

Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No.4/17

Date: 27 January 2017

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Purpose: To provide information on how the Council Plan performance indicator NI167 Journey Times along 6 primary transport corridors into Chatham (mins per mile) during morning peak is collected and collated.

Background

In 2008 the Council introduced a new target for journey times in Medway's 2006 - 2011 Local Transport Plan (LTP) based on National Indicator 167 (NI167):

- No increase in the average journey time across a combination of strategic transport routes into Chatham town centre between 8.00am and 9.00am Monday to Friday above a baseline of 4 minutes per mile.

The 4 minutes per mile target was set following a survey of morning peak traffic flows at the time, and incorporating national guidance on rush hour journey times.

NI's were subsequently abolished by Government in 2011 under the Localism Act and replaced with a single data set that was adopted by individual Government Departments. NI167 features in the Department for Transport Plan.

NI167 data was collated via Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras located on Medway's highway network maintained by Kent Police. The location of the ANPR was defined by the Police and provided the Council with data for eleven different routes across Medway.

The former Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme reviewed NI167 on 3 October 2013. A Member Advisory Group was convened on 4 March 2014 to discuss NI167. The Group concluded that from 1 April 2014, NI167 would be adjusted to provide a minutes-per-mile figure for five key routes into the centre of Medway, in line with the five Local Growth Fund Transport Projects. These five measures are currently calculated and reported on quarterly as part of the Council Plan:

Wainscott bypass
Main Road Hoo to Medway Tunnel
Medway Tunnel through to Will Adams Way roundabout
A2 corridor from Rainham to New Road near Star Hill
A2 corridor from Strood to New Road near Star Hill

Current Position

In March 2016, officers noticed deterioration in the data obtained via the Police ANPR system. The Police confirmed that they could not see any problems with their system and could not clarify why some of the ANPR cameras were submitting fewer counts. As the majority of the infrastructure for the ANPR system is not maintained by the Council, officers are unable to investigate further.

Going Forward

Officers are currently reviewing the Department of Transport (DfT) Trafficmaster data to replace the ANPR system. Trafficmaster data is obtained by DfT via GPS tracking in certain makes of vehicle. DfT collate the data periodically during the year and make it available to any public body free of charge. Officers have engaged with the suppliers of Basemap to create an online, externally hosted database which analyses the DfT data and presents a range of journey time statistics in the form of colour coded maps to show the flow of traffic during a given time period.

The data from Basemap is much richer and can provide a range of information e.g. maximum and minimum speeds on a selected route, calculate journey times and can also be adjusted to include or eliminate certain vehicle types.

Whilst Basemap will be in full Council control and provide greater functionality than the ANPR data; Basemap will not be as up-to-date as the ANPR data. ANPR reporting could be carried out at the end of each quarter, to provide an immediate report on journey times. The Basemap data will be tied to the frequency that DfT publishes Trafficmaster data, currently twice a year depending on the collation process. At present Basemap has data up to April 2015. Data up to April 2016 is expected to be published by DfT in early 2017.

Lead officer:

David Tappenden (Transport Change Manager)
Tel. No: 01634 334316 Email: david.tappenden@medway.gov.uk