

SAFETY ISSUES ON TRUNK ROADS

Report By: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

To advise Members on the background and developments regarding safety on Trunk Roads within Herefordshire.

Background

Prior to 1998 all trunk roads within the County were maintained by the Council acting as Agents to the Department of Transport. In 1998, on Local Government Reorganisation, Herefordshire Council was reformed and management of trunk road matters passed from Local Authorities to the Highways Agency.

Currently all, trunk roads in the county namely the A49 from Brimfield to Bridstow, The A449 from Bridstow to the M50, the A40 from Ganarew to Lea and the A465 from Hereford to Llangua are managed and maintained by AmeyMouchel/ InterRoute on behalf of the Highways Agency. The majority of these roads are included in maintenance area 9 that also includes high speed, high traffic volume trunk roads and motorways in the Birmingham Area.

Current Issues

Whilst responsibility for safety matters on the trunk road network rests with the Highways Agency, accident statistics for trunk roads within the county are included in Herefordshire's figures for the purpose of key performance indicators.

Accidents on the trunk road network within the county have a detrimental effect on the local community and any subsequent road closures may require trunk road traffic to be diverted onto county roads resulting in increased danger to residents and road users and also damage to road surfaces.

Following a number of accidents on the trunk road network, in particular a number of serious and fatal accidents on the A49 at Ashton, Members and Staff lobbied Highways Agency Officials requesting the introduction of speed limits and also improvements to road signing, markings and surfaces.

Initially progress was slow due to the different priorities of the Highways Agency and the Council. However some success has now been achieved, a number of safety improvements have been made and more are planned.

In addition liaison between the Council and the Highways Agency has been improved, quarterly meetings are now held to discuss all trunk road issues likely to have an impact on Herefordshire. Staff from both organisations discuss issues arising on a daily basis, when necessary.

Diversion routes for emergency road closures have been agreed and early detailed discussion is undertaken on major schemes.

It is intended that improved and increased liaison continues to take place at all levels in order to minimise the effect of acknowledged differences in priorities of the Council and the Highways Agency

RECOMMENDATIONS

That subject to any comments the Committee may wish to make to the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) the report be noted.

Background papers

None