

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

August 2015

Work Programme 2015-16 – Scoping report – Working together to address the impact of heavy goods vehicles¹ on roads in Staffordshire

Recommendation

1. At its meeting on 24 July 2015 the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee agreed to undertake a scrutiny review to investigate the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire. A Select Committee is not a decision making body, but it can undertake a review and make recommendations to the Cabinet who can make decisions on behalf of the Council.

Report of Scrutiny and Support Manager

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

2. The Committee agreed to review the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire as part of their 2015-16 scrutiny work programme. An important part of this review is to understand the impact that HGV's have on local communities and our local economy. To take this forward, the Select Committee is asked to consider and agree the Terms of Reference and arrangements for the review, as proposed in this report.

Report

Background

3. The identification of this topic for review by the Prosperous Staffordshire was prompted by the receipt in full Council in May 2015 of two petitions from residents in Yoxall and Kings Bromley demanding a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on the A515 and auxiliary roads between Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay through Yoxall and Kings Bromley to Wood End Lane. The matter was referred by Council to the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, as the relevant scrutiny committee of the Council, to consider further.

¹ A heavy goods vehicle or heavy commercial vehicle is a truck with a gross combination mass (GCM) of over 3,500 kilograms (3.5 tonne) (7,716lb).

Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Review

Scope

4. Following discussion at the Committee meeting on 24 July it was agreed to broaden the scope of the review to consider the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire. Members stated that the problems recorded in regard to the A515 were being experienced on other roads in Staffordshire and asked that the scope be broadened out to include all roads in Staffordshire.

Intended Outcome

5. To better understand the impact that heavy goods vehicles have on roads in Staffordshire and the impact that they are having on local communities;

6. To identify potential solutions to reduce the impact that heavy goods vehicles have;

7. To understand the impact of any future developments;

8. To identify a way forward and to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

Key Objectives

9. To understand better the current problems caused by the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads (and communities) in Staffordshire;

(A case study example of the impact of heavy goods vehicles use on the A515 will be used)

10. To consider what potential solutions might be considered to reduce the impact on local communities;

(A review undertaken by Amey on behalf of Councillor Martyn Tittley will be considered);

11. To consider how Staffordshire roads (and communities) are likely to be affected in the future.

12. To identify a way forward including potential solutions and to report findings to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

Lines of Enquiry

The Working Group of Members is meeting to identify lines of enquiry. These will be forwarded to participants in advance of the Inquiry Day(s).

Review Arrangements

The Committee agreed that the approach to be taken would be to invite key witnesses to give evidence either in person or in writing to a small group of members over two inquiry days. A public call for evidence would be arranged.

The following Members agreed to participate:

- Councillor David Loades
- Councillor Len Bloomer
- Councillor Geoff Martin

It was agreed to invite Councillors Tim Corbett and Martyn Tittley to join the Working Group as they represented the divisions that had petitioned about heavy good vehicles on the A515.

Initial discussions had taken place with County Council officers and an initial proposal on the content of the Inquiry Days has shared with Mary Anne Raftery, Community Infrastructure Manager and Richard Rayson, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager.

It was agreed that the following organisations may wish to give evidence, in person, or in writing:

- All County Councillors
- Local residents
- Yoxall, Kings Bromley, Draycott in the Clay and Longdon Parish Councils;
- Local authorities in the area;
- Road haulier and freight representatives;
- Local businesses;
- Local schools/community groups;
- Staffordshire County Council Highways Team (including the Council's Traffic Manager);
- Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue;
- Highways England;

The Working Group will be provided with a briefing pack prepared by scrutiny officers at the outset of the review. After this, with officer support, Members can determine the information and evidence they require to address the Terms of Reference. As part of the review, Members may wish to undertake visits, consultation and/or call for evidence from third parties.

The meeting will be a public meeting and will be webcast.

The review will take place over two half days in October/November 2015 and it is anticipated that a report will be prepared and presented to the Committee on 17 December 2015.

The Committee/Working Group is advised to share their terms of reference with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport at the outset. During the course of the review the Committee/Working Group will make interim progress reports to the Committee and to the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet. The Committee/Working Group will produce a final report, containing any recommendations they may wish to make for submission to the relevant Portfolio Holder/Cabinet or other body.

An Executive Response to any recommendations will be provided to the Committee.

Link to Strategic Plan

The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of the achievement of the Council's strategic ambitions for promoting prosperity and economic growth and the scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity.

Link to other scrutiny activity

The Committee has considered a number of key programmes of work and has had the opportunity to scrutinise HS2 and the Transport Review. In 2008-9 a predecessor scrutiny committee undertook a review of Speed Policy Working Group reported to the Corporate Policy Scrutiny & Performance Committee on 20 April 2009.

Community Impact

The Committee/Working Group will be expected to consider the implications of work, or proposed action, on the subject under review and to make reference to implications including those below in their final report:

- Equalities and Legal
- Resource and Value for Money
- Risk
- Climate Change.

Contact Officer/s

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Appendices/Background papers

Report of the Speed Policy Working Group – reported to Corporate Policy Scrutiny and Performance Committee – 20.4.09

Freight Strategy

A copy of the report undertaken for Councillor Martyn Tittley will be circulated in the briefing pack.