

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

29 November 2010

Report of the Director of Kent Highway Services

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

1 UPDATE ON THE FREIGHT STRATEGY FOR KENT

Summary

It was announced in September that Kent Highway Services has launched a major action programme to tackle the problem of lorries causing disruption and traffic chaos on narrow country lanes and rural roads in Kent. This report outlines these proposals.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 For many years the issues of Heavy Goods Vehicles in rural areas has been debated at many Joint Transportation Boards across the County and has been subject to numerous petitions. In response to these petitions it has been previously reported that Kent County Council will produce a Freight Strategy detailing how it will deal with the issue of Heavy Goods Vehicles in rural areas. In September Kent Highway Services launched a major action programme to tackle the problem of lorries causing disruption and traffic chaos on narrow country lanes and rural roads in Kent.

1.2 The Programme

1.2.1 The work, which is expected to take between 12-18 months, will involve a complete overhaul of Kent's current lorry-route map, a county-wide review of lorry directional and regulatory signs, a review of Traffic Regulation Orders such as weight, height and width restrictions – which set out where Heavy Goods Vehicles are prevented from driving – and working with satellite navigation firms to ensure this new information is provided to drivers. Kent Highway Services is also in consultation with the two leading industry bodies, the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association.

1.2.2 Kent Highway Services will also look at working more closely with the Traffic Commissioner and planning authorities on preferred lorry routes when operating licences and planning permissions are granted. KHS will also tackle specific, local lorry-related issues by developing tailored plans to fix them.

1.2.3 The major strategic issues of Operation Stack, Lorry Road User Charge and Lorry Parking are being covered in new Local Transport Plan for Kent which is currently out for public consultation as previously reported.

1.3 Views of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste

1.3.1 On the launch of the action plan Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, Nick Chard, said:

1.3.2 “Lorries can cause tremendous problems for residents and businesses when they use the wrong road and get stuck. They also rumble through our small villages’ day in, day out, in some cases causing damage to property. Of course, businesses have to use our roads as part of their normal operations, but at the moment we do not have a full picture of the best routes for them.

1.3.3 What we want to do is put lorries on the best available routes for them. We will look at where HGVs want and need to travel and map out routes that will minimise disruption to residents and other businesses.

1.3.4 Lorry traffic is expected to grow significantly over the next couple of decades. The work we are carrying out will mean we are well prepared in advance to tackle the demands this growth will place on our county.”

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 None at this stage.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 As reported.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 Not applicable.

Background papers:

Nil

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