

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal  
Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 16 November 2016

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community &  
Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report.

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2015 and to recommend a continuance of road traffic collision reduction work.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton over the past decade be noted and welcomed.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Appendix A sets out full details of the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in the year 2015, and compares these figures with those for previous years. These results are very encouraging, with significant decreases in the numbers of people being slightly injured (SLI) and of those killed/seriously injured (KSI) compared to the figures for recent years. Within the KSI total, both the number of adults and children decreased but the latter figure is known to be volatile in Halton and can fluctuate from year to year.

### 3.2 In summary during 2015:

- There were 224 road traffic collisions involving personal injury within Halton, this total was lower than trend lines would have indicated. These incidents produced 304 casualties, a 19% decrease on the 2014 figures;
- 28 of the casualties were classed as serious, and sadly there were 4 deaths compared to 6 in 2014. The total of 32 killed or seriously injured (KSI) is significantly lower than in any of the previous years;
- The child serious injury (CKSI) total of 2 represents a large percentage decrease over 2014's total of 4. The CKSI annual total is subject to relatively large year to year variations.
- The number of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI) dropped to 272 from 325 in 2014.

3.3 It remains to be seen if the casualty and collision decreases seen locally in 2015 are a return of a downward trend (after recent year's flat-lining and last year's increase) or just a temporary drop caused by unique local circumstances. However nationally,

road casualties decreased by 4% in 2015, as set out in the Department for Transport 2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Road Casualties available via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2015>

Looking at the data and in terms of casualty reduction in 2015, Halton was one of the best performing Local Authorities, both regionally and nationally.

Examination of the table and chart on page 3 of Appendix A reveals that with the odd exception, most surrounding Local Authorities achieved significant reductions in KSI numbers. In the case of 2014 to 2015 variations, and as was seen nationally, these movements were in the main towards the lower numbers of KSI casualties, with Halton recording the largest downturn in the region. This is felt to be extremely encouraging, especially following last year's regrettable increase. However, it must be emphasised that this is based on one year's figures only and remembering that casualty figures can be very volatile from one year to the next. Many collisions occur that could not necessarily have been avoided regardless of the engineering measures or effort put into road safety education. However, trends will now need to be carefully monitored over coming years in order to try and determine whether there is any correlation between casualties and the reduction in resources that has taken place in road safety. The ongoing Mersey Gateway works must also be seen as a contributory factor, as the available highway network has decreased in size and consequent traffic management arrangements have resulted in lower traffic speeds.

- 3.4 Halton's 2015 encouraging casualty figures provide no guarantees that achieving further reductions will be possible, in the current climate of reduced resources.
- 3.5 As previous annual reports to this PPB on this subject have stated, in April 2011, Halton lost capital and revenue grants allocated specifically for Road Safety which in part funded Road Safety education, training and publicity and associated staff resource. Like many parts of the Council's activities, the resources available to promote road safety have significantly reduced. This means that work must now be prioritised to where the largest potential accident savings can be achieved.
- 3.6 In 2010, the ten year casualty reduction targets set in 2000 expired. The new Government published its 'Strategic Framework for Road Safety' in May 2011, based on what the Government described as the "key principles" of localism, the "Big Society", non-regulatory approaches and deficit reduction. Within this Strategic Framework is an Outcomes Framework which does set out an expectation for progress on road casualty reductions. Without providing specific targets, and quoting a central KSI reduction forecast of 40% by 2020 based on a 2005-09 base average, the Framework sets out a belief that reductions can be made by encouraging best practice amongst local authorities and comparing local progress with national trends. The only other countries in the EU that do not have targets as part of their road safety strategies are Luxembourg and Malta. Thus, the national focus of future casualty reduction work remains unclear.

#### 4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The work on casualty reduction is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's Local Transport Plan and the Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct funding implications from this report. However, the funding for casualty reduction work is derived from a number of sources. These include:

- **The Local Transport Plan/Integrated Transport Block Grant** - Provides capital funding for engineering based casualty reduction schemes; and
- **The Council's Revenue Budget** – Provides funding for local road safety education, training and publicity initiatives, the School Crossing Patrol Service and traffic management measures.

The Integrated Transport Block (ITB) will, from 2017/18, become part of the Liverpool City Region Single Capital Pot and hence it is not possible at this stage to state with any degree of certainty what future allocations will be. Initial indications are that funding for measures funded through the ITB, including road safety engineering measures, is likely to be less than they current year's allocation.

The Council also currently provides £20,000 p.a. to the Cheshire Road Safety Group for Speed Enforcement cameras. However, no funding has yet been identified for 2017/18 and beyond for this activity.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

### 6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

By helping to create a safer environment, road safety casualty reduction work assists in the safeguarding of children and young people and in the achievement of accessible services.

### 6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

### 6.3 A Healthy Halton

Any reduction in road casualties will have the direct benefit of releasing health resources and thereby enable funding to be focused on other areas of health care.

### 6.4 A Safer Halton

Road safety casualty reduction work of all types supports this priority through the introduction of initiatives and interventions designed to deliver a safer environment.

### 6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal' priority.

## 7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 It is possible that continued reductions in road safety education, training and publicity

resources could have an adverse effect on the Borough's road accident casualties and collision numbers but this link can only be established over a period of several years. No full risk assessment is required.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

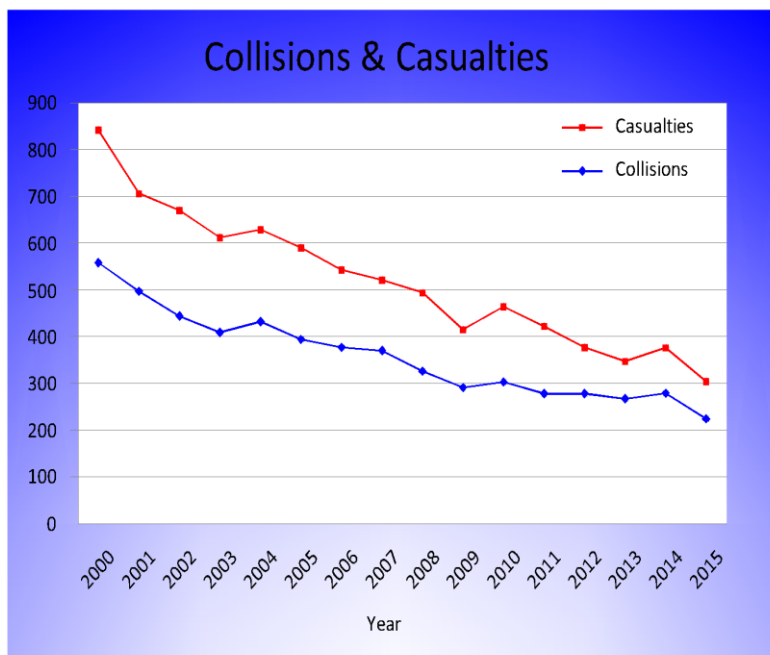
## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 There are no background papers under section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

## Halton 2015 Traffic Collisions Review

## Appendix A

2015 has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of road traffic collisions and casualties in Halton, outstripping, by some margin, the reductions recorded nationally. These reductions are welcome and continue the downward trend for both collisions and casualty figures, but given that Halton is unique in achieving such significant reductions in headline figures, the impact of the ongoing Mersey Gateway works should not be discounted.

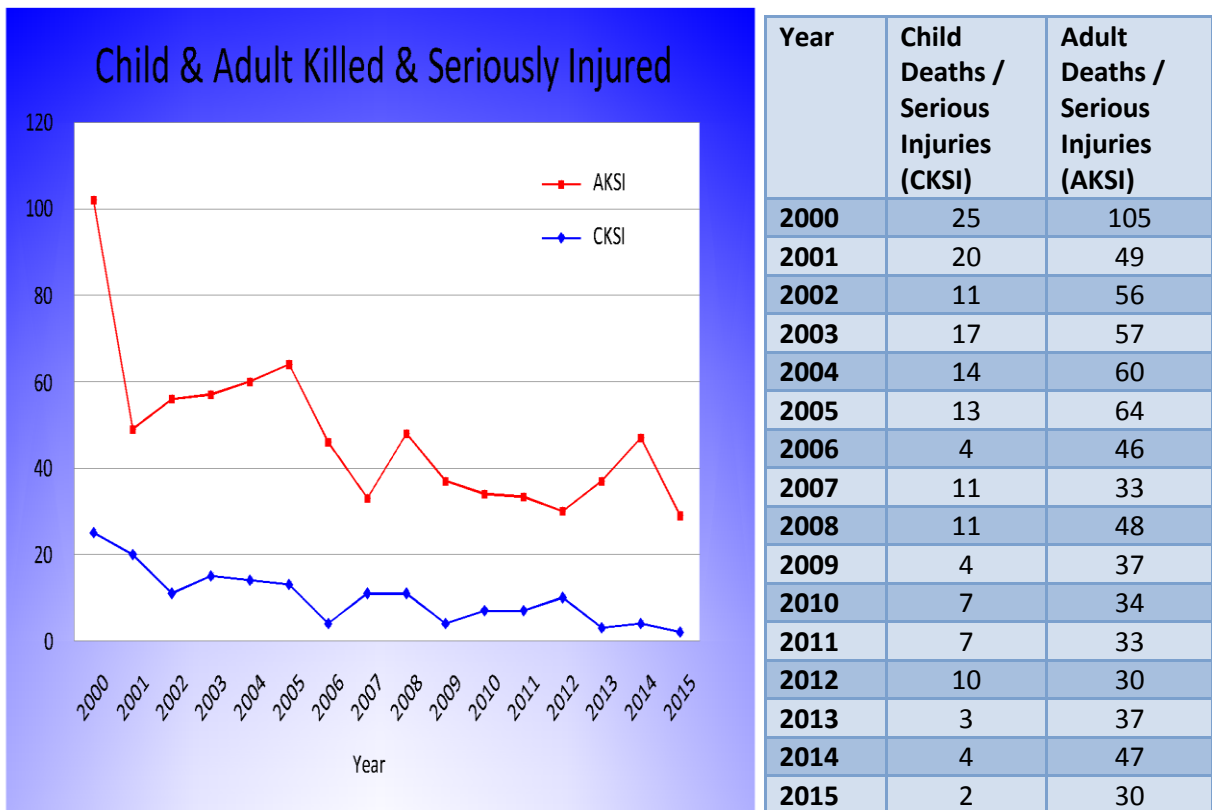


Year	Collisions	Casualties
2000	558	842
2001	497	706
2002	444	670
2003	409	612
2004	432	629
2005	394	590
2006	377	543
2007	370	521
2008	326	494
2009	291	415
2010	303	464
2011	278	422
2012	278	377
2013	267	347
2014	279	376
2015	224	304

The decreases achieved were across all class of casualties – KSI, CKSI and SLI. It remains to be seen if these casualty reductions are part of a wider trend, or more likely due to a combination of factors unique to Halton.

Nationally in 2015, there has been a 4% reduction in casualties whereas Halton has seen a 19% drop in casualty numbers. Whilst there is always a certain amount of volatility, given the small numbers involved, the decreases seen in 2015 are unlikely to be matched in future years.

Consideration must be given to the impact of the ongoing Mersey Gateway works to casualty / collision numbers. The highway network has certainly shrunk in size and several junctions on the Runcorn Expressway system with relatively high collision figures previously are being permanently removed / amended. Also, the increase in traffic congestion on some parts of the network as a result these works could possibly have impacted on casualty numbers, as slower moving traffic is less likely to result in injury accidents.



## Local Indicators

### Killed and Seriously Injured, All Ages (KSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 6*)

2015 saw a large decrease in the number of all-age casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Halton, to a total of 32. Whilst these reductions are very pleasing it is still extremely regrettable that 4 people lost their lives on Halton's roads last year.

Over the previous few years, Halton struggled to achieve reductions in KSI figures and last year (2014) even saw a significant increase in these numbers.

As always with these figures, given the small numbers involved and their inherent volatility, it is always more advantageous to use a rolling average, taken over a number of years than to concentrate on just one year's figures. Even then, the five year rolling average (PPTLI 6) reduced from 42.4 to 40.6 after increasing last year. It remains to be seen whether the reductions achieved this year are a one-off event or part of a new and welcome downward trend.

## Children (U16) Killed and Seriously Injured (CKSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 7*)

In 2015, 2 children were killed or seriously injured in Halton, a record low. Due to the numbers being so low, this annual total is traditionally very prone to variations, year on year. The five year rolling CSKI average (PPLTI 7) is now 5.2, compared with 6.2 last year.

## Slight, All-Age Casualties (SLI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 8*)

In 2015, there was a 13% reduction in people slightly injured in Halton, in contrast to a 6% increase the year before.

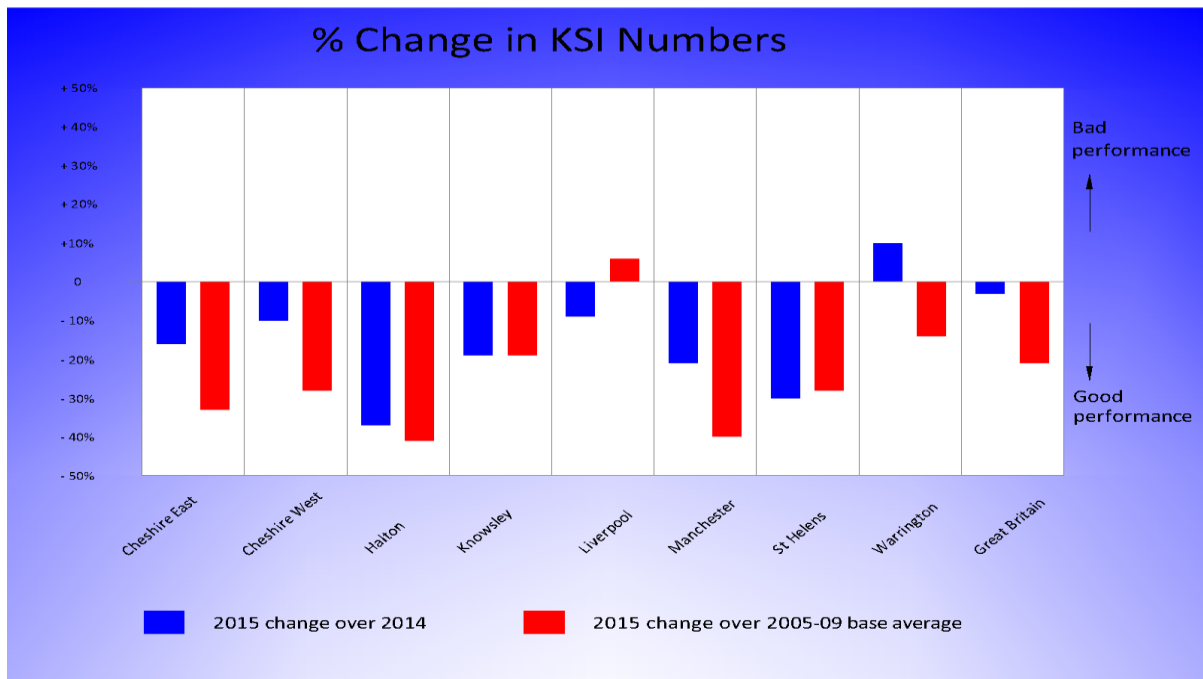
Halton compares very favourably with the situation nationally, where a 4% reduction has been achieved.

## Strategic Framework for Road Safety

In 2011, the Government set out a strategy for Road Safety that set out an outcomes framework designed to help Local Government, local organisations and citizens to monitor progress towards improving road safety and decreasing the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties.

The framework included six key indicators which relate to road deaths. These were intended to measure the key outcomes of the strategy, but in Halton, given the low number of fatalities, and the consequent fluctuations, it was proposed to use KSI rates instead. Halton's performance in reducing KSI casualties, relative to our neighbours, can now be compared:

KSI	2005-2009 average	2014	2015	2015 change over 2014	2015 change over 2005-09 average
Cheshire East	284	225	189	-16%	-33%
Cheshire West & Chester	238	191	171	-10%	-28%
<b>Halton</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>-37%</b>	<b>-41%</b>
Knowsley	58	58	47	-19%	-19%
Liverpool	218	254	231	-9%	+6%
Manchester	222	169	134	-21%	-40%
St Helens	65	67	47	-30%	-28%
Warrington	104	81	89	+10%	-14%
GB	30,041	24,582	23,869	-3%	-21%



With the exception of Warrington BC, Halton and all neighbouring local authorities saw a drop in their numbers of KSI casualties in 2015. Halton achieved the biggest fall in the region, a very welcome achievement following the regrettable rise in casualties in the previous year.

As stated previously, given the very small numbers involved, Halton's casualty figures are prone to wide percentage variations, year on year. However, even by the usual wide fluctuations in numbers, last year's casualty reductions were dramatic and not easily explained. Despite the ongoing reductions in staff and resources, Halton has still been able to undertake a number of successful road safety initiatives, targeting a wide variety of at-risk road users in 2015. In addition, the Traffic Management Section installed a number of accident remedial engineering schemes. Indeed, casualty reduction informs much of the work undertaken by the Traffic Management Section. However, the ongoing reduction in resources available for road safety measures will mean a greater prioritisation of activities will be required, the impact of which will need to be closely monitored.

Nevertheless, given the dramatic casualty reduction achieved in Halton last year, the impact of the ongoing Mersey Gateway works should not be ignored. This major project has resulted in a number of road closures, with many high speed roads that have significant accident histories being temporarily closed. Also, this shrinking of the highway network has resulted in an increase in traffic on the remaining roads, together with an increase in congestion and consequent reduction in traffic speeds.

The Government has targeted a reduction of 40% in KSIs by 2020, relative to the baseline 2005-09 figures, something Halton has already achieved this year. The difficulty will be to sustain these reductions in the face of reduced resources and once the Mersey Gateway works are complete.