

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 13 January 2022

Report number:	CAB/WS/22/003	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	8 February 2022
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Councillor Ian Shipp Overview and Scrutiny Committee Telephone: 07368 134769 Email: ian.shipp@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Telephone: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: This item is not required to be included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

Recommendation: It is recommended that Report number: CAB/WS/22/003, being the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 On 13 January 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following items:
1. Suffolk County Council Update Provided on Councillor Call for Action Recommendations
 2. Markets Review Working Group Update
 3. Work programme update 2022

2. Proposals within this report

2.1 Suffolk County Council Update Provided on Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Recommendations (Report number: OAS/WS/22/001)

- 2.1.1 On 10 June 2021 Councillor Trevor Beckwith submitted a CCfA entitled "Impact of the Eastern Relief Road and A14 Junction 45 on the Moreton Hall Residential Area" for the Committee's consideration.
- 2.1.2 On 2 September 2021, the Committee heard from a variety of organisations and witnesses who have been involved in this issue. The Committee made a number of recommendations to Suffolk County Council and requested a three-month progress report for its January 2022 meeting.
- 2.1.3 The Committee received Report number OAS/WS/22/001, which set out the six recommendations made by the Committee and responses provided by Suffolk County Council (SCC), which are also set out below as follows:

Recommendation 1

Installing signage along the A14 and at Junction 45 to direct HGVs to specific Industrial Estates and Business Parks; and revisiting existing signage within the Business Parking to ensure HGVs are directed to J45, where internal roads join the Eastern Relief Road.

SCC Response:

The A14 is a trunk road and entirely the responsibility of National Highways (NH), not Suffolk County Council (SCC). We have passed on this request to NH, for their information and will discuss with them, as required. Should NH come up with a signing scheme for their network, we would be consulted as a Local Highway Authority (LHA) and would look at ways of supporting this through changes to signing on the local road network.

However, amending the routing of HGVs would have to be considered in the round to ensure that larger vehicles are not displaced on to less suitable narrow rural roads and residential streets.

That is why SCC is carrying out a Suffolk wide HGV review and the results of this review will inform amendments to the Suffolk lorry routing map.

The current version is available to view here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Roads-and-transport/lorry-management/Lorry-Route-Map-Amended-MAY-17.pdf>

Recommendation 2

Undertake day and night monitoring of HGV traffic flow, overnight parking on Moreton Hall in retail and industrial areas, air pollution and noise along Orttewell Road, Bury St Edmunds to provide a clear evidence base for further action.

SCC Response:

SCC conduct periodic monitoring of our network and additional survey work has been conducted as part of the Suffolk Wide HGV review.

Specific local issues should be flagged using the Highways Reporting Tool and will be investigated accordingly. See below link:

<https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Please note that noise, air pollution and residential amenity are the responsibilities of West Suffolk Council (WSC), not SCC. However, we discuss these matters with WSC officers regularly and will engage positively with any initiatives WSC officers carry out in these areas.

Recommendation 3

To consult on a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting HGVs using Orttewell Road, Bury St Edmunds and monitoring the impact of this.

SCC Response:

SCC has no current plans to carry out a Traffic Regulation Order consultation at this location. Orttewell Road is a modern road, built to a high standard without frontage development. Any restrictions on this road would have the impact of displacing HGV traffic onto less suitable roads. This would be especially the case in terms of air quality (which is a WSC matter) as many of the alternative routes have far more sensitive receptors in closer proximity to the road, than are present on Orttewell Road.

The appropriate means to assess these impacts will be through the ongoing countywide HGV routing review. The HGV route review may propose local restrictions, but only when the full impact of traffic displacement has been subject to detailed assessment.

Recommendation 4

Bring the existing lorry park back into use to ensure that drivers park where facilities are provided and where they do not add to the morning congestion at Junction 44 as they leave Moreton Hall.

SCC Response:

It is not the responsibility of SCC to provide lorry parking facilities. However, we are continuing to work with the Department for Transport (DfT) and other partners to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for lorry drivers on the strategic road network.

We would be very happy to work with WSC if they were prepared to investigate providing local facilities for lorry drivers. We have recently had productive discussions with other Suffolk District Councils on this matter.

Recommendation 5

Explore and implement an alternative to the concrete block (roundabout) along Bedingfield Way, Bury St Edmunds to address the issue of noise as HGVs drive over it.

SCC Response:

The design and maintenance of this roundabout will be carried out in accordance with the Highways Maintenance Operational Plan (HMOP). Noise is only one consideration to inform this decision, the road has to be of adequate design to cope with current and projected traffic flows, and not be an ongoing maintenance liability for SCC.

We do not have any current plans to significantly change the design of this junction. As indicated in the answer to question 2 above, any specific defects should be reported on the Highways Reporting Tool.

Recommendation 6

Explore long-term solutions to the rail bridge on Orttewell Road, Bury St Edmunds to address the current congestion, for example, introducing weight restrictions to relieve residents of the impact of a number of HGVs which would allow the rail bridge to be reopened to a normal two-way traffic flow.

SCC Response:

This is a Network Rail (NR) structure and not a SCC responsibility. SCC will engage with NR proactively, should they wish to amend or revise their structure. We have passed on this request to NR, for their information.

The current traffic signal shuttle working scheme was carried out for road safety reasons, in consultation with NR as the result of frequent bridge

strikes. Traffic modelling of this area has shown the railway bridge to be a significant constraint on traffic capacity.

Removing the shuttle working signals would remove this constraint and it is likely to cause very significant projected increases in traffic flow as a result of planned housing developments and background traffic growth in this area.

SCC would not support restricting this road to HGVs in isolation, for the reasons set out previously.

- 2.1.4 The Committee heard from Councillor Birgitte Mager and Councillor Trevor Beckwith, ward members for Moreton Hall.

Councillor Birgitte Mager was concerned that the worries and general wellbeing of local residents had been forgotten in SCC responses to the recommendations.

Councillor Trevor Beckwith who submitted the CCfA was disappointed in the responses from SCC and felt they were disrespectful to the Committee and most importantly the residents who depend on councils to ensure a decent quality of life.

- 2.1.5 The Committee considered the report in detail and in particular, comments and proposals made by Councillor Trevor Beckwith and Councillor Birgitte Mager's comments, and in doing so, shared their disappointment. At the conclusion of the discussions the Committee made the following **recommendations, that:**

West Suffolk Council Cabinet be asked to write to Suffolk County Council to:

1. Find out whether Orttewell Road has been monitored as part of the county HGV review and if so, what are the results.
2. Request Suffolk County Council (SCC) to define "no frontage development" and why numerous dwellings, play area, sports field etc. adjacent to Orttewell Road are not considered vulnerable.
3. Find out what is "the very significant projected increase in traffic flow as a result of planned housing developments" preventing opening-up the rail bridge to two-way traffic flow? and whether SCC advised the local planning authority (LPA) of the need to restrict traffic flow at the bridge during the Vision 2031 process?
4. Request Suffolk County Council and/or West Suffolk Council Cabinet to establish if National Highways are still agreeable to new A14 signage and if developers of Suffolk Park are open to funding.

That West Suffolk Council Cabinet be asked to:

1. Instigate investigation into noise, air pollution and residential amenity in the Orttewell road area.
2. Hasten the return of the Rougham Hill lorry park to operation.

2.2 Markets Review Working Group Update (Report number: OAS/WS/22/002)

- 2.2.1 The Committee received Report number OAS/WS/22/002, presented by the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor John Burns, which updated members on the progress of the Markets Review Working Group to date.
- 2.2.2 The purpose behind the review is to look at the strategic role of West Suffolk Council, aligning the operation of the markets to the council's strategic vision and supporting their development to meet the corporate priorities.
- 2.2.3 To date the Group has met three times online. The Group has received baseline information about the markets in each of the towns, discussed the visions for the markets and confirmed the expectations of the review, received a presentation on case studies of best practice at markets elsewhere and agreed proposals for the engagement plan. A comprehensive market survey was created towards the end of last year to capture feedback from visitors, stall holders and traders, local businesses/stakeholders, town and parish councils, members and young people.
- 2.2.4 The Committee considered the update report and asked questions to which responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the responses received from the survey and whether the Group would be looking at the management of markets.
- 2.2.5 The Committee **noted** the update from the Markets Review Working Group.

2.3 Work programme update 2022 (Report number: OAS/WS/22/003)

- 2.3.1 The Committee received and **noted** Report number OAS/WS/22/003, which updated members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items, and items currently agreed but had yet to be programmed for 2022 as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3.2 In reviewing the Committee's work programme Councillor Tony Brown raised the topic of Planning Enforcement in relation to enforcement outcomes and levels of performance; and Councillor Julia Wakelam raised Barley Homes relating to sustainable standards and whether someone could come to a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the process.

In response to Planning Enforcement, the Chair advised that he was happy to discuss this further with Councillor Tony Brown following the meeting.

In response to the Barley Homes suggestion, the Chair informed the Committee that he and Councillors Diane Hind and Mike Chester sat on the Barley Homes Shareholders Advisory Group as nominated observers and was happy to discuss this further following the meeting with Councillor Wakelam.

- 2.3.3 The Chair advised that with any topic suggestions, members should complete the work programme suggestion form following discussions taking place with the relevant portfolio holder.

3 Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 Please see background papers.

4 Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 Please see background papers.

5 Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 Please see background papers.

6 Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.1 Financial:

Please see background papers.

- 6.2 Equalities:

Please see background papers.

7 Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 Please see background papers.

8 Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/001](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Suffolk County Council Update Provided on Councillor Call for Action Recommendations

- 8.2 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/002](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Markets Review Working Group Update
- 8.3 Report number: [OAS/WS/22/003](#) and [Appendix 1](#) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme Update 2022