

London Councils' Transport & Environment Committee

15 June 2017

London Lorry Control Scheme Review Item no: 16 – Update and Initial Recommendations

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Date: 15 June 2017
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Summary In December 2015, the Committee agreed that a Working Group should be formed to review the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS), its purpose and the impact it has on delivering goods and services in London. This report provides members with an update on the progress of the review to date and the short, medium and long term recommendations for the future.

Recommendations The Committee is asked to:

- Approve the recommendations put forward in this report.
- Agree that officers shall publish a detailed report on the review findings and recommendations.

Background

1. The LLCS controls the movement of heavy goods vehicles over 18 tonnes maximum gross weight, at night and at weekends on specific roads on London's road network. The scheme has been in place since 1985 under the Greater London (Restriction of Goods Vehicles) Traffic Order 1985 and is enforced utilising the London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003. The scheme is in place to help minimise noise pollution in residential areas during unsociable hours through restricted use of these roads.

2. In December 2015, the Committee agreed that a Working Group should be formed to review the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS), its purpose and the impact it has on delivering goods and services in London.
3. The review sought to assess the effectiveness of the scheme, including consideration of its impact on the freight industry, business and the benefits to London's residents. It would look at the management of freight, evaluate how the scheme can assist with the reduction of congestion and to ensure that noise pollution continues to be kept to a minimum in residential areas during unsociable hours.
4. The review aimed to ensure that the scheme continues to provide essential environmental benefits and protection for Londoners as it has done for over 30 years and plays an integrated role with other existing and emerging freight and environmental management initiatives being led by the Mayor and Boroughs.

Review Progress

5. A Steering Group had been established to lead the review and oversee the work of the Working Group. The first Steering Group meeting took place on 24 October, meeting bi-monthly and was chaired by Spencer Palmer, Director of Transport and Mobility at London Councils. The Steering Group members consisted of officers from London Councils, Transport for London, Croydon, Westminster and the Greater London Authority.
6. The Steering Group agreed the key priorities for the Working Group, which include signage, hours of operation, extent of restrictions, enforcement, permissions and exemptions, taking account of technological advances in HGV design, as well as traffic management and planning techniques.
7. The Working Group members consisted of officers from London Councils, Transport for London, borough and sub-regional transport partnership representatives, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association, London Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Noise Abatement Society, British Beer and Pub Association, Mineral Products Association, London First and a residents' representative.
8. The Steering and Working Groups identified the following key areas of focus for the review:
 - Awareness and Communication;
 - Technology;
 - Enforcement; and
 - Administration.
9. The first Working Group meeting took place on 5 December 2016, meeting monthly with a final joint meeting with both Steering Group and Working Group members on 24 May 2017.
10. One of the initial recommendations put forward by freight and industry representatives at the Working Group meetings, was that more widespread engagement was required with the industry as a whole. Therefore, London Councils consulted with the operators through an online survey asking specific questions about the scheme and held an Operators Workshop dedicated to the LLCS review on 9 March 2017.

11. Following the comprehensive engagement with the freight industry, London Councils undertook further consultation with the boroughs. In early May 2017, an online survey was released asking specific questions about the scheme and the effect it has on London's residents. In addition to this, a London Freight Borough Officer Liaison Group (BOLG) Workshop was held on 12 May 2017.
12. The views of the public and residents were represented by resident, borough and London Councils' representatives involved with the review through the Working Group. However, to get a more balanced view before any significant changes to the scheme can be considered fully, wider resident engagement will be required. Bearing in mind the sheer scale of a London-wide public consultation and the current low levels of public awareness about the scheme, it was felt that undertaking wider public consultation would not be constructive at this stage. It is therefore proposed to undertake wider targeted public engagement utilising borough contacts and networks to help progress and develop the recommendations discussed in this report. Any significant changes to the scheme and its associated traffic management order will be subject to a full public consultation and further approval by TEC.
13. A report detailing the review process, its findings and recommendations is planned to be published later this summer subject to TEC's approval in consideration of this report.

Summary of Key Findings

Awareness and Communication:

14. Engagement with all stakeholders highlighted that there were concerns about the level of general awareness and understanding of the scheme with businesses, residents and freight operators alike. The scheme is still often thought of as a "ban" amongst freight operators, although the scheme is not intended to prevent any necessary freight operations from being completed. Poor levels of understanding about the scheme's purpose, benefits and rules make the scheme unpopular with the freight industry, sometimes influencing their operations unnecessarily and is having an impact on compliance. More therefore needs to be done to publicise the scheme to raise awareness and understanding of its purpose, benefits and rules. However, the level of feedback from the freight industry about how the scheme impacts their business operations, does demonstrate that the scheme does remain effective at reducing the number of journeys by the largest vehicles along residential streets overnight and at weekends.

Technology:

15. The review considered how existing and modern technologies might improve the operation of the scheme. This included discussions about how the development of "noise standards" for vehicle and infrastructure design could transform the way the scheme operates, encouraging good behaviour rather than punishing bad – "more carrot than stick". The growing use and demand for apps, online portals, route planning tools and satellite navigation devices suggested much scope for technological improvements for the scheme too. The current, largely manual, enforcement practices could be updated to achieve efficiencies and improve compliance through the possible use of CCTV and ANPR technology.

Technology:

Explore the provision of an 'online interactive mapping and routing tool'.	Mid-term
Investigate the development of a 'noise standard', working collaboratively with relevant agencies and other major cities.	Mid to Long-term
Develop and pilot the use of CCTV and ANPR technology to enforce the LLCS, including before and after compliance surveys to evaluate effectiveness.	Mid-term
Explore 'HGV design standards' which could establish a list of possible exemptions and relaxations for vehicles operating the quietest fleets. This could include exemptions for Electric Freight Vehicles.	Long-term
Explore the advantages of a single portal for multiple/all schemes and controls affecting the freight industry in London	Long-term

Enforcement:

Review the current Excluded Route and Restricted Road Networks, to take into consideration factors such as changes to road layouts and recent and future development activity.	Long-term
Review, update and improve current LLCS signage on street and research the signage requirements if significant changes to the scheme are made in the future.	Mid-term to review; Long-term to implement
Examine fully the impacts of amending the hours of control and develop pilots for any possible changes.	Long-term
Review the current weight limit and establish whether this is the best way of enforcing the LLCS in future.	Long-term
Consider changes to the scheme exemptions on the basis of noise control and time-critical emergency works.	Mid to Long-term
Engage with European collection agencies to help pursue penalties, in order to improve compliance with foreign registered HGVs.	Short-term

Administration:

Create an 'online interactive portal' allowing freight operators to apply for permissions, update their fleets, submit representations and manage their outstanding PCNs.	Short-term
Review and update the current permission conditions and extend the current three-year virtual permit to five years.	Short-term
Implement an electronic and automatic enquiry letter (EF119) process, along with the creation of an automated 'white list' to improve the current process and avoid repeated requests.	Short-term
Improve the current routing advice provided by London Councils, through the consideration of an interactive 'real-time' online routing tool that can be used in conjunction with apps and satellite navigation systems.	Mid-term
Implement a new case management system to improve back-office response times to representations and make settlements of PCNs at the discounted rates, more efficient.	Short-term
To carry out ongoing and periodic monitoring and reporting of on-street activity and compliance.	Mid-term

Next Steps

19. Subject to TEC approval the above recommendations will be progressed in accordance with the indicated timescales. Regular updates will be provided to TEC along with any business cases for detailed proposals for change. A detailed report of the review process, findings and recommendations will be published shortly.
20. The review Steering and Working Group agreed that a new group would be formed (consisting of existing Steering Group and Working Group members), to continue to aid and review the progress of any approved recommendations quarterly for the first year to cover any aspects that are identified as short to mid-term goals and thereafter annually.
21. It is proposed to undertake wider targeted public engagement utilising borough contacts and networks to help progress and develop the recommendations discussed in this report. Any significant changes to the scheme and its associated traffic management order will be subject to a full public consultation and further approval by TEC.

Financial Implications for London Councils

22. The review to date has been completed by mainly existing in-house staff resources, with considerable voluntary support from external stakeholders. £14,000 of external costs for events and consultations have been met from the approved 2016/17 review budget provision of £50,000. The remaining £36,000 is proposed to be carried forward to the current year, which will mean there is a total review budget of £86,000 for 2017/18 to take forward the proposed recommendations set out in this report.

23. The budget is intended to cover the cost of research, consultation and specialist consultant support required. Many of the short-term recommendations for website, system and administration improvements will be delivered by existing staff and contractors within current approved budget provisions. Any additional costs associated with some of the longer term recommendations (e.g. the possible development of an online routing tool), will be subject to separate future business case consideration and approval by TEC.

Legal Implications for London Councils

24. There are no legal implications at this stage to the recommendations within this report. However, there are likely to be future legal implications to be considered (particularly with respect to the traffic management order), which will be presented to TEC in detail when these arise.

Equalities Implications for London Councils

25. There are no equalities implications at this stage. The Working Group members have been selected to represent a broad cross-section of key stakeholders to help inform the review. Any significant changes to the scheme and its associated traffic management order will be subject to full public consultation.