

North Tyneside Council

Report to Director of Regeneration and Economic Development

Date: 19 September 2024

Title: Northumbria Safer Roads Partnership

Report by: Paul Watson, Head of Highways and Transportation

Report to: John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and
Economic Development

Wards affected: All

***Appendix 1 is not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.**

***Appendix 2 is not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.**

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

As the Highway Authority for the Borough, the Authority has a duty to promote road safety. It is recognised good practice to have a road safety partnership in place involving both the relevant local authorities, as local Highway Authorities, and the police force which covers the area.

Following discussions between the local authorities as local Highway Authorities in the Northumbria Police force area, Northumbria Police and the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, it is proposed that the Authority enter into a new Northumbria Road Safety Partnership (NRSP) with the other local authorities in Tyne and Wear, Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Police.

It is envisaged that this new Partnership Agreement will supersede the existing Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative (NSRI). Sitting alongside the Partnership Agreement is a Finance Agreement entered into by the Gateshead Council on behalf of the Authority and the other local authorities as the 'Lead Authority' and the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development:

1. agrees to the Authority entering into the Northumbria Road Safety Partnership Agreement with the other Tyne and Wear local authorities, Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Police attached to this report at Appendix 1; and
2. agrees to the Borough Council of Gateshead entering into the Finance Agreement with Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner as the Lead Authority for the Northumbria Road Safety Partnership, attached to this report at Appendix 2.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 25 October 2023.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to the following priority in Our North Tyneside Plan 2021 to 2025.

- A secure North Tyneside
 - Council wardens will work in partnership with Northumbria Police to prevent and tackle all forms of antisocial behaviour
 - We will continue to invest £2m per year in fixing our roads and pavements
- A green North Tyneside
 - We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative (NSRI) was a Partnership co-ordinating strategic road safety initiatives within the Northumbria Police force area. Its purpose was to help to reduce road deaths and casualties and road-related anti-social behaviour, and promote road safety in the Northumbria Police force area. Financial support for the Partnership included income from the Government's National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS). Whereas Northumbria Police and the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner ("the PCC") withdrew from that Partnership at the end of the 2015/16 financial year, the local authorities continued to operate as a Partnership and the Police continued to work closely with the local authorities, even though they had withdrawn from the Partnership.

1.5.2 The proposed new Partnership

Following discussions between the relevant partners, it has been agreed in principle to establish a new Northumbria Road Safety Partnership (NRSP). It is recognised good practice to have a road safety partnership in place, involving both the relevant local authorities (as highway authorities) and the Police, as both have legal responsibilities relating to road safety. This provides an opportunity to work together efficiently for improved education, prevention and enforcement.

It is intended that the NRSP will work to help reduce road deaths and casualties, and road-related anti-social behaviour and promote road safety on the roads of the Northumbria Police geographical area.

A Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) has been prepared which sets out the roles and responsibilities of the partnership. In summary, this:

- i. identifies Gateshead Council as having a lead role in providing a chair and staffing to support the partnership, including leading on financial, legal and procurement matters;
- ii. identifies that each local authority should identify a senior officer representative who will attend the Steering Group as well as an appropriate representative who will attend any Working Groups. Also that each local authority will maintain fixed camera sites and certify

them and provide data and advice as necessary to the Partnership in reviewing sites for speed enforcement; and

- iii. identifies that the Police will provide appropriate officer attendance at the Steering Group and any Working Groups and provide advice and recommendations.

A Finance Agreement (Appendix 2) has also been prepared. This sets out matters such as, how the NRSP will be funded and how this funding will be utilised. It is intended that the Agreement will be entered into by Northumbria PCC and by Gateshead Council, as the agent of all participating local authorities. It is proposed that any outstanding monies held by the current Partnership (NSRI) will be rolled forward into the new Partnership (NRSP).

1.5.3 Process for decision

The Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in common with all Directors and the Assistant Chief Executive can take decisions on behalf of the Authority on all matters where they have managerial or professional responsibilities for their service areas. In the Officer Delegation Scheme, General Delegation GD6 states that a Director or the Assistant Chief Executive can :-

“take decisions on behalf of the Authority on all matters where they have managerial or professional responsibilities for their service areas. A summary of the scope of the Assistant Chief Executive/each Director of Service’s responsibility is set out at the beginning of each service area’s section in the scheme.”

An officer delegated decision by the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development is therefore sought to agree the recommendations set out in section 1.2 of this report.

The Director of Regeneration and Economic Development is responsible for the discharge of all functions relating to the Road Traffic Act 1988. If the Partnership Agreement and Financial Agreement are entered into by the Authority and the other parties referred to previously in this report, the Director, or a person acting with their written delegated authority, may discharge Highway Authority functions based on information shared at the Steering Group.

No decisions will be taken at the NRSP Steering Group or Working Group meetings, as these are not decision-making bodies. Any decisions that need to be taken as a result of Steering Group or Working Group meetings will be taken by the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, or an officer given written authority to act on his behalf and would be duly recorded as necessary under local government legislation. Any decision making would be made in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

1.5 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development:

Option 1

To approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 of this report.

Option 2

Not to approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 of this report.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.6 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

It is in accordance with recognised good practice to have a road safety partnership in place involving both the relevant local authorities and the Police, reflecting that both have legal responsibilities relating to road safety. This provides an improved opportunity to work together efficiently in relation to education, prevention and enforcement.

1.7 Appendices:

*Appendix 1 – Partnership Agreement

*Appendix 2 – Financial Agreement

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

1.8 Contact officers:

Paul Watson, Head of Highways and Transportation, 0345 2000 101

Andrew Flynn, Senior Manager – Integrated Transport, 0191 643 6083
John Barton, Team Manager, Regulatory Team in Legal Services, 0191 643 5354
Amar Hassan, Principal Accountant, Investment (Capital) and Revenue,
0191 643 5747

1.9 Background information:

- (1) [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#)
- (2) [North East Transport Plan](#)
- (3) [North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy](#)
- (4) [North Tyneside Network Management Plan](#)
- (5) [Road Traffic Act 1988](#)
- (6) [Traffic Management Act 2004](#)
- (7) 'Charging for driver re-training courses' within Home Office [policy paper](#), updated August 2022

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

Appropriate governance arrangements have been determined for financial aspects of the proposed partnership (NRSP). The Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) specifies that the NRSP budget will be set and decided by the NRSP member organisations in accordance with the available funds. It is proposed that Gateshead Council, as the Lead Authority providing officer support for the Partnership, will also enter into a separate Financial Agreement (Appendix 2) with Northumbria PCC.

There is no requirement for a financial contribution from the Authority for entering into the proposed Partnership.

Should a financial contribution be sought, this would be processed in accordance with the Authority's established corporate procedures.

2.2 Legal

The Authority, as the local highway authority for the Borough, has a duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to promote road safety. In addition, the Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Authority to secure the expeditious movement of traffic, including walking, wheeling and cycling; engaging in efforts to support road safety and reduce road-related anti-social behaviour can assist in complying with this duty.

The National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS) is a police-operated scheme, established in 2010, which gives the Police the discretion to offer an educational course to a motorist who has committed a low-level driving offence, as an alternative to a fixed penalty or prosecution.

The proposed Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) recognises that officers on the NRSP Steering Group will report back to, and represent the views of their respective local authorities through existing decision-making processes and management structures. Should a decision by the Authority be necessary as a result of discussion at the NRSP Steering Group, then this will be taken by the appropriate decision-maker in accordance with the Authority's Constitution.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal consultation

Internal consultation has involved the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development.

2.3.2 Community engagement

The partnership involves joint working between local authorities, the Police and the PCC and has not involved community engagement.

2.4 Human rights

Any human rights implications must be balanced against the duty that the Authority has to promote road safety. It is not considered that the proposals will have a negative impact on individuals' human rights.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment for participation in the NRSP has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. This identified potential positive impacts from the proposed partnership's work to improve road safety and reduce road-related anti-social behaviour.

2.6 Risk management

Risk management has been considered as part of the preparation of the proposed partnership agreement and financial agreement, which are appended to the report.

Strategic and operational risks associated with transport matters are assessed via the established corporate process.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are potential positive implications for tackling crime and disorder relating to road safety and anti-social behaviour through improved joint working involving the Police and local authorities.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are potential positive environment and sustainability implications in that efforts to support road safety and reduce road-related anti-social behaviour can play a part in supporting the wider use of walking, wheeling and cycling as an alternative to motorised travel.

PART 3 – SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member
- Chief Finance Officer

- Monitoring Officer
- Interim Director of Corporate Strategy and Customer Service