



Policy Development Panel on HGV Management

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park,
Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ on Friday, 27 January 2017

Present:

Pauline Batstone (Chairman)
Beryl Ezzard, Daryl Turner and Steven Lugg

Member Attending

Andrew Parry, County Councillor for Ferndown.

Co-Opted Members

Councillors Terry Cordrey and Cathy Lugg, Ferndown Town Council.

Officer Attending: Matthew Piles (Service Director - Economy), Mr Simon Gledhill (Network Management Service Manager) and Helen Jackson (Principal Transport Planner) and David Northover (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Apologies for Absence

17 Apologies for absence were received from Mervyn Jeffery and Margaret Phipps. Kate Wheller had previously indicated her wish to stand down from the Panel and the Chairman, on behalf of the Group, thanked her for the contribution she had made.

Notes

18 The notes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016 were received and noted.

Dorset Freight Strategy / Action Plan Update

19 The Panel considered a report by the Service Director - Economy on the outcomes of funding, collaborations and negotiations on policies and strategies with other local authorities and partners on how HGV management could be improved, with a view to making recommendations on that basis to the Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 27 March 2017.

In setting the scene, the Service Director reminded the Panel of the views of the Dorset Police in their ability to effectively enforce TRO's relating to HGVs and what limitations there were in doing this, particularly in how resources were best deployed. Given this, there was a need to manage expectations on what could be achieved and that other means of encouraging HGVs to use appropriate routes should be identified.

Moreover there was a need to manage expectations for how HGV traffic could be managed effectively by means of TROs, with a more practicable and pragmatic means of doing this seen to be through 'Lorry Watch' - in involving local communities in reporting contraventions and enabling them to manage this process for themselves. This was seen to be a tried and tested approach, which had the support of Dorset Police and was in the interests of those communities directly affected by HGV traffic. It contributed significantly to the way in which traffic movements could be controlled and there was engagement with the Traffic Commissioners on how this could be best applied for optimum effect.

The Service Director explained that, in reviewing of Freight Action Plan, this had been circulated to the Panel prior to the meeting for their consideration and the opportunity was provided for members to comment as they saw fit. As a result of this, minor

amendments to the Plan had been made and members were now being given the final opportunity to endorse this. Consequently any success in the Strategy being delivered relied on the cooperation of all highway authorities across the county as it could not be delivered in isolation.

Given this, the Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) had also been given the opportunity to consider the Action Plan and what benefits it would bring. This comprised the three highway authorities across Dorset, road hauliers, the Freight Transport Association and Highways England. Subsequently they had endorsed it as the most practical means of meeting the needs and objectives of the Strategy and achieving desired outcomes. Financial contributions towards this was also explained. It was confirmed that the Action Plan would be an integral part of the Local Transport Plan and how this was applied. It was important too that any Action Plan was seen as being deliverable.

The Panel considered that the Action Plan met the principles of the Strategy and was the practicable means by which the necessary outcomes could be delivered. Final amendments to the substance of this are set out in the bullet points below.

How the Dorset Freight Map could be applied and how it could be best used was discussed. The means of making it as accessible as possible was critical to its successful use. However, the FQP agreed to not make any further changes to the Dorset Freight Map given that the main end-user - the lorry driver - would be unlikely to use an online freight map given that specialised HGV SatNav systems were regularly used. However it was felt it did have a part to play for inclusion in the Dorset Minerals and Waste Plan and in managing the routes that mineral lorries might take. Officers confirmed that a freight assessment prioritisation mechanism could be applied, where specific issues were identified to manage these effectively and in making deliverable decisions.

A348 Ringwood Road, Ferndown HGV issues

Officers provided a synopsis of how this issue had arisen, how the Council had now arrived at the point they had and what the objectives of the Panel's work were. Since the last HGV PDP, there had been discussions with Ferndown County Councillors Steven Lugg and Andrew Parry concerning HGV traffic using the A348 Ringwood Road, and specifically, with local residents near Longham Bridge. Councillor Lugg was particularly concerned that Longham Bridge continued to sustain damage from manoeuvres being made by HGVs.

It was confirmed that the County Council had raised with the Borough of Poole the issue of routing HGV traffic along the A349 Gravel Hill to the Port from the A31, thereby avoiding Ferndown but, to date, Poole had not been receptive to this suggestion, despite the Gravel Hill scheme gaining DLEP Growth Deal funding on the basis that it would improve access to the Port from the A31 trunk road. Similarly, Bournemouth officers did not recognise this as an issue either.

The Panel noted that, so as to identify a satisfactory solution to this matter, Councillors Pauline Batstone and Peter Finney were to meet with their counterparts at both the Borough of Poole - and Bournemouth Borough Council if necessary - to discuss this. Whilst it was recognised that there were seemingly obstacles to this being readily resolved, it was equally recognised that it was in the interests of all that freight was managed efficiently and effectively across Dorset so as to play its part in encouraging economic growth. The Panel considered that it was important that this meeting was held as soon as practicable so that the concerns raised were addressed as soon as possible.

It was considered that a practical means of directing HGV's onto the most appropriate routes would be achieved by improved directional signage, particularly at the Canford

Heath and Bearcross Roundabouts. It was felt that such advisory signage would significantly improve the arrangements for how HGV's were managed and the route they were likely to take. It was recognised too that Bournemouth International Airport contributed significantly to how the network was managed in the south east conurbation and had a direct bearing on directional flows. Officers confirmed that modelling of that corridor was being done within the constraints of local plans, with priority being given to improvements at Blackwater and Chapel Gate junctions and the development of a Parley distributor route. With works being phased accordingly, there was reason to believe that benefits would begin to be seen gradually, over time as things took shape and objectives realised and Ferndown would benefit from this too. Members explained that there was speculation at what housing development was being proposed for the Parley area and asked for confirmation about this. Officers agreed that elected members in the east of the county should receive a briefing note on what development was being proposed; ie in terms housing/infrastructure/mineral extraction etc. Particular mention was made of the significance of the Roeshot mineral extraction proposals and the implications that this would have for significant additional HGV movements through the conurbation.

The Panel recognised that improved directional signage would no doubt play a significant part in helping to manage effectively directional flows for HGVs and, for this to be addressed, it was essential that both Bournemouth and Poole similarly recognised this.

Given what was being experienced, the Panel considered that there would be considerable benefits to be gained from a Combined Authority being realised as it then would be in all local principal authorities interests to ensure that a managed solution was found, not only for this issue but for other cross authority traffic issues which, by definition, had a bearing on the highway network across the whole of geographical Dorset. This would enable a more constructive process to be undertaken with a strong Combined Authority being seen to most likely attract investment and funding at a national level.

Assurances were given that the Dorset LEP's Connected Dorset Group had taken account of freight and understood the importance of this being managed effectively. It was anticipated that those Dorset elected members serving on the Board could play their part in helping to influence proceedings.

From discussion, the Panel identified a series of other issues which they considered needed taking into consideration:-

- how quarry and mineral lorries were routed and what provision was being made for them;
- the imposition of 30 mph speed limits could play its part in deterring vehicles on inappropriate routes;
- that the Action Plan should be an organic 'live' document available on Sharepoint that was seen to be meaningful and relevant and could be adapted to meet need.
- an explanation that the Action Plan would be applied pan Dorset but the specific concerns originally raised by residents of Ferndown could be subtly addressed as part of that Plan
- the absence of a dedicated HGV stop on the primary route was seen by many as a justification for the HGV issues being experienced in Ferndown with alternative facilities being sought within the town. Officers were actively engaging with Ray Bulpit - who had contributed to the previous meeting his ideas for lorry stop provision – to see if any progress could be made in that regard.
- accordingly, the need for dedicated HGV stops along strategic routes encouraging drivers to use these roads.
- further to this, members were encouraged to submit any suggestions they had on suitable sites they identified.

- how freight might be transported by different modes, particularly the need for rail freight to play a more integral part in logistics and distribution. Network Rail recognised the strategic importance of Dorset and their consideration of this would be sought;
- that arrangements be put in place for the Regulatory Committee to be given the opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the Action Plan and its performance;
- amendments to the Action Plan:-
 - Action 3e - Dr Oliver Letwin MP - his views on an emissions route out of West Dorset and how this could be applied. Add reference to “air quality managed areas/emission zones”.

Recommended

That the Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse the attached Freight Action Plan - as agreed by the Freight Quality Partnership and the Policy Development Panel – so that it might be applied and implemented, as necessary.

That the bullet points set out above be taken into consideration and progressed, as necessary and where practicable.

Reason for Recommendation

To do what is practicable to improve how HGV's are managed across Dorset, with particular attention being paid to improving the situation for Ferndown and its environs.

Meeting Duration: 2.00 pm - 3.35 pm