Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership

Report by Ian L Young, Director, Strategic Services Division

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider whether Midlothian Council should join the ‘Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership’. The Partnership facilitates through Government legislation the use of safety cameras to reduce the likelihood of road traffic accidents. The Partnership currently includes City of Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and West Lothian Councils.

2 Report Summary

2.1 The ‘Scottish Safety Camera Programme Handbook’ sets out strict criteria that determine the number and location of safety cameras. For a number of years Midlothian Council has applied the criteria of the handbook in order to assess potential locations for the siting of cameras. On each occasion that the handbook criteria were applied to Midlothian Council roads, it was found that there were no locations which met the criteria for either static safety camera sites nor mobile safety camera sites. The most recent investigation was carried out in July 2007.

2.2 Recent negotiations with ‘Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership’, have resulted in the partnership offering Midlothian Council membership even though no camera sites are currently identified.

2.3 The benefits of joining the Partnership now, even though Midlothian currently has no identifiable sites, could include -

- The partnership is currently looking at “route strategies” within the Handbook rules for the A68 and the A7. If successful Midlothian sections of these routes would be open for speed enforcement, management treatment; and
- The Partnership would support any road safety initiatives promoting improved driver behaviour eg young drivers or rural roads. Financial sponsorship/support would be available in addition to other promotional resources.

2.4 The situation regarding compliant sites will be reviewed annually and should sites be identified that satisfy the handbook criteria, a further report to seek approval of these sites for the installation of cameras will be submitted to Cabinet.
3 Conclusion

3.1 Whilst there are no locations within Midlothian which currently meet the criteria for installation of cameras, having regard to the Council’s overall commitment to road safety and the benefits noted in paragraph 2.3 above, it is considered that, on balance, it would be beneficial for the Council to join the Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership. In reaching this conclusion I have considered the risk implication noted on paragraph 5.2 of this report.

3.2 Accordingly, I am recommending that the Partnership be advised that Midlothian Council wishes to become a partner. If application to become a partner were to be refused, or if terms considered unreasonable were to be specified then I would report further to Cabinet.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Cabinet is recommended to advise the Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership that Midlothian Council wishes to join the Partnership on terms that are agreeable to Midlothian Council.

Ian L Young
Director

28 August 2009
5 Report Implications

5.1 Resource Implications

By joining the partnership with no safety camera sites there is no current financial risk outlay for Midlothian Council. This will continue as long as the Partnership is fully funded by the Scottish Government.

Midlothian Council participation in the ‘Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership’ will require staff time to be met from the existing resources.

5.2 Risk Implications

If the current funding arrangements were to change such that part or all the costs of the Partnership were to transfer from the Scottish Government to the Partners, then there is the risk that Midlothian Council could be paying for membership of a group, yet not receiving a commensurate level of benefits due to there being potentially no appropriate locations for cameras in Midlothian.

5.3 Policy Implications

Strategy

Joining the safety camera partnership meets the following aims/priorities of Midlothian Council:

- Corporate Aim: we will help to improve people’s health (reducing injuries and deaths due to road traffic accidents);
- Corporate Aim: we will protect and enhance the environment (further improve road safety); and
- Divisional Priority: introduce and monitor road safety policies and programmes.

Consultation

None required in the preparations of this report.

Equalities

Joining ‘Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership’ does not involve any statutory equality implications.
Sustainability

There are no sustainability issues associated with joining the partnership.

Report Contact: Lindsay Haddow Tel No 0131 271 3501
Background papers: Scottish Safety Camera Programme Handbook
6 Report Background and Appendices

6.1 Background

The UK safety camera programme was first piloted in April 2000. This followed a study in 1996 that concluded that, whilst safety cameras were effective in reducing road casualties, the full benefits were not being fully realised due to budgetary constraints. Strathclyde was one of eight areas in the UK to pilot a Department for Transport’s scheme for cost recovery allowing fine revenue from safety cameras to be used to fund camera installation and ongoing targeted enforcement at sites with a history of speed related casualties.

6.2 Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership has been in existence since June 2003 and is fully grant funded by the Scottish Government.

Its key aims are:

- to reduce road casualties at identified sites and to reduce the number of road collisions involving personal injury and the severity of those injuries;
- to reduce the number of child casualties on our roads;
- to positively influence driver behaviour with regard to speed and red light violations;
- to improve driver awareness of the adverse effects of speeding and red light violation; and
- to achieve greater levels of driver compliance of speed limits and traffic signals.

6.3 Aside from providing responsive and intelligence led enforcement activity, the Partnership is very much focused on road safety education supporting both local and national road safety campaigns.

6.4 Appendix A sets out the criteria for camera site selection.
APPENDIX A

EXTRACT FROM ‘HANDBOOK, SCOTTISH SAFETY CAMERA PROGRAMME’
DRAFT FINAL OCT 2007

Grant Claim Rules…DRAFT - FINAL GRANT CLAIM RULES

The following rules establish the basis on which consideration will be given to payment of grants for specific activities aimed at reducing accidents and casualties through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme.

RULE 1 - SITE, SELECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

This rule relates to the selection and assessment process for all locations at which a Partnership intends to claim funding for safety cameras or vehicle activated signs whether new, existing, or pre-scheme. All camera sites or routes where cameras are to be deployed must be included in the Operational Plan submission making full use of the available templates. This requirement applies regardless of whether the site is enforced, dormant, or abandoned. The submission must include details of the full cost and all funding from other sources where interventions or strategies are to be joint-funded.

Although the following pages provide the minimum requirements that a camera site must meet to be considered for funding, local expertise must be used to determine what is most appropriate. This should also be reflected in the Partnership’s enforcement strategy, which should give priority to sites that have the most significant accident and speeding problems.

It is emphasised that funding through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme is provided for accident and casualty reduction. It must NOT be used to implement speed or traffic management initiatives.

A list of all key terms and definitions relative to site selection and enforcement can be found in the glossary in Appendix ‘B’.

Where the original parameters of an existing site have been changed, Partnerships must notify the Programme Office, as the site may need to be reassessed or re-defined on the Scottish Safety Cameras website.

New qualifying camera sites should be selected using an assessment that includes the level of fatal, serious and slight accidents. The combined level of accidents will be expressed as a point scale (see table below) and assessed relative to both the road classification for the site, whether it is either a ‘built up’ or ‘non-built up’ area and according to the type of site it is i.e. fixed, mobile or red light.

- Fatal or serious accident = 5 Points (i.e. 2 Serious accidents = 10 points)
- Slight accident = 1 Point (i.e. 5 Slight Accidents = 5 points)
- ‘Built up Area’ is a road with a speed limit of 40 mph or less.*
- ‘Non-built up Area’ is a road with a speed limit of 50 mph or more.*
- As defined by Road Accidents (Scotland).
Grant Claim Rules…DRAFT - FINAL

3.1 - NEW QUALIFYING FIXED SITE

A fixed camera site is a stretch of road up to 1,000 metres (1 km) in length. If a camera housing is to be installed it should normally be located as near as possible to the midpoint of the site and accidents recorded before and after the housing. On dual carriageways the enforcement should only take place in the direction of the identified accident problem. On single carriageways, the direction of the intervention or enforcement should be determined by local assessment and may be bi-directional. **Site conditions must be suitable for operation of the camera system and due regard must be given to the Health and Safety of operatives and road users as part of the site selection process. Any required changes to the road infrastructure to address Health and Safety issues should be included in the Operational Plan submission.**

**Note** it is the responsibility of the Partnership to ensure data used in site selection is accurate and complete. Failure to do so may impact on the award of future funds.

The requirements for a new fixed site are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Site Length</td>
<td>0 to 1,000 metres (1 km)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Speed Limit</td>
<td>A speed limit review should have been carried out post 8th August 2006 in terms of current guidance and in any case an assessment that the limit is appropriate <strong>must</strong> be made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number of Accidents</td>
<td>There <strong>must</strong> be a minimum number of accidents in the last 3 years for a site to qualify for funding. Of these accidents there <strong>must</strong> be a minimum of 3 Fatal or Serious Accidents. The number of accidents (reflected as points) required is represented in the assessment table below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Speed Criteria</td>
<td>The 85th percentile and average speeds of traffic <strong>must</strong> be recorded before any intervention. The 85th percentile speed <strong>must</strong> equal or exceed the Lord Advocate’s current enforcement threshold for the site speed limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Suitability Assessment</td>
<td>The Roads Authority and Police <strong>must</strong> be in agreement that the proposed intervention is the most appropriate for the circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Visibility and Conspicuity</td>
<td>The site <strong>must</strong> comply with the visibility and conspicuity requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Activity Levels</td>
<td>Planned activity levels <strong>must</strong> be declared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: It is the responsibility of the Partnership to ensure data used in site selection is accurate and complete. Failure to do so may impact on the award of future funds.
Grant Claim Rules...DRAFT – FINAL

The points scale will be based on the following factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Up to 1 km in length</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Built Up’</td>
<td>‘Non-built Up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Required in three year period (not per annum)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sites that are less than 1 km in length are still required to obtain a minimum of 22 or 18 points (depending on classification). This should include a minimum of 3 fatal or serious accidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 1.** A fixed site 500 m in length within a built up area would require 22 points. This would mean normally either 3 Fatal or Serious Accidents and 7 Slight Injury Accidents, or 4 Fatal or Serious Accidents and 2 Slight Injury Accidents.

**Example 2.** A fixed site 1 km in length in a non-built up area would require 18 points. This would mean normally 3 Fatal or Serious Accidents and 3 Slight Injury Accidents.

3.2 - NEW QUALIFYING MOBILE SITE

A mobile site is a stretch of road on which funding for mobile enforcement or other intervention such as VAS can be sought. It must have a clearly defined start and end point. A site may cross over different speed limits if the required speed criteria is met in any one section, but offences can only be detected within one speed limit area at any one time. Speed monitoring must take place at each speed limit section and enforcement activity prioritised to deliver against Programme objectives. Enforcement can take place at any location within the site provided this can be done in line with normal Health and Safety practice. On dual carriageways the intervention or enforcement should only take place in the direction of the identified accident problem. On a single carriageway, the intervention or enforcement may take place in either direction. Operators must undertake a risk assessment and check that all relevant signage meets statutory and Programme requirements at each site prior to deployment or period of activity.

A new mobile site should show accidents distributed along a stretch of road. The requirements for a mobile site selection are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Site Length</td>
<td>Between 0 and 10,000 metres (10 km)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Number of Accidents</td>
<td>There must be a minimum number of accidents in the last 3 years for a site to qualify for funding. The number of accidents (reflected as points) required is represented in the assessment table below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Speed Criteria

A review of the speed limit should be undertaken in terms of guidance issued on the 8th August 2006 and in any case an assessment that the limit is appropriate must be made before a new mobile site is established. The average speeds of traffic must be recorded before any intervention. The 85th percentile speed must equal or exceed the Lord Advocate’s current enforcement threshold for the site speed limit.

See section 10.2 for guidance on how to calculate the 85th percentile speed.

3. Suitability Assessment

All partners must be in agreement that the proposed intervention is the most appropriate for the circumstances.

It will be a local responsibility to provide justification for the intervention.

4. Visibility and Conspicuity

The site must comply with the visibility and conspicuity requirements.

See section 5.

6. Activity Levels

Planned activity levels must be declared.

The number of planned ‘enforcement hours’ per month must be declared and records kept to evidence service delivery.

The points scale will be based on the following factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Required in three year period (not per annum)</th>
<th>Up to 1 km in length</th>
<th>For each km thereafter</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Built Up’</td>
<td>‘Non-built Up’</td>
<td>‘Built Up’</td>
<td>‘Non-built Up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sites that are less than 1 km in length are still required to obtain a minimum of 11 or 9 points (depending on classification).

Example 1 - A mobile site 500 m in length within a built up area would require 11 points. This would normally mean either 1 Fatal or Serious Accident and 6 Slight Injury Accidents, 2 Fatal or Serious Accidents and 1 Slight Injury Accident or 11 Slight Injury Accidents.

Example 2 - A mobile site 6.9 km in length within a ‘non-built up’ area would need 44.4 points in total. That is 9 points for the first 1 km and for the remaining 5.9 km a further 35.4 (5.9 x 6) points.

The location of accidents should determine the length of a site not the total number of points. Site lengths should not be extended to include stretches of road where accidents are not happening. Partnerships must be able to provide data on the exact accident locations within the site in order to justify the chosen length.
3.3 - NEW QUALIFYING RED LIGHT CAMERA SITE

A new red light camera site should show accidents clustered at a road junction controlled with traffic lights or at a light controlled pedestrian crossing. A red light camera site should begin at the stop line and continue ‘downstream’ to a maximum of 25 metres beyond the end of the junction. There should be careful consideration of which arm(s) of the junction the camera site should be placed. Site conditions must be suitable for operation of the camera system to be used. A Health and Safety risk assessment must be undertaken as part of the site selection process.

The red light site selection requirements are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Site Length</td>
<td>Begin at stop line and continue ‘downstream’ to a maximum of 25 metres beyond the end of junction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Number of Accidents</td>
<td>There <strong>must</strong> be a minimum number of accidents in the last 3 years for a site to qualify. The number of accidents (reflected as points) required is represented in the assessment table below. See section 10.2 for guidance on how to measure accidents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Causation Factors</td>
<td>Red light running or failing to give precedence are a causation factor in a significant number of the identified accidents. The camera should be placed on the most appropriate arm(s) of the junction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Suitability Assessment</td>
<td><strong>All partners must</strong> be in agreement that there is no suitable alternative road safety measure. Particularly, ensure that any changes in light sequences have been considered prior to a camera going in. An appropriate local audit trail should be maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Visibility and Conspicuity</td>
<td>The site <strong>must</strong> comply with the visibility requirements. See section 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Activity Levels</td>
<td>Planned activity levels <strong>must</strong> be declared. The number of planned ‘live camera’ days per month must be declared.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The points scale will be based on the following factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Required in three year period (not per annum)</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Only accidents directly linked to red light running should be included in the assessment process. Good practice would be to include accidents from the stop line to a point 25 metres beyond the junction in the line of travel, but to exclude any events not directly attributable to the identified problem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example** - A red light site would require 10 points. This would mean either 1 Fatal or Serious Accident and 5 Slight Injury Accidents, 2 Fatal or Serious Accidents or 10 Slight Injury Accidents.