

AGENDA ITEM 5	
SSC/12/11	
Committee:	Safer and Stronger Communities Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date:	15 July 2011
Scrutiny Review on Two Wheeler Road Safety (Minute 11/February 2011)	
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In February 2010 (Minute 11) the Committee agreed its scrutiny report on Two Wheeler Road Safety, and twenty-four recommendations that it had reached based upon its findings.

A copy of the final Scrutiny Report has been sent to Members under separate cover.

A report setting out some of the activity that has taken place over the past year together with responses to the individual recommendations is attached at Appendix A. A substantial part of the report was considered by the Essex Casualty Reduction Board at its meeting in May. However, since then the responses received to recommendations 3, 12 and 17 have been incorporated into the version now attached.

Action required by the Committee:

In order to monitor what outcomes have been achieved by the Committee through its scrutiny review on Two Wheeler Road Safety, Members will consider the responses now received to the recommendations set out in the original scrutiny report. A summary of the Committee's monitoring exercise will be reported to the Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix A

Responses to the Scrutiny Committee Report dated 10 March 2010 regarding Motorcycling casualties in Essex provided by the Environment, Highways and Sustainability Directorate, and others to whom recommendations were directed

Background

Since the 1994-98 baseline was set for the 2010 KSI reduction target, the annual number of P2W KSI casualties in Essex has been consistently high and above target, see Figure 1 overleaf. Although the provisional out-turn of P2W KSI casualties for 2010 was 18% below the annual average for the baseline period (1994-98), it is but above target by 45 KSI casualties.

The number of P2W KSI casualties per district for the 3 years to 2010 is shown in Figure 2 overleaf: The highest numbers of P2W KSI Casualties in 2010 (provisional) were recorded in Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester and Epping Forest districts.

Overall, trends pertaining to motorcycle crashes in Essex over the past 2 years in Essex remain unchanged to those identified in 'Audit of Personal Injury Collisions involving Motorcyclists in Essex: 2006 to 2008' and are in line with national trends. A summary of the findings of that report are given below:

- Collisions were most common in the summer. Collisions involving mopeds peaked in late summer which coincided with the end of the school year/start of work or college;
- Regardless of season, most collisions occurred in daylight and in fine, dry weather.
- Most collisions involving motorcyclists were deemed the fault of the rider, with riders more likely to have been deemed blameworthy for KSI collisions. However, when collisions involving motorcycles and no other vehicle are discounted, blame rested almost equally between the rider and another party, usually a car driver.
- Collisions involving mopeds and scooters (often younger riders) peaked on unclassified urban roads, at junctions and during the early and late weekday commute. Collisions also occurred late in the evening at the weekend, including Friday nights:
 - Causes often related to young riders' inexperience, many having lost control, often when road conditions were wet. Shunts, poor over-taking, aggressive riding and inappropriate/excess speed were also typical features of collisions involving young moped/scooter riders. Car drivers were also blameworthy with many smidsy¹-type collisions happening near junctions.
 - Younger riders tended to live in the area in which they crashed although many who crashed in Epping Forest were from the London area. Collision hotspots remain in urban areas (towns) especially Harlow, Colchester and the Basildon area.

¹ Sorry mate, I didn't see you

- Collisions involving larger motorcycles (usually older riders) occurred on both the urban and rural network. Collision peaks at the weekend were indicative of leisure riding on rural roads whereas commuter involvement was evidenced by peaks during weekday 'rush hours' (on both urban and rural roads).
 - Common faults for riders included speeding, failing to negotiate a bend (often speed-related/slipping/crossing the centre line/meeting oncoming traffic), poor filtering and overtaking. As with smaller bikes, smidsy-type collisions with cars were common at junctions.
 - Riders were usually from Essex, especially those who crashed on the urban network; Epping Forest and Uttlesford districts recorded the highest numbers of riders coming from outside Essex (often the London area). Hot spots for collisions included Epping Forest, especially south of the M25, Chelmsford, Colchester, Basildon and Braintree.

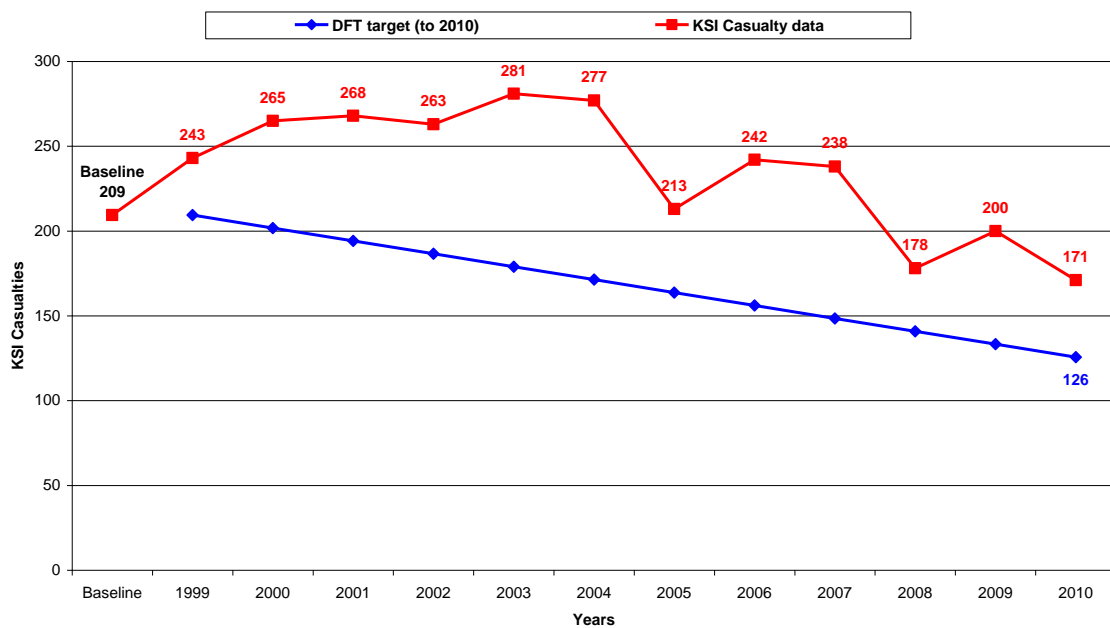


Figure 1: Annual P2W KSI Casualties from 1999 to 2010

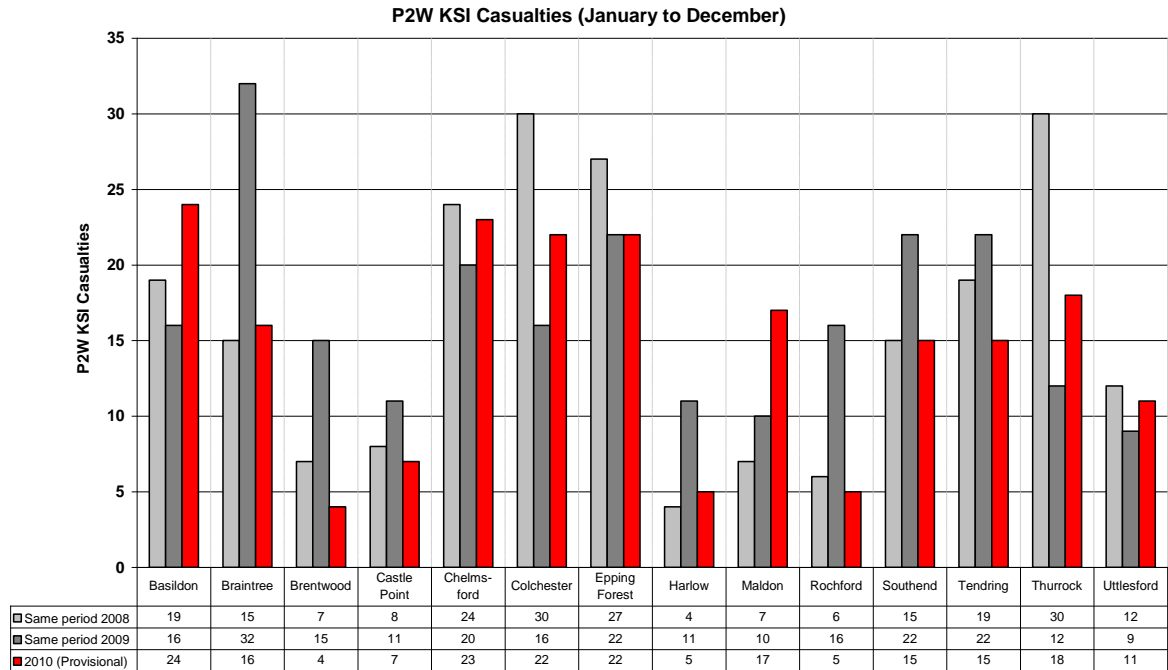


Figure 2: Annual P2W KSI Casualties per District in 2008, 2009 and 2010

Following the HST restructure of road safety, the team has been reorganised to facilitate countywide delivery of the road safety service. This approach will allow us to be more data led and to more easily target, and if necessary, move resources to where they are needed to address the problems. We have some vacancies within the structure.

The Fire and police services are also going through restructure at the moment so, within the partnership, a clear picture of the available staff resource and set-up to deliver road safety is not yet clear.

Although the DfT road safety grant for safety cameras is no longer available, the income from driver and rider awareness courses should provide the majority of income required to support the fixed site safety camera operation and the remainder will be taken from the budget that has been allocated to the ECRB. For 2011-12, there are no financial threats to the delivery of the road safety service.

In response to the individual recommendations set out in the Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee's Scrutiny Report 'Two Wheeler Road Safety', the following information is provided on the activity that has taken place since that Report was published in March 2010.

- **Recommendation 1**
to the Essex Casualty Reduction Board

That the cross agency approach be supported as the most effective way of handling this issue.

Response

The ECRB reviews data and monitors targets on a quarterly basis. The Battle Plan meetings (fortnightly meetings of partners) are further improving the way in which the partners work together but IT communication needs improving and is being looked at. The partners determine what interventions are delivered, where they are placed according to the KSI data and agree on which partner is best placed to deliver. (There are also Warplan meetings, held as required, to deliver strategic partnership documents and strategies and Project Management Team meetings held quarterly to deliver the requirements of the ECRB) Fire service is increasing fire bike activity by 50% (this targets high performance bike riders unlikely to engage with police), police motorbikes are visible (and enforcing speed) and ECC activity will be directed at this user group throughout the year. It has been highlighted that the partners would like motorcycling to form a Corporate Communications gold campaign in 2011 in accordance with ECRB wishes for 2010. It was not delivered in 2010. Design needs to be complete by March 2011 ready for launch in April 2012 at the start of the motorcycling season. Support for this campaign would be welcomed. The DfT campaign for 2011/12 is likely to be motorcycling so we would support this throughout 2011. The partners are meeting in March to draft a joint Road Safety Strategy which will include our activities to reduce motorcycling KSIs. A motorcycling Warplan has been set up and will meet monthly to take responsibility for the motorcycling KSI target and to feed into Battleplan for ratification of actions. The partners have agreed that a target for reduction would be welcomed and will produce a motorcycling Strategy by February 2012.

- **Recommendation 2**
to the Essex Casualty Reduction Board

That the level of proactive work being undertaken ‘on the ground’ by all agencies be welcomed and supported.

Response

ECC supports activities for Bikesafe (a police rider training programme) 18 activities booked and 8 Pit Stop days booked. (Police stop riders at road side and they are invited to discuss safety issues and have an assessed ride). Other interventions planned include Scooter skills days and scooter pit stops in urban areas. Attendance at Motorcycle events such as Battlesbridge Classic Bike show and others.

ECC will also promote DfT or partners’ campaign.

Last year Fire bike attended 65 events and engaged with 7,700 users. Intend to increase activity by 50% this year. ECC supports Fire bike fuel and maintenance costs to £4,000.

Engineering report on passive safety being prepared. Recommendations will be considered. Motorcycling Warplan will examine how passive safety will be translated into action on the roads (e.g adaptation of structures/sign posts/road environment to offer protection to road users).

- **Recommendation 3**

to the Cabinet Member for Education/ Head of Training Standards/ Retail outlets
NB it has been established that the proper Cabinet Member for this recommendation is the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

That all retailers, schools, colleges and licensing authorities should be encouraged to publicise the availability of Bike Safe courses and actively encourage both new and returning motorcyclists to attend such a course prior to taking to the road.

Response

All partners will be looking for additional opportunities to promote and support Bike safe courses, however, it is a police initiative.

The Trading Standards Service has advised that the Bike Safe courses are a police initiative. The Service does participate in a programme of driver training for secondary school students, known as "Roadrunner". Its input relates to helping young drivers make wise purchasing decisions when acquiring their first vehicle. The Roadrunner programme is a Highways led initiative and it would therefore be for them to agree to include details of the Bike Safe course in the programme.

- **Recommendation 4**

to the Cabinet Member for Highways/ Highways Agency

That Essex County Council and, where appropriate, the Highways Agency, should be encouraged to introduce state of the art speed camera technology for use on Essex roads as soon as resources permit.

Response

This has been considered but in light of the removal of the capital road safety grant, it is unlikely that funding will be available in the medium term (3 to 5 years) to permit the upgrade of cameras. We are reasonably confident that the industry will continue to support current technology. However, rear facing cameras will be considered where a reduction in motorcycling casualties is of prime importance.

- **Recommendation 5**

to the Government

That, despite the difficulties involved in acting alone, the Government should be urged to consider the introduction of legislation to allow for the fitting of speed governing devices on motor cycles.

Response

Partners will take opportunities if they become available to consider whether to support this view.

- **Recommendation 6**
to the Essex Casualty Reduction Board

That the Essex Casualty Reduction Board be invited to update and republish the Essex Two Wheeler Strategy.

Response

The Motorcycling Warplan will consider the partners' strategy and will feed into the draft Road Safety Strategy. The Two Wheeler Strategy will be revised by February 2012.

- **Recommendation 7**
To the Cabinet Member for Highways

That the County Council incorporates the lessons learned from a review of the data analysis into the Speed Strategy which it will be preparing in 2010.

Response

The DfT criteria for the speed limit review did not require the analysis of accident data on a route basis to the depth required to determine whether a speed limit is an appropriate intervention to reduce specific user group KSIs. This route intervention treatment would be identified by the Road safety Engineering team

- **Recommendation 8**
to the Cabinet Member for Highways

That, in particular, the Council should seek to impose appropriate speed limits on roads known to be popular in the motor cycling fraternity and which are perceived by the public to be 'race tracks' and should liaise with the Essex Police Force regarding the proactive policing of any such limits.

Response

Some speed limits have been imposed on routes with high rates of motorcycling KSIs. E.g. B1022, B184 now have 50mph limits. These are policed on a regular basis and also subject to other interventions from fire service and ECC. Speed limits have also been imposed as part of the Epping Forest Strategy on A104, A121, B172 and B1393. Shiny side up signs also support work on KSI routes. 290 signs purchased, routes for consideration include, B1022, B1010, B1018 and B184. Signs will be erected as soon as possible.

Where You Look Is Where You Go (WYLIWYG) verge marker treatment completed on B1057 and ready for 2011 motorcycling season. If speed limits are deemed to be an appropriate engineering intervention on motorcycle KSI routes they will be identified through the Safer Roads programme and implemented accordingly.

- **Recommendation 9**
to the Cabinet Member for Highways

That, in designing any changes to road and roundabout layouts, the County Council should always take into account the requirements of motor cyclists, especially the need for them to see and be seen clearly by drivers.

Response

The DfT campaign for motorcyclists last year highlighted their vulnerability and raised driver awareness (My name is Tom).

Essex schemes are designed to current standards and best practice and safety audit also view schemes from the view point of all users. The Head of Maintenance will be made aware of this recommendation.

Process of mounting Shiny Side Up signs will provide opportunities to check for potential visibility issues on routes with high motor cycling KSIs.

- **Recommendation 10**
to the Cabinet Member for Education/ Principals of Essex Colleges
NB it has been established that the proper Cabinet Member for this recommendation is the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

That all educational establishments should be encouraged to require new motor cyclists to undertake training before being allowed to bring a powered machine on to their premises.

Response

ECC will continue with scooter days at colleges (rider training and safety discussions for those using mopeds/scooters to attend college). 4 already planned for 2011/12 in Colchester in May, Chelmsford in September and Braintree and Castle Point dates to be arranged. However, the Road Safety Officers are not driver/rider trainers themselves, but buy in the training element from Professional training bodies as required. Whilst we encourage establishments to adopt training, many young people require some means of transport to be able to attend courses. The motorcycling 'Warplan' group is currently looking for new approaches to target young riders.

- **Recommendation 11**
to the Cabinet Member for Education

NB it has been established that the proper Cabinet Member for this recommendation is the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

That the Cabinet Member for Education and the 2012 Games be invited to consider how two wheeler road safety could be incorporated into both primary and secondary school's work on road safety issues generally.

Response

More focus on motorcycling is being considered as part of Road Runner delivery. Every opportunity to speak to years 11 upwards about motorcycling will be taken. Road Runner events have been delivered in Colchester (February), Chelmsford (March), and planned for Rayleigh (July), Uttlesford (September) and Brentwood (October).

- **Recommendation 12**

To the Head of Trading Standards

That Trading Standards be encouraged to run a campaign (possibly in the pre Christmas period) advising parents of the restrictions on the use of off road bikes and what parents should look for when seeking to purchase such a machine.

Response

The Trading Standards Service could issue a press release highlighting the importance of consumers making sure any mini moto or two-wheeled electric scooter type vehicles purchased are fit for purpose and comply with safety legislation. However when it comes to taking action against unlawful use of two-wheelers in public places when not taxed, insured, MOT'd, etc. (public places will include parks, pavements, shopping centres, etc.), this is a Police and/or a District Council (in the case of nuisance) issue. The Service would therefore recommend a press release be prepared jointly with the Police and District Council representatives and be badged accordingly.

- **Recommendation 13**

to the Chief Constable

That the Chief Constable be invited to consider that, whilst the ability to target particular local issues should always remain, the Force should set clear parameters with respect to Two Wheeler safety and enforcement within which each Division has to operate.

Response

Essex Police targets a number of routes effective from March 1st through until late October (weather dependant) relating to historic P2W KSI data and in doing so focuses upon poor riding behaviour along each of the routes. This is carried out

under the Operational name of PETREL. Currently there are 14 routes targeted including two which have specific commuter riding P2W casualties (A127 & A13). These P2W KSI routes often impact upon community life and within OP PETREL a heavy emphasis is placed upon feed back to such communities relating to Police activity in an effort to reassure. These routes also attract educational activity relating to BIKESAFE and PITT STOP days. For 2011/12 Police motorcycle officers are working covertly in an effort to identify poor riding behaviour within "groups" of motorcycles with a view to prosecution or referral onto RIDE.

R v SUDBURY highlights a successful prosecution where the Crown Court imposed a severe penalty for Dangerous Riding following a KSI P2W collision on the A131.

- **Recommendation 14**
to the Chief Constable

That the Chief Constable be invited to confirm how the Essex and Metropolitan Police Forces liaise to deal with motor cycle gatherings in the Epping Forest area.

Response

Essex Police has primary responsibility for Epping Forest District and deploys a number of staff each weekend to Epping Forest in response to P2W KSI activity in the area. KSI casualties have decreased with the forest area itself with additional attention paid to the A113 in particular and Theydon Bois.

Additional officers are deployed to the M11 (EFDC area) over a weekend when the excel centre hosts a large motorcycle event.

Essex Police is currently hosting KENT Bike safe clients at a location within Thurrock.

ECC attends gatherings in High Beach to engage with users and support Bike Safe. 2 events booked on 22 May and 28 August 2011.

- **Recommendation 15**
to the Epping Forest conservators/ Cabinet Member for Highways

That a general cutting back of trees in the forest to form a buffer zone is acknowledged to be undesirable and not a viable option, although the Forest conservators should be invited to consider some selective cutting back of secondary growth at known accident black spots. Speed limits with average speed camera surveillance were the only viable alternative.

Response

A schedule of sites and amount of cutting required with justification for action would need to be provided to conservators for their consideration. This will be provided by

engineering team with site visits being done May/June when secondary growth occurring. Funding for work may have to be considered.

- **Recommendation 16**
to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

That the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Waste be advised of the Committee's concern that the use of off road bikes could cause a great deal of damage to the flora and fauna of the county and invited to (a) consider how such use might be controlled; and (b) whether any sites could possibly be designated for off road use.

Response

To be confirmed.

- **Recommendation 17**
to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

That district council Environmental Health Officers be asked to consider the impact on the environment and on local residents of the use and noise of off road bikes.

Response

These issues are often dealt with through PRow workstream involving PRow enforcement officer or Police Wildlife liaison officer.

The Trading Standards Service has advised that Harlow District Council's Community Safety Team have been successful in running "Catch & Crush" projects to seize and destroy equipment from frequent offenders. Details of this initiative can be made available to all Districts and Boroughs via the Essex Regulatory Services Partnership Group

- **Recommendation 18**
to VOSA

That, given the Committee's concern about unauthorised alterations to motor cycles that might impair their safety or increase environmental damage (e.g. with noise), VOSA should be asked to set up testing points near known Two Wheeler safety/nuisance black spots.

Response

PRow and road safety and police may be happy to be involved to have the opportunity to engage with riders displaying inappropriate behaviour.

VOSA has advised as follows:

VOSA is not funded to conduct roadside checks of powered two-wheelers and would be unable to support such initiatives. It is the Department for Transport that decides how to fund VOSA's enforcement priorities. It is not clear what the term "unauthorised" relates to as powered two wheelers may be lawfully modified in a number of ways, so long as they are capable of passing their annual MOT test should they be over 3 years old. VOSA does not have noise measurement equipment suitable for deployment at the roadside and there is no in-service metered test or test standard for use at MOT test. On-road enforcement of light (MOT Class) vehicles is the responsibility of police forces and we would respectfully suggest that any local authority with concerns about powered two-wheeler safety should contact their local police force.

- **Recommendation 19**
Chairman of the Committee

That the Committee should add a scrutiny of road safety issues in relation to Heavy Goods Vehicles to its Forward Look.

Operation Mermaid is very successful. Many issues are being taken forward.

- **Recommendation 20**
to the Chief Constable

That the objectives of the Police operation on the A12 – Operation Mermaid – be supported.

- **Recommendation 21**
to the Chief Constable

That the Chief Constable be asked whether it would be possible for Members to have the opportunity to see Operation Mermaid in action.

Response to recommendations 19, 20 and 21 above

Extract from Minutes of the Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee dated 16 July 2010

39. Operation Mermaid

At the meeting the Chairman circulated a briefing note that he had written on behalf of those Members who had taken part in a site visit that was arranged for the Committee to view Operation Mermaid in action on the morning of 20 May 2010.

Operation Mermaid is a nationwide policing initiative to take dangerous vehicles off the road.

Members met police officers, revenue and customs officers engaged in Operation Mermaid at the Boreham Interchange on the A12 dual carriageway. They received a briefing as to how the process worked, prior to witnessing police officers carrying out vehicle and driver checks, interpreting tachographs, and undertaking follow up action. A video was shown to illustrate why an initiative like Operation Mermaid is important. It was based upon a true case where there were several fatalities including a father and his two young children. It demonstrated in very graphic detail the true costs of a major vehicle collision. The accident was caused by lorry driver who had not slept for many hours and it was proven that he was in significant breach of his driver hours.

Operation Mermaid relies on the cooperation of Lorry Park owners who have given free access to the Police, albeit there is probably a reciprocal benefit by having a police presence on site, sometimes for many hours.

Members were advised that vehicles were selected from the main carriageway based on intelligence, past experience, vehicle condition or loads carried. A police motorcyclist would escort the selected vehicle to the lorry park where it was recorded, and allocated a parking bay. A police officer would then engage with the driver to check the hours driven from the tachograph to establish the travel pattern of that driver. Any discrepancies would be dealt with and, depending on its seriousness, a driver might have to have an enforced stop, a fixed penalty notice or further processing through the legal system. Vehicle condition was examined and again if faults were found they would be dealt with appropriately. These checks were thorough and conducted by experienced traffic officers.

On the day Revenue and Customs Officers were taking part in the exercise as one of the partner agencies involved in Operation Mermaid. These Officers were checking upon trading activities. Other partners include the Border Agency, Trading Standards, and VOSA (Vehicle Operators Service Agency).

With regard to on the spot fines, Members were reassured that police processes for issuing such fines to drivers were very robust. Receipts are issued, fines are fully logged, and stored in a safe for later collection. There is a proper paper trail to ensure against fraud and complaints. It was acknowledged that it would be very hard to stop a rogue person from pretending to be authorised for fine collection, and therefore motorists need to be aware of the importance of the documentation.

Those Members who had taken part in the Operation Mermaid visit concluded that it had been very informative providing them with an important insight as to how measures are in place to ensure our roads are kept safe for all users.

- **Recommendation 22**
to the Cabinet Member for Highways

That the County Council always bear in mind the particular dangers caused to motor cyclists by leaving potholes unrepaired.

Response

The Highway Maintenance Strategy has clear response times to defects and takes into account the vulnerability of motorcyclists when assessing priorities.

- **Recommendation 23**
to the Chief Constable

That the Chief Constable's views are sought on the intended operation of the scheme and for advice on how the Committee's concerns can be alleviated.

Response

Road Side Deposits are now taken by Roads Policing officers from those person(s) who do not reside in the UK or are of no fixed abode and relate to ALL Road Traffic offences. In the main this practice is primarily used in support of Commercial vehicle operations where multiple driver's hours and mechanical offences are identified with driver(s) having to deposit a fixed sum prior to leaving the location. Failure to pay often results in the clamping of their vehicle until such time as payment has been made. At present there is no suggestion of rolling out to all officers within the force.

- **Recommendation 24**
to Southend on Sea Borough Council/Thurrock Council/ Transport for London/
London Boroughs adjoining Essex.

That the Committee's report is forwarded to those councils for information and that they, along with other neighbouring authorities such as Transport for London, are encouraged to act jointly with the Essex County Council and the Essex Casualty Reduction Board on any initiatives.

Response

Southend and Thurrock have been invited to attend Battle Plan to look at possible ways of working jointly and to develop joint strategies/ interventions and efficiencies. Work in progress!