

## **Motion: Reducing HGV traffic affecting villages and narrow, unsuitable roads Submitted by Councillor O'Brien**

### **Preamble**

The Government's figures show that HGV traffic nationally is increasing. The most recent figures, up to September 2021<sup>1</sup>, show that whilst car traffic decreased, there was an 8.9% increase in HGV traffic in just one year.

The growth in HGV traffic affects noise, air quality, and safety in many of our local villages and towns, and can have a real impact on quality of life for those living on affected streets, causing sleepless nights and even mental health problems. It also affects cyclists and pedestrians, especially older or vulnerable people and those with small children.

One cause of HGV traffic on unsuitable roads is the use by lorry drivers of google maps and/or satnavs which are only intended for car use. In extreme cases, HGVs are being routed up narrow and unsuitable routes and becoming stuck.

Following a request from Councillor Emily O'Brien, the Local Government Association has now renewed an earlier call to make mandatory for HGVs the use of commercial satnavs (see <https://trans.info/en/sat-navs-lorries-301372>).

Locally, a large volume of HGV traffic is caused by new development, and residents frequently report frustration that the appropriate routing of construction traffic is not given sufficient care and attention as part of the planning process, and may feel like an afterthought, when from their perspective it should be front and centre.

Currently the Construction Traffic Management Plan required by the council at the validation stage requests information on the 'level of vehicle movement and routing arrangements' however new wording could better encourage the routing of construction traffic away from narrow, residential or unsuitable roads. This would require any major Development to consider this important issue at the very beginning of the planning process, and send a strong message that the Council takes this issue seriously.

More widely, there is no strategic approach to HGV traffic routing in our District, with East Sussex County treating all A roads and B roads across the county as equally

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provisional-road-traffic-estimates-great-britain-october-2020-to-september-2021#:~:text=in%20Great%20Britain%20for%20the%20year%20ending%20September%202021.,%2C%20an%20increase%20of%200.4%25>.

suitable for lorry use, and failing to respond to the increasing levels of traffic and the concerns of residents.

There is substantial local support for a local campaign to ask East Sussex County Council to adopt a lorry route network across the county, similar to the one in West Sussex, which would encourage HGVs to take the best route not just the shortest one, and avoid villages and narrow and residential streets. A protest on Ringmer Village Green in October 2022 in support attracted over 60 attendees.

**Motion:**

**This Council resolves:**

- To ask the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure to write to Government Transport Minister Mark Harper, asking for the Minister's view on the Local Government's Association's call for HGVs to be required to use commercial satnavs, and expressing this council's support for such a measure;
- To ask the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure to write to East Sussex County Council to express this Council's support for the campaign for a strategic lorry route network, similar to the one already adopted by West Sussex; and
- To ask Council officers to expand the current validation requirements for planning applications for major development, so that routing away from narrow, unsuitable and residential roads and away from villages becomes an integral feature of any planning permission discussed or granted, and is thought about at the earliest possible stage.