



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(WOKING)**

**HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES – PROPOSED
WEIGHT RESTRICTION AMENDMENTS
31ST OCTOBER 2007**

KEY ISSUE

This report recommends the advertising and introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order that is required by Legislation.

SUMMARY

A change in Legislation requires Highway Authorities to change all existing 17 Tonne weight restrictions to 18 Tonnes. The existing Traffic Regulation Orders therefore need to be changed. Two such Orders in Woking are affected.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to agree:

- (i) that the intention of the County Council to make an Order under Sections 1, Part III of Schedule 9 and Part IV of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to change the existing weight restrictions Orders listed in ANNEXE A from 17 Tonnes to 18 Tonnes be advertised and that if no objections be maintained, the Order be made.**
- (ii) that consideration and if possible resolution of any representations received as a result of advertising the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders be delegated to the Highways Group Manager (West).**

- (iii) that, in the event that any objections are maintained despite recommendation (ii), the Highways Group Manager (West) in liaison with the Local Committee Chairman and local Members be authorised to over-rule these on the grounds that the proposed changes are a legislative requirement.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Central Government introduced the current edition of The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSR&GD) in 2002. This Statutory Instrument governs the traffic signs and carriageway markings which may be used on the Public Highway.
- 1.2 One of the changes within the above Regulations was to support the legislation that was brought about by a previous Statutory Instrument in 1998, the Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) Regulations 1998, which was necessitated by a European Parliament Directive.
- 1.3 In essence, traffic signing and therefore Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that had previously imposed a weight limit restriction of 17 Tonnes were to be increased to 18 Tonnes.
- 1.4 Highway Authorities were given until 1 January 2007 to change any Traffic Regulation Orders and their associated signing.
- 1.5 In order to make this process easier the Department of Transport were to introduce an amended procedure to change the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders
- 1.6 The Department of Transport has now informed us that this simplified procedure has not been introduced due to the high volume of work undertaken by them on the new Traffic Management Bill.
- 1.7 The County Council still has a duty to comply with the required changes and will have to use the existing legal procedure of revoking current Traffic Regulation Orders and introducing new ones with the new weight limit.

2. ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Instead of introducing separate Orders it is proposed to introduce one Order, which will make the process easier, and more importantly make the necessary advertising cheaper.
- 2.2 The details of the affected TROs and their associated bridges and roads are shown in **ANNEXE A**. Only two are in the borough of Woking – a weight restriction covering various roads in the Sheerwater Area and the other is for Oriental Road.
- 2.3 A full survey of the existing traffic signing has been undertaken and the changes required have been designed.

COUNTY LORRY ROUTEING STRATEGY

A lorry routeing strategy for the County is currently being developed. The strategy will be represented in a digital format on the website and reinforced by signing on the preferred routes. This project cannot be completed until the weight restriction revisions are implemented.

Many objectors at the 2005 Public Inquiry for Walton Bridge raised concerns over the effectiveness of Surrey County Council's management of freight traffic. Following the Inquiry the Inspector reported that although Surrey's approach to this issue was sound very little progress had been made. Many of the sites listed in ANNEXE A of this report are in the north west of Surrey and will have some impact on route choice in through the area served by Walton Bridge.

It is essential that these issues are resolved in advance of a possible new public Inquiry into the redesigned bridge scheme, which is expected to place during 2007/2008.

3. OPTIONS

- 3.1 This is the only option available if the County Council is to comply with national legislation, and maintain a weight limit on the bridge.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 No consultation has been carried out since the proposed changes are required by law. Any objections received as a result of advertisement of the proposals will also have to be considered against this legislative requirement.

5. VALUE FOR MONEY AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The estimated cost of amending the Traffic Regulation Orders is £2,500. The cost of the changes to signage is estimated to be £10,000. Capital funding provision has been made from the Surrey Lorry Routing and Freight Quality Partnership budget. There are no financial implications for the Local Committee's devolved or delegated budgets.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has no implications for equalities and diversity

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report has no implications for crime and disorder.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The proposed changes are required by law and the County Council is therefore obliged to make these, and to deal with any objections which may arise against that background.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To comply with national legislation

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 Following approval of the proposal by the affected Local Committees, the Traffic Order will be advertised. If no objections are received the Order will be made and

the signage will be amended. In the event of objections these will be considered and dealt with as agreed by each Local Committee.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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Annexes: 1