

Written Response to the Enterprise and Learning Committee on it's Report on Road Policing in Wales – Y Maniffesto, by Ieuan Wyn Jones, the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

March 2009

Executive Summary

The Association of Chief Police Officers, Wales (ACPO Cymru), in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government produced a draft document entitled 'Road Policing in Wales - Y Maniffesto', setting out initiatives aimed at improving roads policing in Wales.

The Enterprise and Learning Committee considered the draft document which was presented to them by the Chief Constable of North Wales Police, Richard Brunstrom on 29th January and prepared a report which summarised the evidence examined and made several recommendations for both ACPO Cymru and the Welsh Assembly Government.

I have set out my response to the report's individual recommendations below.

Detailed Responses to the report's recommendations:

The Committee recommends that:

1. The Welsh Assembly Government uses powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to propose secondary legislation to establish a Traffic Officer Service in Wales and works with ACPO Cymru to train and upskill current personnel to implement the service.

Response : Partially Accepted

A six months trial of the new strategic roads policing model is currently being considered for the A55 trunk road in North Wales later this year. In order to facilitate this I have agreed for the Welsh Assembly Government's Legal Services to commence drafting a Commencement Order for Part 1 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. Once in force, this will allow Welsh Ministers to authorise the designation of Traffic Officers as part of the trial or any subsequent 'roll out' of the service.

Under plans for the A55 trial, four existing route stewards, employed by the North Wales Trunk Road Agency, will be designated as Traffic Officers and have powers to stop and direct traffic and deal with incidents on the A55 corridor from junction 11 to the English border (the corridor comprises the A55, A550 and dualled section of the A495). Before being deployed, the new Traffic Officers will be provided with training by the police and that given to the Highway's Agency Traffic Officers in England.

Financial Implications: Any trial of the new strategic roads policing model will be funded from existing budgets. The service will only be 'rolled out' across heavily congested sections of the motorway and trunk road network in Wales if the trial demonstrates that it is effective, provides value for money and is sustainable within available resources.

The Committee recommends that:

2. The Welsh Assembly Government undertakes an evaluation of best practice with regard to zoning in northern Europe and reviews current policy regarding the implementation of 20 mph zones, home zones and quiet lanes.

Response: Accepted

I accept this recommendation. The Welsh Assembly Government fully supports the spirit of this recommendation, which aligns with the Assembly's manifesto commitment within "Wales: A Better Country" to extend 20 mph schemes and safer routes to schools.

As outlined in One Wales we are committed to improving road safety through investing in safe routes to schools/in communities and 20mph zones. The Assembly has provided a Local Road Safety Grant annually since 2000 and local authorities may use this resource to implement 20 mph schemes. To date over £54m has been allocated, and at 31 August 2008, there were 438 schemes in Wales involving a 20mph limit or zone. Following a wide consultation we will shortly be publishing guidelines for "Setting Local Speed Limits".

The Transport Act 2000 enables a traffic authority to designate any road for which it is the highway authority as a Quiet Lane or Home Zone, and consideration will be given to the provision of regulations or guidance to assist local authorities in this regard.

Financial Implications – This activity is funded in the main from the annual Local Road Safety Grant. Any additional costs will be drawn from existing programme budgets.

The committee recommends that:

3. ACPO Cymru and VOSA analyse any emerging trends with regard to an increase in infringements which may arise in the coming months and report their findings to the Department for Transport for further consideration.

Response:

This is matter for ACPO Cymru and VOSA. However, I am aware that both organisations regularly analyse the level of offending and collisions using the National Intelligence Model. VOSA have a Strategic Analysis Unit and the four Welsh Police forces have a single point of contact, who collates such intelligence on a nation-wide basis. Any developing trends are addressed by

means of specific nation-wide road policing operations such as 'Coachman' and 'Mermaid' whereby partner enforcement agencies seek to use the developed intelligence packages to target those operators who pose the greatest risk to the motoring public.

Financial Implications – None for the Welsh Assembly Government

The committee recommends that:

4. Given the current commitment to collaboration between the services that they undertake joint planning with the aim of delivering an evaluated, high quality package on the relevant tactical areas of the Manifesto and related issues in schools and other educational institutions that the Welsh Assembly Government prepares and issues guidance to heads on how this instruction might most usefully be included and delivered at different stages of the curriculum.

Response: Accepted

Equipping children and young people with the knowledge and practical skills to make informed positive choices which ensures their safety and that of others is central to the process of education in schools in Wales. In terms of the revised curriculum in Wales there are a range of opportunities for schools to teach about safety.

The Welsh Assembly Government and the four Welsh Police Forces jointly fund the All Wales Schools Core Liaison Programme (AWSLCP) which is delivered as part of the PSE programme in 97% of schools across Wales. The partnership between schools and the police provides a positive strategy to schools so that all pupils have opportunities to enhance their knowledge, understanding, behaviour, attitudes and skills regarding:

- Drug and substance misuse education
- Social Behaviour and Community
- Safety

The programme consists of fifteen core lessons; five per strand. In addition, eighteen supplementary lessons have been developed including two lessons for secondary aged pupils within the Social Behaviour and Community strand that address road safety in general and safer driving in particular;

- 'Wheels of fortune' is a Key stage 3 lesson which addresses safer driving
- Key stage 4 'Know fear' covers similar topics with an emphasis on drink/driving and the legal consequences of having an accident

Additional web-based materials for teachers are currently being developed by the AWSLCP which offer additional learning activities such as a safer driving quiz, a review of teenage driving statistics in Wales and signposting to relevant websites for young people such as 'Deadly mates'.

At a time of unprecedented change in educational policy, with the introduction and implementation of initiatives such as the foundation phase and the 14-19 learning pathways, we consider that there is an opportunity to incorporate good practice on defensive driving in the curriculum in a structured way, so that children and adolescents can be instructed in the best practice.

The Police were invited to and took part in the PSE curriculum consultation and two representatives from the AWSCP, attended the PSE consultation conference in Llandrindod in 2007. Many schools work closely with the police and fire service in developing their PSE programmes

Many secondary schools already address safer driving often with Year 12 pupils. However PSE is not statutory for this phase and the teaching is at the discretion of learning providers. The Core Programme addresses these concerns. In terms of guidance schools if a suitable case study was developed it could be included on the PSE Guidance website Officials may well be able to:

- Quality assure the teaching materials to ensure links with the revised PSE framework and the revised curriculum as a whole.
- Broker an opportunity to raise awareness of the resource with the All Wales LEA PSE Advisory Group.

Financial Implications – None.

The Committee recommends that:

5. The Welsh Assembly Government provides adequate funding and support, and works with ACPO Cymru and other key stakeholders to design an effective publicity campaign and to ensure wide dissemination of a driver friendly version of the Manifesto.

Response: Accepted

The Welsh Assembly Government intends to work in partnership with ACPO Cymru and all other stakeholders to both implement and publicise the Manifesto.

Financial Implications – None. This activity will be integrated with other road safety initiatives and funded from existing budgets.

