



Surrey County Council Local Committee

Surrey Safety Camera Partnership Update and Progress

9 February 2007

KEY ISSUE:

This report provides an update on the progress and future of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership. This includes an explanation of the role of the partners, the governance of the Partnership, and the principles and effectiveness of the use of safety camera enforcement in Surrey.

SUMMARY

Surrey Safety Camera Partnership began full operation in April 2005. The creation of the Safety Camera Partnership allows the cost of providing red light and visible speed camera enforcement to be recouped from the fines issued to motoring offenders generated by the cameras, rather than from taxpayers. This process is often referred to as "netting off". A report on the setting up of the Safety Camera Partnership was presented to the Local Committee (Runnymede) in July 2004.

As well as reclaiming the costs in the prevention, detection and processing of speed and red light camera offences, the Partnership is investing in ten new safety camera sites at collision "hot spots" this financial year. Improvements have also been made to existing sites - there is now a co-located speed camera warning sign and speed limit roundel in view to the driver at the same time as the yellow speed cameras at every single site in Surrey. The Partnership has also invested in educational campaigns to change driver behaviour and to demonstrate the role safety cameras play in preventing casualties.

Monitoring at sites in Surrey echoes national data, which shows that safety cameras continue to be highly effective in reducing speeding, collisions and casualties.

Two new safety camera enforcement sites are being introduced in Runnymede during the current financial year. These consist of a fixed speed camera on the A318 Byfleet Road near Byfleet & New Haw Rail Station, and a regular mobile enforcement site covering New Haw Road, New Haw. Both locations have suffered a continuing history of collisions and speed surveys have confirmed a speeding problem.

Following 2006/07 the “netting off” process will be replaced by an additional road safety grant to Local Authorities as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process. The County Council’s Executive have approved that the replacement grant be invested to ensure the continued operation and success of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership, and that any surplus additional funding be invested in a range of road safety interventions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report is for information only.

The committee is asked to note:

- (i) the benefits of the creation of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership and the progress made to date.
- (ii) that safety cameras continue to be highly effective at reducing speeding collisions and casualties.
- (iii) that two new “core” safety camera sites are being introduced in Runnymede in the current financial year, where there has been a continuing history of collisions and excessive speed.
- (iv) that following 2006/7, local authorities will be provided with an enhanced grant for road safety as part of the LTP process, replacing the current system of “netting off”. The County Council’s Executive have approved that this be invested to ensure the continued operation and success of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership began operation in April 2005 and is responsible for red light violation and visible speed camera enforcement at collision “hot spots” across Surrey.
- 1.2 The creation of the Safety Camera Partnership allows the costs incurred by the partner organisations in providing visible safety camera enforcement to be recouped from the fines issued to motorists substantially exceeding the limit or failing to obey red lights at collision hotspots. This process is often referred to as “netting off”.
- 1.3 Prior to this the individual partner organisations, and ultimately the taxpayer met the cost of this enforcement. Consequently it had not always been possible to provide suitable levels of enforcement at locations that really needed it, due a lack of resources in any one of the partner organisations.
- 1.4 The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership is also able to invest in educational campaigns in a bid to change driver behaviour and increase awareness of the purpose, principles and achievements of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership.
- 1.5 The Partnership is *not* responsible for
 - Vehicle Activated Signs (other than those at “core” safety camera sites or former safety camera sites);
 - “Community Speed Watch” initiative;
 - Speed cameras associated with the variable speed limit on the M25. These are operated by the Metropolitan Police.
 - Surrey Police Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) units.

Role of the Partner Organisations

- 1.6 **Surrey County Council** is the lead partner and is the main Highway Authority in the Partnership area, with responsibility for all local roads. Surrey County Council is responsible for the provision and maintenance of all safety camera housings and safe roadside locations for mobile enforcement vehicles on local roads. The County Council is responsible for overall project management and monitoring of existing sites, and for conducting analysis to examine potential new enforcement sites.
- 1.7 **Surrey Police** are responsible for providing roads policing and safety management in the Partnership area. The Safety Camera Unit of Surrey Police is responsible for deployment of cameras in safety camera housings, deployment of the Partnership’s dedicated mobile

enforcement units, the processing of speeding and red light offences, and issuing of fixed penalty notices.

- 1.8 **Her Majesty's Court Service** has responsibility for the administration of the magistrates' courts in Surrey. The Surrey Fines and Enforcement Unit deals with all matters relating to enquiry and payments facilities for the County, including conditional offer of fixed penalty notices.
- 1.9 **The Highways Agency** is an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) and is responsible for Motorways and Trunk roads. The Highways Agency is responsible for the provision and maintenance of safety camera housings and safe roadside locations for mobile enforcement vehicles on these roads.

Governance

- 1.10 A Project Board directs the Partnership, upon which all partners are represented. The lead representative from Surrey Police chairs the Board. The manager of Surrey County Council's Network Management and Information Group represents Surrey County Council. The Project Board usually meets once every quarter.
- 1.11 The County Council employ a Project Office consisting of a Project Manager, Communications Officer and Engineer/Data Officer to be responsible for the day-to-day running of the Partnership. This includes coordination of the activities between Partners in operating existing sites, assessment of potential new sites, and monitoring, evaluation and communications. The Project Manager is responsible for monitoring the overall budget of the Partnership and for reclaiming the Partnership's costs that are directly related to safety camera enforcement, from DfT, from the fines that the cameras generate.

2 THE USE OF SAFETY CAMERAS IN SURREY

2.1 There are three types of safety camera used by the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership, and their deployment is dictated by some important principles:

- **Red light violation** cameras are used to address a continuing history of collisions at a junction, associated with drivers passing illegally through red traffic light signals.
- **Fixed speed cameras** are used to tackle a continuing history of collisions along a short stretch of road, associated with drivers substantially exceeding the speed limit.
- **Mobile speed cameras** are also used to tackle a continuing history of collisions associated with drivers substantially exceeding the speed limit, but on a longer stretch of road. The mobile speed camera can be deployed at different locations at different times along the same stretch. Mobile enforcement can also take place at fixed sites (for example when the fixed camera is not working, or in the opposite direction to the fixed camera).

“Core” Enforcement Sites

2.2 Collisions are random events, and relatively rare. Although we do not know when or where the next collision is going to take place exactly, we do know that there are certain locations or stretches of road that are more likely to suffer collisions in the future because of the pattern of collisions occurring there in the past. It is these “collision hotspots” that can usually be ameliorated through implementation of engineering and/or enforcement measures.

2.3 New “core” sites where frequent enforcement takes place are only introduced at locations where there has been a continuing, serious history of collisions related to excessive speed or jumping red traffic signals, and after all other engineering measures have been considered. Although safety camera enforcement can be very successful at reducing casualties at the correct locations, it is not always the most appropriate solution in all cases. It is important to appreciate that safety cameras should not be seen as a universal remedy for casualty reduction, they are just one part of the road safety “toolbox”.

2.4 The DfT set strict criteria for new “core” enforcement sites and this is shown within **ANNEX A**. In summary this criteria uses a points system, with a greater weighting for collisions involving death or serious injury. A minimum number of points are required before DfT will approve a new

“core” site. For speed enforcement locations, speed surveys are also required to confirm and assess the extent of the problem. A map of “core” safety camera locations is provided on the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership website www.surrey-safecam.org, and the local press and members are always informed of any new sites.

- 2.5 **ANNEX B** summarises the procedure used by the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership to carefully assess, select and implement new sites in accordance with the DfT criteria and principles described above. Senior Transportation Management colleagues and the Portfolio Holder for Transportation within the County Council have been consulted over this procedure. The new procedure is intended to allow County Council colleagues to closely manage the work undertaken by the Council’s contractors to avoid unnecessary delay. The procedure also clarifies the responsibilities for keeping Local members informed of any works taking place.

“Exceptional” Mobile Enforcement Sites

- 2.6 “Exceptional” mobile speed camera enforcement is undertaken on many other roads across Surrey, separate to the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership “core” mobile enforcement sites. “Exceptional” enforcement takes place where there are concerns over speeds or casualties, but where the history of collisions is not as serious as a “core” enforcement site. To maintain the overall focus on casualty reduction the DfT insist that the total amount of time spent enforcing at “exceptional” sites within a Partnership area must not exceed 15% of the total number of live safety camera hours at “core” sites.
- 2.7 Each District or Borough Police area has a Casualty Reduction Officer (CRO) who undertake a range of road safety education and enforcement activities, of which the provision of “exceptional” mobile speed enforcement may be one. Although the Safety Camera Partnership is responsible for processing any resulting offences captured by safety camera, the work of the CROs takes place under local police command, and is not directly managed by the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership. Hence any request for additional enforcement (speed or otherwise) outside the Partnership’s “core” sites should be made to the Police. A list of the sites where “exceptional” enforcement has taken place can be downloaded from the Partnership website www.surrey-safecam.org.
- 2.8 The provision of regular concentrated enforcement at the worst “core” speed related casualty locations by the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership in combination with “exceptional” enforcement from time-to-time on other roads by Surrey Police CROs provides the most efficient deployment of resources across Surrey as a whole.

Road works enforcement

- 2.9 Temporary enforcement can also be undertaken at road works sites where temporary speed limits have been imposed to mitigate against the additional risk of collisions and to protect the workforce.

Visible Enforcement

- 2.10 As a requirement of the “netting off” system, all speed safety camera sites have to conform to strict visibility and conspicuity criteria (listed below) to ensure maximum opportunity for drivers to keep to speed limits. The aim is to act as a visual deterrent. However, if despite all the warnings drivers continue to substantially exceed the limit, then they face the risk of being issued with a penalty.

- Fixed speed cameras are bright yellow, mobile enforcement vehicles are liveried with safety camera warning signs.
- Fixed speed and mobile enforcement sites have to conform to minimum visibility distances to be seen by motorists.
- Speed camera warning signs have to be provided at all sites. Signing has been enhanced this year – there is now a co-located speed limit repeater sign and safety camera warning sign in view to the driver at the same time as the camera at every single site in Surrey.
- Some sites have been provided with vehicle-activated signs to remind drivers of the limit and to warn of the enforcement camera.
- A map of camera locations is provided on the Partnership website www.surrey-safecam.org, and the local press are informed as new locations are introduced.
- “Exceptional” mobile enforcement is still subject to the same visibility, conspicuity and signing rules as “core” safety camera enforcement sites.

Vehicle Activated Signs

- 2.11 Vehicle-activated signs detect vehicles that are approaching too fast, and illuminate a sign to inform or warn the driver. There are two main types: those that illuminate to remind drivers of the speed limit (and where appropriate inform of the presence of speed cameras), and those that illuminate to warn of a particular hazard such as a bend or a junction.

- 2.12 The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership installed a total of 14 vehicle-activated signs at nine locations across Surrey during the last year (listed in **ANNEX C**). Some were installed at former safety camera sites (where it was considered that the existing camera no longer offered the best solution and was removed), and others were installed ahead of safety cameras to remind drivers of the speed limit, and to warn them of the enforcement. It is intended that a similar number of signs will be installed during the current financial year at new or existing safety camera sites across Surrey.
- 2.13 The use of vehicle-activated signs reflects the Partnership's commitment to the principles of visible enforcement and to the education of drivers, giving maximum opportunity to stick to the speed limit. However, if despite the warnings drivers continue to substantially exceed the limit, then they face the risk of being issued with a penalty.

3 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

Work Undertaken to Date

3.1 During the initial stages of the Partnership the main focus was in the setting up of a new office, with new colleagues being recruited to the partner organisations to undertake work on behalf of the Partnership. In addition there have been enhancements to existing safety camera sites, removal of seven obsolete sites where the sites were assessed and it was considered that the camera no longer offered the best solution, and introduction of six new “core” enforcement sites. In summary this has included:

- A new fixed safety camera housing and vehicle activated sign installed on the A24 at Mickleham, previously one of the worst casualty “hotspots” in Surrey.
- The creation of four new “core” mobile enforcement zones (two on the A31 between Guildford and Farnham, one on the A308 Staines bypass and one on Kingston Road, Staines).
- The installation of two red light cameras in Guildford at the junction of A25 Ladymead with A322 Woodbridge Road.
- An additional safety camera housing installed on the A24 Ewell Bypass to allow enforcement in both directions.
- The upgrading of a single-direction fixed camera site on the A25 in Merrow to a bi-directional fixed camera site.
- The installation of 14 vehicle-activated signs at nine locations, including sites where obsolete camera housings have been removed.
- Provision of safety fencing to various sites. The safety fencing is required to protect police colleagues when visiting and tending to the camera installations. The fencing also protects vehicle occupants against the risk of collision with the camera installation, should vehicles happen to lose control and leave the road.
- Further enhancements to signing has resulted in there being a co-located speed camera warning sign and speed limit repeater in view to the driver at the same time as the safety camera on the approach to every single camera site in Surrey.

New Sites for 2006/2007

- 3.2 The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership have applied and received approval for ten new enforcement sites this year, and work is progressing to implement these in the coming months. The number of collisions and casualties occurring at these locations within a three-year period prior to application for the new “core” enforcement sites, is detailed in **ANNEX D**. In summary these ten collision hotspots alone have suffered a total of 285 casualties within a three-year period. Applications were made for these new sites only after site visits had been undertaken by Surrey County Council road safety engineers and Surrey Police colleagues in order to confirm that enforcement would be the most appropriate solution.
- 3.3 Two of these sites are in Runnymede. Regular mobile speed enforcement will be introduced along the A318 New Haw Road, New Haw, after analysis confirmed that a stretch of 775m had suffered 27 casualties over three years, including nine serious and one fatality. Speed surveys showed that the 85th percentile speed (the speed above which the fastest 15 per cent of vehicles were travelling) was 35 mph in both directions along this 30 mph speed limit.
- 3.4 Fixed speed camera enforcement will also be introduced on the A318 Byfleet Road enforcing in the southbound direction and located near to the junction access to the electricity switching station. This will be supported from time to time with mobile enforcement on A318 Oyster Lane. Analysis showed that a stretch of 925m along these roads had suffered a total of 23 casualties in three years, including 5 resulting in serious injury. Speed surveys again showed 85th percentile speeds of 35 mph in both directions along this 30 mph speed limit.

Publicity and Road Safety Campaigning

- 3.5 The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership believes that education of road users is a vital part of the drive to reduce road casualties. A communications plan to help change driver behaviour related to excessive speeding and red light running, and to demonstrate the role safety cameras play in preventing casualties, is integral to our work.
- 3.6 Consequently the Partnership is undertaking a range of media and communications activities targeting the general public as well as specific groups within the driving population. The work includes the following:
- Creation and maintenance of the Partnership website (www.surrey-safecam.org)
 - Press releases, Internal newsletters

- Advertising (local radio, bill-boards, bus-stops, bus backs, “Football in the Community” brochure, Community Care Guide, car parking tickets, petrol pump advertising, Local Authority magazines, Woking FC perimeter hoarding)
- Leaflets, Posters, Merchandising
- Articles and advertising in Chambers of Commerce magazines
- Attendance at the County Show and Guildford Motorshow
- Publication of Annual Report
- Sponsorship of the award winning “Safe Drive Stay Alive” road safety stage show for young adults

3.7 The opinions of Surrey residents are monitored through an annual survey, the results of which inform future campaigns and activities. The latest survey is took place during November 2006, with results expected to be available in February.

Effectiveness of Safety Cameras

3.8 In December 2005 the DfT published research examining over 4,000 camera sites in 38 safety camera partnership areas, covering virtually the whole of Great Britain. The report finds that safety cameras continue to be highly effective in reducing speeding, accidents and casualties at camera sites:

- The number of vehicles exceeding the speed limit fell by 70% at fixed camera sites;
- After allowing for the general trend of improving road safety, there was a 22% reduction in personal injury collisions - around 4,230 fewer per annum; and
- Again after allowing for the general trend, there was a 42% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs) - around 1,745 fewer per annum, including over 100 fewer deaths.

3.9 Data for the number of collisions and casualties before and after the implementation of each active “core” safety camera site in Surrey is presented within **ANNEX E**. Prior to enforcement there were on average 163 collisions and 225 casualties per annum at the 30 “core” safety camera sites in Surrey in the three years prior to enforcement. Thirty collisions per annum involved serious injury or death.

- at 17 fixed speed camera sites there has been a 34% reduction in collisions, or 33 fewer collisions per annum, and a 71% reduction in KSI collisions, or 12 fewer KSI collisions per annum;

- at 10 junctions using red light violation cameras there has been a 30% reduction in collisions, or 11 fewer collisions per annum, and a 76% reduction in KSI collisions or six fewer KSI collisions per annum; and
- At three new mobile enforcement sites, there has so far been a 9% reduction in collisions, or three fewer collisions per annum. There have been no further KSI collisions, (compared with an average of five per annum before). It is expected that the overall reduction will be greater after a full years data is available, as this will also include the summer months when fewer collisions tend to occur.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The creation of the Safety Camera Partnership in 2005 has allowed the costs incurred by partner organisations in providing safety camera enforcement to be recouped from the fines issued to motorists substantially exceeding the speed limit or failing to obey red lights at dangerous locations, rather than the taxpayer. This system is known as “netting off”. Any surplus fines, should there be any, are retained by central government, thus there is no incentive to generate additional income.
- 4.2 The cost of setting up and running the Partnership during it’s first year was approximately £1.7 million, which was fully recovered from the DfT. The total amount generated in Conditional Offer of Fixed Penalty Notices (CoFPN) was approximately £1.4 million. This is equivalent to approximately two CoFPN paid, per site, per day. It was agreed with the DfT at the inception of the Partnership that the total costs of the Partnership would be recovered over a 22-month period, and the shortfall after the first year would be borne by the DfT. Full first year audited accounts will be published by the Partnership in due course.
- 4.3 The “netting off” system has enabled partners to invest in a new office building, new staff and equipment in order to provide an effective level of enforcement at the worst collision “hot spots” in Surrey. In the first year of “netting off” a number of existing enforcement sites have been enhanced and new sites have been introduced where there has been a continuing history of serious collisions.
- 4.4 In December 2005 the Secretary for State for Transport announced changes to the future funding of Safety Camera Partnerships. The announcement highlighted the fact that safety cameras are delivering substantial reductions in casualties (described above). In order to build on this, a change was announced to integrate Safety Camera Partnerships into the wider road safety delivery process giving local

authorities and partners greater flexibility to pursue whichever mix of road safety measures will make the greatest contribution to their area. Therefore, 2006/07 will be the last year of the “netting off” funding arrangements for safety cameras. As a replacement, the DfT will enhance the overall level of funding for road safety provided to local highway authorities through a specific grant within the Local Transport Plan (LTP) lasting until 2010/2011.

- 4.5 The additional grant is being allocated to authorities on the same basis as other road safety funding within LTP, namely in accordance with their road safety needs (using the existing LTP road safety formula), and based upon the quality of their second round LTP submissions, delivery record and future progress reports. The funding is cash grant, rather than borrowing or credit approvals. Though not ring-fenced, DfT have emphasised that “there is a high expectation that this funding will be invested in road safety”. Consequently on 25 April 2006 the County Council Executive approved the following recommendations:

The replacement additional road safety grant provided as part of the LTP process until 2010/11 be invested to ensure the continued operation and success of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership following the end of “netting off” after 2006/7.

Any additional funding over and above that required by the safety camera partnership is not restricted solely to camera enforcement, but invested in a range of solutions to tackle collision “hotspots” throughout Surrey, depending upon the nature of the problem at each site.

5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The issue of speed and antisocial driving remains a prime concern of Surrey residents. In the Policing Plan Survey 2006/07, speeding was identified as the most problematic issue by 39 per cent of residents, with anti-social driving not far behind (31 per cent of residents). The use of safety cameras, supported by educational campaigning and publicity aims to address these issues.

7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications. Safety cameras are, by their very nature, indiscriminate.

8 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The setting up of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership under the “netting off” system has allowed the Partner organizations involved in the prevention, detection and processing of speed and red light camera offences to reclaim their costs in undertaking this work. The Partnership has been able to invest in educational campaigns to change driver behaviour and to demonstrate the role safety cameras play in preventing casualties. Improvements have been made to existing sites, and new sites have been introduced at collision “hot spots”.
- 8.2 Safety cameras are not a universal remedy to casualty reduction, and should be seen as just one part of the road safety “tool box”. However when used at the correct locations they are very successful in reducing casualties. Monitoring at sites in Surrey echoes national data, which shows that safety cameras continue to be highly effective in reducing speeding, collisions and casualties. In Surrey:
- At fixed speed camera sites there has been a 34% reduction in collisions, and a 71% reduction in collisions resulting in serious injury or death.
 - At red light camera sites there has been a 30% reduction in collisions, and a 76% reduction in collisions resulting in serious injury or death.
 - At new mobile enforcement sites there has been a 9% reduction in collisions, and no further collisions resulting in serious injury or death.

8.3 Following 2006/07 the “netting off” process will be replaced by an additional road safety grant to Local Authorities as part of the LTP process. The County Council’s Executive have approved that the replacement grant be invested to ensure the continued operation and success of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership and any surplus additional funding be invested in a range of road safety interventions.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

ANNEX A: Department for Transport Criteria for the Introduction of New Safety Camera Enforcement Sites

ANNEX B: Summary of Procedure for Site Selection and Implementation

ANNEX C: Provision of Vehicle Activated Signs

ANNEX D: Collisions and Casualties at new Safety Camera Sites 2006/2007

ANNEX E: Collisions and Casualties at “Core” Safety Camera Sites in Surrey