

Report of_[x1]: **Head of City Works**

To_[x2]: **City Executive Board**

Date_[x3]: **11 June 2008**

Item No_[EM4]:

Title of Report _[x5]: **Cyclists' Safety**



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report_[x6]: To advise the Executive Board of action taken in response to the Motion on Cyclists' Safety adopted by the Council on 19th November 2007.



Key decision_[x7]: No

Lead member_[x8]: Councillor Cook

Report Approved by: **Linsay Cane (Legal)**_[EM9]
Andy Collett (Finance)



Policy Framework_[x10]:

Recommendation(s)_[x11]: That the Executive Board note the contents of the report.



Introduction



1. On 19th November 2007 Council adopted the Motion that forms Appendix 1 to this report. Action on the Motion falls into three parts, as follows:-



- i. Letters to be sent to the County Council and to Oxford's two Universities concerning measures to improve cyclists' safety
- ii. The Executive Board to ensure that drivers of Council vehicles receive regular training in cyclist (and other vulnerable road-user) awareness

- iii. Officers to ensure that Council vehicles present as low a risk as possible to cyclists.
2. This report details what action has been, and is being taken, to address these three matters.

Letters Concerning Cyclists' Awareness

3. The Leader has written on the Council's behalf to the Leader of the County Council and to the Vice Chancellors of Oxford's two universities. Replies have been received to all three letters and they form Appendices 2A – C

Current safety measures and training

4. All drivers of Oxford City Council fleet vehicles have their driving ability formally assessed by a Freight Transport Association (FTA) trained staff member before they are given authorisation to drive Council vehicles. During the assessment cyclist awareness and other vulnerable road users is considered and discussed with each candidate. Drivers are introduced to the 'Well Driven' scheme which identifies vulnerable road users including cyclists. 'Well Driven' information sheets are given to each candidate which reminds drivers of the vulnerability of cyclists.
5. All Oxford City Council staff authorised to drive the authority's vehicles are subject to an annual driving licence check by their line manager.
6. Oxford City Homes carry out full licence, MOT, insurance and Road Fund Licence (RFL) checks annually on all employees and their privately owned vehicles that are used on council business. They have also agreed to advise these drivers of the council's commitment regarding Well Driven and cyclist awareness.
7. Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) drivers' skills are reassessed following any major occurrence and reviewed by practical assessment, during which specific attention is given to cyclist awareness. Assessment sheets have been recently reviewed to include a 'Remarks' column for assessing the candidate's awareness regarding cyclists and other vulnerable road users.
8. LGV drivers and City Works staff attend regular toolbox talk sessions and cyclist awareness has been added to the information provided during these sessions, the content of which has been updated in conjunction with CYCLOX.
9. City Works waste collection teams are trained in banksman duties to aid the driver as necessary during manoeuvring operations.

10. All drivers of City Works' vehicles carry out a daily safety inspection before driving the vehicle.
11. Front view mirror to cover under windscreen blind spot are now fitted as standard to all LGVs supplied to the Council after January 2007.
12. In addition to the standard mirrors, all LGV's used by City Works are fitted with nearside blind spot mirrors.
13. Mechanical sweepers and waste collection vehicles have on board rear view cameras, where a cctv screen is visible to the driver in the cab.
14. All City Works' LGVs, specifically waste collection vehicles, are fitted with flashing amber warning lights (used during collection operations) and sound warning systems are activated when reversing.
15. Waste collections are planned to reduce the requirement for vehicle reversing, for example: avoiding school runs where possible.

Current Audit Controls.

16. City Works is a founder member of the "Well Driven?" scheme. Our commitment is to the highest operational and driving standards required by the code. This results in better driving and fewer accidents. The public can be reassured that, as a member of the code, not only do we place safety and high standards at the top of our priorities, but we also care enough to respond properly to their worries. The "Well Driven?" scheme is managed by the FTA. It is open to all companies and local authorities (large or small) who care about high road safety standards. The scheme works as follows:
 1. Vehicles display "Well Driven?" logo showing the 24hour 365 day a pear Freephone number for the public to call
 2. On receipt of a call, the FTA call centre acknowledges the report in writing and emails the company operating the vehicle.
 3. The operator investigates and makes responses to each report within 21 days.
17. Independent Vehicle safety inspections are undertaken by the FTA to ensure that we continue to meet the legal requirements of our 'O' Licence conditions and maintaining roadworthiness. This audit of our in-house work assesses the condition of our vehicles and equipment across the fleet. These reports are respected throughout the industry for their independence and accuracy. The inspections form part of our fleet management information to allow us to benchmark vehicle condition against the industry sector and national standards.

Additional controls being reviewed

18. We will review the administration of the 'Casual car users who drive on behalf of Oxford City Council' scheme by checking driving licences and related documents. Through the Transport User Group we will ensure that all drivers are aware of the WellDriven? Scheme and Cyclists safety.
19. Under-run side bars are not legally required to be fitted on to refuse collection or tipping vehicles and in the past have not been fitted to the Council's refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) due to damage when taking them onto landfill sites and rough terrain. The need for all collection vehicles to go onto landfill has reduced over the last two years and City Works are now reviewing the policy of not fitting such equipment. The decision has been taken that with all future specifications, under-run side bars will be fitted as standard unless there is the likelihood that the vehicle will be used off road or for landfill operations.
20. No cyclist warning signage is currently fitted to City Works vehicles. This has been reviewed and signs will now be placed on the rear of the LGVs, (where they can be fitted), to warn cyclists of the vehicle's nearside hazard.
21. The Oxford City Council Drivers Handbook is to have a section on cyclist awareness added when it is next printed.
22. City Works has reviewed the feasibility of adding electrically adjustable mirrors to the fleet as standard specification for new vehicles (when and where available). This will be limited to certain manufacturers and models for our fleet.

Financial implications

23. There will be capital financial implications caused by adding to the standard specification of vehicles (where appropriate). However this is expected to be absorbed within our existing transport budgets over the life of the new vehicles. The financial implications per vehicle are as follows:
 - £1500 additional cost for the fitting of under-run side protection bars to new RCVs. The replacement programme is likely to cover approximately 3 vehicles per year, resulting in a total expected cost of £4500 per annum.
 - There will also be a £300 additional cost for the fitting of electrically adjusted near side mirrors to new vehicles. These will be fitted to approximately 15 vehicles per year resulting in expected costs of £4500 per annum.


24. This will have revenue implications to the City Works fleet revenue budget in the region of £2k per annum, however this will be absorbed by existing budgets. This should be noted as an additional efficiency saving that will be absorbed at local level.

Recommendations:-

That the Executive Board note the contents of the report.

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Background papers[x13]:

FTA Driver's Handbook

Oxford City Council 'A Guide to Vehicle Operations' Drivers Handbook

The Good Lorry Code and the Good Van Code – part of the Well Driven? Scheme

