



# Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

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## Report to the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

<b>Title:</b>	Freight Strategy
<b>Committee date:</b>	Tuesday 29 May 2018
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<b>Cabinet Member sign-off:</b>	Councillor Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation

### 1 Purpose of Agenda Item

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Transport, Environment and Communities (TEC) Select Committee an opportunity to be briefed on the development of the Freight Strategy (2018-2036). This Select Committee meeting takes place ahead of a proposed Cabinet Member Decision being taken to adopt the Strategy.
- 1.2 This report is for information and consultation. Intensive stakeholder engagement with Elected Members and the public has been a consistent theme throughout the Strategy's development. As such, complete transparency and consultation with stakeholders continues to be the preferred approach despite the work now being in its final stages.
- 1.3 This report is intended to provide insight on the purpose of the Strategy, the consultation activity that has helped inform the Strategy and the agreed approach to its implementation. Committee Members are encouraged to discuss the Strategy's proposed delivery model, the impact this approach will have on local residents and its associated timescales. The delivery of the Strategy will take the form of an appointed freight officer and a dedicated 'Action Plan'.



1.4 The officer responsible for delivering the Strategy will follow the Strategy's adoption. Views, comments and ideas of the Committee will help support a seamless link between the Strategy and its application.

## **2 Background**

2.1 The proposed Freight Strategy is a non-statutory document. The Freight Strategy is a supporting document to Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). It provides more detailed policy to deliver the objectives set out in Buckinghamshire County Council's (BCC's) Strategic Plan and LTP4. There has been continued support for the development of a Freight Strategy in the engagement process to LTP4.

2.2 Buckinghamshire County Council's existing Freight Strategy is from 2010 and lacks an agreed approach to the management of freight. This Strategy requires a refresh to ensure the county's existing conditions are appropriately reflected and planned for.

2.3 The absence of an up to date Strategy means existing concerns raised by communities and the scale of growth facing Buckinghamshire are not addressed adequately. Furthermore, the potential benefits brought about by future partnerships with the freight industry are not realised.

2.4 The views of Elected Members have been considered during the Strategy's development. Feedback has been considered at a Parish Councillor workshop and a presentation of the Strategy at the TfB Members Working Group. All County Councillors were sent an advanced copy of the Freight Strategy before it went out to public consultation; this helped ensure local members were sighted and could ask questions before it went into the public realm. The Freight Strategy has not been discussed by the Committee previously.

2.5 All Local Area Forums were encouraged to respond to the Freight Strategy and a freight item publicising the Freight Strategy was included on their respective agendas before being disseminated.

2.6 Amongst other engagement activity, a two week 'snapshot' consultation was held in 2017 to understand the public's perception of freight locally and help inform the content of the Strategy.

2.7 A further 6-week public consultation on the Strategy was launched between February 26<sup>th</sup> 2018 and April 9<sup>th</sup> 2018. Both consultations were developed with BCCs consultation officer. Feedback from the consultation was used to inform the final version of the Freight Strategy. In addition, BCC has compiled a list of local areas reported in the consultation as being unduly impacted by freight movements; these are included in the Freight Strategy Consultation Report. The list from the 6 week consultation and the

previous 'snapshot' consultation will be used to help guide the Action Plan and steer the appointed officer's focus for investigation.

2.8 A Freight Strategy Consultation Report has been developed and will be published on Buckinghamshire's County Council's dedicated freight webpage. The report analyses the feedback gleaned in the most recent consultation and resulting changes made to the Strategy.

### 3 Summary

#### The purpose of the Freight Strategy

- 3.1 The aim of the Freight Strategy is for freight to continue to help Buckinghamshire grow, thrive and develop. Freight should move around the county as efficiently as possible, without imposing inappropriate costs on business, consumers, residents or our unique environment.
- 3.2 Our businesses depend on freight transport and as consumers we have become increasingly dependent on access to a range of goods via haulage. Equally, freight can have an adverse impact on residents, communities and the environment when not managed effectively. Effective management of freight through and around Buckinghamshire is vital to the local economy and our resident's quality of life; as such this Strategy should work for everyone.
- 3.3 The county is facing unprecedented levels of growth and proposed infrastructure schemes. These will generate a varying amount of HGV trips so it is important we know how to deal with this.
- 3.4 The Strategy has been developed with a range of stakeholders in mind, ensuring the needs of both ends of the 'supply chain' are represented. Local authorities, communities, businesses, developers, infrastructure scheme promoters have been considered in the development of the Strategy.

#### The Freight Strategy proposed

- 3.5 The Freight Strategy objectives have been shaped by the aspirations set out in Buckinghamshire's Local Transport Plan 4 and feedback received during both public consultations. The following four objectives have been developed:
- **Appropriate Road use** (*encourage haulage operators to use the right routes, at the right times*)
  - **Protecting our environment** (*preserve the county's unique characteristics in both rural and urban areas, whilst minimising pollution*)

- **Partnership working** (*support collaboration amongst key stakeholders to develop new solutions to freight issues*)
- **Consider freight in decision making** (*seek opportunities to work with partners to minimise the impact of freight and lobby for improvements*)

3.6 Alongside the Freight Strategy's objectives, there are 14 policies that set-out the county's holistic approach to freight management. These policies are found within Section 3 of the Freight Strategy and sit alongside the objective they best support. Within each of the 14 policies it identifies ways BCC can put the respective policy into action. A link of the Draft Freight Strategy (pre consultation) can be found by visiting: [www.buckscc.gov.uk/freight](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/freight)

3.7 We plan to implement the Freight Strategy by appointing an officer whose responsibilities will include liaising with communities that feel unduly affected by freight issues. A mix of revenue and capital funding has been secured to help deliver solutions and approaches that may require investment. Further investigatory work will be required with communities and businesses to identify areas that require intervention proportionate to the scale of local issue faced. The officer will be responsible for the preparation of an Action Plan which will set out details of actions and locations of these actions for the plan period. It is anticipated that the freight 'hotspots' (areas facing local issues) identified in the Strategy and its associated consultation report will be subject to further assessment to quantify the challenge.

## 4 Key issues

4.1 The management of freight is complex; with a wide range of issues, opportunities and solutions. As such, the Freight Strategy plans for a wide range of activities. Some of the policies in the Freight Strategy can be applied countywide; others are suited to specific local communities. Some involve behaviour change based approaches, other more physical solutions. This Freight Strategy sets out the way different solutions can each play a part. This means it is not always possible to set out in detail how each element of the Freight Strategy will be put into practice as some of this will have to be worked out at a later stage. For example what role business and communities might want to play. The Freight Strategy includes as much detail as possible with the freedom to develop the best possible solutions for Buckinghamshire.

4.2 As a result of these complexities, the Strategy has committed to appointing a freight officer who will work with communities to develop local solutions. Capital funding will help deliver targeted intervention (physical infrastructure/enforcement) when other strategies to improve the situation have failed.

4.3 Local areas mentioned in the 6 week consultation have been listed in the Freight Strategy Consultation report. This list and the previous 2017 'snapshot' consultation will

be used to help guide the subsequent Action Plan. Each of these locations will be investigated by a suitably qualified officer to assess the scale and nature of the local issues. At the time of writing, we have begun to shortlist areas of priority that will require early consideration.

- 4.4 The Freight Strategy, and in particular the Action Plan will be 'live documents'. Evolution will be needed to cope with developments in large infrastructure projects, with growth in new developments, new government guidance and from cultural change.

## **5 Resource implications**

- 5.1 The Freight Strategy's development, engagement and consultation were developed using 'officer time' only.
- 5.2 The work on the proposed Freight Strategy document is now largely complete. It is proposed that the Freight Strategy is a 'live' document and there will be some officer time needed going forward to allow for updates to the Freight Strategy as our understanding on future changes develops.
- 5.3 Revenue and capital funding has been secured from the medium term financial plan to put the Freight Strategy into action. This funding is set out below:
- 5.4 The officer responsible for implementation of the Freight Strategy will use this dedicated funding to develop an Action Plan whereby measures requiring expenditure will be supported by cost-benefit analysis and taken through all due diligence approval procedures.

## **6 Next steps**

- 6.1 The responses received in the consultation have informed a revised version of the Strategy. Required changes were relatively minor. Full details of changes are included in the Freight Strategy Consultation Report which will be published on Buckinghamshire County Council's website, and these have been approved by our Cabinet Member for Transportation.
- 6.2 The adoption of the Freight Strategy is being taken as a Cabinet Member Decision. The Strategy has been through internal governance (TEE/CMT) and a decision for adoption is planned in June 2018.
- 6.3 County Councillors will be given advance notification of a forthcoming decision to adopt the Freight Strategy; we envisage this will be done through an email to all members.

- 6.4 County Councillors will then be subsequently informed of the decision by democratic services. The Freight Strategy will be published on the Buckinghamshire County Council website.
- 6.5 Those without internet access can use Buckinghamshire's libraries to access the Freight Strategy. Our libraries provide internet access and support in using the internet for less experienced users.
- 6.6 There will be a regular review of the Strategy and any major changes will be brought through full approvals process. It is proposed that the approval of any minor amendments to the Strategy is delegated to the Director of Growth and Strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation.