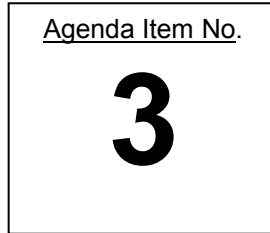


HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS CABINET PANEL
WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2018 AT 10.00AM**



A507 WEIGHT RESTRICTION PROJECT

Report of the Chief Executive & Director of Environment

Author: Trevor Brennan, Manager (ITP) (Tel: 01992 658406)

Executive Member: Ralph Sangster (Highways)

Local Members:- Jeff Jones – Buntingford
Michael Muir – Baldock and Letchworth East
Steve Jarvis – Royston West and Rural

Adjoining Members: Ken Crofton – Hertford Rural
David Andrews – Ware North
Fiona Hill – Royston East and Ermine
Simon Bloxham – Letchworth North
Terry Hone – Letchworth South
Phil Bibby – St Nicholas (Stevenage)
Adam Mitchell - Broadwater (Stevenage)
Michael Hearn - Shephall (Stevenage)
Robin Parker – Chells (Stevenage)
Richard Thake – Knebworth and Codicote
Graham McAndrew – Bishop’s Stortford Rural

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To set out the key elements of a Project Plan to devise and evaluate an optimum scheme of enforceable Weight Limits to channel Heavy Goods Vehicles onto the most appropriate routes, avoiding A507 between Baldock and Buntingford.

2. Summary

2.1 Following the recommendations of the June 2017 Highways Cabinet Panel, a Project Plan has been developed to devise and evaluate an optimum scheme of enforceable Weight Limits to channel Heavy Goods Vehicles onto the most appropriate routes, avoiding A507 between Baldock and Buntingford.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Panel is asked to note this Project Plan.

4. Background

4.1 Following a petition from the 'A Safer A507 Campaign Team' and the December 2016 Highways Cabinet Panel initial consideration, the June 2017 Panel endorsed the proposal to:

- i) Initiate a project to develop and consult upon a 7.5t weight limit proposal on the A507 funded by the 2018/19 Integrated Plan and submit for future consideration by the Panel
- ii) Not proceed with a re-classification of the A507 at this stage, but ensure that the issues were considered within the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP 4) process.
- iii) Investigate whether funding could be secured for the Police to enforce weight limit restrictions.

4.2 It was also acknowledged at the Panel meeting that the further study would include:

- i) Extension of the weight restriction from the Baldock Road to Buntingford to stop HGV traffic coming down the A507 and thus cover farm traffic which used it in preference to the bypass
- ii) Extension of the weight restriction from Radwell Services to the A10 to protect Baldock railway bridge

4.3 The strategic impact of east – west movements across northern Hertfordshire and beyond is being recognised within LTP 4 and joint working with neighbouring authorities is being initiated to develop a cohesive transport strategy for the corridor.

5 Project Plan

5.1 The overall aim of the Plan is to develop an optimum scheme of enforceable Weight Limits to channel Heavy Goods Vehicles onto the most appropriate routes, avoiding the A507 between Baldock and Buntingford

5.2 This scheme will then be evaluated by comparing and contrasting the:

- i) Benefits and dis-benefits to communities and road users between A507 between Baldock and Buntingford
- ii) Benefits and dis-benefits to communities and road users on the wider network

5.3 The communities within the following Divisions are likely to benefit from a weight restriction to some degree

- Buntingford
- Baldock and Letchworth East
- Royston West and Rural

5.4 However, the communities within the following Divisions are likely to dis-benefit to some degree as a result of both formal and informal re-routing of HGVs

- Hertford Rural
- Ware North
- Royston East and Ermine
- Letchworth North
- Letchworth South
- St Nicholas (Stevenage)
- Chells (Stevenage)
- Shephall (Stevenage)
- Broadwater (Stevenage)
- Knebworth and Codicote
- Bishop's Stortford Rural

5.5 This will allow final recommendations to be presented to the Highways Cabinet Panel on how to proceed in the light of the likely consequences of the various options.

5.6 The key components of the project are set out below:

5.7 **Rerouting of Traffic**

- The effect rerouted traffic will have on other roads and on towns and villages such as Stevenage and Hooks Cross on the A602 route and Royston and Buckland on the A10/A505 route.
- What might the relative impact on residential properties on those alternative routes be and how might it compare to the current impact on such properties on the A507?
- Further work to confirm modelling of numbers of HGVs expected to be rerouted and how effective a weight restriction might be at changing HGV route patterns with different levels of enforcement.

5.8 **Enforceability**

- Options for funding Police enforcement.
- The potential use of other technologies such as Automatic Number-Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera options will be explored.
- What is the experience or level of compliance of other weight restrictions elsewhere within or outside the county?

5.9 Designing the Proposed Weight Limit

- i) Understand and determine the options for the extent and type of the proposed weight limit.
- ii) Undertake a study of existing weight restrictions in the vicinity of the recognised alternative routes, including the A507, and their likely impact on the A507 weight limit proposals

5.9.1 Wider Implications

- i) Understand the effect of the proposed weight limit on the highway network in adjacent authorities (including Highways England).
- ii) Understand the wider effect on Hertfordshire's network, given the A507 is a well-used east-west cross county route that is also used as a signed diversion route. If a weight restriction was introduced this would hinder the use of the A507 as a diversion route without the suspension of the weight restriction by means of a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO).

5.9.2 Policy and Strategy Implications

- i) Initial assessments suggest that the alternative routes would typically increase the length of each diverted trip by around 10 miles with the associated air quality, carbon, congestion and productivity implications.
- ii) This increased trip length needs to be considered in the context of the duty placed upon Hertfordshire County Council by the Traffic Management Act to help ensure the expeditious movement of people and goods.

6. Project Plan Timeline

- 6.1 **Phase 1:** Data Gathering and Analysis (March – June 2018) to gather any additional data required including informal stakeholder consultations, undertake agreed modelling and analysis work and provide initial conclusions and options for consideration.
- 6.2 **Phase 2:** Outline Report (July – September 2018) considering options and making recommendations prepared for onward reporting to September Highways Cabinet Panel
- 6.3 **Phase 3:** Detailed design and formal public consultation on preferred option (Autumn/ Winter 2018/19)
- 6.4 **Phase 4:** Evaluate consultation and make final recommendations to January / February 2019 Highways Cabinet Panel.

6.5 **Phase 5:** Implementation of chosen scheme during 2019/20.

7 Financial implications

7.1 Funding for project development in 2018/19 and potential implementation in 2019/20 has been allocated within the Integrated Programme.

7.2 The potential for funding Police enforcement shall be investigated as part of the project development.

8. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs)

8.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

8.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure the proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.

8.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant, protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.4 The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.5 There are no equalities implications arising because of this report and an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been undertaken.

Background papers

[*22 June 2017- Highways Cabinet Panel-Proposed Actions Following the 'A Safer 507' petition \(and associated maps\)*](#)