

SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Meeting Date	Monday 12 September 2016
Report Title	Swale Freight Management Plan
Cabinet Member	Cllr David Simmons, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Rural Affairs
SMT Lead	Mark Radford
Head of Service	Tracey Beattie
Lead Officer	Sue Kennedy
Classification	Open

Recommendations	<p>Members are asked to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Support the preparation of a Swale Freight Management Plan to identify opportunities to reduce air pollutants from freight transport and other commercial vehicle sources in the Borough.2) Consider any other relevant concerns to be incorporated in the final report.3) Agree to the completed Defra approved report being brought back to the JTB early in 2017.
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1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The successful Defra Grant application made by the Environmental Protection Team in 2013 for the development of a Freight Management Plan included the proviso that the plan was completed by the end of 2016. The plan was intended to complement the overarching Kent Freight Action Plan 2012 (currently under review) and provide a more detailed assessment of the freight issues in the borough and explore opportunities to reduce air pollutants associated with freight and commercial vehicles.

2. Background

- 2.1 Freight transport is known to contribute significantly to poor air quality within the Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. The development of a Freight Management Plan for Swale will provide us with information on potential opportunities to improve air quality and a framework for action with our partners in the sector to achieve this.
- 2.2 John Elliott Consultancy and Mike Talbot Associates have been appointed to produce the Freight Management Plan for Swale by the end of 2016 in line with the

funding requirements from Defra. The plan will complement the Kent wide Freight Action Plan and bring a detailed analysis of the issues in Swale.

- 2.3 This is the final year of the Freight Management Plan project and the Council are required to submit the report to Defra by the end of 2016. An informal steering group meeting was held in July to discuss the current issues and to provide a remit for the consultants who will be preparing the plan for the Council. The intention is to align this work with the new KCC Freight Action Plan and KCC Transport strategy which is currently out for consultation.
- 2.4 Appendix I sets out in draft, the headlines of the Freight Management Plan the consultants will be working on.

3. Issues for Decision

- 3.1 Under the terms of the original grant the Council are required to produce the Freight Management Plan and submit it to Defra by December 2016.
- 3.2 With this in mind members are asked to consider the various suggestions made for inclusion and whether there are any additional matters they wish to see incorporated into the plan.

4. Recommendation

4.1

Members are asked to:

- 1) Support the preparation of a Swale Freight Management Plan to identify opportunities to reduce air pollutants from freight transport and other commercial vehicle sources in the Borough.
- 2) Consider any other relevant concerns to be incorporated in the final report
- 3) Agree to the completed Defra approved report being brought back to the JTB early in 2017.

5. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The adoption of a freight management plan will contribute to the Council's priorities of a borough and a community to be proud of. Its aim is to seek to improve community safety through safer roads and to actively explore opportunities to reduce air pollutants associated with freight and commercial vehicles.
Financial, Resource and Property	Costs associated with preparing the report are covered by the DEFRA grant. Using the information provided by the report will assist in formulating responses to air quality within the various Air Quality Management Areas. Depending on any locally agreed initiatives Traffic Regulation Orders may be required although this cost should be accommodated from within existing budgets.
Legal and Statutory	The Plan is not a statutory plan but one which will provide a detailed planning framework to address air quality management. Legal will be involved in finalising any Traffic Regulation Orders
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	Reducing air pollutants will have a significant impact on health and wellbeing
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Sustainability	The plan is designed to provide a framework to explore opportunities to reduce air pollutants and should contribute to sustainability.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix I – Outline Draft for Swale B C Freight Management Plan

Scoping Document for the Draft Freight Management Plan

Prepared by John Elliott Consulting and Mike Talbot Associates
August 2016

1. Background

- 1.1. The current economic prosperity of the borough relies on freight movements distributing the goods from ports and distribution centres based within the district. Unfortunately this predominance of road freight contributes to air poor quality; and the need to identify mitigation measure through traffic and network management.
- 1.2. There are a number of organisations with responsibilities for transport and highways within the borough: Swale BC (SBC), Kent CC (KCC), Highways England (HE) which can all influence this source of air pollutants including the road haulage industry itself.
- 1.3. There are a number of strategic plans which influence air quality in Swale: the current Local Plan, Bearing Fruits lays out the aspirations for future development, employment; housing allocations and consequently for freight movement with Master Plans for specific development sites. KCC's Local Transport Plan and daughter documents including the Kent Freight Action Plan also play a role in Swale' air quality. As does Highways England's investment programme, including Operation Stack and M2 junctions improvements.
- 1.4. A consultation with KCC and other agencies, including the relevant services within Swale was originally undertaken in 2013 and work to proceed with the suggestions of this steering group commenced. For example Swale had undertaken several Air Quality partnership projects last year including "Ecostars" (an award scheme for freight which was the pilot for Kent), the KCC "Smarter Travel Challenge", with a website for travel planning and an eco driving initiative to help drivers to drive more efficiently and use less fuel and thus produce less air pollution. During this time the steering group was dormant but recently a new steering group has met in 2016.
- 1.5. The Swale Freight Management Plan is being written by the consultants Mike Talbot and John Elliott using the Swale grant money allocated by Defra in 2013. It will be aligned with new KCC Transport Strategy and new KCC Freight Action Plan.

2. Swale Borough Council Freight Management Plan (FMP)

The draft plan includes suggestions from the officer steering group which comprised officers from Swale Borough Council, Planning Policy and Economic Development as well

as Environmental Protection and the KCC who are currently revising their Transport Strategy. The outline proposals will be developed more fully by the consultants over the following months and be submitted to Defra for approval.

In summary the suggestions raised by the group are:

1. Identify the problems caused by Freight Traffic in Swale.

- a) **Overview** - of problems and the causes of air quality and freight transport in general terms and local incidence of those problems within Swale.
- b) **Air quality** - Relationship between AQ and traffic, and freight traffic's contribution; identifying the proportion of lorries, vans (taxis and buses also an issue), the circumstances when problems greatest – volume, queues, hills, canyons, types of vehicles. Designation of AQMAs in Swale. The role of vehicle speed.
- c) **Noise and intrusion** - Vibration and noise for residents along key routes, especially A2. Exacerbated by speed.
- d) **Lorry parking** - Nature of nuisance: noise, pollution, litter. KCC survey results. Cause due to lack of lorry parking facilities, drivers' hour's limits, port location.
- e) **Lorry use of unsuitable roads** - Some have no choice because of location of destination (e.g. for depots on A2 between Sittingbourne and Faversham or farm produce), whilst others divert to unsuitable roads to avoid congestion. Issues of lack of capacity at key locations leads to rat runs, signing may not be effective, sat nav's, lack of junctions on M2.
- f) **Rural Diversification** - (e.g. mini business parks) leading to more lorries on unsuitable rural roads.
- g) **Alternative Transport Options** - Rail options limited. Paths on rail network limited. But Sheerness Master Plan includes rail terminal
- h) **Impact of traffic displaced into Swale** - Problems caused by traffic cascading onto Swale's roads when there are problems on HE's network.
- i) **Lack of resilience in road network** - Single connection to motorway network at M2 J5 and reliance on A249 for north-south access in the borough means network unable to cope with disruption.
- j) **Damage to highways** - Impact of high volumes of lorry traffic and lorries parking on footways. Impact of damage on delays (road works), noise and vibration, pedestrians. Costs for highway authority.

2. Swale BC's Scope for Action

Clarify the extent of the role SBC can play within the FMP including:

- a) Powers in some areas, influence in others
- b) Resource constraints

3. Action plan – to consider suggestions received for direct intervention

- a) Use of planning powers. Role of Air Quality technical guidance/supplementary planning guidance. How can powers be used to best effect. How to police planning conditions?
- b) Taxi licensing conditions
- c) Use of purchasing power to promote good practice in deliveries

4. Action Plan – influencing behaviour

- a) Promotion of better driving by lorry drivers
- b) Promotion of better freight operations by companies
- c) Signs for turning off engines in queues and limiting speed in AQMA congestion residential and conservation areas

5. Action Plan – lobbying or working with other parties in relation to:

- a) Provision of more lorry parking in Swale
- b) Junction improvements on A249
- c) M20 lorry parking plans and encourage use of space for overnight parking when not needed for Stack
- d) M2 J5 improvements
- e) Extra M2 junction
- f) M2 J7 improvement
- g) Lower Thames Crossing
- h) KCC soft initiatives, e.g. freight route planner
- i) Any other suggestions from consultees and Councillors

6. Consultation

The draft Freight Management Plan will be shared with the relevant AQMA Steering Groups and Parish Councils for consultation following the comments made by the JTB meeting. Any comments will be considered for inclusion in the plan.