification of causes and appropriate works will continue, with the enhancement of greater use of the data analysis possibilities to make the process as precise as possible. For the future we will start to develop proactive approaches to risk identification, with a view to identifying circumstances that can lead to collisions before they start to happen at a particular location.
- 2.23 We will also be prepared to use low-cost measures to assist with the fear of collisions so common in many rural communities. A number of issues affect perceptions as to whether a route or mode of travel is 'safe'. This can result in defaulting to a car or, worse, a person or community even feeling restricted as to whether to travel at all. The 'professional' perspective may be that these perceptions are unjustified, but if West Berkshire Council takes the view that 'perceptions are another's reality', then we have good reason to address the fears expressed. Whilst this sort of activity is unlikely to show any rate of return as currently measured, it will contribute towards improving the likelihood of people being prepared to walk or cycle –

whether for the whole of the journey or just to the appropriate stopping places for our public transport options. Examples of the work that can be done in this field include:

- the deterrence of inappropriate use of roads by large lorries; deterrence of rat-runners;
- sensitive topping-off of banked verges to create walkable routes or stand-offs;
- improving visibility of hazards and signage so motorists can more readily assess a situation - without being encouraged to drive faster.

2.24 Ongoing programmes, such as Safe Routes to School, Safety Outside Schools etc will continue, with data analysis assisting the prioritisation process. We will work towards developing basic packages of safety work that all schools will have over time, with specific risks at particular sites receiving individual attention. The approach will be similar to that used when establishing enforceable school zigzag markings, (introduced Jan 2002), creating a 'West Berkshire' standard. Where possible this sort of engineering solution will be supported with lead and/or follow-up ETP work to maximise the benefits. Likewise, by liaising with the police throughout the planning and implementation phases, the chances of effective enforcement will be enhanced.

2.25 The work outlined above is not an exhaustive list. The whole concept of this strategy is that the Objective will be achieved by all the means available and necessary at the time. Programmes, technology and skills available now will not stand still. This long-term strategic approach is designed to retain flexibility and encourage innovation, so opportunities are grasped and we move away from only using initiatives that are 'safe, tried and tested'.

3. OPPORTUNITIES TO DELIVER

3.1 This and following paragraphs address proposals relating to specific groups of road user who we feel warrant particular attention, including overriding principles regarding the funding of our activities.

Funding

3.2 At various stages within the strategy mention is made to how activities and services will be funded. Overall, an ethical strategic concept for funding will be followed which will be flexible enough to allow inter-departmental partnerships and co-operation whilst remaining focussed on delivering quality service and Best Value.

3.3 Prime funding will come through the Local Authority budgetary processes, with the Road Safety Team bidding for and receiving core funding within the financial arrangements of the day. Secondary funding will come from project-type income direct from Central Government, Government Agencies and like bodies, through any bid process. Where appropriate, bids will be made in partnership with other departments or even other Local Authorities, appropriate businesses, safety organisations and similar.

3.4 In certain cases West Berkshire Council will be barred from applying for the necessary funds, (or may not be looking to set up an initiative itself at that time). In these cases we will seek to work with appropriate voluntary or trade groups, companies, charities etc to assist them with applying for funds, where the activity supports our Objective.

3.5 Our membership of the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership enables West Berkshire Council to enter into initiatives involving the purchase of equipment and expertise as well as the attendant staff costs. Whilst we will make full and imaginative use of this line of funding, it will always be treated as opportunity money so that West Berkshire is not unwittingly

committed to costs beyond or after the scope of the initial funds. The same approach will be taken with funding arrangements – entered into on a nil-cost basis for the Council.

- 3.6 Our approach to funding is to have high ambition so that wherever opportunities arise we are in a position to move quickly and efficiently to make the required applications. Thus when new funding, developers contributions, appropriate sponsorship, simple benevolence or whatever become available unexpectedly, we will have activities in reserve that can be activated.

Pedestrian Safety

- 3.7 This is an issue steeped in perceptions, impacting on sustainable travel decisions as well as simple casualty rates. Hence this section needs to be read alongside the Pedestrian Strategy within the Local Transport Plan. Success in encouraging walking has to go hand-in-hand addressing the vulnerability of a pedestrian in a collision with a vehicle. There are few ‘damage-only’ collisions between vehicles and pedestrians. We will have to do ‘joined-up’ thinking and implementation across a range of activities and departments if progress is to be made in encouraging walking without creating casualties we do not currently have. The issue of encouraging walking, whether for health, sustainability, leisure or any other reason is dealt with in the pedestrian strategy. Just as Road Safety is mentioned within the pedestrian strategy, this section demonstrates the way in which road safety issues can support and be supported by that pedestrian strategy.

Encouraging and Enabling Walking

- 3.8 Any programme to develop walking in safety will have to consider and demonstrate an understanding of the varied issues. Problems and solutions are different in urban and rural situation; the needs of the recreational walker are different to the school pupil or worker. West Berkshire Council can facilitate and encourage walking as a recreation, and as a viable alternative to driving, by simple road safety based activities. The distinct road safety message for walkers is primarily delivered through education programmes and we will develop information packages appropriate for various target groups. Additionally, through effective liaison with Highways and Countryside & Environment, we will be able to share with them the management, maintenance, planning and provision of off-road rights of way.

- 3.9 Early years training will focus on both parents and toddlers, the first stage of the ‘Whole Life Continuum’. Hazard awareness is a key issue for the parents of small children: they need to see the issues from the child’s perspective before they can deliver their responsibilities in terms of road safety training. It will be especially important that we deliver to those who, for whatever reason, tend not to take these responsibilities on. It will be easy to get the message to those who want to hear it. Profiling of our collisions involving pedestrians will enable localised messages to be presented.

- 3.10 Children and young people will get the message that walking is a viable option to motor travel, and not second class, unfashionable or any other such issue that deters them from walking. The life long learning process can continue by including walking issues in Green Travel Plans for employers.

- 3.11 Engineering will add value to the programme by adopting a positive approach to path maintenance, including such things as drainage, siding out, cutting back shrubbery overgrowth and similar environmental works. Many footpaths are not hospitable, especially those between buildings. Shared work with the Community Safety Team will help to make our pathways as safe as possible.

Pedestrian Facilities

- 3.12 The underlying process with pedestrian facilities will be to maximise the opportunities to use what we already have, urban or rural, through identifying and targeting ‘strategic’ walking routes. This will drive the maintenance programme, as well as support bids for new paths as a

need is identified. Providing good walking facilities in a safe environment will go a long way to reducing the likelihood of pedestrian casualties.

- 3.13 Our extensive rural footpath network will be included, and much the same way as the urban paths. If pedestrian movement between villages, etc is to be encouraged, and casualties reduced, maximising use of cross-country paths is essential. The Road Safety Team will work closely with the Countryside & Environment team to ensure realistic alternatives to motor transport are available for rural residents. A good programme of path maintenance and enhancement already exists. We will add road safety considerations to the process.
- 3.14 Where the need for new or upgraded paths is identified, a prioritisation process will be followed. By taking a joint approach pooling of resources will enable much more to be achieved than any one budget or department could provide. Furthermore, opportunities often exist for developer contributions, grants or even benefactors to provide resources – land as well as funds. These opportunities will be explored to the full and taken up according to ethical and policy considerations.
- 3.15 Evidencing increased pedestrian travel will not be easy, but we already operate an annual survey of journeys to school, which provides data on mode of travel. Continuation of the process will provide some information over the period of a school generation, which will be a valid baseline indicator. Further evidence will be gathered in from Business Travel Plans as they are collated. Ongoing analysis of accident data will also provide direction for future work, as well as providing some measure of the effect of past action.

Cycling

- 3.16 Recent years have seen a growth in cycling, especially with the successful marketing of mountain bikes as a fashion item. We do not have the large contingent of cyclists typical of European countries, nor of several big UK towns and cities. We do have great potential for the use of the cycle as the means of choice for people to get to work, and for leisure. Much of our road network is old, which means the space for cycleways is often limited. However, as with walking, a process of facilitation and encouragement can be undertaken that will maximise use of cycles without bringing increased casualty levels that attach to this more vulnerable travel. The cycling policy within the Local Transport Plan already sets out the Council's aims and objectives. In this Local Road Safety Strategy the links and mutual interests are developed, very much as with the issues for pedestrians.
- 3.17 We already look to include cycle facilities in new road design, and several footways have been adapted for dual use, usually in connection with school routes in urban areas. Work is also in hand to enhance the small network of urban cycle routes across Newbury. The rural cycleways are mainly used for leisure, but some have more strategic possibilities. This Strategy will add weight and value to plans to provide or improve cycle facilities and usage. It will particularly ensure fair consideration to rural issues and preventative as well as reactive measures.
- 3.18 The Road Safety Team role will be to work with engineers and cyclists to maximise opportunities that either already exist but are underused, or can be developed as part of the Council's capital programme. This will be the case for both rural and urban situations, and will support the establishment of strategic cycling routes across the area. Examples:
- work to increase the dual use of rural roadside footways as cycle paths;
 - work to enhance cross-country off-road rights of way for use as cycle routes.

Cycle Training

- 3.19 West Berkshire Council is already active in the traditional Cycle Training Scheme delivered to Year 6 pupils through their primary schools. This currently provides training for around 500

pupils at 25 schools. The Scheme has a part-time co-ordinator and examiner. At this time the training is only offered through state schools: in the future we will include the private sector. Volunteer instructors and helpers run the schemes, and the pupils take a theory and practical test at the end of the course. On achieving the standard, a certificate is awarded.

- 3.20 There is little evaluation of the courses as currently managed. Developing the role of the paid examiner to that of Cycle Training Co-ordinator will enable us to develop a small qualitative analysis of the courses. We will also be able to target scheme development so that those schools that do not currently participate, but where an identified need exists, can be helped to set up schemes either on their own or in partnership. Our simple objective of increased participation each year will remain, but we will be looking to add a measure of quality. We remain committed to the principle of Cycle Training Schemes as part of the 'Whole Life Continuum' initiative. However, we await with interest the national evaluation research currently being undertaken by LARSOA and will review our programme in the light of any report.
- 3.21 Within the 'Whole Life Continuum', we will be looking to expand and implement appropriate training opportunities across the broad spectrum of cyclists. Whereas our policy will be to provide the school based Cycle Training Scheme free of charge, resource constraints will make it necessary for other courses to be either provided by external partners or directly charged for. This approach will allow 'demand' to be met as well as providing the basis for attracting 'needed' training. It will also allow for payments to instructors so as not to put further strain on our already small band of volunteers. We will be looking to groups such as Sustrans, Cyclewest, and local cycle interest groups for support in the setting up and running of these programmes within their own guidelines.
- 3.22 A proactive approach will be adopted to minimise the risk of increased casualties as progress is made towards the Council's Public Service Agreement (PSA) target for increased cycling within the District (a 3-fold increase in cycle journeys). This will involve an element of forward planning, as opposed to merely reacting to accident data. Where such work involves external partnerships we will have regard to such issues as commercial value, lead times etc. West Berkshire Council will develop partnerships with cycle retailers in the area to promote both the sale and use of helmets, high visibility clothing and other appropriate cycle safety equipment. We will develop a system for accrediting cycle dealers for quality service and advice. By creating a positive 'selling point' the dealer would be able to manage any associated cost that the accreditation compliance may require. The accreditation would include cycle maintenance advice and provision.
- 3.23 Evaluation packages will be designed to give both quantitative and qualitative measures of inputs and outcomes, to inform the management process and to aid any external marketing of the programme.

The Motorist

- 3.24 Many of the things West Berkshire Council, as Highway Authority, can do to improve the safety of roads for motorists – in or on whatever kind of motor vehicle - will require engaging with the relevant group. Only by identifying target groups, situations and needs will we overcome the apparent enthusiasm for motorists to blame 'others', or deny responsibility. The success of activities other than enforcement will require this approach. A speed limit perceived as illogical will not be complied with; passive marketing of courses will fail to involve the problem driver; localised publicity for an issue involving motorists passing through the district will not have the desired effect. By improving our analysis and evaluation capabilities, such issues of efficiency and effectiveness will be addressed.
- 3.25 We cannot do everything ourselves, nor can we act in isolation. Certain aspects of our work will require consultation according to statutory or policy directives. Other work will benefit from

appropriate consultation at various stages to identify issues, desired outcomes, solutions and actions. Use will be made of local consultation structures – elected, representative or focus groups – to add value to data-led and ‘traditional’ problem solving tactics. The extended consultation process must not slow down appropriate action, nor must it be seen as a way of every ‘solution’ being adopted and implemented. Neither will we be seeking to sanitise the travel experience or take proper responsibility from the road user. The objective is to enrich the decision making process, not restrain it.

Motorist Education

3.26 In both rural and urban areas we have problems with inappropriate use of roads – ‘rat runs’. This can involve large vehicles on country lanes or residential estates; cars and vans travelling too fast for the circumstances; and local people being unsettled by the overall situation. Whether from an environmental or a casualty reduction aspect, work will continue towards discouraging such road use. West Berkshire Council already has an effective Village Speed Limit programme, and is creating safer – and more ‘comfortable’ zones by use of ‘environmental’ weight limits. For the future we will implement appropriate aspects of schemes such as Quiet Lanes, Rural Roads Hierarchy, and urban traffic calming to influence road usage and minimise casualty risks and fear.

3.27 We will also raise the profile of the damage caused by lack of consideration or awareness. Local instances of ‘road rage’ do occur, and road safety processes can sometimes uncover a cause and enable elimination of it. Experience suggests that there is a correlation between accident locations and ‘road rage’ incidents, so the approach will be beneficial to both casualty reduction and the wider community safety issue. Similar risks arise when a road user fails or refuses to acknowledge the needs of another. Examples include:

- Lorries pass too close to cyclists;
- cars park on bus stops or disabled bays;
- motorcyclists force themselves between lines of vehicles;
- motorised vehicles use rural and green lanes without thought for the walkers, riders etc who also have rights of use.

Even where collisions do not actually happen, such events influence the decision whether, and how, to travel, usually discouraging walking and cycling even when the event does not directly involve that mode of travel. Where appropriate sites and circumstances are identified, we will develop publicity and education packages to address the issue.

3.28 Delivery of ETP to deal with ‘motorist’ issues will feed off the live audit. West Berkshire Council is not the sole source of information or expertise and it will not set out to be so. Numerous competent and trustworthy organisations offer services and activities, including:

- DSA pre-driver training;
- Approved Driving Instructors offering Pass Plus courses;
- Institute of Advanced Motorists;
- DriveTech;
- ‘Driver of the Year’ Schemes,

and so on. Our role will be to acquire knowledge of what is required, what is offered, and who by, and then accredit appropriate programmes. We would want to enter into arrangements with organisations offering courses to ensure quality is maintained, and even implement incentives.

3.29 Further ETP packages will bring motorists into the Whole Life Continuum, creating and offering suitable information for pre-driving or riding, driver and rider improvement (not solely post-accident), hazard perception and speed awareness, refresher training and so on. There is

also the case for enabling the older person to recognise and cope with the need to give up driving. We expect to use the live audit for these issues, as well as the accreditation system.

3.30 Existing data demonstrates that particular groups of motorist tend to have particular difficulties. Examples:

- 'Born Again' motorcyclists;
- car owners who buy the larger off-road vehicles;
- trailer towing;
- renters of the larger vans driven on car licences.

West Berkshire Council will develop links with relevant businesses and dealers to create a quality standard that does not damage their commercial interest. Dependant on the needs our casualty information reveals, we would encourage dealers to enter into arrangements to take a safety conscious approach to sales and rentals and not merely seek to close the deal. Opportunities would again exist for accreditation and incentives.

3.31 Another target group includes the drivers and operators of large Goods Vehicles and Passenger Carrying Vehicles. While these vehicles are, thankfully, not involved in many collisions, the outcome often involves multiple – if not serious – casualties. It is also well established locally that such vehicles on 'inappropriate' roads cause much anxiety within our communities as to safety issues, even without collisions actually occurring. The nature of the haulage and passenger transport business in our area will not make elimination of the problem easy or straightforward. Work will be done to raise safety issues with operators and drivers, primarily through appropriate partnership with the Police, Vehicle Inspectorate, Freight Transport Association (FTA), Road Haulage Association (RHA), Road Operators Safety Council (ROSCO), DSA and similar bodies.

3.32 We will also raise safety issues amongst our local licensed taxi and private hire fleet, more in line with the concept of encouraging good practices than correcting any bad ones.

3.33 The business issue not only relates to sales. Many businesses have vehicle fleets, most have staff who are motorists even if they are not employed as such. Hardly any have staff who never go near a road. Thus there is a commercial interest – asset protection – for all business. Even with adequate insurance, the loss of use of the 'asset', whether human or mechanical, is a serious matter for all, even the largest companies. In certain cases there is a Health and Safety Act implication, which is still being learnt by employers.

3.34 Many companies already operate sound road safety incentive and award schemes, and these will be supported. Others would, but do not have the resource or the knowledge of where to access it: they will be encouraged and aided. Where we meet apathy or resistance we will, through our improving data analysis capability, demonstrate the sound business case. Key partners in this activity will be groups like the local Business Watch and Chamber of Commerce. We will need to show an understanding of the commercial pressure on companies when marketing the road safety message, but that will not be a barrier to progress. As appropriate, businesses will be asked to develop a safety strategy as part of any travel plan sought within a planning agreement.

3.35 A new area of work will be the safety of loads, especially concerning the sort of equipment carried by tradesmen. While injuries of this nature do not feature in our casualty data it is apparent that the growth of self-employed work is leading to an increased risk of displaced equipment moving around in a vehicle and presenting avoidable risk to occupants. The solutions are usually readily available and involve correct initial selection of vehicle if not the purchase of appropriate equipment. Whilst not a high priority activity, work will be done to raise awareness of the risks and remedies.

- 3.36 The key enforcement areas for motor vehicle safety are likely to remain speed and occupant security. By encouraging reduction of illegal speed, the adoption of appropriate lower speeds and the security of occupants within vehicles we can expect to deliver significant casualty reductions by number and seriousness.
- 3.37 West Berkshire Council is a partner in the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership, the group that operates the Safety Cameras within the Thames Valley Police area. This independent body works with the police, councils, Courts, Health and the Crown prosecution Service (CPS) to deliver casualty reduction in accordance with Government policies, through the use of Safety Cameras enforcing speed and traffic light offences. As long as the scheme follows the guidelines, income from the cameras is retained by the partnership to be spent on casualty reduction activities. This is variously known as 'Hypothecation', 'Netting Off' or 'Cost Recovery'. West Berkshire Council will maintain and enhance its partnership with Thames Valley Police so that the three elements of basic road safety solutions work together. Continued and shared analysis of accident details and locations will improve the siting and effectiveness of speed and other 'enforcement' locations. For example, numbers of casualties and dangers arise from abuse of traffic light controls: we will work with Thames Valley Police and implement safety camera enforcement of such offences where appropriate.
- 3.38 Local information indicates the wearing of seat belts is not yet sufficiently embedded in the psyche of motorists and their passengers, in particular rear seat passengers and – disturbingly – children. National and local campaigns are planned and run already to tackle this real problem – both through enforcement and ETP. We will partner the Police campaigns, and improve information and advice available on such matters as the fitting and wearing of child restraints. This will involve working with manufacturers and retailers.

Animals & Agriculture

- 3.39 Any rural area like West Berkshire suffers collisions involving animals that are on the highway. Whilst all such collisions are regrettable, we will focus activity to reduce human casualty. In so doing, we would expect to reduce the number of collisions where only the animal suffers, but such events are very difficult to quantify, let alone analyse or resolve. We have a proactive stance towards the signing of identified hazard locations, and this work will continue.
- 3.40 Farm and domestic animals do not feature strongly in our crash statistics. Our aim will be to maintain that situation by good maintenance practice for fencing and hedging and by a suitable signage policy for regular road crossing points. This will require liaison and understanding with the farming community, so responsibility is appropriately borne. West Berkshire Council will demonstrate good practise – typically through the recent changes around Greenham and Crookham Commons, with the area returned to public open space and the introduction of roaming cattle.
- 3.41 Horses are of special significance in the area, with high profile racehorse training activities especially in the Lambourn Valley. While the Council is not blind to the monetary value of such animals, that will not be the primary force behind decisions for action. As the professional body of trainers is so well established, we will look to them for strong support and positive input to all horse safety issues – including those that do not involve their members. We are in the process of developing links with the British Horse Society, which offers a sound road safety programme. As with other areas of road safety, packages and programmes available for riders and drivers of horses will be included in our live audit.
- 3.42 We will promote consideration for horses. For the most part, motorists are aware of the need for care when in the vicinity of horses, but there remains scope for improvement.
- 3.43 The rural nature of the area also gives a risk of collisions involving agricultural vehicles, especially on the rural lanes where they often take up the whole width of the road, and on the

more open roads where their slow speed can cause hold-ups and injudicious overtaking by impatient motorists. Many farmers already make good use of standard signage where they know of regular or planned movements, and we will commend and encourage that practise. Furthermore, anything that can be done to improve consideration for other road users will be encouraged.

Road Workings

- 3.44 Utilities and other contractors undertaking works on the highway are subject to Government regulations and on-site requirements laid down by our Highways Service. Also, on major workings, the Police are supportive of enforceable speed limits, effective in protecting both site workers and motorists. Good management of road works limits the opportunities for collisions within the site and the likelihood of inappropriate use of alternative routes. Existing practice is sound, and our corporate attitude will encourage and allow opportunities to improve processes in the future. As legislation or Good Practice develops, the Council will review and revise the supervision of contractors authorised to work on the highway.

Road Users with Disabilities

- 3.55 West Berkshire has shared in the welcome social change of recent years that has led to greater road use by disabled people. Work done by a range of voluntary and local authority bodies has enabled a far more inclusive social and economic framework for people with disabilities. Across the area work has been done to provide tactile surfaces at safe crossing points, dropped kerbs, step-free access, and disabled parking. The national Motability Scheme, in its modern format, has increased opportunities for disabled people to travel, as has the activities of the transport operators to accommodate passengers with disabilities. The Newbury Shopmobility Scheme has proved successful in enabling temporarily or permanently disabled people to get around in loaned electric wheelchairs
- 3.56 The incidence of casualty collisions involving disabled road users has, thankfully, not increased as a result of this improved mobility. It is as important to maintain that status as to achieve it. We will continue with our support of disabled road users through the work of the Access Officer and participation in local forums to seek feedback on work done and fresh needs. There will also be active involvement in the planning process for highway working, so that the needs of the disabled are met in a way that exceeds the letter of current guidelines and regulation.
- 3.57 Work will also be undertaken to develop and distribute local information for disabled road users – safety, access, training and so on, together with actions to raise awareness of the needs of disabled road users with others. Within the constraints of ability, we will seek to include disabled road users in all road safety activities and planning.

Conclusion

- 3.58 Nothing within this strategy – at any stage – seeks to ignore the strategic travel needs within West Berkshire. Whatever the mode of travel, true needs will be accommodated, with equal and specific thought given to rural and urban matters. However, pure numbers mean an emphasis on measures for motor vehicles, especially with casualty reduction targets a priority. Some national and local ‘sustainable transport’ programmes will lead to some migration to greener modes, leading to increased vulnerability. Other external pressures might lead to other unwelcome and unplanned outcomes. We will expect to be aware of such changes and implications, so that even the unplanned is not the totally unexpected and objectives are not thereby missed.
- 3.59 Successful planning and implementation of this strategy will require the recognition and maintenance of links with many other such strategies, not all of which will be owned by West

Berkshire Council. Many will be in the ownership of partners, or will themselves be the products of partnerships. Some will be directives from central Government and some will emanate from the corporate policies of West Berkshire Council. The following list is not exclusive or exhaustive, and will alter through the life of the strategy. It is intended to indicate the breadth of information and sharing that we will employ to deliver success in reducing casualties on the roads of West Berkshire.

- Tomorrows Roads – Safer for Everyone (DfT)
- Local Transport Plan (WBC)
- Community Safety Strategy (WBC/TVP and others)
- Neighbouring Road Safety Strategies (Reading, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Highways Agency)
- Local Plan (WBC)
- Regional/National group policies (LARSOA/ IRSO, SEARWG, RCR(SE) etc)

4 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS/ACTIVITIES

4.1 At various stages in this document we have set out partnerships we will enter into, and work with, to deliver our objectives. The Council recognises the importance of partnership working in order to ensure that opportunities within West Berkshire are maximised. The establishment of the West Berkshire Partnership (West Berkshire's Local Strategic Partnership), and in particular its Transport Task Group will have an important role to play in achieving the objectives of this strategy. The following is a review of the typical groups we will seek, develop and maintain partnerships with. We will support organisations that link to our target groups. Existing work will be recognised, and new areas will be explored so as to maximise benefits. Thus we will make best use of our own resources and those of our partners. This list is not exclusive or exhaustive, nor is it cast in stone. During the life of this strategy opportunities will arise for new partnerships and the purpose of existing ones will be met.

4.2 The partners that we work with include the following:

Local Business Community:

- Business Watch
- Chamber of Commerce
- National Farmers Union
- Trade Organisations
- Sponsorship
- Incentive schemes
- Work travel plans

Local Groups:

- Parish/Town Councils
- Support for the disabled
- Support for the elderly
- 'Vulnerable' road user support organisations
- MAG
- BHS
- Newbury Motor Project

National/Statutory Bodies

- DfT
- Thames Valley Police

- Health Authority
- Berkshire Fire/Ambulance Services
- RoSPA
- LARSOA
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Highways Agency
- DSA
- TRL
- MIRC Thatcham

Internal (WBC)

- Highways
- Maintenance
- Safer Routes to Schools
- Local Safety Schemes
- Education
- Whole Life Learning
- Private Sector
- School Travel Plans
- Planning
- Major scheme consults
- Developer contributions
- Press Office
- Campaign/Project/Initiative launches
- Information
- Public Protection
- Community Safety issues
- Countryside & Environment
- 'Strategic' paths
- Culture & Youth Services
- Grant funding
- Youth Groups
- Parent support
- Housing
- Home Zones
- Corporate Policy
- WBC as the centre of good practice

6. TARGETS

6.1 The over-riding principle West Berkshire Council is required to follow is to meet national casualty reduction targets set out in the Strategy 'Tomorrows Roads – Safer for Everyone'. These are applied to the whole range of road safety activities – vehicle manufacturers, highway design, construction and maintenance, education, training and publicity, enforcement, and so on.

6.1.1 The National targets, to be achieved by 2010 and based on the averages achieved over the period 1994-8, are:

- Reduce the number of people Killed or Seriously Injured (KSIs) by 40%
- Reduce the number of children (U16) Killed or Seriously Injured by 50%
- Reduce the number of Slight injuries by 10%, based on the number per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

West Berkshire Council will adopt these targets

- 6.1.2 Local authorities in the Thames Valley Police area are in the process of agreeing a 'calculated' baseline average to allow for the casualty severity classification difficulties mentioned at Para 1.5.1. It is anticipated the requirement will be to adopt figures based on a 'National Average'. While such a figure may not be exactly correct for West Berkshire, it allows fairer comparison and an appropriate basis for target setting. The situation will also be standardised across the whole 'Thames Valley' area. The calculation for the 'Slight' injury reduction is based on government figures for vehicle distance travelled, published annually within the return 'Road Casualties Great Britain'.
- 6.1.3 The graphs at Appendix B illustrate the targets and required trends for the West Berkshire area.
- 6.1.4 While our 'national' targets are based on figures for the whole geographic area, we do not manage road safety for Trunk Roads (M4, A34 and – until de-trunked – the A339). Thus the graphs and our regular statistical returns show separate figures excluding these Highway Agency roads in order to define our own objectives. West Berkshire Council looks forward to working with the Highways Agency to deliver the 'full target' and not just success on 'our' roads.
- 6.1.5 Effective monitoring of data will allow appropriate changes in tactics as the situation demands. A key issue will be migration – where engineering changes a road use or even where fashion changes transport mode (such as the growth of motor scooter ownership in the 16-18 group). Likewise, activities like the secondary safety work done by manufacturers, can change the status of a casualty from Killed to Serious, or Serious to Slight, without actually changing the simple number of casualties. Unexpected changes in vehicle distance travelled will also influence the 'Slight' statistics without any change in the numbers of casualties.
- 6.1.6 Our monitoring process will require several strands. Simple provision of data and statistics will remain a key function, using the primary data supplied by Thames Valley Police. Systems are in place for the verification/validation of this data. Collected data will provide Best Value and Annual Performance Review returns; casualty reduction monitoring; project evaluation, and future planning information.
- 6.1.7 Milestones will be set and monitored through the life of the strategy. These will go beyond simple counts of casualties and will include longer-term strategic activity such as the establishment of processes and partnerships. While not true 'milestones', the implementation of key changes will also be included, such as the de-trunking of the A339; the new route through the A34/M4 Junction 13, and the opening of significant housing (Thatcham Depot site) or commercial (proposed Sainsburys distribution facility) developments. By including both target milestones and influential events we will have a historical and forward timeline to explain progress and plan future action.
- 6.1.8 Examples of known milestones include:
- August 2002 – adoption of the West Berkshire Local Road Safety Strategy;
 - September 2002 – implementation of ETP programme;
 - March 2003 -review of year 2 achievements;
 - May 2003 - Completion of 'live audit' of road safety in West Berkshire;
 - June 2003 - Review APR Data.