

From: **Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport**

**Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport**

To: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 12 January 2017**

Subject: **Freight Action Plan (Consultation Draft)**

Key Decision: No

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: **N/A**

Futue Pathway of Paper: **Decision by Cabinet Member**

**Electoral Division:** All divisions

**Summary:**

Kent is unique in its strategic location in the country as a gateway to mainland Europe. Despite the positive economic benefits road freight brings to the county and UK, the negative implications of road freight are felt across the county. The original Freight Action Plan was a five year plan (2012-2016), adopted in 2012 and had the vision to: *“Promote safe and sustainable freight distribution networks into, out of and within Kent, which support local and national economic prosperity and quality of life, whilst working to address any negative impacts on local communities and the environment both now and in the future.”* This latest plan incorporates a refresh of the original Freight Action Plan but brings it up to date with what we have already achieved and what we will plan and continue to do to mitigate the negative impacts of road freight in Kent.

This latest Freight Action Plan includes nationally and locally important priorities such as Operation Stack and the provision of overnight lorry parking as well as looking into HGV routeing and the powers that KCC can use to reduce the negative impacts of road freight.

The draft Freight Action Plan (see Appendix B) will be subject to an 8-week public consultation. Following consideration of consultation responses, a revised Freight Action Plan will be brought back to Cabinet Committee later in the year for further comment before a final decision is taken by the Cabinet Member to recommend to adopt the final Plan.

**Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations on the proposed decision to approve the draft content of the Freight Action Plan for Kent and permit this to be released for public consultation

**1. Summary of the Freight Action Plan**

1.1 The Freight Action Plan sets out what KCC has already achieved, the roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders of freight traffic in Kent and outlines five key actions to help mitigate the negative impacts of road freight to the county which are as follows:

1. *To tackle the problem of overnight lorry parking in Kent*
2. *To find a long term solution to Operation Stack*
3. *To effectively manage the routing of HGV traffic to ensure that such movements remain on the strategic road network for as much of its journey as possible*
4. *To take steps to address the problems caused by freight traffic to communities*
5. *To ensure that KCC continues to make effective use of planning and development control powers to reduce the impact of freight traffic*

**2. Next Steps and Consultation**

2.1 Following the consultation of the draft Freight Action Plan, the document will be updated taking into account the findings of the consultation and its responses.

2.2 KCC had pre-consultation communications with the main stakeholders outlined in this plan and their comments were considered in the report. The identified stakeholders were; the Department for Transport, Highways England, Kent Police, the 12 District Authorities, Medway Council, the Freight Transport Association, the Road Haulage Association as well as the major freight ports in Kent: Port of Dover, Eurotunnel, Sheerness (Peel Ports), Thamesport and Port of Ramsgate. This pre-consultation produced a number of detailed and helpful responses which allowed the Freight Action Plan to be improved and amended. This has ensured that the draft which will be released to the public is as close to the final version as possible.

2.3 Other significant consultees identified for the public consultation are Parish/Town Councils and those represented by KALC, neighbouring councils, the general public through press releases, equality and diversity groups and business commerce. All groups/organisations will receive an email directing them to the KCC Consultation Directory.

- 2.4 A copy of the draft Freight Action Plan and consultation questionnaire will be provided to all members.
- 2.5 The KCC Press Office will prepare a general press release upon the launch of the consultation. KCC will also publicise the consultation through the kent.gov.uk homepage and through its social media accounts. Kent businesses will also be informed of the consultation through the KCC Business Newsletter.
- 2.6 Completed consultation questionnaires and other written responses will be analysed and a consultation report produced that summarises the responses to the draft Freight Action Plan. This will be reported alongside a revised Freight Action Plan to this Cabinet Committee.
- 2.7 The consultation timetable is:
- 12 January Cabinet Committee – Members note the plan for consultaion
  - Public Consultation 16 January – 12 March
  - March Cabinet Committee – Members to approve/adopt plan

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Some of the actions in the plan have implications for officer time. There are no further financial implications beyond agreed budgets.

### **4. Equalities Implications**

- 4.1 The draft Freight Action Plan has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) demonstrating that it will not have an adverse impact on any group with protected characteristics. This will be included as part of the consultation.

### **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Kent's Freight Action Plan provides a framework for mitigating the negative impacts of road freight in the county. This plan has identified realistic actions that can be taken to improve the situation.

### **6. Recommendation:**

- 6.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations on the proposed decision to approve the draft content of the Freight Action Plan for Kent and permit this to be released for public consultation.

## 7. Background Documents

- Appendix A: Freight Action Plan (Consultation Draft)

## 8. Contact details

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