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**To**  
Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

**Date**  
23<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

**Subject**  
Traffic Management and Enforcement

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**1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny Board (4) with an overview on how traffic in Coventry is managed to reduce congestion and disruption to road users.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the contents of this paper and make any comments and recommendations for further consideration by the Cabinet Member (Public Services).

**3 Information/Background**

3.1 Legislative Framework

- 3.1.1 The primary piece of legislation governing this area is the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), which places a network management duty on local traffic authorities (LTA's), including Coventry City Council, to secure the "expeditious movement of traffic" on their road network. The term traffic is not restricted to motorised vehicles and also includes pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.1.2 Measures to be taken by a LTA in performing the duty includes action that will contribute towards the more efficient use of the road network or actively reduces congestion and disruption to road users. In essence the duty requires authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving. The TMA also requires that a Traffic Manager be appointed to perform the tasks that an authority considers necessary for meeting the duty. In Coventry this role is performed by the Head of Traffic and Transportation.
- 3.1.3 A major cause of disruption and delay to motorists are works carried out by statutory undertakers and other work promoters when they dig up the roads. The main legislation to control and manage these activities is the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. Under this legislation the City Council has a duty to co-ordinate works in the highway and statutory undertakers have a duty to cooperate in this process.
- 3.1.4 The TMA has tightened up this area giving LTA's more powers to co-ordinate and control works with the aim of minimising disruption. One of the new powers is the ability to introduce a Permit Scheme whereby statutory undertakers and other work promoters

would need to book occupation of the highway and obtain a permit first rather than just giving notice as at present. This allows certain conditions to be attached to the use of a permit giving greater control to LTA's to limit timescales and impact of works.

3.1.5 Another area of legislation contained within the TMA is around civil parking enforcement. The Act introduces a broader range of controls and responsibilities for managing parking enforcement including the use of Civil Enforcement Officers and powers to tackle offences such as double parking and obstructing dropped footway crossings.

3.1.6 The TMA also originally intended to confer powers on LTA's to enforce moving traffic offences such as banned turns and blocking yellow box junctions but these powers have not yet been enacted. The only moving traffic offence that the City Council can currently enforce is driving in a bus lane owing to separate powers included within the Transport Act 2000.

### 3.2 How traffic is managed in Coventry

3.2.1 In order to meet the network management duty the City Council has put in place a range of measures and interventions to keep traffic moving. These measures can be both proactive and reactive.

3.2.2 One of the key proactive measures is working with partners and stakeholders such as the Highways Agency, Warwickshire County Council, Centro, bus operators, statutory undertakers and event organisers to ensure that we are aware of the needs and conflicting priorities of stakeholders and of different road users and consequently manage the road space for everyone. We hold regular co-ordination meetings with stakeholders to ensure that their needs are considered and also to establish better outcomes for Coventry.

3.2.3 Effective co-ordination of works on the highway is vital if disruption to road users is to be kept to a minimum. In order to make a step-change in this area, in 2012 the City Council entered into a shared service with Warwickshire County Council for the management and co-ordination of street works. This has resulted in a major improvement in the service and a greater level of scrutiny and enforcement of statutory undertaker activities. In 2015, again jointly with Warwickshire County Council, we are proposing to introduce a Permit Scheme which will further increase our ability to minimise disruption caused by road works.

3.2.4 Having effective measures in place to reduce congestion will play a key role in helping Coventry grow as a city. This is ever more important when considering the success Coventry has had in attracting additional funding for Major Projects such as Friargate Bridge, Whitley Bridge, Pinch Point and City Centre public realm improvements, all of which have to be constructed within a similar timescale in addition to works carried out in the same period by statutory undertakers and the Tollbar End scheme by the Highways Agency.

3.2.5 During the period of these Major Projects a temporary support team (the Strategic Coordination Team) has been established to support the existing teams in place during this period of increased pressure on the road network. The Strategic Coordination Team takes a strategic overview of the network to provide advice and direction to the existing teams ensuring effective coordination is taking place to proactively identify clashes and manage activities and incidents on the network.

3.2.6 Prior to the commencement of the Major Projects traffic modelling was undertaken to look at where we might need to improve capacity at key junctions that might be affected. As a result a number of 'enabling works' were identified and carried out at critical junctions on

the network to release spare capacity in the junctions to enable them to accommodate greater traffic flows.

- 3.2.7 To help further proactively manage traffic flow and reduce congestion we have introduced additional traffic cameras at key locations, deployed six new portable Variable Message Signs (VMS) in addition to the existing static VMS which are used to give advance warning to motorists of road closures or other information to help them plan their journey. These tools are operated from the Council's Traffic Control Centre at Civic Centre 4 which acts as the 'eyes and ears' to monitor traffic flow on key routes in real-time to identify any incidents on the network and make adjustments to traffic signal timings to improve traffic flow. This is done either through the development of pre-developed contingency plans or by on-the-spot manual interventions.
- 3.2.8 Another important role of the Traffic Control Centre is to communicate information to motorists about delays and incidents. Information about live traffic conditions is communicated to road users in a number of ways including via the VMS, the Council's website, Twitter and links to local media. Information about planned road works is also available via the web-based mapping information system EIGIN which is accessible via the Council's website. With this information road users are then better able to plan their journey and avoid delays.
- 3.2.9 Use of technology to improve the efficiency of the existing road network is also increasingly important. Using a 'common database' within the Traffic Control Centre to link all the traffic management and other intelligent transport systems together such as VMS, journey time monitoring, traffic signals data and development of parking guidance systems, enables more strategic decisions to be taken to limit overall congestion levels on the road network.
- 3.2.10 The other major tool that is used to reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety is effective enforcement of traffic restrictions such as yellow lines, school keep clear markings and bus lanes. The City Council has been a civil parking authority since 2007 and currently has a total of 24 Civil Enforcement Officers employed to enforce parking restrictions across the city. In 2012 the Council commenced enforcement of bus lanes using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cctv cameras positioned at the road side to deter the illegal use of the bus lanes which can reduce bus journey reliability and punctuality. In the autumn of 2014 there are also plans to extend camera enforcement to school keep clear markings, the red route and bus stop clearways through the use of a mobile ANPR car. Effective enforcement is therefore necessary to ensure that roads remain clear and traffic keeps moving.
- 3.2.11 Finally, the effectiveness of the arrangements that are in place in performing the network management duty are kept under review. Any comments and recommendations by Scrutiny Board in this regard would be welcome for further consideration by the Cabinet Member (Public Services).

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