

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Meeting: 26 November 2021

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

KEY DECISION Yes

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POLICY, STRATEGY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER– TRANSPORT & AIR QUALITY

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present a new Road Safety Strategy for the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority approve the new Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy as set out in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The 2017 – 2020 Road Safety Strategy, agreed by the Combined Authority in July 2017, outlined the range of measures and methods to be used to help achieve safer roads. It was based on the traditional road safety principles of education, enforcement and engineering (known as the 3 Es), with targeted action plans to focus on four key challenge areas (cyclists, motorcyclists, senior road users and adult pedestrians).

3.2 In reviewing and updating the previous strategy, consideration was given to DfT's 2019 Road Safety Statement [*A Lifetime of Road Safety - Moving Britain Ahead.*](#) This Statement sets out an aspiration where the UK moves towards a Vision Zero approach to road safety, since “*road deaths and casualties are not merely the result of poor driving...but of a transport system as a whole, from signage to road user education, from enforcement to infrastructure design and construction*”; in essence, avoidable road deaths and injuries should be reduced to an absolute minimum.

- 3.3 Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. The Safe Systems approach, supported by Vision Zero, views human life and health as paramount to anything else and should be the first and foremost consideration when designing/redesigning a road network. The principles underpinning the Safe Systems acknowledge that:
- People make mistakes which can lead to crashes; however, no one should die or be seriously injured on the road as a result of these mistakes.
 - The human body has a limited physical ability to tolerate crash forces – any impact greater than 30km/h increases the risk of dying significantly.
 - Road safety is a shared responsibility amongst everyone, including those that design, build, operate and use the road system.
 - All parts of the road system must be strengthened in combination to multiply the protective effects and if one part fails, the others will still protect people.
- 3.4 The Strategy also recognises this approach needs to be complemented by a “hierarchy” of sources of danger. Indeed, this was also recognised as part of the government’s recent review of the highway code, in that the ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’ as a concept places those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy, to ensure a more mutually respectful and considerate culture of safe and effective road use that benefits all users.
- 3.5 The new Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy proposes a step change in approach, with a clear recognition that deaths and serious injuries on the road are preventable and that they are neither acceptable nor inevitable. It includes a bold target to reduce the number and severity of road traffic collisions, working to an overall Vision Zero target that **by 2040 no one will be killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the roads in the Liverpool City Region.**
- 3.6 The strategic outcomes for the Strategy, to be delivered through evidence-based activity in support of the Vision Zero target, are:
- A reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions working to a target of no collisions by 2040
 - Creating the conditions for more people to make safer journeys on foot or by bicycle, and enabling more children to walk or cycle to school
 - Contributing to improved air quality and reducing climate changing CO₂ emissions
- 3.7 It also notes that Halton Borough Council is aligned with the Cheshire Road Safety Partnership, given its historic links with the county, and that the collaborative working that exists between the two road safety partnerships will ensure the interests of the whole LCR are met in delivering the aspirations of the Strategy. It has been developed in consultation with the following stakeholders:

- Liverpool University academic reference group (Institute of Population Health)
- RoadPeace
- Action Vision Zero
- LCR Local Authority Road Safety teams
- Mersey Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

3.8 Wherever possible comments received have been accommodated and are reflected in the Strategy. Whilst commentators applauded the bold ambitions set out, some were sceptical on the deliverability of the Vision Zero target of no KSIs by 2040, despite this being a central tenet of the Strategy. Other areas of debate included the impacts of pavement parking especially in older, narrow roads; the practicality of imposing speeds limits and traffic calming; and the shift away from fossil fuels, the associated noise created by internal combustion engines, and the inaudibility of electric vehicles and e-scooters.

3.9 The new Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy will supersede the current Strategy, introduced in 2017. It does not explicitly include a period of validity, but it is anticipated that it will run until 2026/27, in line with the City Region's Sustainable Transport Settlement. It is noted that the Strategy also commits to the production of an annual report of activity.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no direct resource implications for the Combined Authority as a result of adopting the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy. The Strategy acknowledges the importance of the Partnership maximising available funds, and that whilst road safety will continue to be delivered within local budgets and to meet each partners' own corporate objectives and targets, a coordinated approach to partnership working is essential.

4.2 Human Resources

None

4.3 Physical Assets

None

4.4 Information Technology

None

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Liverpool City Region local authorities have a statutory duty under section 39 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act to *“take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents”*. Other relevant legislation for Highway Authorities are *Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (s 122)*, and the *Traffic Management Act 2004 (s16)*. The *Infrastructure Act 2015* requires *“Highways England to manage the strategic road network in England to ensure the safety of people who use the network”*.
- 5.2 The *Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004* requires fire and rescue authorities *“to rescue people from road traffic accidents and protect people from serious harm from road accidents”*, and the *Health & Social Care Act 2012* requires local authorities in England to assess the current *“and future health and social care needs of the local community (including road safety)”*.
- 5.3 The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership (MRSP) work collectively to discharge these statutory duties, and their actions will be guided by outcomes and interventions articulated in the Strategy.

6. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 6.1 There is a risk that without a collaborative and evidence-led approach, as set out in the proposed Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy, the ongoing challenges relating to the number of people killed and seriously injured on the City Region’s roads will not be addressed effectively. By working collaboratively and ensuring that activities and resources are aligned to make roads safer for all users will help to mitigate such risks.
- 6.2 Additionally there is a risk that the Merseyside Road Safety Partnership (MRSP) will not achieve its target of zero avoidable road deaths by 2040. Aside from the reputational risk, the financial cost of a KSI is significant, as detailed in figure 2 of the Strategy (appended to this report). This will be mitigated by adopting the Vision Zero/Safe Systems approach as articulated in the Strategy.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

No negative impacts have been identified in the Equality Impact Assessment of the Strategy; the Safe Systems approach focuses on reducing danger at source, such that the potential impact of the Strategy is “positive” across all protected characteristics.

8. PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS

None

9. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Strategy has been discussed in detail by the MRSP, the Transport Advisory Group and the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and all Liverpool City Region partners have been involved in its preparation (see para 3.7). It is envisaged that all partners will be responsible for promoting its messages through their established media channels.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 In general, road safety risk for LCR residents is slightly lower than national trends and considerable progress has been made to improve road safety through engineering measures as well as education, training and publicity initiatives to reduce the number and severity of crashes. However, across the City Region in 2019, 25 people were killed on the roads and a further 474 were seriously injured.
- 10.2 In delivering this Strategy, there will be a step change in approach to safer roads with a clear recognition that deaths and serious injuries on the road are preventable and that they are neither acceptable nor inevitable. This Strategy will reduce the number and severity of road traffic collisions, working to an overall Vision Zero target that by 2040 no one will be killed or seriously injured on the roads in the Liverpool City Region.

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Appendices:

Appendix One – Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy
Appendix Two – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents:

None