



Strategic Transport Forum

27th November 2020

Agenda Item 9: Business Unit Update

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the meeting:

- a) Agrees that EEH Business Unit should, working with partners, undertake a Task and Finish exercise to more clearly define the case for enactment of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 across the Heartland region.**
- b) Notes progress made on an additional number of key projects for England's Economic Heartland.**

1. Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 6

- 1.1. Forum Members will be aware of a long-standing ambition for local authorities in the Heartland region to be able to enforce and prosecute moving traffic violations. Having these powers would allow Heartland transport authorities the same traffic management powers as London Transport authorities. The powers will bring significant benefits to ensuring the better management and flow of traffic, including HGVs through the region. As well as transport benefits, there are environmental and safety benefits derived from the better management of traffic: an important consideration for the EEH Transport Strategy in the context of decarbonisation and environmental net gain.
- 1.2. To date, outside of London, Traffic Regulation Orders can only be legally enforced through complex, demand-heavy arrangements carried out by Trading Standards or the police. Earlier engagement with partners has confirmed isolated use of Automatic Number-Plate Recognition is not an effective deterrent. These schemes are dependent on drivers admitting the offence and require a burdensome statutory approval process to establish them.
- 1.3. The provisions relating to moving traffic offences are available in legislation for all local authorities: through Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. However, to date the powers have not been activated outside of London.
- 1.4. Enacting this part of the Act would grant local authorities powers to enforce—and issue penalty charges for—offences such as disregarding one-way systems, failing to give priority to oncoming traffic, disregarding box junction markings and breach of weight restrictions for HGVs.
- 1.5. Successive Governments since 2004 have been asked to enact Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act. However, as yet, no Government has acted on the commitment. In July 2019, a survey completed by the Local Government Association identified that, of those responding, 90% of authorities said they would consider using the full powers of the Traffic Management Act (2004) including Part 6 if it was available. In addition, the survey identified that over 90% of responding authorities set out evidence of that the

most common issues that their local authority would use the Traffic Management Act to improve were safety (95%) and congestion (92%).

- 1.6. The publication of the EEH Transport Strategy, alongside with a proposed Concordat between England's Economic Heartland and the Department for Transport provides the ideal opportunity for EEH to request that the Department for Transport activates powers and provisions available under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 1.7. Granting local authorities the power to enforce against moving traffic offences makes sense. It allows enforcement to take place even where roads police resources are limited and it provides valuable local accountability. Activating powers across a Sub region alleviates one of DfT's reported concerns about Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act: that activating it outside of London could result in inconsistency of approaches for managing moving traffic offences.
- 1.8. In order to make the case to Government for enactment of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act, EEH Business Unit proposes a task and finish exercise with local partners with an ambition to present the Forum with an evidence-based case on which to present to DfT. Subject to approval, it is expected that the case will form an important addition to the Forum's proposed Concordat with the Department for Transport.

2. Connectivity Studies

- 2.1. Forum Members will be aware that a core part of the EEH work programme moving forward is Connectivity Studies, as set out in the Transport Strategy.
- 2.2. Following consideration of the responses to the draft Transport Strategy and further engagement with the DfT, the programme of studies has been revised: the updated programme is attached as Annex A.
- 2.3. Work on procuring the first two (year 1) studies is now underway following discussions with partners involved in each of the studies.
- 2.4. Work on scoping the studies for year 2 of the programme will commence in January 2021, following completion of the procurement for year 1.

3. Improving First Last Mile Connectivity: Marston Vale Line

- 3.1. EEH has committed through the Transport Strategy to undertake a discrete number of First Last Mile pilot projects. The pilots will provide the opportunity to work with partners locally to put into effect improved first mile/last mile on the ground, using the tools and techniques developed by EEH.
- 3.2. The initial pilot being taken forward is in the Marston Vale where the need to improve local connectivity to/from East West Rail will be critical in unlocking the full benefit of the investment in the railway. A second pilot – focused on Aylesbury – is anticipated to follow on, again linked with the investment being made in East West Rail.

4. Decarbonisation of Freight

- 4.1. The EEH Transport Strategy sets out the Forum's ambition to reduce the impact of Freight on the environment: both in terms of carbon emissions and its impact on communities living in and around freight corridors.
- 4.2. The freight and logistics sector has a challenging pathway to a de-carbonised future, based on the structural supply chain shifts, the technology that will emerge, constraints on capacity and the regulations that may be put in place.
- 4.3. Alternative fuel and power strategies for transport and particularly freight is subject to a number of externalities that are yet to resolve: UK Hydrogen Strategy, the Energy White Paper and Brexit. In addition, the DfT Transport Decarbonisation Plan, Freight Strategy and HE's decarbonisation program will be significant policies/drivers that will shape freight for a generation.

- 4.4. As Forum members are aware, STBs have a key role in supporting the freight sector, while also needing to respond to deliver a rapid and deep action plan to ensure its decarbonisation.
- 4.5. In order to respond to the challenge, EEH Business Unit is developing a series of small scale projects to better understand the pathway to freight decarbonisation in the region. Projects will look to capture:
- i) better data on freight movements
 - ii) a better understanding of the pathway to Alternative Fuels for Freight
 - iii) a small scale piece of work to model the additional freight demand generated by infrastructure deployment such as East West Rail, HS2 and the construction of proposed and approved strategic housing and employment sites across the region.
- 4.6. In the longer term, EEH Business Unit is exploring options to develop a larger project to consider the potential capacity release and environmental impact of a large scale "Road to Rail" programme for freight. This project has the potential for national interest, and as a result EEH is exploring whether this would be a possible shared piece of work with other agencies in 2021/22.

Naomi Green
November 2020

Revised programme of connectivity studies

Following publication of the Draft Transport Strategy for consultation and ongoing communication with the Department for Transport and partners, the proposed programme of Connectivity Studies has been revised.

The proposed programme (with alterations) is shown in the table below. It should be noted that EEH currently receives a single year settlement from the Department for Transport, therefore the programme is dependent on receiving DfT funding year of year in order to undertake future year studies.

Study	Programme year (anticipated start date*)	Comments
Oxford – Milton Keynes	2020/21	This geography was originally presented as 2 studies to the Transport Officer Group and Strategic Transport Forum. The geography now consists of one study covering the Oxford – Milton Keynes area. There is a requirement to take this work forward as a priority in order to have clarity on how to improve connectivity in this part of the region (as an alternative to the previous expressway proposal)
Peterborough – Northampton - Oxford	2020/21	To be commissioned in parallel with Oxford to Milton Keynes
Swindon – Didcot - Oxford	2021/22 – Q1	Development of brief to begin in Q3 2020/21 to enable study to be commissioned in Q1 2021/22. Scope of work will align with work being undertaken on the Solent to Midlands Freight Study
London – Bucks – Milton Keynes - Northampton	2021/22	Originally a Year 1 study, this will now follow on from the Oxford – Milton Keynes work.
Watford – Aylesbury – Bicester – M40 junctions	2021/22	Remains a Year 2 study
Luton – Milton Keynes - Daventry	2022/23	Originally a Year 2 study, this is now proposed for Year 3, with scoping and development scheduled in autumn 2021.
North Northamptonshire	2022/23	Remains a Year 3 study
Oxford – M40 junctions	2022/23	Remains a Year 3 study
Luton- Bedford – Northamptonshire	2023/24	Remains a Year 4 study
Northampton – Milton Keynes	2023/24	Remains a Year 4 study

*Note this is the proposed commissioning year, it is not anticipated that the studies will be complete within the same financial year.