

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP14/30

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
29 APRIL 2014**

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

SUMMARY:

1. This submission seeks to outline issues relating to Community Speedwatch in Suffolk.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. To note the content of the report and the issues raised.

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

1.1 **BACKGROUND**

- 1.2 Suffolk Constabulary fully supports Community Speed Watch (CSW) and it is the intention to develop further schemes across the County.
- 1.3 Speed is a contributory factor to both fatal and serious injury collisions and forms one of the identified "Fatal Four" major causes of death and serious injury on our roads.
- 1.4 The speed enforcement procedure for Suffolk Constabulary has been recently reviewed. The policy now requires a strict, proportionate and evidence based approach to speed enforcement where Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) data and public complaints are analysed and assessed by a tasking process in order to identify areas which require police enforcement. CSW members are an essential part of this process and enable both a highly visible deterrence and a method of assessing the true nature of the problem through speed monitoring. CSW is a proven successful way for communities to undertake their own positive action in relation to casualty reduction in areas that would not initially warrant police enforcement due to lack of KSI history or noncompliance evidence.
- 1.5 The overarching aim of the scheme is to achieve an overall reduction in speed of vehicles within areas of concern, and to make drivers aware that excessive speed within posted limits is socially unacceptable.
- 1.6 This paper outlines both the current position and developments that will enhance the position of CSW within the County through:-
1. Reduction of bureaucracy;
 2. Introduction of the CSW Co-ordinator;
 3. Giving responsibility of CSW liaison with Roads Policing to a nominated Inspector.

1.7 **CURRENT POSITION**

- 1.8 The CSW initiative was tested in Suffolk at the beginning of 2009 with a CSW scheme at Blythburgh in the Suffolk Coastal District.
- 1.9 The scheme has taken best practice from other forces and CSW schemes are well established in Suffolk, with 42 active schemes and 5 new schemes in the process of training.
- 1.10 The CSW initiative allows members of the community to address the issue of speeding by becoming actively involved in road safety, working in partnership with parish councils, Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council.
- 1.11 Details of vehicles exceeding the prescribed limit are noted and forwarded to Suffolk Constabulary by trained CSW volunteers. Letters are then sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle asking the keeper for their cooperation by reducing speed in their community. A maximum of two letters will be sent to offenders but consideration may be given to police enforcement where a persistent offender is identified.
- 1.12 CSW volunteers are part of the Police Support Volunteer (PSV) scheme and make a significant contribution to making communities safer. They add value and support the work of Suffolk Constabulary staff, whilst also helping to forge closer links with communities.

1.13 **BENEFITS**

- Nationally CSW can show a reduction in overall average speeds, and a significant reduction in the proportion of drivers exceeding the limit.
- Fewer fatalities and serious injury collisions.
- Increase in road safety awareness by and for all road users.
- Enhancing the role of community members as volunteers.
- Raise awareness of anti-social road use.

1.14 **DEVELOPMENTS**

- 1.14 CSW is beneficial for all interested parties involved in road safety. It is therefore desirable to promote the expansion of the scheme.
- 1.15 Overly bureaucratic processes have been a criticism amongst some and this has been assessed. As an example, one area that had been a barrier to efficient and timely setting up of schemes has been the vetting procedure questionnaire for new personnel. A number of complaints were received in relation to the content of the vetting questions and it was feared that this was putting some volunteers off. The vetting process and role profile were reviewed and risk assessed by Assistant Chief Constable Gareth Wilson and there is now a new process in place which is far more user friendly, and balances the need for necessary information with organisational risk.
- 1.16 CSW is a true partnership approach to a common community concern, with the benefit of the professional partners facilitating the members of the community to become involved in contributing to the resolution of their own issues. However, to ensure that the schemes continue to function over time it is vital that visible support is provided in terms of training, equipment and consistent co-ordination to ensure that issues are addressed across the County. A CSW co-ordinator has been appointed to work in this area and this is seen as a major development. It is envisaged that with the creation of this role will ensure communication routes between the schemes and the partner agencies will be open.
- 1.17 Funding is clearly a major factor in any scheme where equipment and training are necessary. CSW is supported by Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council both organisations are committed to the ongoing funding of the current scheme and also its expansion.
- 1.18 To ensure that the CSW is recognised as a true partner in the fight against road casualties, the role that it plays needs to be both obvious and continually reinforced. As Roads Policing and Firearms Operations Unit (RPFOU) are the lead area in road casualty reduction it is imperative that the links between CSW and RPFOU are also open. To this end an RPFOU Inspector has been appointed as liaison officer for CSW.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The CSW co-ordinator is employed in a permanent position 16 hours per week. This is a force funded post which sits within Community Safety within the CPC. Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Constabulary are fully supportive of CSW as is the Suffolk Roadsafe Board. Recent developments as a result of direction from this board have led to exploration of closer working between Suffolk Constabulary SafeCam and Suffolk County Council. The driver behind this is to ensure that more funding is made available for Road Safety initiatives from revenue generated by Speed Awareness Courses.

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

3.1 None.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	Yes
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	Yes