

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**

**REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM 13** .....

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject:  COST RECOVERY SCHEME FOR ADDITIONAL SPEED AND RED LIGHT CAMERA ENFORCEMENT
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 20 March 2002	Ref: D/TT/75/15/DMcD	

**Purpose of Report**

1. Committee may recall that a previous report was submitted to P & E on the 12 September 2001 concerning the implementation of a speed camera Cost Recovery scheme throughout the Strathclyde Police Force area. Committee subsequently homologated the decision of the Chief Executive and the Director of Planning and Environment that North Lanarkshire Council become involved in the first wave of the implementation programme and that North Lanarkshire be the lead authority, to act as the local treasurer for the Strathclyde Police Force area partnership.

**Background**

2. Prior to submission of the previous Committee Report, an officers' meeting was held between Strathclyde Police, Planning and Environment, Finance and Legal Services to discuss the scheme and its implications. The decision by the DTLR to promote a national rollout of the scheme was due to the initial success of the national fine hypothecation pilot programme, which demonstrated a reduction in accidents and casualties in the pilot areas. The Cost Recovery scheme is a road safety initiative, the primary aim of which is to reduce the number and severity of accidents on the affected roads, through a reduction in the number of drivers travelling at inappropriate speeds.
3. Of the twelve local authorities within the Strathclyde Police Force area, initially four are to be active partners, those being Glasgow, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire. The remaining eight authorities are committed to the scheme but will initially be sleeping partners. In addition, the Scottish Executive will be active members of the partnership and will erect speed cameras on a number of trunk roads. The scheme will be known as the "Cost Recovery Scheme for Additional Speed and Red Light Camera Enforcement".
4. It is hoped that inclusion in the scheme will deliver significant accident reductions, which will contribute towards all authorities' 2010 accident reduction targets. Since its inception in the early 1990's, all existing camera sites have been chosen by the Police, on the basis of a site's accident history and the number, and extent of, drivers exceeding the posted speed limit. Inclusion within this new scheme requires sites to meet quite specific, and strict, guidelines, which restrict where cameras can be located. The overriding objective of the project is to reduce casualties by reducing crashes by reducing speeds (the slogan for the scheme is likely to be "Cameras Cut Crashes"). It is intended that extensive publicity will run concurrently with the introduction of this scheme, stressing that the deployment of cameras is a road safety initiative, and is not a revenue generation exercise.
5. Under the guidelines, Councils have to identify sites that meet specific predetermined casualty figures. These are then identified to the Police who in turn carry out speed checks, after confirming that the site meets the accident-rate criteria. The 85%ile speed (the speed below which 85 percent of drivers are recorded as travelling at) and the number of drivers exceeding the posted limit also

have to be above predetermined thresholds before the site can be considered for camera deployment. Sites which don't meet the casualty and speed criteria can not be included within the scheme; this is to help ensure that the perception of the scheme is that it is for accident reduction/ road safety and not some form of money raising exercise.

6. The proposed commencement date for the implementation of the scheme is 1 July 2002, subject to relevant legislation being in place. Initially, it is intended to cover a 3-year period, ending in March 2005. However, the expectation is that if the scheme were found to be successful, in road safety/ accident reduction terms and with each partner committing to continuing their involvement, it would be extended.
7. The Project Steering Group ratified that North Lanarkshire be the lead authority/ local treasurer. The lead partner will facilitate the receipt of project revenue from the appointed government agency; collate all accounts received from the individual partners; distribute revenue to individual partners against invoice; prepare and submit quarterly reports on consolidated partnership accounts to the Project Manager; and submit consolidated accounts to the external auditor to facilitate the issue of Audit Scotland's certificate to DTLR. All authorities taking part in the scheme will be governed by the rules on allowable expenditure which define what costs can be reclaimed.
8. At present, all speed camera fine revenue goes to the Treasury, save for 10% which is retained by the District Courts to cover their administration/ handling charges for processing the fines, forwarding drivers' licences for endorsing, etc. However, under this new scheme, Councils will recover all of their costs associated with running the scheme, that is for buying and siting the cameras, maintaining the sites, direct staff costs, Courts' time for processing the tickets, etc. All excess monies, after each participating partner has recovered their costs, goes to the Exchequer. Partly for that reason, the partnership is keen to ensure that the scheme is promoted as a traffic safety initiative, as some could construe it as just the Councils, and the Police, raising monies for themselves. However, as noted, we can only recover direct costs and relevant share of overheads, and therefore do not retain any "profit" from the scheme.
9. Currently, the District Courts process approximately 2,168 fines per annum. Under the Cost Recovery scheme, it is anticipated that they will be required to process approximately 34, 076 fines per annum (including the fines generated from the speed cameras on the trunk road). These figures are based on traffic volume/ speed surveys carried out by Strathclyde Police. Each offence will result in an endorsement of the driver's licence plus a fixed penalty sum of £60. The Council will be reimbursed for all directly incurred costs and relevant overheads relating to the scheme; all excess revenue will be retained by the Treasury. It should be noted that the expected number of tickets is essentially a best estimate and that the department may require to go back to Committee after an initial operational period when outturns are available.
10. Presently within North Lanarkshire there are three fixed camera sites, all of which will be included in the new scheme and will generate income from day one. A number of other sites within the Council area have been identified which meet the requisite criteria for the installation of speed cameras. From 1 July 2002 there will be a total of 9 No. camera sites within North Lanarkshire, that is 3 No. existing fixed cameras; 2 No. new fixed cameras, 1 No. new mobile site; and 3 No. fixed cameras on the A80 Trunk Road. No sites have been identified within North Lanarkshire which meet the criteria for the installation of red light cameras. The full list of the proposed sites is listed within Appendix 1 to this report.
11. The existing mobile sites will cease to be operational, until such time as new speed checks/ accident analyses can be carried out to establish if they meet the new Cost Recovery criteria. If they satisfy the criteria they will be included within the Cost Recovery scheme.
12. The Finance and the Planning and Environment Departments anticipate that they can accommodate the requisite additional workload within their current resources. However, due to the direct affect of the substantial increase in the number of fines requiring to be processed, the District Court section require to employ an additional 4 No. members of staff, plus effect property alterations to accommodate the additional personnel. The new members of staff required would be an Administrative Officer to act as supervisor at level AP2, plus 3 Clerical Officers at level GS3. The

staff would be recruited on temporary contracts to endure to 31 March 2005 to reflect the initial project period. It is envisaged that the additional members of staff would temporarily be based at Bron Way in Cumbernauld, following reconfiguration of the existing accommodation. There is a possibility that the unit may be able to be based later at the Coatbridge Court following completion of the planned refurbishment of that building.

13. It is anticipated that in Year 1 (July 2002 – March 2003), NLC's combined costs will be in the order of £227,309, allowing for capital costs of purchasing and installing cameras, staff costs, the District Court's additional personnel, etc. However, all direct costs are reimbursable from the scheme. It is envisaged that the majority of any spend is reimbursed within the same financial year from which the expenditure has been made, save for the current setting-up costs which will be reimbursed in Year 1.
14. However, a suspense holding account will need to be allocated from which the outlay and running costs can be charged, in the understanding that all direct costs will be refunded from the revenue stream generated by the fines, and reimbursed within the same financial year. As noted above, NLC's total first year costs are calculated to be approximately £227,309.

### **Recommendation**

15. Committee is asked:-

- a) to approve the Council's involvement in the first wave of the roll-out of the speed camera Cost Recovery initiative, due to come into effect on 1 July 2002;
- b) to note that the Council is the lead authority in the scheme, to act as the local treasurer for the Strathclyde Police area partnership;
- c) to note that the prime objective of the project is to reduce casualties by reducing crashes by reducing speeds;
- d) to note that the number of camera sites will increase from the current three fixed sites to a total of nine, comprising eight fixed (including trunk roads) camera sites plus one mobile camera site;
- e) to note that the number of tickets to be processed will rise from currently 2,168 per annum to approximately 34,076;
- f) that the General Purposes Committee approve that the District Courts section employ an additional four members of staff on temporary contracts to endure to 31 March 2005 to deal with the increase in ticket processing, the requisite staff being one AP2 Administrative officer plus three GS3 Clerical officers, situated initially at Bron Way having effected building alteration works, and note that these staff costs are fully recoverable through the Cost Recovery Scheme;
- g) to approve the establishment of a suspense holding account in the amount of £227,000 from which set-up and running costs for the scheme can be charged, and to which fines' revenue will be credited to, to effectively have a nil balance at the close of the financial year;
- h) to note that the Chief Executive will sign the Memorandum of Agreement within the scheme's Partnership Agreement, which will thereafter permit the Police, on behalf of the Partnership, to submit the full Operational Case for approval;
- i) to remit consideration of the foregoing to the General Purposes Committee and Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for information.



 David M. Porch  
**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

For further information please contact David McDove on 01236 616256.

**APPENDIX 1**

**LIST OF PROPOSED SPEED CAMERA SITES**

Existing Fixed Camera Sites (which will be included within new scheme)

Coatbridge Road, Bargeddie  
Old Edinburgh Road, Viewpark  
Castlehill Road, Wishaw.

New Fixed Camera Sites

Gartcosh Walk, Bellshill  
Calder Street, Coatbridge

New Mobile Camera Site

Carlisle Road, Airdrie

Trunk Road Fixed Camera Sites

A80 Muirhead (Eastbound)  
A80 Moodiesburn (Eastbound)  
A80 Moodiesburn (Westbound)