

**Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 10 November 2015**

Present:

**Attendance**

Len Bloomer	Geoff Martin
Tim Corbett	Simon Tagg
Carol Dean	Martyn Tittley
David Loades (Vice-Chairman)	

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:**

**PART ONE**

**31. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**32. Declarations of Interest**

Mr Martin declared an interest as a former haulier.

**33. FOR INFORMATION: Notes of the Inquiry Session held on the 20 October 2015**

There were two amendments:

Page 2, 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point "In 1985 the "A515" should read "A513".

Page 3, 7<sup>th</sup> bullet point – "would have to turn left and go down to the "A50" should read "A51".

The notes were confirmed as a correct record subject to the above amendments.

**34. 10:15 Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Economic Plan (10 minutes)**

Peter Davenport, Economic Partnerships Manager and Partnership Manager for the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Economic Plan was prepared in 2014 and provides a long term vision through to 2030. The Plan is used to draw down investment funding. The objectives of the SEP are:

1. Stoke on Trent as a Core UK City

2. Staffordshire as a Connected County - the aim is “super connectivity”, maximising the benefit of existing road, rail and air connections and future strategic infrastructure investments, including HS2
3. Competitive urban centres - the future prosperity of the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire economy will also be dependent on growth in Stoke-on-Trent and the chain of strategic centres in Stafford, Burton, Cannock, Lichfield, Tamworth and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Business and housing growth in and around these centres will underpin economic progress.
4. Sector Growth - ensuring globally competitive innovation, investment and enterprise-led expansion in large & small businesses across our priority sectors. We have to take advantage of sectors where we have the most strength.
5. Skilled workforce - to develop a modern and flexible skills system which enables all people to up-skill and re-skill to meet the needs of our growth sectors, particularly important in manufacturing industries. Staffordshire has strength in this area.

The strategy is built around a series of key sectors which are expected to drive growth in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. These include:

Five Advanced Manufacturing sectors: Applied Materials, Agricultural Technologies, Aero-Auto, Medical Technology and Energy Generation. There are two further Barometer sectors, which help to benchmark progress towards a more mature local economy: Business and Professional Services, and Tourism and Leisure (e.g. Alton Towers, in spite of recent redundancy announcements). Applied materials e.g. ceramics; Agri-tech e.g. JCB, important in spite of recent announcements regarding job losses; Medical technologies e.g. Keele Science Park; Energy generation (Stoke and Staffs – GEC based, GEE ABB still very big business internationally); Aero-auto. There are many businesses supplying automotive parts and supply chains providing components for manufacture across the UK e.g. i54. Fradley – company on the Business Park that is a big manufacturer of electrical components; Business and Professional services - largely in town centres not as strong a presence as we would like; Tourism – a strong sector – particularly, Alton Towers (in spite of the announcement of recent redundancies) has been strong in this area.

Health is the biggest employer in Staffordshire. Transport including storage is the fifth biggest employer accounting for 25,000 jobs and an expanding area of growth.

All allocated employment sites and manufacturers are situated along main ‘A’ roads in Staffordshire. We have been investing in sites along these routes.

### **35. 10:25 The role of the Traffic Manager - including network classification and traffic regulation (15 minutes)**

David Walters, Regulation and Governance Manager

The best use of the road network is important for economic vitality and society in general. The primary purpose of a road remains facilitating movement. The local road network is a finite resource with legitimate and competing pressures from road users.

Reliable journey times are important to road users. This has to be balanced against the needs of the local transport authorities, utilities and communities in order to maintain and upgrade the network.

The Council has a range of duties and powers as the Highway Authority. These are set out in The Highways Act 1980; The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991; the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Road Traffic Act 1988.

### **Network Management and the Traffic Management Act 2004, Section 16**

The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the local authority to manage their road network to enable traffic to move freely and quickly on their roads and roads of nearby local authorities and the strategic network, such as that managed by Highways England (HE). The responsibility for ensuring this duty is met is that of the Traffic Manager (David Walters). This is a statutory post. Physical and classification changes to the network and the impact on the network of neighbouring authorities is the responsibility of the Traffic Manager.

### **Road Classification and the Primary Route Network (PRN)**

The PRN designates roads between places of traffic importance across the UK with the aim of providing easily identifiable routes to access the whole of the country.

A series of locations, designated as primary destinations, are identified by the Department of Transport (DfT), which are then linked by roads. From January 2012 local highway authorities have the responsibility for management of the road classification system (with central government approval).

DfT guidance states that the PRN must provide unrestricted access to 40 tonne vehicles. The implementation of a weight restriction would require reclassification to remove its primary route status. A significant change to the PRN would require the Highways Authority to consult with other highways authorities. Where a change has an impact on the strategic road network, the highways authority must consult with HE. Agreement of all affected authorities must be obtained before a change to the PRN can be made. The Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport retains ultimate power over the PRN. The removal of a section of the road from the PRN would require replacement and modification of signage along the local authority network, HE network and adjoining local authority network. The cost of this would be the responsibility of the authority initiating the reclassification.

### **Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO)**

Placing a weight restriction order on a road is done by a TRO (made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). The SoS for Transport is responsible for authorising TROs on motorway and trunk roads. For authorities outside London the County Council are the relevant authority. The SoS has the power to lay down the procedure to be followed in making orders (Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996). The procedure to make a permanent order requires the authority to consult with organisations and road users.

The Regulations specify the publicity and consultation procedure that must be followed. Whilst consultation with some organisation is only required if the proposed order has an impact on them, the Road Haulage Association (RHA) and Freight Transport Association (FTA) must be consulted on all occasions. The relevant Chief Constable must be consulted before making an order for certain purposes, including prohibiting commercial vehicles from using a particular road. The authority does not have to accept the advice from the Police, but the order could be ignored by motorists if not enforced by the Police. Anyone may object to an order within 21 days of the notice being given.

A public enquiry only has to be held if the order affects loading, unloading at certain times of the day or bus services. Whilst the highways authority can make TROs without SoS consent or public enquiry, failure to follow proper procedure could result in a High Court challenge.

### **Enforcement of TROs**

The responsibility for enforcement of a TRO varies depending on the type of Order. The enforcement of a weight limit generally remains the responsibility of the Police. Trading standards and planning services officers may carry out enforcement work.

Enforcement can be time consuming and expensive and requires evidence that access to premises along the route is not required. It was proposed that implementing a width restriction supported by physical measures is easier, but would restrict HGVs with a legitimate need for access.

Parking has been decriminalised and is carried out by highway authorities (Traffic Management Act 2004).

The responsibility for enforcement of moving traffic offences is the responsibility of the SoS (this includes the enforcement of weight restrictions).

### **Emergency Diversion Route (EDR)**

County Councils have the responsibility to reduce, control or mitigate the effects of an emergency (Civil Contingencies Act 2004). This could include closure of part of the strategic road network. The Council also has a duty of care to the public stranded in traffic congestion.

EDRs help Highways England and Local Authorities manage traffic after closure of the strategic network via pre-planned, checked and agreed junction to junction diversion routes. Before introducing an EDR the route is investigated for suitability identifying traffic 'pinch points'. A PRN would generally be considered a suitable EDR. SCC and HE are reviewing EDRs in the county including those associated with the A38.

## **36. 10:40 County Council's Freight Strategy (10 minutes)**

Clive Thomson, Commissioner for Highways and the Built County

SCC published a Freight Strategy in April 2011 following consultation with Parish Councils, freight operators and HGV drivers. The Strategy was reviewed in 2014. All 20 actions and priorities in the Strategy were reviewed against criteria. A number of actions were outstanding but the review did not detail who should undertake the actions. Some actions were dependent on partnerships with others. The Strategy should be refreshed. Officers would welcome a steer from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee.

### **37. 10:50 Integrated Transport Strategy - including developments (15 minutes)**

Nick Dawson, Connectivity Transport Manager

Each borough/district council area has a (local) District Integrated Transport Strategy (DITS), which is published on our website. These strategies form part of Staffordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 3. They are 'refreshed' regularly.

The DITS help the Council prioritise expenditure in the districts, and secure contributions and funding e.g. from developers, and influence strategic investment from the rail industry and HE. In this latter regard reference is made to strategies produced by the road and rail industry. DITS also provide advice to local planning authorities on the impact of local development proposals on transport. Countywide the Council's available funding for integrated transport schemes (via Integrated Transport Block) has fallen to @ £3m per year (half of what it was), as the Government has diverted monies into Local Growth Deals. The DITS are informed by quantitative data gathered nationally and locally and include signage, speed safety issues and strategic maintenance issues, but mainly focus on land use planning and development.

In regard to HCVs and traffic SCC generally encourages maximum use of rail freight.

The strategies for Lichfield District and East Staffordshire Borough support the development of bypasses e.g. Lichfield Southern bypass and in neighbouring local authority areas Walton –upon Trent bypass in Derbyshire. SCC also supports a number of targeted road improvements along the A38 and A5. The strategies also include mitigation improvements flowing from development proposals e.g. weight restrictions, signing, speeding and safety reviews. In Lichfield District we support the provision of a lorry park at Fradley

Members were shown a slide on Fradley. The junctions at Fradley South and Hilliards Cross are considered inadequate in terms of slip lengths and general arrangements. The slide showed an improvement to Wood End Lane. SCC is lobbying HE for investment to improve both the Fradley junctions in Wood End Lane improvements may result from HS2 investment monies.

Engagement of the public is achieved through the Divisional Highways Teams who submit requests for improvements. Members raised concerns regarding public feedback to the Community Infrastructure team when problems occurs that impact on them, post development.

In regard to the impact of the Fradley development, planning permission was granted in 1995 for a different development. This has developed beyond expectations. No traffic

management plan for the area. Newer businesses on the development have developed routing agreements with SCC and use the A38 for access to the North and North West rather than the A515, albeit the A515 is a primary route on the local highway network.

### **Development Control process**

Dale Arthur, Development and Improvements Manager

SCC is a statutory consultee on new planning developments. 4,000-4,500 application consultations are received each year, a quarter of which are for the Lichfield/East Staffordshire area.

The role of the highways authority in its capacity as a statutory consultee is to ensure that the developments do not have a severe impact on the Staffordshire road network. Pre-application advice is provided to developers to encourage a better quality formal application. Every application is checked to ensure highways and transportation matters comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plans and District Transport Strategies. For large scale applications developers are required to make financial contributions to mitigate the impact of their developments by (Section 278 of the Highways Act) and Section 106 agreements.

When a new application is received developers are required to provide a transport assessment and/or a transport statement depending on the type and scale of the development. A range of factors are considered including trip generations from the development, traffic flows, accidents, road safety, connectivity, accessibility, and sustainability before recommendations are made to the Local Planning Authority. Construction traffic routing is important and developers are encouraged to direct access away from residential areas where possible. Some developments will require an off-site traffic management plan detailing the permitted routing for HCV traffic accessing and leaving the site. Travel plans are secured as part of the planning process and travel plan monitoring occurs following occupation of the development. Following planning approval of the application, a technical submission is made by the developer's consultant to consider new access arrangements. The developer then enters into a major works agreement with the County.

When a construction contract is let the highways works are supervised and administered by the Highways team. Following satisfactory completion of the works the works are then formally adopted.

Members asked what happened when recommendations made by the Highways Team are not enforced.

The Highways Team continually monitor the situation and undertake a road safety assessment within 12 months of substantial completion. If conditions are not met then the local borough/district council could enforce such condition under the Town and Country Planning Act. It would be up to the local planning authority to ensure that a planning condition such as a travel plan is enforced.

Members asked what would happen if a company's suppliers breached a HCV routing agreement planning condition.

If this occurred, the local authority would again have the powers to enforce this.

### **38. 11:05 A515 Case Study (25 minutes)**

Richard Rayson, Community Infrastructure Manager and David Walters, Regulation and Governance Manager

SCC receives more requests for improvements than it can meet for financial and practical reasons. In the last 2 years, 142 requests for weight limits were made from major to minor schemes. 85 requests for major schemes such as the A515 were received.

Each Member can identify community concerns and put them forward for inclusion in the DHP. All suggestions are agreed and prioritised. Each Member has a budget of £10,000 to address local highways issues. Requests for weight restrictions are considered through the DHP.

Councillor Tittley prioritised a feasibility study into a weight restriction on the A515 using his DHP monies. Amey completed a technical report (at a cost of approximately £2,000) to determine if the A515 was designated correctly as a principal route; to determine what changes (if any) are required; to determine if a potential weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on a section of the A515 between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay is feasible and deliverable. The report considered the freight strategy and the importance of transport and logistics to the Staffordshire economy; the Council's powers, duties and responsibilities in terms of managing the local highways classifications and restricting HGV use. The Council's duty to ensure traffic can move freely and swiftly on the SCC and HE network and the classification of the A515 as a primary road. It concluded that the A515 contributes to the efficient movement of traffic within the county and the destinations along its route are correctly classified as a primary road.

The implementation of a weight limit would require reclassification of the A515 to remove its status as a principle route. This requires the Council to demonstrate that traffic flows are relatively low or that the journey of similar convenience is available through an assessment of the observed journey times and journey time reliability. Impact of displaced traffic on the alternative route would have to be given full consideration.

Traffic data from 2012-13 shows that the percentage of HGVs using the A515 in Yoxall is 11.3% and in Draycott in the Clay 7.4%. It was suggested that the percentage for Kings Bromley would be similar to Draycott in the Clay. Any weight restriction would have to allow vehicles to have access to businesses and premises along its route. We have no data on the number of HGVs that currently travel along the A515 that would be affected by a weight restriction and further evidence would have to be found. The enforcement of a weight restriction is difficult. This would be the responsibility of Staffordshire Police. Personal injury accident analysis shows there is no disproportionate number of road accidents involving HGVs along the A515. Any weight restriction would have to be suspended during these times of emergencies and planned works on the trunk road network.

The report concludes that the implementation of a weight restriction on the A515 would not be appropriate. If the Council decides to go ahead Amey advises that the following should be initially undertaken:-

- Establish the % of HGVs using the A515 for access and the number of HGVs not affected by a weight restriction;
- To establish the effect of surrounding roads for displaced traffic, including the A38, through a collection and analysis of traffic data;
- To identify any work required to replace or modify all direction signs indicating the A515 as a primary route
- To consider the effectiveness of an appropriate enforcement strategy
- To establish the practicalities of a temporary suspension of a weight restriction when the A515 is required as an emergency diversion route in terms of frequency and signing requirements.

Officers confirmed that none of these actions have been taken as yet.

Members found it disconcerting that we had to wait for accidents to happen before action was taken. Accident data shows that reported accidents on the A515 are low in number. Average speed cameras have been installed on the A515 to influence traffic speed.

Specific solutions could be found using DHP monies to address the issue of HGVs mounting footways along the A515. Some solutions could be identified with local communities.

Members asked if there was an issue regarding the road width of the A515. A primary route should be 7.3metres wide. This is the case along the majority of the A515 but in parts of Yoxall and Kings Bromley this is not the case.

Members suggested that the origin and destination surveys be carried out. Some limited data was available that indicated that 57% of HGVs travelling to Fradley came from the North West, Warrington, Cheshire West and Cheshire East and Flintshire and 73% of HGVs are going to those destinations. This information could be supplemented by roadside interviews. Members sought reassurance that the HGVs using the A515 were using the correct route and should not be using the A38, and proposed a weight restriction on Wood End Lane.

Further evidence from DfT traffic counts showed that the number of HGVs using the A515 was typical of an 'A' road e.g. 11%. DfT counts are manual counts on a neutral day once a year. Further analysis of datasets going back to 2000, using 12 hour counts (not overnight) shows:

- On the A38 at Fradley and the A50 at Sudbury, traffic volume is going up, but less than it was at its peak.
- HGV volume and % of traffic on those roads are below the historic levels, but increasing in percentage in more recent years, probably reflecting the downturn in the economy and the fact that traffic is starting to grow again.

At Kings Bromley there are two DfT traffic count sites, one to the north of the village and one to the south of the village. The traffic volume at the north shows overall traffic volume is less than at its historic peak, but has started to increase in recent years. HGV



volumes have been generally been reducing in recent years, and the percentage of HGVs has been reducing. To the south of the village, the overall traffic volume is less than the historic peak, but has increased in recent years. HGV volumes have followed a broadly similar pattern. The percentage of HGVs has very slightly increased in recent years.

In Yoxall, overall traffic volume is less than its historic peak but increased in recent years. A similar pattern for HGVs, less than historic levels, fairly constant in recent years.

Between Five Lane Ends and Mitre crossroads, overall traffic volume is less than at its historic peak, but has been increasing in recent years. Volume and % of HGVs, less than historic levels and fairly constant in recent years.

Right to the north of the A515, north of Draycott in the Clay, overall the volume of vehicles has increased, the volume of HGVs is generally down and the percentage of HGVs is generally down over the period. Finally the one on the right hand side (referring to a diagram showing the A513 west of Alrewas), the volume is overall less than historic peak and the volume and % of HGVs was specifically down.

In summary officers stated that this data gave quite a mixed picture of the volume of HGVs using the A515 and they would like to do more work to understand this data better.

Data from the Council's own dataset recording data at 12 hour counts from 6 a.m. in the morning to 6 p.m. in the evening and from 6 p.m. in the evening to 6 a.m. in the morning, from our permanent site in Yoxall Road, Kings Bromley shows average hourly traffic flows between midnight and 11.00 a.m. for the last 12 months. 94% of the total flows from 6 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. Peak day time flows show 300 vehicles travelling in each direction. Night time flows varies from day to day, but typically can be down to 5 vehicles an hour but can be up to 40 vehicles, but most of the traffic is in the day time. The counts do not differentiate the type of vehicle.

Members favoured working with local Members to identify safety schemes that make the villages along the A515 less desirable to travel through.

Members did not consider that the DHP was adequate for addressing highways issues that cross Members' divisions and county boundaries. Officers stated that the DHP was a means of identifying and record issues that have been raised by the public with their Councillors that may be appropriate for minor scale traffic schemes and other issues that it might be appropriate to secure Section 278 or 106 funding.

Members raised the issue of other housing development plans such as Brook Hay and the impact on the A38 and A515.

a) Overview (10 minutes)

**39. Trunk Road Emergency Diversion Routes (5 minutes)**

If a weight restriction were imposed on the A515 it would still be required to be an emergency diversion route for the A38 and A50. A weight restriction on the A515 would have to be temporarily suspended during this time.

#### **40. HS2 (5 minutes)**

Clive Thomson informed Members that Phase 1 of the HS2 is going through the Hybrid Bill. Information was shared with Members regarding the potential impact of HS2 on this area. The Council have petitioned on some of the proposals to minimise disruption on local residents.

HS2 construction traffic will affect the southernmost 600m of the A515. HS2 traffic would not be affected by a weight restriction and would have right of access through the route.

#### **41. 11:30 Feedback from road haulage and freight representatives (15 minutes)**

Rhys Williams, Road Haulage Association

The RHA represents 10,000 members of the haulage industry across the UK & Northern Ireland, 360 of whom are in Staffordshire. The RHA does not represent lorry drivers from outside the UK.

Hauliers are not committing an offence by using the A515.

The RHA would oppose the implementation of a 7.5 tonne. They would suggest introducing traffic calming measures along the route e.g. traffic lights at the pinch points along the A515 and bollards, or railing to prevent trucks mounting pavements.

The RHA could advise drivers to use a specified route, but would not dissuade them from using the A515. If speed is a concern, speed cameras should be installed.

Members reflected on the growing size of trucks, no longer being appropriate for some country roads.

Members stated that if hauliers who were not using the appropriate roads should be fined for breaking the law. The RHA did not disagree.

Members suggested that the RHA advise their Members not to use the A515 as a shortcut to Ashbourne, but to use the A38. The RHA reiterated that drivers were not breaking the law by using the A515, reiterating that volumes of traffic have reduced on the A515 which may indicate that it is not being used as a shortcut.

The RHA stated that if the Council had routing agreements in place that were not being abided by they should take the matter up with the relevant company.

Members raised the issue of lack of lorry parks and facilities which could dissuade drivers from joining the haulage industry.

Finally Members asked if a ban from using the A515 during certain times of day could be considered.

#### **42. 11:45 Feedback from Highways England (15 minutes)**

Letty Askew, Asset Manager, Highways England

Highways England (HE) is now a government owned company following the Infrastructure Act that came into force in March 2015. It was formally Highways Agency, an executive agency of DfT. HE is the highway authority for the strategic road network within England, and has funding for five years. Its plans are set out in the Roads Investment Strategy and Highways England Delivery Plan 2015-2020.

HE's network within Staffordshire is comprised off the M6, A5, A38, A5148, A500 and A50 (part of this road is operated by a consultant, Connect Roads, on behalf of HE). Highways England also has a responsibility to liaise with the M6 toll operator (Midlands Expressway Ltd). However, the Secretary of State remains the highway authority for the M6 toll. The A515 is a local highways authority road and is operated by SCC.

Letty explained that she and her team were responsible for the day to day maintenance of the above 'A' roads, identifying short and longer term needs for improvements, responding to consultations and responses to planning applications and local plans and engaging directly with stakeholders, local highways and planning authorities, private developers, district and parish councils and individual customers who use their network.

In response to the concerns raised regarding the A515 (quantity of vehicles using the A515, safety, drivers failing to comply with speed limits and signals, narrow carriageway and overrunning junctions, traffic vibration, noise, and property damage). Other concerns were that the A38 needs to be widened, that HGVs are using Alrewas, rather than Hilliards Cross and that we need more lorry parks and overnight facilities for drivers.

The HE response to these concerns is:

HE has no objection, in principle, to a weight restriction on the A515. However, the A515 is used as an emergency diversion route from the A38 and it was the view of the HE that attempts to divert traffic down a longer route would be unsuccessful. Furthermore, in the event of the need for urgent (i.e. unplanned) repairs on the A38, the HE would need a 24 hour contact with SCC to enable the restriction to be lifted and arrangements for signs to be put in place to say that the restriction has been lifted.

The HE considered that more data was required on how much traffic using the A515 is through traffic.

The HE stated that they could take the following steps to assist.

HE can only influence drivers who use its network, but would agree that the A38 is the most appropriate road for HGV drivers to use.

The have a dedicated project looking at the suitability of diversion routes that is currently bidding for funding. HE is keen to receive feedback from customers and stakeholders. Concerns from both Inquiry Days had been noted and would be fed into the process. HE is looking at ways to reduce the number of closures on the A38. Longer term funding gives the HE the opportunity to look at ways in which the A38 can be improved.

HE has been involved in pre-planning discussions regarding the Brook Hay development.

There is an ongoing study looking at the strategic needs of the A38 from Weeford to the Toyota roundabout. Once the study is completed, any identified needs will be subject to a competitive tendering process. HE will be working with SCC to discuss the findings and how these are taken forward.

HE is also looking at how most priority trunk roads can be brought up to a better standard. This is called the Expressways concept. This work is in its early stages of development.

HE has no responsibility for the provision of service areas and lorry parks.

The HE has limited influence over drivers using the A515 but offered to have discussions with SCC officers about possibilities along this route.

HE responded to the suggestion of a night time ban on the A515 by stating that this would clash with when most roadworks are undertaken on the A38.

In response to questions from Members it was clarified that HE agree diversion routes with local authorities. If a diversion route were put on a road there would be a need for additional signage to indicate the route and to waive the weight restriction. Diversion routes are only operated when there is a total closure of the carriageway (i.e. not a single lane closure).

HE agreed to provide information on the number of closures on the A38 over the last 12 months that required a diversion. In response to Members' question regarding the capacity of the A38, the HE responded that although it did depend on the time of day and the day of the week, overall the A38 was experiencing high capacity.

Members expressed views that legislative change was needed to address the issue and that MPs should have a copy of the final report. A further view was expressed by Members that qualitative data regarding the impact that HGVs on Staffordshire roads was having on local residents' lives was as valid as quantitative data.

#### **43. 12:00 Public Questions (15 minutes)**

**Mark Flavell on behalf of Yoxall, Kings Bromley and Draycott in the Clay Parish Councils.**

Do we have quantified data that shows that the Staffordshire economy would be impacted by a weight restriction on the A515?

Would a weight restriction on the A515 be difficult to enforce?

Inspector Neeson, Staffordshire Police, indicated that it would be difficult to enforce the weight restriction 24 hours a day 7 days a week. To secure a successful prosecution the Police would have to have evidence that vehicles were not delivering to premises along the route of the A515.

How do local people feed in their concerns through the DHP process if their local councillor does not agree with the proposal local people have put forward?

The Chairman indicated that if this were the case there were processes that could be followed (contact the relevant Cabinet Member).

What happens if drivers ignore the routing agreement that has been made with their business? Are penalties imposed?

It is for the local planning authority to enforce the condition in the routing agreement.

The Chairman asked for details of the routing agreements in place for businesses on Fradley Park.

Mr Williams from the Road Haulage Association added that representations could be made to the Traffic Commissioner if routing agreements are being breached, specifically if the agreements are subject to conditions of an operators' licence.

**Councillor Eagland (Lichfield Rural North)** drew Members attention to the fact that road repairs on the A38 had lead to a diversion route through Lichfield. Whilst the signage had been adequate, HGV drivers had used their SATNAVs to identify a quicker route to join the A38 through the centre of Lichfield and they have continued to use this route in spite of the road repairs having been completed. This was having an impact also on the safety of old buildings in the town centre. Councillor Eagland asked what influence HE and the RHA had on the routes on SATNAVs.

The level of influence that HE has over SATNAV operators, once HGV drivers have left the principle road network, is minimal, but the HE representative asked Councillor Eagland to let her have further details and she would take the matter up with them.

### **Roger Sherrington**

Will the final report of this Committee be a report of County Council recommendations, uninfluenced by what HE will allow the Council to do?

Are average speed cameras incapable of identifying a vehicle (apart from its registration number)?

David Walters responded that a speed camera could identify the registration number and type of vehicle but to enable a successful prosecution, the Police would have to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the vehicle was not accessing premises along the route. Local authorities have no powers in this regard.

Mr Sherrington responded that it would be unlikely that a large HGV would be visiting to local stores along the A515.

Does traffic management form part of the HE's report? Letty Askew responded that there was a possibility that this could form part of the Expressways concept and may also form part of the recommendations from the study.

Mr Sherrington asked for details of the (routing agreement) conditions being placed on new businesses using Fradley Park and on existing businesses that were expanding and if in liaison with hauliers we could ask that they are sympathetic to local residents.

What are your views on a weight restriction on being applied to Wood End Lane?

Richard Rayson responded that applying a weight restriction to Wood End Lane would prevent HGVs from using the A515.

Mr Sherrington asked how many hauliers in the RHA were from Europe. Mr Williams stated that all RHA members were from the UK.

#### **Steve Browne, Kings Bromley Parish Council**

The current volume of HGV vehicles using the A515 and the A513 is 931 (over a 24 hour period). What will happen in the future when a HS2 construction compound is being erected at the end of Wood End Lane at its junction with the A515, this could result in 2,500 (corrected as 2,400) going through the Kings Bromley junction every day.

#### **44. 12:15 Summary and Way Forward**

The Chairman clarified that he would be willing to receive any additional evidence and this would be considered. The report will now be prepared. It will go to the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee who will then make recommendations to the Cabinet Member. The Select Committee and Cabinet are public meetings. The Chairman agreed to keep the Parish Councils informed of dates when the report would be considered.

**Chairman**