

Meeting: Green Sub Committee

Date: 7 November 2023

Title: Motion – Road Safety.

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Service: Highways and Transportation

Directorate: Regeneration and Economic Development

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to detail the road safety motion that was presented at the Full Council meeting 21 September 2023.

The motion:

Council asks the Mayor to bring forward a speeding prevention plan, which includes:

- A. Change the way speeding problem areas are identified, moving away from the average to a system which reflects a mix of incidents numbers, police concerns, resident complaints, councillor reports and maximum speeds recorded.
- B. Develop a strategy for dealing with anti-social driving outside of sociable hours.
- C. Improve the way that Council logs and reports upon residents' speeding complaints and to frequently communicate this data to Northumbria Police
- D. Work more closely with the police on the installation of 20mph zones to ensure these can be effectively enforced.
- E. Work with Northumbria Police to establish Community Speed Watch schemes in problem areas.

- F. Introduce a system for councillors to request urgent junction protections be installed in areas of their wards where poor visibility is hazardous.
- G. Prioritise the re-painting of faded junction lines over other road markings where the faded junction lines present a danger to drivers' safety.

2. Recommendations

Is it recommended that the Green Sub-Committee considers and notes the information presented in this report regarding the strategy taken to address the motion.

3. Information

3.1 – Policy

Road safety and casualty reduction is embedded in a number of policies and strategies at national, regional and local level.

Transport policy at regional level is set out in the [North East Transport Plan](#), approved by the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) in March 2021. Its overall vision is *“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”* and its objectives include to introduce measures to make travel an easier, safer and more attractive way to get around.

The Authority's overall approach to transport, is set out in the [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#), which was refreshed and approved by Cabinet in October 2021. The strategy has an overall vision of *“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North Tyneside”* and outlines how the Authority will reduce carbon emissions from transport; improve health outcomes; support inclusive economic growth; improve connectivity; and manage demand and enable safe and smart choices for all. This also fits with the objective of the [North Tyneside Local Plan](#) to ensure sustainable access, including making walking and cycling an attractive and safe travel option.

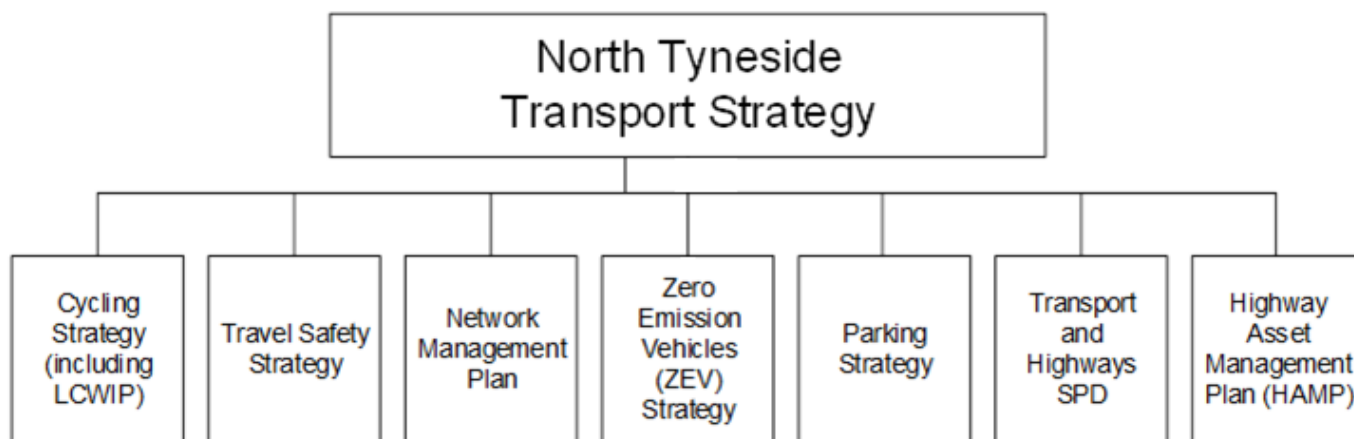
The [North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy](#), adopted in 2018, and is to be refreshed in 2023/24, includes aims such as increasing awareness and education of road safety matters and working in partnership to address travel safety concerns on the borough's transport network.

Within the context of safer travel there are a number of specific regional strategies, including the [North East Active Travel Strategy](#) and the [North East Making the Right](#)

[Choice Strategy](#) which contributes to improving safety, this contributing to overall casualty reduction and encouraging safe and sustainable travel across the borough.

In October 2022, Cabinet approved the refreshed [Transport and Highways Supplementary Planning Document](#) (SPD), which sets out in detail the procedures adopted by North Tyneside Council regarding the transport impact of new developments, including active travel infrastructure and means of promoting safe and active travel to users of the development.

The diagram below shows how the strategies mentioned in this report, and others, fit within the overall context of the North Tyneside Transport Strategy:



A key aim for both our Transport Strategy and the North Tyneside Local Plan is to provide a safer environment for road users and to continue to reduce the number of people injured on the transport network in North Tyneside.

Travel safety considers all users of the highway including, pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, motorists and users of buses, Metro and taxis and private hire vehicles.

The Council in partnership with Capita delivers a range of road safety and casualty reduction services that address matters such as speeding by improving highway infrastructure and delivering safety schemes, and also through coordinated road user education and encouragement programmes.

Similar partnerships exist with Northumbria Police through the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative where colleagues meet to discuss casualty reduction across the police force area. This also includes the coordination of national police priorities aligned with local delivery.

3.2 Road Safety Motions

The motion tabled at Council contains 7 areas that have been requested to be reviewed. They are detailed in this report and include proposed comments regarding a methodology for addressing each action:

Motion A

Change the way speeding problem areas are identified, moving away from the average to a system which reflects a mix of incidents numbers, police concerns, resident complaints, councillor reports and maximum speeds recorded.

Comments

Both North Tyneside Council and Northumbria Police receive complaints relating to road safety and speeding.

Each speeding report is evaluated against the data that is available. The only way to understand if there is a speeding problem is by looking at various sources of information. This will include speed data, road casualty records, local intelligence, related complaints and other reports.

The Council addresses speeding complaints through the 'Average Speed' also referred to as 'Mean Speed' and the '85th percentile' which gives a good indication of what is considered credible by drivers, and this information is used as the basis for determining local speed limits. The use of this methodology is underpinned by extensive research demonstrating the relationship between speed and accident severity and reflects what the majority of drivers perceive as an appropriate speed to be driven for a particular stretch of road. This is a national standard for the reviewing of speed limits and the Department for Transport issues guidance for LA's to follow.

If speeds are recorded above the police enforcement threshold, 10% of the speed limit plus 2mph, (e.g. in a 30mph zone enforcement would commence at 35mph) then targeted enforcement would be considered. Northumbria Police have set up 'Operation Modero' where actions are taken to tackle speeding complaints provided these speed thresholds are met.

The Council can also provide vehicle activated signs on a temporary basis to remind drivers of their speeds at specific locations.

Approach

Review the methodology for assessing speeding complaints to identify opportunities to enhance or improve the process.

Motion B

Develop a strategy for dealing with anti-social driving outside of sociable hours.

Comments

Anti-social driving is not an area covered by North Tyneside Council. However, as with many moving traffic offences, enforcement of anti-social behaviour caused by drivers is dealt with by Northumbria Police. The standard reporting of anti-social behaviour incidents is done through the police website.

Northumbria Police have a road safety delivery arm named 'Operation Dragoon' and this was formed to address a range of casualty reduction concerns that could include anti-social driving.

Approach

The Council will engage with Northumbria Police to review procedures and establish whether it can improve communications or information sharing between both organisations in terms of the reporting of anti-social driving.

Motion C

Improve the way that Council logs and reports upon residents' speeding complaints and to frequently communicate this data to Northumbria Police

Comments

North Tyneside Council currently operates a system for the logging of speeding complaints. Each report is evaluated, and an appropriate response is provided back to the complainant.

Complaints can be received by telephone, reports online through Council and police websites and through elected members.

Where there is a genuine and identifiable problem, the Council adopts a number of ways to address speeding including use of the softer measures such as vehicle activated signs. The Council deploys its speed signs at 49 locations across the borough. There is always the opportunity to involve Northumbria Police from an enforcement perspective provided speeding thresholds exceed their enforcement levels. This would only be where speeding complaints exceed their enforcement threshold of 10% of the speed limit plus 2mph.

Approach

The Council proposes to review the way speeding complaints are logged and addressed, and will engage with Northumbria Police to establish whether there are opportunities to further improve the way such complaints are managed and actions taken to address the concerns.

Motion D

Work more closely with the police on the installation of 20mph zones to ensure these can be effectively enforced.

Comments

North Tyneside Council implements 20 mph zones that are self-enforcing through designing in lower speeds where possible. This reduces the need to undertake enforcement. However, we do appreciate that there will be some instances where vehicles travel over the posted speed limit. 20mph zones are only installed in areas that are already compliant with average speeds of 24mph or below to reduce or remove the requirement for enforcement from Northumbria Police.

Northumbria Police do not routinely enforce 20mph zones for this reason.

In those circumstances where 20 mph zones do not benefit from traffic calming, Community Speed Watch can be deployed to address a speeding issue that has been identified through an evidence-led approach.

Approach

The Council proposes to review opportunities for enforcement activities with Northumbria Police to identify whether Community Speed Watch could be implemented to address lower level speeding complaints.

Motion E

Work with Northumbria Police to establish Community Speed Watch schemes in problem areas.

Comments

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is a national policing initiative that has been introduced by Northumbria Police. The initiative aims to educate drivers on the importance of road safety through the use of volunteers operating from the roadside to report errant speeding motorists.

Trained volunteers gather information about speeding vehicles on a designated stretch of road to assist in raising awareness and to deter speeding.

The project works with a team of 2-4 volunteers who will visit pre-approved sites with a speed radar device to record the details of those vehicles speeding over a particular speed threshold.

The scheme relies on the recruitment of local volunteers who are trained in delivering the scheme.

At present there is only one CSW scheme in North Shields. The traffic team do share CSW information with Members and residents who have an interest in the outcome of the activities.

Volunteers can sign up to deliver CSW in North Tyneside through the Northumbria Police website. There are opportunities to work with colleagues in the communications team to highlight Community Speed Watch and encourage volunteer recruitment.

Approach

The Council will work with Northumbria Police to encourage residents to apply to volunteer to deliver targeted CSW projects in local areas. We will also look at establishing an agreed criteria for involvement of the CSW volunteers in supporting the project.

Motion F

Introduce a system for councillors to request urgent junction protections be installed in areas of their wards where poor visibility is hazardous.

Comments

Any highway concerns can be raised via the member enquiry system. The Council will then assess each request and the appropriate action is taken on a risk-based approach. This approach takes into account the local environment including the presence of major and minor junctions, composition of traffic and vehicle speeds.

The Council responds to all reports of junctions that have been highlighted as a concern and appropriate actions are taken to address the level of risk.

If in establishing an appropriate course of action, a Traffic Regulation Order is required, we have an existing process in place that is subject to a legal process involving consultation where all responses are considered to establish a solution. If there was an immediate road safety issue that was evidenced by accident data, we can bring forward a proposal urgently if necessary.

Approach

Council officers will review the process for the reporting of highway safety issues to determine whether there are any improvements that can be made to this procedure.

Motion G

Prioritise the re-painting of faded junction lines over other road markings where the faded junction lines present a danger to drivers' safety.

Comments

Requests for road marking renewal will always exceed available resources. We therefore have to prioritise all requests. The Council is currently undertaking a rolling programme of lining renewal targeted on main roads that carry the largest volumes of highway users. Urban estate roads tend to be lower priority and done when resources permit.

Following receipt of the request the issue is investigated and only road markings that pose a significant safety issue will be prioritised, for example give way markings at main estate entrances, school zig zags etc

Approach

The Council will review its approach to road markings renewal to establish whether there are any improvements that can be made to the existing processes.

3.3 Next Steps

Officers will review the motion and undertake all necessary actions identified in this report and provide a detailed summary of all action points, findings, opportunities for improvement for inclusion in a report to be presented at Full Council in March 2024.