

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT – CLLR R TONGE

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

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FREIGHT ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITY MECHANISM
2012/13 FREIGHT MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to take forward a freight study looking at freight movements on the B3107 in Holt. The route has been identified as a priority via the Freight Assessment and Priority Mechanism (FAPM) process in 2012/13.

Background

2. The Council receives numerous comments and complaints from residents and town/parish councils regarding the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on their local communities, with the request that solutions, typically weight limits, be introduced. Wiltshire Council has developed the FAPM to help deal with the requests that are received. The FAPM is an assessment tool which enables the Council to look at a number of different criteria to assess the extent of an HGV issue in a particular area.
3. Use of the mechanism was approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Economic Development in April 2008.
4. The FAPM has been developed as a two-part process. The first stage of the assessment process involves undertaking a range of surveys and assessments that consider the following:
 - **HGV proportion and flow**
 - Number of HGVs
 - Proportion of HGVs
 - **Safety**
 - Accidents
 - Speeds
 - Footway availability (Pavements) *for HGVs*
 - **Community characteristics**
 - Number of properties fronting onto the route
 - Proximity to local services such as schools, shops and doctors, etc.
 - Narrowings along the route
 - AONBs/Conservation areas
 - **Road characteristics**
 - Road classification
 - Physical nature of the road (e.g. single carriageway enclosed by high hedges)

5. A score is applied to each of these criteria to work out the likely impact HGVs are having along a route. An overall score for each freight issue forms a priority list which identifies the routes that should be carried forward to the second part of the assessment process.
6. Those routes that have been identified as a high priority through the first stage of the process are taken through to the second assessment stage. In this second stage, officers look at the local area to help determine any local circumstances which may give rise to the HGV problem identified. There may be operational reasons that HGVs may need to use a particular road, for example, to access a farm or other business. In addition, there are certain routes throughout the county, such as those shown on Wiltshire's Freight Route Network, where high levels of freight are expected and where freight management measures may not be appropriate.
7. Through this process, the Council is able to determine which route(s) should be further investigated with the aim of undertaking a more detailed study and potentially introducing appropriate freight management measures.

Main Considerations for the Council

8. Wiltshire Council's Freight Strategy requires that requests for freight management should be dealt with using the FAPM and this process allows the Council to decide where it should focus its limited resources in terms of freight management. The main consideration is whether a freight study should be undertaken to better understand freight movements in the vicinity of the B3107 in Holt in 2012/13.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

9. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and supporting strategies was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Priority goals of the LTP include improving the environment by reducing CO₂ emissions, as well as addressing community severance and air and noise pollution. Freight management measures can help to achieve these goals.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

10. The LTP was the subject of a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

Risk Assessment

11. The FAPM process is designed to remove as much as possible the risk of unnecessary use of the network by HGVs which should be travelling on alternative routes.
12. There is a possibility that the freight study recommends measures that would be difficult to implement.

Financial Implications

13. There is an allocation in the current approved LTP Integrated Transport budget for the development of freight management schemes.

Legal Implications

14. No legal implications have been identified.

Options Considered

15. All requests for weight limits and other freight management measures are assessed using Wiltshire Council's FAPM process. At the beginning of 2012, around 100 requests for freight management measures were assessed using the FAPM. Through this process the B3107 has been identified as a priority route for further investigation.
16. No other options have been considered as the FAPM process sets the freight priorities for the year.

Reason for Proposal

17. The assessment process has concluded that the B3107 through Holt is Wiltshire's top priority for freight management in 2012/13. A study is required to help better understand the freight movements in and around the B3107 in Holt before further consideration can be given to the introduction of freight management measures on this route. In addition, a freight study in this area will also assist the Council in predicting likely HGV movements when the Hilperton Relief Road (HRR), which will be constructed nearby, is built. The delivery of the HRR is tied to the development of the strategic housing site to the east of Trowbridge; the proposed study would be part funded by this committed development which is now in the process of being constructed. Therefore, it is imperative that the Council fully understands as soon as possible the likely impact the HRR will have on the HGV routing through Holt and in the surrounding area, and gives consideration to the opportunities for routing that this new link may offer

Proposal

18. That a study should be undertaken to better understand freight movements in and around the B3107 in Holt.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None