

From: **Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation & Waste**

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director – Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 15 June 2017**

Decision No: 16/00145

Subject: **Freight Action Plan**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: Environment & Transport Committee – 12 January 2017

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: County-Wide

Summary: The Freight Action Plan for Kent is a non-statutory document that highlights what we have already delivered and what we plan to do to reduce the negative impacts of road freight on local communities. The plan includes both 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.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation and Waste on the proposed decision to endorse and adopt the Freight Action Plan for Kent as attached at appendix A.

1. Introduction

1.1 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.

1.2 The draft Freight Action Plan was considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 12 January. The Freight Action Plan for Kent is a non-statutory document that highlights what we have already delivered and what we plan to do to reduce the negative impacts of road freight on local communities. The plan includes both 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.

1.3 The plan sets out five ongoing actions for managing freight through Kent and outlines how these actions can be met through partnership working between Kent County Council, local councils, industry bodies and other affected parties. These actions are outlined below:

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. Financial Implications

2.1 Some of the actions in the plan have implications for officer time. There are no further financial implications in developing the plan but there will be costs involved for the delivery of specific actions and these will be costed separately.

3. Policy Framework

3.1 The Freight Action Plan for Kent sits as a supporting document to our Local transport Plan 4 (LTP4) *Delivering growth without gridlock*.

3.2 LTP4 deals with the large strategic schemes to address challenges, such as the Lower Thames Crossing and a solution to Operation Stack. The Freight Action Plan sets out the smaller scale interventions that KCC, working with communities and partner organisations, can and is making to mitigate the impact of road haulage on our communities and environment.

4. The Report

4.1 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.

4.2 To date, working with partners and stakeholders, we have achieved:

- Government commitment of £250 million for a permanent lorry holding area as a solution to Operation Stack.
- Implemented Freight Journey Planner; a web based route planning tool that aims to help HGV drivers and Transport Managers to plan their routes within Kent to avoid roads with weight, height and width restrictions as well as roads that are unsuitable for HGV use.
- Implemented a number of Lorry Watch schemes across the county to empower local residents to record the details of vehicles contravening restrictions.
- Established Operation Kindle in which KCC works collaboratively with Kent Police, Highways England and Medway/Borough/District and Borough Councils to clamp/move on illegally or antisocially parked HGVs in the district. So far this has resulted in just under 500 fixed penalty notices issued and over 2,000 HGVs being moved on.

4.3 The Freight Action Plan was subject to an 8-week public consultation between January and March 2017. Over 500 residents, businesses and organisations responded to the questionnaire and as a result the plan has been amended and is shown at appendix B. Specific actions in the updated Freight Action Plan include:

1. Developing a strategy for a network of small lorry parks across Kent;
2. Continuing to press for overnight parking to be incorporated into Highways England's plans for the proposed lorry area at Standford West;
3. Support proposals for a permanent lorry area to remove the need for freight traffic to queue on the M20 during Operation Stack;
4. Support for proposals for a permanent solution for Dover TAP with twin speed limit variations along the A20; and
5. Continue to promote and pilot mapping and satellite technology to improve HGV routing within Kent including developing a 'Connected Vehicle' pilot scheme on the A2/M2 corridor.

4.4 The main focus of the action plan is on road freight as the dominant mode of transporting freight across the county and as this impacts the residents and businesses of Kent most significantly. However, the document also states that KCC fully supports the provision of modal shift from road to rail to reduce HGV movements in the county, so long as it does not adversely affect peak rail passenger services. It also considers water freight as currently the River Thames and Estuary in Kent are used to transport waste, construction materials and increasingly containerised goods.

4.5 The Freight Action Plan for Kent has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) demonstrating that it will not have an adverse impact on any group with protected characteristics.

4.6 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5. Conclusions

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(s)

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation and Waste on the proposed decision to endorse and adopt the Freight Action Plan for Kent as attached at appendix A.

7. Background Documents

Appendix A: Proposed Record of Decision

Appendix B: Freight Action Plan for Kent

Appendix C: Consultation Report

Appendix D: Equalities Impact Assessment -

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD5169&ID=5169&RPID=15203683>

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