

Report

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Report to:	Roads Safety Forum
Date of Meeting:	27 February 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Road Accident Casualty Statistics For 2017
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ inform the Forum of the provisional number of fatal, serious and slight casualties resulting from road accidents occurring in the Council area during the year 2017
- ◆ compare the trend in casualties with the Scottish Government's accident reduction targets

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report are noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. In 2009, the Scottish Government published "Go Safe on Scotland's Roads it's Everyone's Responsibility: Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020". This document sets out the Government's road safety vision for Scotland, aims and commitments and the Scottish Targets for reductions in road deaths and serious injuries to 2020.
- 3.2. A paper to the Road Safety Forum of 2 September 2009 outlined the contents of the framework and the Forum supported Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020.
- 3.3. The target reductions are: 40% for all fatal casualties; 55% for all serious casualties; 50% for child fatal casualties; 65% for child serious casualties; 10% for all slight casualties. The base figure for this reduction was the average of the road accident casualty figures for the years 2004 to 2008.
- 3.4. The figures for 2017 are provisional on the basis that the Police Scotland may still add or amend records over the coming months, but the numbers in such an event will be minimal across the greater severities. Therefore, the general trends described below are, to all intents and purposes, accurate. The confirmed figures for 2017 will be published by The Scottish Government during October 2018 in "Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2017".

4. Road Accident Casualty Statistics

- 4.1. The statistics for all fatal, serious and slight casualties, including child fatal and serious casualties, within South Lanarkshire are detailed in the tables that form part of Appendix A to this report. These are given as the figures for the base period, the calendar years 2009 through to 2017 and the target for 2020. The information is also displayed graphically in Appendix A.
- 4.2. After five years of steady decline in fatal casualties between 2009 and 2013 the last four years have been erratic with 2014 and 2016 showing a sharp reversal in that trend. The year-end total for 2017 was seven fatalities from seven road accidents, a decrease of 11 over 2016. This is generally in line with the decline between 2009 and 2013.
- 4.3. The number of serious casualties has risen slightly from 83 to 86.
- 4.4. There was one fatal child casualty during 2017.
- 4.5. The number of serious child casualties increased by 2 to 15, compared to the all time low in 2015 of 6.
- 4.6. After a spike in slight casualties in 2014, the trend continues downwards with the provisional total being 418. It has decreased by 88 from the 2016 total of 506, as recorded in Table B of Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2016. The number continues to be significantly below the trend line for 2020 target as well as the target itself (746 slight casualties).

5. Discussion

- 5.1. The figures for 2017 are clearly disappointing in terms of fatal, serious, child fatal and child serious casualties. The results confirm that the targets are, and have always been, challenging and confirm that year on year reductions will become harder and harder to achieve going forward to 2020.
- 5.2. The graphs in Appendix A do, however, include a trend line and these show that in each appropriate category, despite the results in 2017, the trend is downwards and on track to exceed the 2020 targets.
- 5.3. The total of five road deaths in 2015 was, as previously reported to the Forum, exceptional and there was an expectation that the 2016 total would show an increase. The total of eighteen from seventeen collisions, however, was by far the highest since the previous 2010 target was reached and there was an expectation that there would be a decrease in 2017; seven fatalities from seven accidents has borne this out. Road accidents are described as rare, random and multi-factored events and fatal road accidents can be described as the rarest so their occurrence can be hard to influence. This is supported in part by the fact that, in 2015, of the five deaths only one occurred on the Trunk Road network. In 2016, there were seven on roads over which the Council has no influence or jurisdiction, while in 2017, the number was one.
- 5.4. The significant drop in serious casualties between 2009 and 2010 has not been repeated and it would be fair to conclude that reductions have stagnated and are possibly reversing. The difference in the circumstances of an accident that can change the classification between a serious and a slight may be very small and it is possible that there has been a greater emphasis on hospital treatment for casualties over the last five years which has seen an increase in this classification.

- 5.5. Child fatal casualties (under 16 years of age) continue to be uncommon in South Lanarkshire, with a total of four between 2009 and 2017.
- 5.6. Child serious casualties showed significant drops from 2008 to 2009 and from 2011 to 2012. The trend over the subsequent three years was, like that for all serious casualties, one of stagnation. Unfortunately, 2016 saw a doubling of casualties in this group and in 2017 there was a further increase. The base total (2004 to 2008 average) is, at 17, a small number and a variation of one or two accidents can cause significant fluctuations against the target trend line. Further, the target of a 65% reduction in child serious casualties is a challenging target. The breakdown of child casualties shows ten were pedestrians and five were car passengers. We must continue our work with this vulnerable road user group to maintain and endeavour to improve, even marginally, upon previous successes.
- 5.7. Slight casualty numbers showed a drop of approximately 400 between 2007 and 2017. The numbers have continued to trend downwards year on year, with the exception of a slight increase in 2014. The current total is significantly below the 2020 target but it is important not to lose sight of the benefits to society that the reduction in even a slight injury can bring. While the headline categories of serious, child fatal and child serious casualties have shown increases, it is encouraging that the number of fatalities has fallen significantly from the high 2016 value. It should not be forgotten, however, that these are small numbers and, therefore, any variations appears as a high percentage. It should also be noted that the total number of casualties on roads within South Lanarkshire has fallen year on year from 2006 to 2013, reducing by 337, or 35.2%, as recorded in Table B of Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2016. While there were small increases in 2014 and 2016, and despite these headline increases, the provisional total number of casualties for 2017, at 511, is below the total of 607 for 2016 as recorded in Table B of Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2016.
- 5.8. Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 requires that all local authorities carry out studies into the cause of accidents on roads in their area and to take appropriate measures to prevent accidents. Since its formation, the Council has been proactive in reducing casualties on the road network, however, much still requires to be accomplished to further improve road safety. Through the efforts of the Council and by working in partnership with other bodies such as Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, the National Health Service, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, we aim to have fewer people injured in road accidents.
- 5.9. Road safety was identified as a priority through the consultation exercises undertaken for the Council's Local Transport Strategy and Local Development Plan. In both surveys approximately 95% of the respondents were of the view that improving road safety was important.
- 5.10. To effectively reduce casualties in South Lanarkshire, the Council and its partners need to address a wide variety of issues, including vulnerable road users, road user behavior and the road environment.
- 5.11. For road safety measures to be effective, cooperation is needed across the various disciplines – the four 'Es' of road safety: education, engineering, enforcement and encouragement. At the heart of road safety planning, it is essential that casualty reduction strategies are identified and that actions are developed to implement these strategies.

5.12. The Council is responsible for road safety engineering solutions and much of road safety education. Other partners such as the Police Scotland and the Fire and Rescue Service also contribute to road safety education and Police Scotland are mainly responsible for enforcement, while all partners have a role to play in encouraging road safety.

- **Road safety engineering**

5.13. The Council receives details of all recorded injury accidents that occur on our roads from the Police Scotland. This information is analysed to identify locations, routes and areas where accidents could be reduced using engineering solutions. This approach is known as Accident Investigation and Prevention and different approaches require to be tailored for the type of accident problem that has been identified.

5.14. For example, accidents occurring on rural roads are often treated with the implementation of Route Action Plans. Improved road signage and markings are installed along with new road studs, verge marker posts and anti-skid surfacing. Solutions to accidents in urban areas could lead to the introduction of pedestrian crossings or traffic signals. Speeding issues, particularly in residential streets, or near to schools, can be treated with the installation of vehicle activated signs, warning drivers that they are travelling too quickly and, where appropriate, the speed limit can be reduced to 20 miles per hour.

5.15. Requests are also regularly received from elected members or the community for road safety improvements. Locations requiring improvement are identified annually by undertaking pro-active studies to identify either accident clusters, where three or more injury accidents have occurred on the road network in the previous three years, or where the number of accidents occurring along a specific route exceeds the national average. Currently, there are a significant number of locations across South Lanarkshire. Given current resource levels it is anticipated that we will be able to target approximately 5% of these locations annually.

5.16. This approach can sometimes be met with criticism, however, to put it into context, within the latest three year period analysed, there were approximately 80 locations in South Lanarkshire which had three or more accidents occurring at single sites or routes that have a higher rate than the national average. The approach outlined above ensures that we prioritise works where they are needed the most.

- **Road safety education**

5.17. The Council take a “whole life” approach to road safety education with initiatives aimed at all ages and types of road users. We believe those good habits are best developed when we are young, therefore, particular emphasis is given to educating and training children and young people. Police Scotland, and the Fire and Rescue Service also supplement the Council’s programme of road safety education.

- **Enforcement**

5.18. This is the responsibility of Police Scotland and the Council fully supports their active enforcement of road safety laws such as drink-driving limits, seatbelt wearing and speed limits. We are partners in the West Safety Camera Unit (formally Strathclyde Safety Camera Partnership), which has been successful in reducing speed related accidents and those which have involved drivers disobeying traffic signals.

- **Encouragement**

5.19. Encouragement is also very important when working towards casualty reduction. In the past, schemes such as advisory 20 mile per hour areas, while involving some engineering and education, play a key role in terms of encouraging drivers to travel at an appropriate speed, although this initiative is no longer supported by the Scottish Government. Vehicle activated speed signs are also used to encourage drivers to travel at an appropriate speed.

5.20. The various educative campaigns that are pursued also play an important role in terms of encouragement. Often the messages being promoted in such campaigns are not new knowledge to the driver, but are designed as a reminder to encourage safe driving. Encouragement can prove to be the key to many road safety campaigns, especially those aimed at children. The Forum has already noted its support for the Scottish Government's 2020 targets which are challenging. After the eight full years of work towards the targets, progress within South Lanarkshire appears to have slowed towards the 2020 goals. It is expected that future gains in all categories will be difficult to achieve because the base numbers and targets are small numbers. This reinforces the need to continue to focus on road safety initiatives as a Council necessity if it is to maintain its contribution to reducing road casualties on the roads of South Lanarkshire and making roads safer for all users.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. There are no personnel implications.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. Funding for accident reduction schemes, both route actions and single site, has been and will continue to be sought from external sources such as The Scottish Government's "Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets" allocation and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT). In addition, opportunities will continue to be sought to utilise Roads Investment Programme funding where accident reduction and roads investment priorities overlap.

8. Other Implications

8.1. There are no significant risks associated with this report, nor any environmental implications.

9. Equality Impact Arrangements and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Michael McGlynn
Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

6 February 2018

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- Making communities safer, stronger and sustainable
- Improve the road network, influence improvements in public transport and encourage active travel

Previous References

- Roads Safety Forum of 6 March 2017

List of Background Papers

- Go Safe on Scotland's Roads It's Everyone's Responsibility: Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020 published by the Scottish Government in June 2009
- Report to Road Safety Forum 2 September 2009
- Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2016 published on behalf of the Scottish Government by Transport Scotland in October 2017

Contact for Further Information

If you would like inspect any of the background papers or want any further information, please contact Stuart Laird, Roads and Transportation Services

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Appendix A:

2004 to 2008 Ave.	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Milestone 11	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target
16	18	12	11	9	6	13	5	18	7			9

All Fatal Casualties within South Lanarkshire

2004 to 2008 Ave.	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Milestone 68	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target
120	121	83	78	72	69	83	70	83	86			54

All Serious Casualties within South Lanarkshire

2004 to 2008 Ave.	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Milestone 0	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target
1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1			0

All Fatal Child (<16 years) Casualties within South Lanarkshire

2004 to 2008 Ave	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Milestone 8	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target
17	14	14	14	7	8	6	6	13	15			6

All Serious Child (<16 years) Casualties within South Lanarkshire

2004 to 2008 Ave.	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Milestone 776	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target
829	623	611	581	559	545	562	523	506	418			746

All Slight Casualties within South Lanarkshire

Notes

- i. For all fatal casualties, the target for 2020 is a 40% reduction from the base figure which is the average for the years 2004 to 2008 inclusive.
- ii. For all serious casualties, the target for 2020 is a 55% reduction from the base figure which is the average for the years 2004 to 2008 inclusive.
- iii. For all child fatal casualties, the target for 2020 is a 50% reduction from the base figure which is the average for the years 2004 to 2008 inclusive.
- iv. For all child serious casualties, the target for 2020 is a 65% reduction from the base figure which is the average for the years 2004 to 2008 inclusive.
- v. For all slight casualties, the target for 2020 is a 10% reduction from the base figure which is the average for the years 2004 to 2008 inclusive.
- vi. A child is considered to be aged 15 or under.
- vii. Averages and targets have been rounded up or down to nearest whole number.