

Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership
Partnership Meeting
The Abingdon Four Pillars Hotel
Wednesday 24th January 2007

Attendees:

Steve Howell (Chair – Oxfordshire)
Supt Mick Doyle (TVP)
Joe Carter (Slough)
Ben Smith (Windsor & Maidenhead) – *Arrived 11.30am*
Cariad Eveson-Webb (CPS)
Neil Matthews (Bracknell Forest)
Andrew Garrett (West Berks)
Vicky Roberts (Wokingham) – *Arrived 11.30am*
Martin McMahon (Highways Agency)
Jim Stevens (Buckinghamshire)
Ian Duncan (Buckinghamshire)
Maria Madeley (HMCS)
Pat Baxter (Reading)
John Howarth (Reading)
Richard Owen (TVSRP)
Karla Batchelor (TVSRP, Minutes)

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Trevor Dove (Milton Keynes Council)

Introduction

SH introduced himself and then asked others to identify which authority they represented. SH said that ID is not acting as a committee member but is here to advise on some of the documentation he has produced on behalf of the Partnership since the last meeting.

MOU Status

Signed MoU's were received from the Highways Agency and Bracknell Forest Borough Council. Signed MoU's are therefore still outstanding from Wokingham and Reading.

JH said that while Reading recognises there is a lot of good work done by partnership, they have concerns about the new formulation of the Partnership. Firstly, there is a public perception that this is about revenue raising and enforcement rather than road safety and the new Partnership will need to address this. Achieving greater public accountability and transparency of

operations will go along way to meeting this objective. Secondly, it has been unclear in the past exactly how the funding mechanism would work, although this now appears to be addressed. Finally, there is a requirement from Reading for an SLA between itself and the Partnership to ensure that local issues are addressed and good value for money achieved.

SH commented that JH's second point is no longer a concern and RO supported this by reiterating that it is only 80% of additional LTP funding that is required for Partnership operations. SH agreed that JH's first point about public perception is valid and asked JH to create an amendment to the MoU that all partners would then agree to in respect of this point and the SLA issue. With regard to the third issue, SH said each highway authority is likely to have different requirements from the partnership to reflect their own circumstances.

Review of Action Points (Meeting 11/12/06)

RO provided feedback on the action points from the previous meeting and all have been discharged.

RO also drew attention to several amendments to the minutes submitted after they were initially distributed. In regard to one of these amendments, JS highlighted a point of principle about Partnership resources. He said that with the new funding source we shouldn't be finding work for the machine to do, instead we should be looking to down size it in line with actual funding.

The amended minutes were agreed as a true record by the Committee.

Approval of Terms of Reference

ID introduced the documents and said that they were not substantially different from those discussed at the last meeting.

SH nominated JS as vice-chair of this Committee. There were no objections and JS' appointment was approved.

The Terms of Reference for the Strategy Committee were agreed by all present.

There followed a discussion surrounding the appointment of the Partnership Board Chairman during which SH suggested that it should be a member of one of the Highway Authorities. It was finally decided that the Chair of the Highway Authorities Group should act as Chair of the Partnership Board, although MD raised concerns that the Chair of both TVSRP groups should not be from the same authority. The Highway Authorities Group needs to make this decision very quickly and this could be done by email.

ACTION: Highway Authority partners to nominate a suitable Chair before the next scheduled Partnership Board meeting.

CEW has said that she will be the only person who will be released by the CPS to attend Partnership meetings. MMadeley confirmed that she would attend the Board meetings with Liz Thomas attending this Committee.

SH suggested that a cabinet or executive member may be interested in attending from the smaller authorities. JH said that he would determine Reading's representation as lead member but that it is highly likely to be an officer. SH said that his lead member would be keen to attend one meeting a year.

The Terms of Reference for the Partnership Board were agreed by all present.

Review of 'Partnership Standard' Document

ID ran through the document, prepared and circulated in advance of the meeting, and various issues were raised during this.

MMcMahon (hereafter referred to as MMc) noted that the HA have a 33% KSI reduction target reflecting the high traffic flow and relatively low collision risk on their network. JS said that local authority statistics are affected by these roads and on going work was needed with HA to reduce casualties.

PB questioned the statement about local authority involvement in the operation of enforcement at speed camera sites. In her experience, this has not always been the case. MD said it is not police who decided where to site fixed cameras. JH listed three examples where sites remained in place but were not enforced by the Partnership for various reasons. Ultimately, this suited Reading as speeds were reduced, even though enforcement was never carried out. JH argued that local knowledge should be used when deciding camera sites and operations. MD said that we need to combine this knowledge and work together to decide sites.

JS said that the Partnership should adopt a more proactive approach to media activities although this point was more relevant to the communications strategy. SH added that the media need to understand that this is a road safety partnership and not a camera partnership.

JH asked if target 10 referred to the public or partners. ID confirmed that he had the public in mind. JH stated that there should be more accountability to the partners also.

ID commented that these are only the outline of potential targets and that they would need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely). SH said that there were lots of sections that needed further development, particularly in identifying efficiencies. It should be the responsibility

of the Finance & Efficiencies Group to carry out this work. JS supported this work, especially as the LTP Road Safety Grant funding allocations to Highway Authorities will be reducing over the next 4 years.

JH commented that there should be a section on transparency and accountability within the MoU and that he would draft this for approval by the Committee. He also stated that if one meeting per year was held in public then it would allow more accountability.

ACTION: Partnership Standard to be further revised for further consideration by the Partnership Board at their first meeting

The meeting then recessed for 10 minutes to allow JH to finalise the wording to be added to the MoU.

At the resumption of the meeting BS and VR arrived, giving their apologies.

The proposed amendments and additions to the MoU were then read by all members. ID noted that there could be a problem with timing the approval of budgets, expenditure and the publication of the Partnership report at the same time. SH suggested this could be looked into further at a later date. MD said that there shouldn't be an overwhelming need for local SLA's as the Partnership has been designed to provide equality of service in proportion to funding.

All agreed to the proposed changes.

ACTION: New text to be incorporated into the MoU appropriately and distributed with the minutes.

SH stated that there is no need to re-sign the document.

Enforcement Strategy

RO informed the Committee that the new Enforcement Strategy document was now more condensed than the previous version. It will list all current camera sites, including community concern sites. It will use a variety of data to rank sites by priority according to collision risk. This document will be updated annually and distributed to all partnership members. JC asked why no ranking had been created for red-light sites. RO stated that this was because there were very few red-light cameras and they had been previously loaded on an equal basis.

ACTION: RO to include Red-light sites in Enforcement Strategy and to liaise with local authorities.

ID said that the document could be split into 4 simple sections and he will work with RO to revise this document before the next meeting. He also commented

that little recognition was given to the work of the CRO's. This will need to be expanded to ensure that the document is not too camera orientated and covers the full remit of enforcement – this was emphasised further by JS. BS asked if local priorities could be changed to address new sites. MMc questioned if speed relatedness should be ranked more highly? RO said that it is very difficult to absolutely determine if a collision was speed related. MD supported RO on the difficulties of causation identification.

Communication Strategy

RO presented the Communication Strategy document and ran through its key principles.

JH asked how many partnership staff are involved in delivering the communications role? RO stated that under the new partnership there will only be the communications manager undertaking this responsibility. JH said that partners have considerable contributions to be made and asked what contact with partners press offices previously. SH said that contact with these departments should be made as a result of this meeting.

ACTION: Partnership Team to create contacts list

ID said that one of the biggest issues is the potential duplication of work in the Partnership. This covers ETP as well as data functions. JS commented that in his experience the TVSRP media work has always been to defend the role of the Partnership and that we should be trying to engage the public far more. Furthermore, TVSRP promotional marketing should give the local authorities the opportunity to publicise the work of the Partnership in their area.

There should be statements available from Members in each authority. MD commented that there should be a unified position as well as a local perspective.

PB said that most of the Partnership publicity material that she has seen, seemed outdated and needed modernising. This was particularly in respect of cinema adverts.

MD said that we should work more in the national Think! Framework. Everyone agreed that ETP work should be more closely coordinated in the future.

The Committee then discussed the formal 'launch' of the new Partnership. SH and JS commented that the media launch should happen sooner rather than later. It was decided that the launch should happen in advance of the 1st April, possibly by the end of February. A group was identified to meet to discuss the publicity work required to meet as soon as possible. This will consist of Malcolm Collis, Sue Brown and Dan Campsall.

ACTION: Group to meet and feedback to Partnership Board at the end of February

Partnership Structure

The proposed dates were discussed and agreed.

Further Discussion

A discussion followed on the work to be carried out by the Partnership in the next two months. SH said that the big issue was publicity and how the partnership was presented to the public.

RO said that the draft strategy documents would need to be revised and approved by the Partnership board. NM said that all local authority partners would need to analyse their enforcement strategies.

PB said that Reading will be carrying out some work on an SLA to address their concerns. SH asked if this could be shared with others. This was agreed by PB.

RO said that at the last meeting, revisions to the Partnership Team structure were mentioned but no final decision made on who would carry out the required work to decide the new structure. A discussion followed on who should be tasked with this responsibility. A team of 3 people were nominated, including Malcolm Collis, Trevor Dove and a representative of Reading Borough Council.

ACTIONS: A meeting to be held between nominated representatives to align the Partnership Team's responsibilities with the Partnership Standard document. The team's structure should also be finalised. To be completed by the next Partnership Board meeting on the 28th February.

Reading BC to do some work on SLA and share with other partners

Summary and Close

SH thanked all attendees and closed the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: 28 March 2007