

Meeting date: 10 January 2019
Report to: Transport and Highways Cabinet



Subject/report title: Digital Average Speed Enforcement Pilot Evaluation

Report from: Head of Highway Services

Report author/lead contact officer: James McNeil / Paul Tovey
jmccneil@solihull.gov.uk / ptovey@solihull.gov.uk

Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Select an Exemption paragraph from the Quick Parts drop-down list

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To report on the outcomes of the Average Speed Enforcement (ASE) equipment pilot.

2. Decision(s) recommended

2.1 Cabinet Member is asked to:

- (a) Note the performance of the ASE system and its positive contribution to speed management and reliable journey times in the Borough.
- (b) Agree to explore, with our partners, the future expansion of the ASE scheme, subject to funding being available.
- (c) Agree to retain the existing fixed speed GATSO camera housings, and carryout safety inspections and maintenance checks as detailed paragraph 5.5,
- (d) Agree to receive a further ASE project monitoring report in March 2020.

3. What is the issue?

3.1 In 2013, fixed safety cameras within the West Midlands were switched off; in 2016 a contract was awarded to pilot a network of digital Average Speed Enforcement (ASE)

cameras at three sites in Solihull and five in Birmingham. The outcomes of the pilot were to be assessed after 21 months; this report contains the results of this evaluation.

3.2 The remaining fixed camera (GATSO) housings, in the short term, remain in place at various sites around Solihull. They still provide a reminder to motorists and act a positive deterrent. Looking forward there will be an on-going need to ensure this equipment remains safe and to consider their long term future.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

4.1 The ASE cameras were installed, commissioned and went live on the 8 August 2016, at the following three locations in Solihull:-

- **B425 Lode Lane** (Moat Lane to Castle Lane)
- **B4114 Bradford Road / Chester Road** (Timberley Lane to Hurst Lane)
- **A3400 Stratford Road** (Avenue Albert to School Road)

4.2 Baseline traffic speed and casualty data has been collated for all 3 sites. The evaluation criteria for the 21 month pilot are primarily based on speed reduction, although road traffic collision will be considered but has not been evaluated, as the project period is relatively short. Best practice for road safety analysis usually takes into account a minimum of three years Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) data. A later evaluation will be undertaken to assess the impact of ASE on road safety, however the sites chosen for the ASE pilot previously had GATSO cameras or mobile enforcement which will have already had an impact on safety in those locations.

4.3 Traffic speeds for the sites in Solihull have been monitored during the trial and results in the table below show that 85th percentile speeds are all under the 30 mph speed limit. It is understood that this is also the case for the Birmingham sites.

4.4 The before ASE data was collected over a one week period in April 2016 (apart from Lode Lane) using pneumatic spot speed counting devices. The after speed data being collected over a number of one week periods during January, February and March 2018 via the ASE cameras themselves.

Site	Speed Limit (mph)	85 th %ile Speed before ASE (mph)	85 th %ile Speed after 21 months of ASE (mph)	Difference in Speed (%)
B425 Lode Lane Site 326 (NB)	30	33.6*	25.7	-23.51
B425 Lode Lane Site 327 (SB)	30	34.2*	25.4	-25.73
B4114 Bradford Road Site 334 (EB)	30	38	28.6	-24.73
B4114 Bradford Road Site 336 (WB)	30	N/A	28.6	N/A

A3400 Stratford Road Site 2313 (NB)	30	38	29.1	-23.42
A3400 Stratford Road Site 2314 (SB)	30	38.5	27.5	-28.57

* December 2014 figures.

4.5 As shown in the above table, the 85th percentile speed has reduced at all sites after the implementation of ASE. Before ASE data was not available for B4114 Bradford Road Site 336, therefore the speed reduction could not be calculated.

4.6 Between 8 August 2016 and 31 March 2018, a total of 21,205 vehicles activated the cameras in Solihull. 6,015 of these offences were sent to the Police's Central Ticketing Office (CTO). A break down per site is detailed in the following table.

Site Description	Activations during trial	Offences to CTO during trial
B425 Lode Lane	2,216	1,055
B4114 Bradford Road, Castle Bromwich	10,477	3,420
A3400 Stratford Road, Hockley Heath	8,512	1,540
Total	21,205	6,015

4.7 During the same period, a total of 171,952 activations were recorded at all 8 trial sites, with 30,040 offences being sent to the CTO for review. As a result, a proportion of offenders are offered the alternative of attending a Speed Awareness course rather than receiving fixed penalty fine and points on their driving licence.

4.8 As a result of these offences, the proportion of the Speed Awareness course fees received by Solihull during the 21 month project trial is expected to outturn at £114,727 which was part used fund the maintenance of the service, at approximately £62,000, the balance is held in a reserve for the future maintenance of the service. This will enable them to be used to either re-invest into the project or be ring fenced for other Road Safety initiatives.

4.9 Preliminary discussions have already started with the Police regarding extending coverage of the ASE scheme to other sites; the choice of sites will again be led by road safety data and it is hoped that some initial proposal sites for scheme expansion will be put forward early in 2019.

4.10 In respect of the GATSO fixed camera housings, the anecdotal evidence supports the view that they continue to provide some road safety benefit in reminding motorists of the need to drive within the speed limit; although the physical condition of the housings are deteriorating. It will therefore be necessary to either carry out some low cost maintenance works involving cleaning the housing; preventative maintenance and electrical safety inspections as a minimum. The alternative option would be to remove the redundant electrical supplies and dispose of the housing and associated warning signs for the associated routes.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 The pilot scheme has successfully demonstrated that ASE has a positive impact on speed limit compliance and speed reduction. The more consistent overall journey speeds also help to reduce vehicle pollution levels and improve air quality. For the following reasons it is recommended that the trial of ASE cameras should continue in Solihull:
- The majority of drivers tend to comply more consistently with the larger sections of streets monitored by ASE cameras than with spot speed enforcement (as provided by the previous GATSO cameras). Previously, it was found that drivers tended to slow down a few metres before the camera and accelerate once they passed the secondary check carriageway markings. Due to the method of capture by the ASE cameras and larger area of enforcement between two fixed points, the ASE system has a much larger “halo” effect compared to fixed spot speed cameras because the driver is uncertain where the enforcement begins and ends.
 - No vandalism has been experienced on the new ASE cameras; the GATSO equipment does still attract some anti-social behaviour. This is possibly due to the ASE cameras being installed 6m high, but it may also be because of a better acceptance of this system by the public.
 - The cost of installation of the ASE cameras is comparable to the old previous fixed speed cameras. The use of existing street lighting columns does also reduce the impact on the street scene.
 - With the old wet film cameras, regular site visits were required to retrieve the film or to physically move the camera heads to another location. The new digital ASE technology has improved operational procedures as camera rotation between sites happens remotely from the back office and no regular site visits are required to collect the evidence. This is now all electronically transferred to the police back office.
 - Other benefits identified by West Midlands Police from the use of the ASE cameras were the identification of clone vehicles and repeat offenders.
 - The ASE equipment collects data in respect of traffic speeds, journey time monitoring and other vehicle data and has much improved data analysis tools for statistical/planning purposes.
 - In terms of road safety benefits, these have been considered but have not been evaluated, as an assessment of RTC data after 21 months of operation would not be considered robust. There is also the ongoing deterrent impact of the GATSO safety camera housing to take into account. The overall view on both the ASE and GATSO equipment is that they continue to support the Council’s road safety strategy.
- 5.2 The project has generated a number of Freedom of Information Act requests, generally concerning the number of offences resulting from ASE, public perceptions

have been positive, with no complaints received concerning the system.

- 5.3 Looking forward, the project team, which includes colleagues at Birmingham City Council and West Midlands Police, will continue to monitor performance of the system; consider what action should be taken with regard to the GATSO equipment both in Solihull and across the West Midlands region, and evaluate whether the system could be expanded as demand for measures to traffic calm some of our streets, both in the urban and rural environments continue to be received.
- 5.4 Other priority routes that will need to be considered include sections of the West Midlands Key Route network. The introduction of ASE on these routes could bring real benefits for journey time reliability and have strong links to these important key economic transport corridors.
- 5.5 To ensure the GATSO equipment remains safe it is recommended that a programme of safety inspections and maintenance works should be undertaken this year. This work is estimated to cost in the region of £5,000 and can be funded from the available ASE budget.
- 5.6 Finally, it is recommended that a further report monitoring performance and progress against the project's objectives should be received in March 2020, when the 3 year road traffic collision data should be available.

6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 Delivery of key themes in the Council Plan:

How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of the key themes in the Council Plan? *(select which themes apply and briefly state how the options / proposals in this report contribute to their delivery):*

- Improve Health and Wellbeing – Reduced vehicle speeds result in fewer and less serious RTCs and also improve air quality.
- Managed Growth – The ASE scheme allows more control over the network and a reduction in congestion due to stop/start movements, facilitating growth within the Borough.
- Build Stronger Communities – Lower vehicle speeds create an environment where people feel safer when undertaking everyday tasks, which also encourages walking and cycling.
- Deliver Value – ASE cameras installed on existing street furniture is a low cost, sustainable solution that minimises street clutter.

6.2 Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

- 6.2.1 None as a result of the recommendations of this report.

6.3 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.3.1 The subject has not been considered by the Council's Scrutiny process.

6.4 Financial implications:

6.4.1 The project has proposed to carry forward £214,000 from its capital allocation. It is recommended that this funding should continue to be brought forward into 2019/20 financial year to ensure funding is available for the full five year project costs; be available to support future expansion of the system as and decommissioning of the fixed camera sites as and when approved.

6.4.2 The following table sets out the financial position of the service:

Description	2017/18	2018/19	Total
Income	(£82,409)	(£32,318)	(£114,727)
Expenditure	£29,204	£32,549	£61,753
(Surplus) / Shortfall	(£53,205)	£231	(£52,974)
Reserve Balance	(£53,205)	(£52,974)	(£52,974)

6.4.3 The cost to inspect and maintain the existing GATSO equipment has been estimated to cost in the region of £5,000 and this can be funded from within the project's existing budget. The outcome from the inspection programme will help determine if any further work / expenditure will be required. If so, this will be considered in a future report.

6.5 Legal implications:

6.5.1 None as a result of the recommendations of this report.

6.6 Risk implications:

6.6.1 The Council's corporate Risk Management approach is being followed and the Project's risk register has no identified RED risks.

6.7 Statutory Equality Duty:

6.7.1 None as a result of the recommendations of this report.

7. List of appendices referred to

7.1 None.

8. Background papers used to compile this report

8.1 Transport & Highways Cabinet Report – September 2017

9. List of other relevant documents

9.1 None.