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| <b>Cabinet</b>         |  |
| <b>Meeting Date</b>    | 18 December 2019   |
| <b>Report Title</b>    | Lorry Parking in the Borough   |
| <b>Cabinet Member</b>  | Cllr Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property   |
| <b>SMT Lead</b>        | Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration   |
| <b>Head of Service</b> | Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services  |
| <b>Lead Officer</b>    | Kieren Mansfield, Economy and Community Services Manager   |
| <b>Key Decision</b>    | No   |
| <b>Classification</b>  | <b>Open</b>  |
| <b>Recommendations</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Council maintains its dialogue with the Highway Authorities and other relevant stakeholders to help develop a set of actions to help address lorry parking in the Borough, but would wish to see this come forward as part of a wider strategy for Kent.</li> <li>2. The Council will not pursue any specific proposals to identify a site for lorry parking close to Brenley Corner.</li> </ol> |

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The previous administration had expressed an interest in working with Kent County Council and neighbouring authorities to facilitate new, formal lorry parking provision as part of efforts to reduce unofficial lorry parking, in evidence at a number of locations across Swale. In March 2019 Cabinet gave authority to officers to explore further with Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council and Highways England potential options for lorry parking.
- 1.2 This report restates the scale and extent of the problem and considers whether the Council should continue to engage with partners in respect of identifying potential options for lorry parking.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 A report to the December 2018 Swale Joint Transport Board set out the scale of the problem of unofficial lorry parking in Kent and for Swale specifically. In September 2018 surveys showed an average of 246 trucks unofficially parked per night. This is at least three times as many as any other district in Kent and since this report was produced, a further survey in June 2019 showed an average of 260 trucks per night. The distribution of the unofficial lorry parking is both local, largely focused on established employment areas, and along strategic road corridors, namely the A249, A2 and A299. The damaging effects of this are felt

by residents and businesses – noise and air pollution from refrigeration units, anti-social behaviour and littering, negative road safety, impacts, and damage to verges and kerbs.

- 2.2 To date commercial provision has generated a limited and patchy availability of lorry parking in Kent, which has had little impact upon the problem locally, with some sites in Swale operating without the necessary consents. Consequently, and over some period of time, the Highways Authorities have been working to encourage new lorry parking provision across Kent and identify potential sites, recognising that there is a need to back this up with enhanced enforcement powers.
- 2.3 At Ashford, where formal provision is commercially provided, a pilot enforcement scheme was trialled from October 2017 until April 2019. A zonal HGV parking ban was implemented on a section of the A20 between Charing and Ashford, and on certain industrial estates around Ashford as an 'Experimental Traffic Regulation Order' (TRO). The scheme proved successful in reducing unofficial lorry parking, with over 2,300 HGV's clamped. It is yet to be seen whether the reductions in informal lorry parking at Ashford will be sustained, now that the enforcement regime has ended.
- 2.4 As the district with the largest problem and given the distribution of the informal lorry parking, discussions about Swale have focused on Brenley Corner (J7 M2) and the A249 corridor. Both Kent County Council and Highways England have sought to establish what the position of the new administration is in respect of the identification of possible sites for formal lorry parking and specifically at Brenley Corner.
- 2.5 To be commercially acceptable (with a view to accommodating up to c.300 trucks) the site requirement for a lorry park was expected to be in the order of 10 acres. In either location, aside from land availability, there would be significant planning and transport issues that would need to be considered.
- 2.6 In both locations there is also additional uncertainty regarding the possibility of improvements to the strategic road network, which could impact directly, or indirectly on the consideration of sites. The proposed improvements at Junction 5, remain to be confirmed and until the scheme is in place this will impact upon potential sites close to the A249, which may generate additional HGV movements. At Brenley Corner both KCC and Swale Borough Council have lobbied for improvements required at M2 Junction 7, which is also facing capacity issues, in the hope that funding will be identified through the next phase of the Governments Road Investment Strategy. At present there is no outline design for such a scheme and land required to deliver any improvements uncertain.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 Given the scale of the problem in Swale, the Council will maintain its dialogue with the Highway Authorities and a wider set of relevant stakeholders to help

develop a set of actions to help address informal lorry parking in the Borough. However, to be effective we would wish to see this come forward as part of a wider strategy for Kent. This may include identification of sites for formal lorry parking, but should also reflect the need to put in place an appropriate and affordable enforcement regime.

- 3.2 As part of this, the Council does not currently wish to pursue any specific proposals to identify a site for lorry parking close to M2 Junction 7. Given the current issues at Brenley Corner and the priority that Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council have placed on securing substantial improvements to the junction, the Council believes that any such proposal should only be considered in the context of a scheme, at the point it comes forward.
- 3.3 It is recommended that
1. The Council maintains its dialogue with the Highway Authorities and other relevant stakeholders to help develop a set of actions to help address lorry parking in the Borough, but would wish to see this come forward as part of a wider strategy for Kent.
  2. The Council will not pursue any specific proposals to identify a site for lorry parking close to Brenley Corner.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Do nothing – this is not recommended as this an issue impacting upon communities across Swale and as such the Council is open to dialogue with stakeholders to develop effective and affordable solutions where possible.
- 4.2 Pursuing the identification of a site to create a formal lorry park at Brenley Corner. This is not considered appropriate at this time. The Junction is already at capacity and is a critical node on the strategic road network that is widely recognised as being in need of major improvement. Aside from any wider planning and traffic impact considerations, identification of any site in close proximity would potentially be compromised, subject to the junction improvements that are eventually bought forward.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 The previous administration held discussions with Kent County Council, Highways England and Canterbury City Council. The development of an effective approach to the issue of informal lorry parking will require a partnership approach involving a wider set of agencies and other stakeholders, including the haulage industry and local businesses.

## 6 Implications

| Issue                                 | Implications   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Corporate Plan                        | Finding solutions to address the problems associated with unofficial lorry parking will primarily contribute to Priority 2: delivering improved quality of life.   |
| Financial, Resource and Property      | None identified at this stage. Any comprehensive strategy would involve Swale Borough Council resources. As a minimum it would be responsible for substantial elements of the enforcement required. Any other interventions could have resource implications across a range of Council Services. This would need to be considered in the light of any future proposals   |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement      | None identified at this stage.   |
| Crime and Disorder                    | None identified at this stage. However, it is important to note that the issue of informal lorry parking is associated with anti-social behaviour, which impacts upon a number of communities across the Borough.  |
| Environment and Sustainability        | None identified at this stage. However, it is important to note that the issue of informal lorry parking is associated with negative environmental impacts on a number of communities across the Borough. Building a lorry park at Brenley Corner would result in the loss of grade 1 agricultural land, cause negative environmental impacts on and around the site (e.g. air pollution, dust, noise, lighting in the countryside). |
| Health and Wellbeing                  | None identified at this stage  |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | None identified at this stage.   |
| Equality and Diversity                | None identified at this stage  |
| Privacy and Data Protection           | None identified at this stage  |

## 7 Appendices

7.1 None.

## 8 Background Papers

HGV Parking - report to the Swale Joint Transport Board, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018.  
Lorry Parking within the Borough – report to Cabinet, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019