

**PACTS Conference Speech – Tuesday 3 November 2015**

To speak about achieving safer road users and safer vehicles and also welcome delegates to the conference.

**09.35 *Keynote address: Safe road users – the role of the police. Councillor Yvonne Mosquito, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner – West Midlands***

Good morning, I'd like to start by thanking David Davies and PACTS for inviting me to speak this morning.

And I'd also like to welcome you all to Birmingham, it is certainly an exciting time to be involved with the area, I'm sure some of you will have arrived via the spectacular New Street station this morning, I hope you'll agree that it is a great addition to our city.

The West Midlands is an area with fantastic road links, thousands of people use the region's motorways, A roads and local links to move in and around the likes of Coventry, Wolverhampton and Birmingham every day.

With that in mind it is, of course, vital that we talk about keeping these road users safe, whether they are using public transport, cycling or driving a car.

In 2014, there were 1,936 reported deaths or serious injuries on the region's roads a 6.6% increase from 2013. The total number of casualties of all types was 17,077 an increase of 8.6% on the previous year.

Perhaps most worrying are the number of child and cyclist casualties. There were 159 child deaths and serious injuries in the West Midlands last year – a statistic we are obviously very concerned with.

Our Police and Crime plan sets out three clear aims for the roads here in the West Midlands:

1. Keeping those that use our road network safe
2. Denying the use of the road network to criminal activity
3. Keeping the road network open so traffic is moving and business is not affected.

I am pleased to say we have already taken steps to meet these aims.

We are currently in talks with the seven local authorities in the West Midlands regarding plans to turn on speed cameras across the region. Solihull Council has already agreed to turn their cameras on and Birmingham is expected to follow suit in the near future.

These two local authorities have also purchased 12 new mobile speed cameras. These new cameras will rely on wireless technology so they can be moved between sites to maximise

coverage. The force has identified 12 priority 'hot spots' to which these cameras will be deployed.

Our traffic team has recently successfully applied for funding to assist with in the fight against those driving under the influence of drugs. This funding will predominantly go towards new equipment and training for Officers so they can recognise the signs of "drug driving."

Officers in our Safer Travel Team are also now benefitting from new technology that allows them to access the regions CCTV network. This will allow them to monitor our public transport network and respond efficiently to any misdemeanours that are taking place.

Staying with public transport, the West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership has been working to increase people's confidence to report sexual assault. Project Empower has seen work done to raise awareness of the problem we have seen on our buses and trains over recent years, and this is already seeing an increase in arrests as a result.

These are just some of the measures we are taking to increase public safety on the roads in our region. I hope you'll agree that, although small steps, they are positive steps towards the three aims I set out earlier.

I was asked to identify the role of the Police Force when it comes to road safety. I hope the actions I have already set out have partly answered this. But I'd like to speak briefly about the topic now.

The role of the Police Force when it comes to any crime, not just road safety, should be preventative and reactionary.

In terms of road safety, the Police certainly have a duty to respond to Road Traffic Collisions, instances of speeding and drunk driving. But they must also work to stop these incidents taking place, by pushing for the re-introduction of speed cameras and supporting community led initiatives such as Speedwatch and Project Empower, the force can help to increase the safety of those that use our roads.

I thank you all for listening this morning and would like to say thank you again to PACTS for inviting me to speak.