

APPOINTMENT OF TRAFFIC MANAGER

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

CABINET

13TH JANUARY, 2005

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the means by which the Council will fulfil the requirement imposed by the Traffic Management 2004 to appoint a Traffic Manager.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT Cabinet notes that the duties of the post of Head of Highways and Transportation be extended to incorporate the statutory role of Traffic Manager for the Council.

Reasons

Under Section 17 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 the Council is required to appoint a Traffic Manager. The appointed person is to be known as the Traffic Manager but the post holder may carry other responsibilities for the authority.

Considerations

1. Part 2 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 comes into effect on 4 January 2005. This places a new network management duty on the Council as Local Traffic Authority. It is to be a duty for authorities to manage their road network with a view to securing, as far as may be reasonably practicable, the expeditious movement of traffic on their own network and facilitating it on the network of others (i.e. on trunk roads and within adjoining local authority areas).
2. The overall aim of the "expeditious movement of traffic" implies a network that is working efficiently without unnecessary delay to those travelling on it. But the duty is qualified in terms of practicality and the other responsibilities of the authority.
3. The Council will be expected to promote pro-active co-ordination of the network, adopt a planned, evidence-led approach to known events and develop contingencies for the unforeseen.
4. Included within the Act is a requirement for each authority to appoint a Traffic Manager to perform the tasks that an authority considers necessary for meeting the

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Graham Dunhill, Director of Environment on (01432) 260041

duty. This is a statutory post but the post holder may carry out other responsibilities for the authority. It is envisaged that the post will be at a level with the ability to consider and influence all the functions of the Council and decisions made by it that could have an impact on traffic movement. The emphasis is on a whole authority approach to the co-ordination and regulation of the flow of traffic.

5. The recent restructuring of the Highways and Transportation Service reflects the principles of the Traffic Management Act by bringing all aspects of the management of the highway network under Area teams (North, South and Central) through which maintenance and improvement schemes are delivered. The Area teams also monitor works carried out by public utilities in the highway.
6. Under this structure, the designation of Traffic Manager would most appropriately fit at Head of Service level and complement the existing duties of the current post of Head of Highways and Transportation, from where resources can be directed to carry out the network management functions specified in the Traffic Management Act 2004. The duties would be incorporated into the Plans and Strategies of the Service with the functions discharged through the Area teams.
7. The Government has powers under the Act to impose a Traffic Director on an authority if it considers that the authority has failed to carry out its responsibilities under the Act.
8. Although the Act requires the Council to facilitate the traffic activities of other Authorities, there is no similar duty within the Act for the Highways Agency on the trunk road network. It is suggested that the Highways Agency has been given a similar remit by the Secretary of State, including facilitating the movement of traffic on local networks. This will be a matter of key importance in carrying out the network management duties in Herefordshire, where much of the congestion is focused on the trunk road network, particularly in Hereford.

Financial Implications

No additional funding has been provided to fulfil the functions imposed by the Act. Any costs will have to be contained within existing service budgets. However, under other provisions of the Traffic Management Act, there will be powers to make charges to public utility companies for "lane rental" and to impose fixed penalty notices for offences relating to utility street works.

Alternative Options

Alternative Option 1

A new post of Traffic Manager could be created. This would be an additional cost and would not have the operational effectiveness provided by attaching the duties to the current post of Head of Highways and Transportation.

Risk Management

The duties imposed by the Traffic Management Act 2004 will be incorporated into the next Local Transport Plan and the Highway Maintenance Plan. This will ensure that there is effective integration with the council's existing highways and transport services. By the rural nature of the county, issues of congestion in Herefordshire are relatively localised on a few areas of the county highway network and so it seems unlikely that there is significant risk of failure to comply with the duties of the Act.

Consultees

Relevant employees.

Background Papers

Traffic Management Act 2004.