

12 October 2016

**Summary of considerations at meetings of the Policy Development Panel on
HGV Management held on 30 June and 27 September 2016**

30 June

Enforcement of HGV Traffic Regulation Orders by Dorset Police

The Panel received a presentation from Sergeant Joe Pardey of Dorset Police on what HGV traffic management by Dorset Police entailed and how HGV Traffic Regulation Orders were enforced.

The way in which HGV restrictions were managed and the priority given to these, how investigations took place regarding reported indiscretions and what assessments were made was explained by Sergeant Pardey as well as the operational mechanisms used in delivering this.

A number of exercises undertaken to address all aspects of HGV practices, including compliance with traffic orders, speeding, laden weight violations, tachograph and European driver directives discrepancies was considered to have proven successful. It was hoped that the success of these exercise would proliferate. Such a means was designed to accord with the principle of education, in the first instance, in preference to enforcement, being seen to be a positive message that raised the profile of the campaign and benefitted the perception that these issues were being adequately addressed. It was recognised that any action taken in response to an indiscretion had to be proportionate and reasonable.

How the Polices' traffic division operated and what this entailed was explained and it was emphasised that resources had to be deployed and allocated with efficiency, to be utilised as and when necessary, so as to be as effective as possible. The Panel recognised that Dorset Police was doing all that was practicable to address the management of HGV traffic but that resourcing and budgetary constraints meant that there were limitations to what might be achieved.

Petitions received in respect of HGV Traffic Management

The Panel noted the receipt of 3 petitions relating to how HGV traffic was being managed within the County, namely:-

- the HGV Situation on the B3091 St Johns Hill/ Bimport, Shaftesbury
- request for a HGV ban – Highcliffe Shopping Centre (A337) Christchurch
- HGV Traffic on A35/B3073, Christchurch in connection with Roeshot Hill gravel extraction.

Mention was made of two other petitions about HGVs which had not as yet been submitted, relating to waste facilities at Uddens Industrial Estate at Ferndown and issues through Colehill.

The Panel considered that the petitioners should be informed that the Authority was working with the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, Transport Authorities - both pan Dorset and neighbouring- , to agree a HGV Management Action Plan, but was being realistic on what might be achieved, given the current constraints. Dialogue was also ongoing with Dorset Police and Highways England, with the part each played in how HGV's were managed being significant. **Letters were subsequently**

sent to the petitioners by the Chairman of the Committee on what progress was being made.

Progress on how HGV's were being managed in Dorset County Council

The Head of Economy provided some context around what progress was being made in identifying solutions for managing HGV traffic in Dorset and what benefits might be gained from this.

The part the Borough of Poole's core strategy and housing policy played in this process was critical. Its significance and the practicalities of delivering this was integral to how any transport infrastructure was progressed. The Growth Deal series also contributed significantly to what could be achieved in terms of the necessary infrastructure being readily in place.

The importance of strategies for housing, planning and infrastructure to achieve this were acknowledged and were seen to be inter woven and dependent on each other in delivering a meaningful solution. The part the LEP played in ensuring these were delivered in the best interest of Dorset was also essential.

Work was progressing between the Tri Councils of East Dorset District and Bournemouth and Poole Boroughs on a way forward, in ensuring that the needs of Dorset were provided for and that its profile was raised to reflect the importance of the investment required to meet the need. The means by which this would be achieved would need to be determined, taking into consideration how any combined authority, unitary authority or devolution process might meet that need.

HGV Management Discussion with the Borough of Poole

The Panel were updated on works proposed for A349 Gravel Hill and what improvements this would bring. The relevance of this to how HGV traffic could be signed and managed and the current routing strategy was recognised, given that Poole Port played a significant part in HGV movements on the north south corridor. The Panel acknowledged that the means by which HGV's were routed into and out of Poole was integral to the success of any transport strategy. The Panel considered that the routing strategy was critical to any meaningful improvement being made to how HGV's were managed. They considered that a rationalisation of the directional routing was absolutely necessary in order to better manage the flow of HGVs .

Poole's core strategy on housing was also considered to be significant in how the routing of HGVs was signed so as to manage them effectively, with continued discussions ongoing between officers from both authorities.

Review of other adjoining Highway Authority Freight Strategies

The Panel were informed of the means by which HGV issues were addressed in other neighbouring authorities, including those which had defined freight strategies. One example was the arrangement Wiltshire had in place, being seen to be the most applicable for Dorset and one which could be best modified to meet the needs Dorset had. Based on the Wiltshire Freight Assessment and Priority Mechanism (FAPM) structure, this would provide an objective mechanism for how assessments, processing and prioritisation might be made and the way in which issues could be best managed and an effective method of monitoring HGV movements.

The "Lorry Watch" scheme - designed to monitor how HGVs were manoeuvred and managed – in collaborative working with the police and trading standards, and in formalising the neighbourhood watch scheme process, was also considered to be a worthwhile course of action to follow.

The Panel were encouraged by these prospective improvements to the way in which HGVs were managed and in how matters could be best addressed and considered that these should be actively pursued.

Current Dorset LTP Freight Strategy

The Panel were informed that the current Dorset Freight Strategy complemented the LTP 3 and – as part of its Action Plan - was designed to address the issues which faced HGV operators such as directional information - so as to be able to determine which were the most appropriate routes to take -, where and what facilities were available, how SatNav's operated, their reliability and the confidence with which they could be used and other routing issues, such as connectivity with the M4. There was a thought that facilities should be made available to coincide with the preferred routes for HGV traffic.

The Panel hoped that the Freight Map - available on Dorsetforyou.com - could be formalised and made more accessible, in time, through Travel Dorset so that freight and haulier groups might benefit from this useful tool. They considered that there was a need for freight transport and haulier groups and Highways England to play their part in the accessibility of preferred and appropriate directional routing strategies and the promotion of such freight maps. This was particularly critical in advising of preferred routes which did not involve having to travel through Ferndown.

The Panel considered that SatNav mapping companies should also have a responsibility in advising on directional preference for HGVs and that representations should be made to them to take this into account. Drone technology might also play some part in directional management. Accordingly this should be pursued with those SatNav companies to see what opportunities and scope there might be for interactive participation

Future Draft Dorset Freight Strategy

The Panel had the opportunity to see what future improvements were proposed for the Draft Dorset Freight Strategy and how this would be applied. Partnership working with both Bournemouth and Poole colleagues and the Freight Quality Partnership was critical in ensuring the approach to be taken was successful. As such the Panel endorsed the bullet points contained in the officer's report which showed how this was to be achieved.

On-going work with the Dorset Freight Quality Partnership meetings

The Panel were updated on what progress was being made at meetings between the County Council and the Dorset Freight Quality Partnership and what improvements they were working towards to ensure that HGV traffic was managed as well as it could be. Once again any part that LEP funding could play in contributing towards improvements had to be seen to be beneficial.

27 September

Proposal to Review Dorset's Freight Strategy

Prompted by the ever-increasing growth in road traffic across Dorset, and complaints about HGV traffic from local communities, as well as the proposed future housing and employment developments across the County and South East Dorset, the County Council was proposing a review of the Dorset Freight Strategy, with agreement and support from Bournemouth Borough Council, Borough of Poole, the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership and the Dorset Freight Quality Partnership.

In drawing the attention of the Panel to how the review would be managed, officers explained the detail of what was being proposed, in that there was to be:-

- wider consultation with / more input from Parish/Town councils – including the part they could play in “Lorry Watch - and in working with Dorset Police;
- the development of an effective procedure for dealing with HGV complaints by way of the new procedures in place for addressing petitions
- targeting spending on areas with particular HGV issues, using Wiltshire’s FAPM example as a mechanism to do this
- broaden Dorset FQP membership to District Councils, the Police etc
- further work on the Dorset Freight Map so that this was a relevant tool for hauliers to use in it being regularly updated, interactive, and a printable PDF version on Dorsetforyou website (Travel Dorset), to include links from Bournemouth and Poole websites, leaflets (at Ports and local businesses);
- further work with SatNav companies over HGV routing in Dorset - lobbying through Road Haulage Association (RHA) and Freight Transport Association (FTA);
- an investigation into how www.freightjourneyplanner.co.uk – a web based tool that local authorities can use to recommend appropriate freight routes – might benefit how HGV’s were managed in Dorset.
- a continuation in reviewing good practice from other local authorities to see which of these might be applicable in Dorset.

The Group were provided with the opportunity to discuss the merits of those proposal and make contributions, as necessary. From this it was established that:-

- it would be beneficial for Dorset Police to be able to serve on the LEP’s Connected Thinking Group so that they might be able to actively participation in those discussions
- consideration should be given to Bournemouth and Poole also contributing to discussion to feed into the connected Thinking Group so that there was a coordinated approach
- the imminent announcement of Growth Deal 3 would have a bearing on the Borough of Poole’s housing strategy and allocation in north Poole bringing with it transport implications, which could play a significant part in improvements to how HGV’s were managed
- efforts should be made to raise awareness about the Dorset Freight Map and the benefits this could bring
- investigation of the freight journey planner website and its benefits should be pursued
- the prospect of an informal arrangement for HGV traffic to use the A350 one way and the C13 the other might be pursued.
- funding of such investigations might be allocated between Bournemouth/ Poole/ County Council
- Highways England should play their part in encouraging use of their primary trunk road routes as a basis for HGV traffic
- the involvement of local communities in identifying how HGV’s were being operated and the routes they were taking could play an important part in how movements could be better managed. Such communities had a direct understanding of the particular issues which were affecting them and how matters might be resolved. However in order that this might be meaningful there was a need for a relevant strategy and LTP polices to support it
- how HGV’s were routed could be stipulated in planning conditions to manage HGV traffic more efficiently and this could also be applied to minerals and waste operations. Officers confirmed that there was

scope to be able to do this if necessary and hauliers were advised of this in submitting their applications.

The Service Director - Economy concluded that considerable work had been carried out to recognise and address those issues raised and that the Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 12 October would be informed on what progress was being made to date. Crucially a discussion about the issue had now been initiated with a view to a HGV strategy being established for Dorset which would meet the principles of the LTP and require partnership working with the LEP and Highway England to be successful.

Trunk Road Service Area and Lorry Park Proposals

The Group provided Ray Bulpit with the opportunity to explain his proposal the A35 trunk road service area and lorry park provision to serve central/western Dorset, given the lack of provision on that route.

His proposal had been drawn up in conjunction with the Duchy of Cornwall. A site to the south of the A35 at its junction with the A354 at the football stadium roundabout had been identified as a possible suitable strategic location for this facility.

His proposals had been drawn up taking into account economic, employment and environmental considerations with the Panel's attention being drawn to a report he provided on his scheme – entitled Jurassic Gateway Services – based on the need for such provision in light of the absence of any along the A31/A35 trunk road throughout Dorset.

His paper detailed the planning processes which were followed, the part the Duchy and West Dorset District Council played in this, the need, demand and reasons for selecting the site; its identification and suitability, and what benefits it was designed to bring. A rest area to mitigate against fatigue and a convenience for refreshments and toilets were considered to be an essential facility.

Dr Phil Sterling took the opportunity to inform the Panel of the environmental sensitivities associated with the proposal and what process might be followed to see if there was a likelihood of any of these being resolved and solutions found. Contained dialogue was key to these negotiations meeting with success.

Bearing this in mind, the Panel thanked Mr Bulpit for his presentation and appreciated the principle of what was being proposed and what he was trying to achieve, in recognising its benefits, especially given the absence of such facilities along that length.

Whilst the merits of providing such a facility were acknowledged, the Panel recognised the environmental sensitivities associated with the development of this scheme and the practical difficulties this posed, noted the processes which would need to be complied with in the management of the scheme and the practicalities of land management and use.

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