



**SPEED SURVEYS AND  
SURREY POLICE COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH;  
OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTNERSHIP  
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN RUNNYMEDE  
28<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2005**

**Key Issues**

The impact of speeding vehicles is the main community safety issue raised by residents in Runnymede. New speed survey equipment will aid in providing rapid feedback to residents concerned about traffic speeds. There is a potential opportunity to enable members of the community to take an active role in assessing the level of speeding in their neighbourhood.

**Summary**

The northern division of Surrey Police has been trialling a "Community Speed Watch" campaign. The trial was launched following the experience of work by other Police Forces; in particular the work of Avon and Somerset Police has been used to develop the campaign. This report explains how the campaign works and sets out a possible way forward for operating the campaign in Runnymede.

Runnymede LTS is in the process of procuring speed survey equipment to facilitate the provision of rapid feedback to residents concerned about traffic speeds. This equipment could contribute a vital resource in any Community Speed Watch scheme within the Runnymede Borough area.

**Officer Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to agree:

- a) **that any Community Speed Watch scheme taken forwards by Surrey Police is applied as a partnership between Surrey Police and Surrey County Council in the Runnymede Borough area.**

## **1.0 Background Information**

- 1.1 In 2004 Surrey Police launched a new pilot scheme in its Northern Division called "Community Speed Watch". The scheme started in Elmbridge and has subsequently been rolled out to other boroughs within the Northern Division: Epsom and Ewell, and Spelthorne. Following experience in Elmbridge it has also been trialled in the more rural areas of Mole Valley.

## **2.0 How does the Community Speed Watch work?**

- 2.1 The Community Speed Watch scheme is operated by volunteers supported by Surrey Police. It involves the volunteers in helping to reduce road traffic collisions, improving the quality of life for local communities, reducing traffic noise and pollution and increasing public awareness of inappropriate speed.
- 2.2 Trained volunteers, using specialist speed detection equipment, monitor the speed of vehicles at specific locations within their communities and record details of the offending vehicles. Volunteers are not expected to stop vehicles but to record their details and forward them to Surrey Police, who will then look at the issue.
- 2.3 Surrey Police provides training to volunteers, which is critical to the safe operation of the scheme. The training provided covers:
- Understanding of the protocols for operation of the scheme
  - The use of appropriate safety clothing to highlight the presence of volunteers near the carriageway
  - Use of the monitoring equipment to ensure that the results recorded are accurate and comply with the standards set out in the protocol – in this way the records between several neighbourhoods can be compared
  - Personal Safety issues including how to handle confrontation and any aggressive reaction from another highway user
  - The safe keeping of records and the process for submitting them to Surrey Police
- 2.4 The campaign is coordinated in each Borough and District in the Northern Division by the respective Casualty Reduction Officer for Surrey Police. It is the Casualty Reduction Officer who would examine the records collected and decide what action to take. For example a letter could be sent from Surrey Police to the registered owner of the speeding vehicle – such a letter would request that all drivers of that vehicle adhere to all speed limits.
- 2.5 At this stage the report author has not seen any assessment of how effective the trial scheme has been. Surrey Police are expecting to review the outcome of the trial of the scheme later this year.

## **3.0 How could a scheme be launched in Runnymede?**

- 3.1 From section 2 it is clear that Surrey Police have lead the development of the Community Speed Watch scheme. Two activities critical to the success of the scheme are provided in the trial by Surrey Police: personal safety training and follow up of information provided through use of the Police National Computer (PNC). It may be possible to arrange personal safety training from alternative training providers; however access to the PNC is only open to Police Forces.

- 3.2 It will be important to understand the effect of a Community Speed Watch scheme in Runnymede. Results of traffic speed and volume surveys would be collected before and after the campaign in a particular neighbourhood. Residents would also be consulted to establish their views about the effectiveness of the scheme. The results would be presented in an annual review report to the Committee.
- 3.3 Runnymede LTS is procuring speed survey equipment. The initial purpose of this equipment is to be a tool for LTS engineers to be able to provide rapid feedback to residents who are concerned about traffic speeds. This will be reassuring for the concerned resident, and provide valuable information for the engineer in assessing what action should be taken. If the Community Speed Watch scheme is taken forwards within the Runnymede Borough area by Surrey Police, then the speed survey equipment could become a valuable resource, and serve two useful functions:
- Rapid site assessment to facilitate prioritisation of Surrey Police resources
  - To provide equipment to residents participating within the Community Speed Watch scheme
- 3.4 Elsewhere on the agenda Members will see the link between speed and injury accidents. The impact of speeding vehicles is the main community safety issue raised by residents in Runnymede. The availability of speed survey equipment, and the implementation of the Community Speed Watch scheme would both be positive responses to this issue for Runnymede residents.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The procurement costs for speed survey equipment are as follows:
- One calibrated unit for exclusive LTS use: **£2,500**
  - Three un-calibrated units for LTS use, and as a resource for the Community Speed Watch scheme if it is taken forwards: **£400**
- 4.2 These costs will be funded from the LTS non-works budget.

#### **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 This report has been written in consultation with Surrey Police, the Traffic and Road Safety Group of Surrey County Council, and Runnymede Borough Council. The following comments were received; any further comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

##### **5.2 Surrey Police**

The Safety Management Officer for Surrey Police has considered a draft report, which included a suggestion for the LTS to provide the necessary training for volunteers to monitor vehicle speeds in a manner similar to the Community Speed Watch scheme, but without Surrey Police involvement in the first instance. He would strongly prefer that such volunteer involvement in Runnymede be held back until the results of the Surrey Police Northern Division trial are known. He believes that it would be difficult for the LTS to deliver the personal safety training required and points out that this is the only LTS to make this suggestion. This could create confusion whilst the trial scheme is operating. There is due to be a meeting of senior management of Surrey Police, at the at the end of February or beginning of March, to decide whether the trial Community Speed Watch has been a success, and if the scheme should be rolled out across Surrey.

### 5.3 **Traffic and Road Safety Group, Surrey County Council**

The Head of Road Safety has considered the draft report. Whilst understanding that the LTS is responding to a local concern she is investigating the feasibility of a countywide scheme. A verbal update will be made at the meeting. There are other types of campaign available such as those where drivers are asked to make a pledge not to speed. Results from elsewhere have had variable degrees of success.

### 5.4 **Safer Runnymede, Runnymede Borough Council**

The Safer Runnymede Manager has considered the draft report and would support the introduction of the scheme subject to support from Surrey Police. In Runnymede over some 8 years there has been considerable investment in both staff time and technology. This has included the first mobile speed camera and the first interactive speed indicating signs. These have been backed up with signage. Independent evaluation has shown reductions in excessive speed offending have been achieved and this scheme may help inform local people of the true scale of the problem.

## 6.0 **Conclusion**

- 6.1 The development of a Police Community Speed Watch scheme in Runnymede would respond to the main community safety issue of local concern. It is recommended that once the lessons from the Police Community Speed Watch trial are known, and if the police decide to roll out the Community Speed Watch program, that the scheme is applied as a partnership between Surrey Police and Surrey County Council in the Runnymede Borough area.
- 6.2 It is intended that such a partnership would involve Surrey Police managing the day to day operation of the scheme, and Runnymede LTS providing resources in the form of speed survey equipment. This equipment could be used to facilitate prioritisation of sites, and could be supplied to residents involved in the scheme.

**Report by: David Mitchell, Principal Engineer, Runnymede LTS**

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Lead Contact Officer: **David Mitchell**

Telephone: **01932 794 150**

Background Papers: **None**

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Version: 2

Date: 18/1/05

Time: 1530

Initials: NH

Annexes: 0