

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

# ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION SPENDING

### 1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress made on the Road Safety Strategy since the last meeting of the Fire Authority, and to bring forward proposals for implementing further strands of the Strategy with immediate effect. The report also discusses the impact that this will have on Service budgets.

### 2 Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Note the content of this report; and
- b) Approve funding as proposed herein.

### 3 Background

At its Annual Meeting on 19 July 2006 the Fire Authority agreed that Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service should progress a strategy to reduce the incidence and effect of road traffic collisions across the County. In doing so Members approved the Road Safety Strategy, and sought further information regarding funding of proposals from within existing budgets for immediate commencement of the Strategy.

### 4 Progress to Date

Officers have secured a partnership with West Mercia Safety Camera Partnership (WMSCP), whereby they have displayed their hard-hitting road safety messages on the rear of appliances at no cost to the Service. WMSCP have since presented their annual review and referred to the partnership we have started as a significant step forward in road safety promotion. As a result, Shropshire County Council Road Safety Team is keen to be involved in similar arrangements for their Winter 2006 campaign.



Members will be aware that the Service's website is expanding rapidly and the Road Safety Strategy has pages with links to a number of other informative websites.

Finally, in the short time since the last Fire Authority meeting officers have delivered road safety messages at three Station Open Days and, in doing so, have encouraged both The Safety Camera Partnership (speeding) and Mothercare (child car seats) to provide information to our communities in Bridgnorth, Oswestry and Market Drayton.

## **5 What Next?**

Having started work on various initiatives, the next stage of work, which could be delivered, depends upon the appointment of a Road Safety Co-ordinator. This was originally planned for the next financial year, however, should we wait until then, the strategy may well stagnate. The Co-ordinator would provide capacity to increase liaison with our existing partners, and identify both new partners and potential funding opportunities. He/she could then assist in maximising the opportunities that arise following our initial successful involvement with new partners.

For the short term it is proposed that we second one crew commander to this position for a period of 5 months at a cost of £16,600. Following initial development work this post would be reviewed and the benefits of a uniformed officer versus a road safety professional would be considered.

At a cost of approximately £6,000 a road safety demonstration vehicle could be provided. The County Council's Road Safety Team has already expressed an interest in this project, as it would support and enhance their current service delivery to young people. It is likely that in turn the Road Safety Team would provide materials suitable for delivery by our staff into those secondary schools that the County Council cannot resource. This would save considerable duplication of effort, and ensure a consistent delivery across the County, including the Borough of Telford & Wrekin, who have also expressed interest in a three-way partnership for such initiatives.

In order to support a number of Fire Station and Community Safety Open Days eight professionally produced banners have been ordered, which will display road safety messages alongside our normal Community Safety and Recruitment messages at a total cost of £2,480. These will form part of a package of visual aids and training aids for use throughout the County.

Finally, in the short term, we intend to train a number of Retained Duty Staff and wholetime personnel in the skills necessary to deliver Cycling Proficiency to schools throughout the more remote parts of the County. The training sessions for volunteers will be provided free of charge by the County Council. The Fire Service will operate the Cycle Safety Training Team on a similar basis to the Associate Trainer scheme. It is proposed that, during the autumn and winter of 2006, twelve trainers will be appointed and will undergo appropriate training at a total cost of approximately £3,600.



## 6 Funding

The four proposals outlined above would cost:

Road Safety Co-ordinator	£16,600
Demonstration Vehicle	£6,000
Training/Visual Aids	£2,480
Cycle Trainers	£3,600
<b>Total Cost to 31 March 2007</b>	<b>£28,680</b>

Under normal circumstances it would be difficult to support this additional expenditure, but the imperatives within the road safety strategy are clear. The 2006/07 budget set aside monies for wholetime overtime payments which, owing to unavoidable delays in commencing the Structured Overtime agreement, may well be under spent at the end of the financial year.

It is, therefore, proposed that the sum of £28,680 be moved from the wholetime overtime budget to provide sufficient funding to continue apace with the implementation of the Road Safety Strategy. Consequently, there would be no negative impact on service delivery as a result of this virement, and there may, indeed, be considerable benefits to our communities, because of the increase in road safety awareness that the Strategy strives to achieve.

### Future Funding

Members will recall from the Road Safety Strategy that there is no central funding for prevention work of this kind. Members are, however, convinced by feedback from the Integrated Risk Management Planning consultation process and the desire of staff that, if financially possible, we should continue with the Strategy of reducing the number of deaths and injuries on our roads.

In line with the timescales set out in the Strategy and, should the initial funding identified above be agreed by Members, it is proposed that funding required to support the continued delivery of the strategy of £41,000 per annum is included within the normal budget setting process. This amount is made up of £12,000 per year for firefighter salaries and advertising etc and £29,000 per year for the Road Safety Co-ordinator post.

## 7 Financial Implications

The financial implications of implementing the proposals outlined above are set out in section 6 of this report.

## 8 Legal Comment

The Authority has the power to act as proposed in this report.

## 9 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.



## 10 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority Annual Meeting 19 July 2006, Report 21 – Road Traffic Collision Strategy, and Minutes

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Road Safety Strategy

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balance Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	
Capacity	*	Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Equality and Diversity		Retained	
Efficiency Savings		Risk and Insurance	
Environmental		Staff	
Financial	*	Strategic Planning	
Fire Control/Fire Link		West Midlands Regional Management Board	

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Paul Raymond, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, 01743 260203.

