

London Councils' Transport & Environment Committee

Freight Strategy Update

Item No: 16

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Summary:

This paper has been prepared for the Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) of London Councils to provide a high level update on our strategic approach to freight.

The paper also recommends the establishment of a borough officers freight working group through a partnership between London Councils and Transport for London (TfL) and outlines key areas of our freight work programme with boroughs to date.

Recommendations:

The committee is asked to:

- Note TfL's approach to developing a new freight strategy for London; our engagement with businesses, operators and local authorities; and the progress to date in defining our strategic approach and aims.
- Endorse the establishment of a borough officer freight working group and acknowledge this will be reviewing existing controls, including the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS).
- Note the key elements of TfL's current programme of work with boroughs described in appendix 1.

Background

Freight Strategy Development

1. Freight serves London's economy, helping to build schemes like Crossrail or new housing, delivering food and drink to shops, restaurants and cafes, and making sure our hospitals and hotels have supplies.
2. Around 90 per cent of all freight is moved by road in London so making sure it is moved safely, cleanly and as efficiently as possible is one of TfL's key priorities.
3. London is growing at a faster rate than anywhere else in Europe, from 8.6 million today to an expected 10 million in 2030. This is creating demands for new public spaces and less traffic-dominated streets. It also means that the number of other work sites or businesses, and deliveries to them, are on the rise. As a result there will be a significant impact on London's roads.
4. To date TfL's approach to freight has focused primarily on mitigating congestion impacts in central London. However, to deliver our key priorities we need to consider freight movements across the whole of London that result from national and global supply chains and individual customer choice. A delivery plan is required to mitigate the impact of the Road Modernisation Plan (RMP) in the short term. TfL also needs to respond to the Roads Task Force (RTF) report in a more strategic manner.
5. TfL are therefore developing a new strategic approach to freight that recognises there is no simple single solution to the impacts of serving and delivery. Our new approach aims to:
 - a) reduce the demand for road trips through modal switch and more efficient deliveries where possible
 - b) promote retiming to better match demand for our roads with their ability to cope
 - c) ensure the impact of freight is mitigated with the safest, cleanest and best managed vehicles possible. Our approach is outlined in the section below

Developing our strategic approach

6. TfL have deliberately engaged with all parts of the freight industry in our decision making and consultation process - operators, businesses, customers, regulators, boroughs and academics – to ensure our work is comprehensive and can achieve results. There is a broad acknowledgement among key freight stakeholders that current practices and relying on voluntary behaviour change alone will not be sufficient to deliver the amount of change needed. There is clear industry recognition of the need for additional incentives and regulations.
7. Given this, TfL's strategic approach is being developed in two parallel parts:
 - a direction of travel type document to clarify our priorities for freight management and
 - the development of specific schemes and options consistent with the agreed strategic direction.
8. TfL have yet to decide what form the final product will appear in but it is likely to be one of the following:
 - a fully-fledged strategy document
 - a set of individual policy approaches

- a generic 'Road Map' for managing freight in London

Borough officers working group on freight

Background

9. Our strategic approach places a strong emphasis on working with the boroughs and other partners to develop appropriate local and regional solutions to improve road safety, air quality and the local and business trading environment.
10. TfL has been working with boroughs on a number of freight programmes including retiming deliveries, FORS and CLOCS (see appendix 1).
11. The Changing Times – Delivering London's Future conference took place on 29 April 2015. The overarching message from freight industry attendees was that in the long-term clear policy, standardisation and planning is needed, with solutions that remove barriers and shares good practice between businesses and boroughs. In the short-term, they asked for a contact in each borough so that local issues could be discussed and overcome.
12. Officers from 20 boroughs and London Councils also attended the conference and suggested London Councils and TfL discuss whether a borough officer freight working group was needed to enable local authorities to co-ordinate their activities as much as possible.
13. The conference also highlighted concerns about the purpose and operation of the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS), which is managed and enforced by London Councils on behalf of the participating boroughs. Some operators believe the LLCS is one of the barriers faced by those wishing to change how they manage deliveries, especially where these result in longer journey times.
14. Although the scheme does not prevent anyone making a delivery to anywhere in London, it does control the routes that are used overnight and at weekends to minimise the environmental effects on local residents, particularly noise. Some businesses and operators have said they are not clear on the scheme's intentions and how it interacts with other restrictions.

Approach to establishing borough officers working group

15. Following the Changing Times event, Ian Wainwright, Head of Freight and Fleet Programmes, Transport for London and Spencer Palmer, Director of Transport and Mobility, London Councils, agreed that it would be helpful to establish a borough officer freight working group covering environment, planning, traffic, enforcement and regulations.
16. There are several areas where TfL and the boroughs can work together to maximise behaviour change from the freight industry, including:
 - reviewing existing controls (including the LLSC as well as local restrictions)
 - freight consolidation
 - quieter vehicle/ loading technology
 - development and sharing of best practice
 - trialling TfL's freight awareness programme which is currently under development

17. TfL propose working with London Councils and a small number of borough councils to devise a draft Terms of Reference for the working group. This will be presented at the initial meeting of the group, currently scheduled for July 2015.

Recommendations

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Legal implications for London Councils

None as a direct result of this paper.

Financial Implications for London Councils

None as a direct result of this paper.

Equality implications for London Councils

None as a direct result of this paper.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Freight Programme, summary key areas of work with boroughs