Purpose of report:

The purpose of the Report is to update the Scrutiny Committee on the Northumberland Road Safety Strategy, following a previous report in January 2014.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee note the report.

Key Issues

1) Road safety is an issue that affects everybody living in, working in or visiting Northumberland. Road accidents are a tragedy for all involved and they also place burdens on the emergency and health services and have an economic impact on our communities.

2) Accident reduction on Northumberland’s roads is a challenge that cannot be achieved by any single organisation in isolation and therefore a multi-agency approach is required to provide the best results. This approach needs to be co-ordinated and measurable.

3) The Northumberland Road Safety Group (NRSG) has produced the Northumberland Road Safety Strategy to coordinate the work of its Partners and to produce challenging and measurable objectives to make Northumberland’s Roads safe.

4) The NRSG has now reviewed its membership to avoid duplication and to ensure key organisations are represented. The Chief Fire Officer is now Chair of the Group, working closely with Local Services Group Officers. A programme of campaigns has also been approved, including closer working with Police on High School campaigns to target high risk new drivers (and their passengers).

5) NSRI. The NRSG has clarified and improved the working relationship with NSRI. The role of NSRI and detail on these issues is outlined in the NCC OSC paper to be presented alongside this update.
NORTHUMBERLAND ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

Background

1) The Northumberland Road Safety Group co-ordinates and delivers a multi-agency approach to road casualty reduction in Northumberland and consists of representatives from the following partners;

- Northumberland County Council (NCC)
- Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS)
- Northumbria Police
- North East Ambulance Service (NEAS)
- Northumbria Healthcare Trust
- Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative (NSRI)
- North East Regional Road Safety Resource

2) This Group has for a number of years met on an adhoc basis to look at ways of making Northumberland’s highways safer for all users. Last year we agreed that in order to make more effective use of the group, signpost the direction of Road Safety in the County and set out challenging and measurable objectives we needed to produce the Northumberland Road Safety Strategy.

3) The Northumberland Road Safety Strategy represents the best way forward in the drive to improve Northumberland’s road safety. The strategy is founded on the investigation of local accident data and seeks to determine the most appropriate way of addressing the issues by altering attitudes and behaviour by using the four E’s. Depending on the desired outcome, a combination of the ‘4Es’ is to be used to help meet road safety targets. The fourth ‘E’, representing emergency response was added to ensure a more comprehensive approach including ‘blue light’ rescue/casualty care.

Education:

The Partnership will strive to alter attitudes and behaviour by providing education, training and publicity. National and regional campaigns will be supported through press releases, local events and activities. Particular emphasis will be given to priority areas such as speed, child safety, drink and drug driving and driver fatigue. Support will also be given to campaigns on motorcycling, mobile telephones, pedestrian and cyclist safety and novice drivers. Road safety campaigns will be integrated with Police enforcement initiatives where appropriate.

Enforcement:

Northumbria Police are responsible for the enforcement of road traffic law. The Road Policing Plan sets out priorities designed to make roads safer by combining enforcement with education and engineering interventions. The aim is to create a positive influence over driver behaviour.
The Partnership will support the Police through education and publicity campaigns targeting issues such as speeding, drink driving and seat belt use. The County Council will enforce traffic regulation orders in order to ease congestion and to ensure that dangerous parking practices are eliminated.

Engineering:

Road safety engineering is primarily carried out through the Local Safety Schemes Programme, which consists of measures targeted at sites identified following analysis of accident data as having a speed or accident problem.

Emergency Response (ER):

Emergency Response is key in preventing incidents i.e. road closures/coning off areas but primarily saving lives through effective rescue/casualty care and recovery. NFRS, NEAS and the Police all play a key role in effective emergency response.

4) The Overarching Aim of the Road Safety Strategy for the period 2014 to 2020 is:

To reduce accidents and casualties throughout Northumberland, with a focus on vulnerable road users.

The Road Safety Strategy has four objectives;

a) A 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents by 2020, compared to the 2005-09 average.

b) A 40% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents by 2020, compared to the 2005-09 average.

c) A 50% reduction in the number of Motorcyclists Injuries by 2020, compared to the 2005-09 average.

d) A 60% reduction from collisions involving Young People.

5) Alongside the Strategy we have produced Northumberland’s Road Safety Action Plan. This will be used to manage and monitor performance of the strategy over the next 3 to 5 years. The action plan will be reviewed regularly by the NRSG and an annual report will be prepared for Members.

Historically Members were involved with the Road Safety Working Group and the issues raised at their last meeting have been incorporated within the Strategy.

6) Northumberland’s road safety performance is benchmarked alongside the eleven other North East local authorities by the North East Regional Road Safety Resource.

The North East Regional Road Safety provides information and data analysis to support road safety education, training and publicity to reduce road user casualties in the North East of England.

The Resource partly funded by the Northumbria Safer Road Initiative is to support data led education, training and publicity (ETP) campaigns by identifying and targeting issues of concern, facilitating programme planning,
7) An annual report will be produced to guide Northumberland on their performance compared to that of other local authorities in England. This report will be produced by the North East Regional Road Safety Resource for the Working Group and will be presented to Members.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NCC Communities and Place Scrutiny Committee papers

Northumberland Road Safety Strategy – January 2014

Northumberland Safer Roads Initiative – September 2014

Implications

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<td>Carbon reduction</td>
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Report Author: Alex Bennett
Chief Fire Officer
01670 621112
Alex.Bennett@northumberland.gcsx.gov.uk