

FARNHAM FREIGHT INITIATIVES: UPDATE

1 Introduction

Work is underway to develop the County Council's first Freight Strategy which will form part of the third statutory Local Transport Plan. Freight was considered within the first and second Local Transport Plans but only as a contributory element to other key objectives (such as reducing congestion). The new freight strategy will be published by March 2011. The strategy will set out the county's approach to balancing dealing with the impact of goods vehicles whilst maintaining a vibrant economy.

More locally, at the Farnham Air Quality Management Area meeting in Farnham on 26 January 2010 freight traffic, especially congestion involving deliveries in the town centre, was identified as a possible key cause of poor air quality in the town.

This note sets out actions being taken in Farnham and countywide in respect to freight traffic.

2 Freight Initiatives in Farnham

A Business Delivery and Servicing Study focussing on The Borough, South Street, Union Road, Downing Street, West Street, East Street and Castle Street is currently being undertaken with the assistance of Waverley Borough Council. This includes:

- Interviews with business and shop owners on these streets on their delivery loading/unloading patterns
- On-street observations of loading/unloading activity
- Consultation on extending waiting restrictions

The survey will be supported by an assessment of:

- Traffic Flow data especially HGV movements
- Accident records
- Lorry/ delivery routes through the town

It is proposed to set up a Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) to consider the findings of the surveys and identify and appraise other local freight related issues such as the impact of new developments. The FQP would be drawn from local members the business community, freight operators and other local representative groups.

Lorry Route Signing Lorry Directional Signing is being installed in the A325/A31 Shepherd and Flock area of Farnham to direct long distance lorries away from the A3016 through Upper Hale and onto the A331 Blackwater Valley Route. This is in response to member and public concerns about the impact of large goods vehicles passing through this residential area.

It is proposed to monitor and address more localised lorry routing problems through the Waverley Local Tasks Groups. An HGV reporting system is already available on the Surrey website and we are working with Parish Councils and other groups to

identify problem routes and alert the freight industry. However, it is felt that this system could be enhanced if coordinated by local task groups.

3 Progress on Countywide Freight Transport Initiatives

Lorry Routeing - Surrey's location on the fringe of London and within the national road corridor to the channel ports puts additional pressure on Surrey's roads and makes it essential to collaborate with other authorities when dealing with the impact of long distance freight traffic and disseminating information to lorry drivers.

Discussions are currently taking place with neighbouring southeast counties on developing consistent web-based regional lorry route mapping and disseminating this information to all drivers passing through the Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel.

Surrey also participates in the South London Freight Quality Partnership. This has led to the implementation of a joint lorry route signing scheme with the London Borough of Kingston and a detailed lorry parking study for south London and its approaches, which was focussed strongly on Surrey. Surrey also benefits from access to extensive research carried out on behalf of Transport for London on new developments such as Service and Delivery Plans and Construction Logistics Plans.

Within Surrey, preferred lorry routes are now being developed as GIS layers consistent with the Surrey Travel (Voyager) system. Lorry routes will generally be limited to A and B roads except for local access. This network will be aligned with the Priority Route Network, which targets road maintenance funding at roads with the heaviest HGV flows.

Environmental Weight Limits are in place in some Surrey villages but as they are costly to implement and are rarely enforced, new schemes will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Unsuitable for HGV signs will only be considered at locations where there is a history of large vehicles getting stuck.

Freight Quality Partnerships (FQP's) have previously been initiated in Guildford, Epsom and Ewell, and North West Surrey (Woking, Spelthorne, Elmbridge, Runnymede and Surrey Heath). These were set up as part of the development of major schemes in those areas and have resulted lorry route plans and lorry signing schemes. Future FQP's could be initiated as part of the major transport hub scheme developments in Guildford and Redhill/Reigate and to support local initiatives such as Air Quality management Areas.

In order to coordinate these initiatives, Transport for Surrey has designated Peter Hitchings as the Council's freight officer. Peter can be contacted on:

020 8541 8992 or peter.hitchings@surreycc.gov.uk