

**REPORT:** Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Petition from Hale Parish Council requesting the introduction of a vehicle weight restriction in Hale

**WARDS:** Hale

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report on a 393 name petition from Hale Parish Council requesting the introduction of a vehicle weight restriction in Hale village.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **It is recommended that the request for a vehicle weight restriction in Hale be noted and the Parish Council be informed that it will not be supported due to the lack of available enforcement from Cheshire Police.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The petition and covering letter from Hale Parish Council is attached in Appendix 'A', with 393 individual names and addresses withheld. The three main concerns put forward are safety, health and the local environment.

3.2 In relation to safety:

- Between the years 2008 to 2013 inclusive there have been no road traffic collisions resulting in injury within the Parish that have involved heavy goods vehicles.
- There are speed-restriction/traffic calming features on both Hale Gate Road and Hale Road approaching the village.
- On the main east-west route through the village via Town Lane/High Street/Hale Road there is a footpath available next to the running carriageway.
- The introduction of a full system of traffic calming was rejected in a public consultation exercise in 2009.

3.3 Health and environmental concerns have to be linked to the volume of heavy goods vehicle traffic. A classified traffic count conducted by independent surveyors on Town Lane for the week starting 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 returned a total of just 23 heavy goods vehicles each working day travelling through the village. This total would include large delivery lorries, skip wagons and others with genuine business in the area that any vehicle weight restriction would not apply to, also agricultural vehicles which are common in an agricultural area.

3.4 In addition to the 'true' HGVs, each working day the traffic counter also recorded 52 two axle, double rear wheel vehicles that may or may not be over a weight of 7.5 tonnes unladen. An automatic counter cannot differentiate between an unladen skip lorry and a

much lighter pickup truck, but again for many of the vehicles recorded it is reasonable to assume that they had business within the Parish area and would be entitled to be in the area even if a weight restriction were imposed.

- 3.5 Ground borne vibration is produced by the interaction between rolling wheels and the road surface producing possible vibration in buildings and maybe felt by their occupants. The main Hale Road/High Street/Town Lane/Hale Gate Road, east/west route is generally level, "C" classified, and maintained to a correspondingly high standard. It is not considered reasonable that ground borne vibration is an issue in Hale and it has not been raised previously.
- 3.6 The Parish Council have expressed concerns for the safety of cyclists and walkers but there is no history of complaints to the Council by members of either road user group in relation to HGVs.
- 3.7 Any weight restriction to span the village of Hale would probably need to start at Liverpool Airport in the west and extend to Hale Bank in the east, plan attached in Appendix 'B'. Cheshire Police have been consulted and comment as follows:

"The Police do not support any form of environmental weight restrictions and would only consider such options on road safety grounds.

The logistics of such an area wide restriction across two force areas would negate any form of enforcement. To prove an offence a police officer, not a PCSO, would need to follow every vehicle for the full length of the restriction in either direction to ensure that they were not legitimately accessing any properties within the controlled area."

- 3.8 Aside from the attached letter and petition, the Council does not appear to have received complaints about vehicle fumes or pollution in the past.
- 3.9 The ward Councillor for Hale, Cllr Mike Wharton has written to support a vehicle weight restriction and was a signatory to the petition.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 It is estimated that the cost of implementing the requested vehicle weight restriction proposals would be approximately £20,000, which would be charged to annual traffic management revenue funds. There would also be an ongoing revenue cost for the maintenance of the signs including the electricity costs for the illumination of the signs.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no other direct social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES.**

##### **6.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Children & Young People in Halton' priority.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Present levels of HGV activity do not present any measurable threat to resident's health.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

Over the years 2008 to 2013 inclusive there have been no road traffic accidents resulting injury within the Parish that have involved lorries.

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal'.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There is a variable and uncertain road safety risk associated with not introducing a vehicle weight restriction in Hale but given the lack of any relevant road traffic collision records this risk is very small.

7.2 Heavy goods vehicles displaced from Hale by any vehicle weight restriction would inevitably place an extra load on adjacent areas and this would be largely unavoidable.

## **8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 There are no background papers under section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.



**HALE PARISH COUNCIL**  
of the Halton Borough in the County of Cheshire



1<sup>st</sup> of October 2014

David Parr  
Chief Executive  
Halton Borough Council  
Municipal Building  
Kingsway  
Widnes  
WA8 7QF

Dear Mr Parr

Hale Parish Council formally request HGV restrictions for Hale Village.

The main issues of concern are as follows:

**a Environmental**

Vibration

Hale is a Conservation Area

There are no footings to the old cottages along High Street and the War Memorial

The road surfaces are being badly damaged

Hale is part of the Pennine Way, used by walkers and cyclists

**b Health**

Diesel fumes are a known health risk to children, pregnant women, the elderly and also to people suffering from heart and lung diseases

Hale already has a pollution problem from the aircraft movements over the village.

**c Safety**

Increases in HGV traffic

The road through the village is very narrow with a number of blind bends

The pavements are extremely narrow and non-existent in parts

Cyclists and walkers feel they are being swept into the slipstream.

The residents of Hale Village request that Halton Council seriously consider implementing a weight restriction on heavy goods vehicles passing through Hale Village. They believe that HGV movements through the village will continue to increase, particularly when work on the new Mersey crossing gets into full swing, and they are very concerned for the future of their community.

Yours Sincerely

Alison Jones  
Chairman Hale Parish Council

Tina Rogers-Smith  
Clerk to Hale Parish Council

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**HALE PARISH COUNCIL**  
of the Halton Borough in the County of Cheshire



31 September 2014

David Parr  
Chief Executive  
Halton Borough Council  
Municipal Building  
Kingsway  
Widnes  
WA8 7QF

Dear Mr Parr

Please find enclosed residents signatures in support of:

‘We the undersigned request that a weight limit be placed on heavy goods vehicles passing through Hale Village, for health, safety and environmental reasons’

There are almost 400 signatures to date.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Jones".

Yours Sincerely

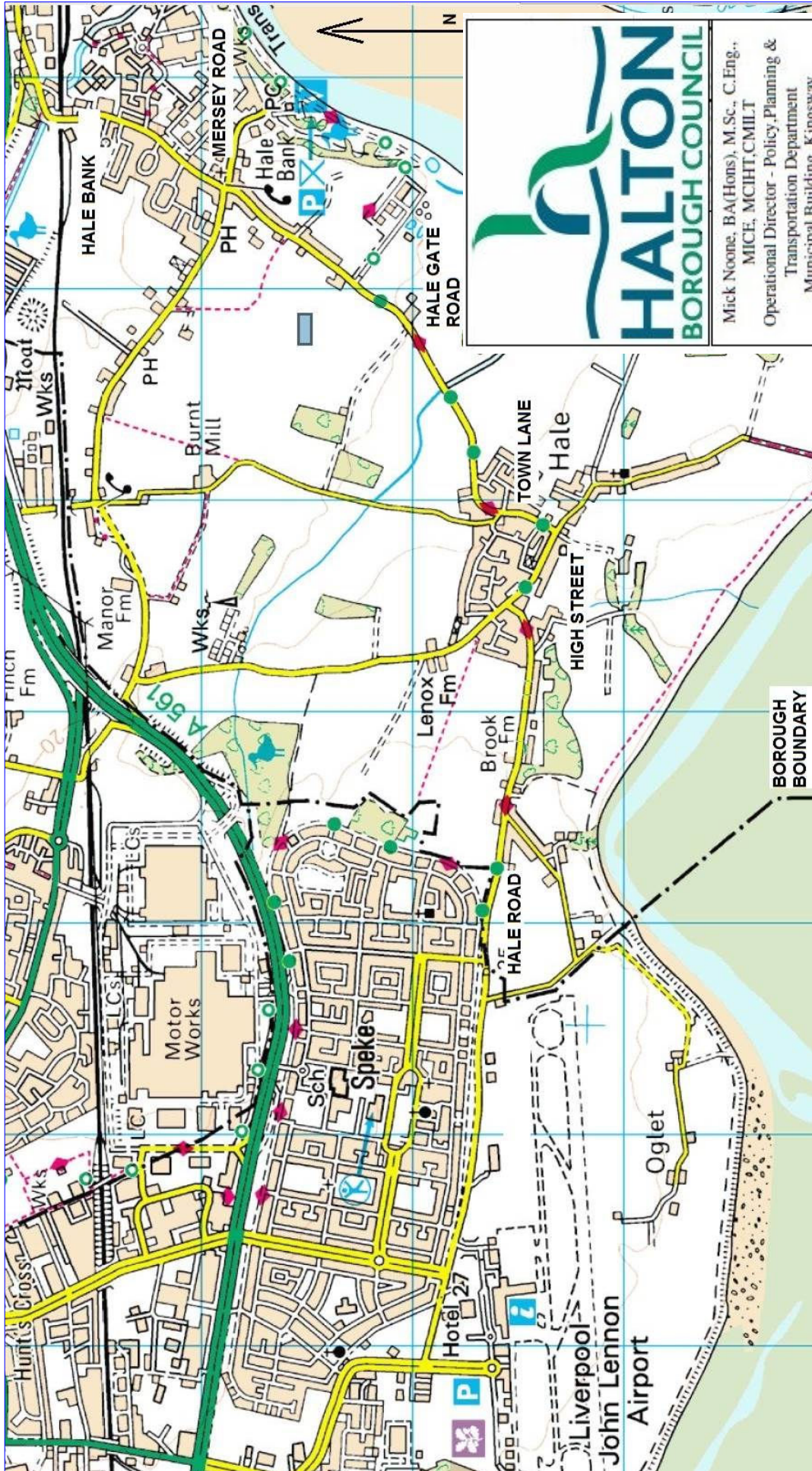
Alison Jones  
Chairman Hale Parish Council

Tina Rogers-Smith  
Clerk to Hale Parish Council  
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APPENDIX 'B'



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