

County Council Update from County Cllr Anne Wight February 2020

Freight Strategy Update

I am happy to be able to provide an update from our Freight Strategy officer with regard to the forthcoming Freight Strategy Public Engagement:

“We are at last moving toward being able to start engaging with residents and businesses on the proposal for managing freight and heavy good vehicle movements in the area known as the Ivinghoe Division. Work has started on putting together display materials, leaflets and posters along with an online survey to capture important comment from the area, feedback we can use to shape the formal consultation process. We are hoping to get the public engagement process underway in February.

In the meantime, we have reached out to affected County Councillors to inform them and gain their support. Now we are looking at meeting Parish Councillors to bring them up to speed, answer any questions they may have and to, hopefully obtain their help and support promoting what is believed to be a best available balanced solution for the communities and businesses. The first of these meetings is taking place on Tuesday 4th of February with representatives from four Parish Councils. The second meeting for the remaining Parish Councils is being worked on to find a venue and date that works. It is important we engage with the elected bodies in the area prior to the wider public engagements. We are hopeful to get this completed before the public engagement gets underway.”

Breaking News: The Freight Strategy Public Engagement is now running from 19 February until 14 March, 2020.

Attached is a link to the latest news regarding the repair plans for the Brownlow Bridge in Ivinghoe, along with a link to the Freight Strategy informal consultation itself.

Please encourage all residents and stakeholders to participate in this informal consultation as we are hoping for a robust response.

Link to news article:

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/news/lorry-restriction-proposals-for-ivinghoe-freight-zone/>

Freight Strategy public consultation link:

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/transport-plans-and-policies/freight-strategy/ivinghoe-area-freight-engagement/>

Reporting Unauthorised Encampments

An unauthorised encampment is a group of people with vehicles who are entering and staying on land without the landowner's consent.

As you may know, the County Council's enforcement team works closely with the district councils and Thames Valley Police to assist communities in resolving issues with encampments when they arise. However, people often have unrealistic expectations of the powers of the local authority and police to take immediate enforcement action when an encampment takes place.

In order to better explain the legal situation and processes involved, our colleagues at Thames Valley Police have produced a couple of short films which explain the law and practice in this area in a way which is both concise and easy to understand.

These films are an excellent resource for summarising the law in this area so that if an encampment occurs, there is greater awareness of the process of eviction and the limitations on police and local authority action.

The links for the films appear below.

Thames Valley Police encampments video part 1: <https://youtu.be/yWQGy3DNdEE>

Thames Valley Police encampments video part 2: <https://youtu.be/Z-Feh6mP2VE>

For further information, or to report an unauthorised encampment, please go to the County Council website for more detail.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/report-an-unauthorised-encampment>

Fairer funding plea to look after Buckinghamshire's roads

Buckinghamshire is supporting calls to the Government for a fairer slice of funding for roads, following national research that shows London has the money to invest three times the amount compared to counties. And other major cities aren't far behind.

Figures, produced by the County Councils Network (CCN) this week, showed the 36 shire counties in the analysis were able to spend an average £20,885 per mile on road repairs, pothole filling, and building new junctions and roads last year. By contrast, London councils were able to spend an average £62,350 per mile.

Mark Shaw, Buckinghamshire County Council Deputy Leader and Transport Cabinet Member, said that while the authority was investing more than £20 million in roads in the current financial year, including halving the number of potholes needing repair last year*, it was still well below what he would like to see invested to bring all the county's roads up to scratch.

"Our road teams work tirelessly to keep our 2,000 miles of roads safe and resilient, and that includes a tremendous achievement in repairing road defects like potholes, but our budget is always under intense pressure," said Mark.

"It's a fact that our roads are some of the busiest in the country and without adequate funding from Government, we'll always be playing catch-up, particularly when you think of the damage done during the three months of rain we've just had."

Mark welcomed CCN lobbying on behalf of county councils to ensure a fair distribution of the new Government's promised £2 billion for repairing potholes in the coming four years. An announcement on allocations of the first £500 million for 2020-21 is expected in the coming weeks.

"The CCN analysis shows a big difference between the two sides of Buckinghamshire's south eastern boundary; that our county's motorists are the poor relation to drivers in London and other cities, when it comes to spending on mending potholes and improving local roads," said Mark.

"What's needed is a more equitable allocation of Government funds across different council types, and a

longer-term settlement for roads funding, rather than the current ad-hoc fund pots we have to bid for," he said. "I welcome the CCN's drive to influence the Government to correct this disparity."

Buckinghamshire's Family Support Service – how we can help you

Do you sometimes struggle to relate to your teen? Are you a young parent who sometimes feels isolated? Maybe you're having difficulties with your primary school child's behaviour.

Anyone and everyone struggles with parenting from time to time and it can be tough being a kid too!

Buckinghamshire's Family Support Service is here to help.

We have a network of 16 family centres across Buckinghamshire and new timetables for all of them have just been released. The new spring timetables run from Monday 6 January right through until Easter and there are different types of sessions at each centre.

Here are some of the courses and sessions on offer:

- "Incredible Years" parenting courses – for parents of children aged 4-10 years
- "Your Space" drop in sessions – for children in school years 7-13
- "Teen Triple P" sessions – a positive parenting programme for parents of teenagers
- "Strengthening Families" course for parents and children aged 10-14
- "Marlow Feel Good Group" for adults who've experienced mental health issues
- Many 'universal' 'playgroup' type drop in sessions for parents with babies and pre-school aged children
- Sessions for parents of children with disabilities or special educational needs

There are lots of other types of sessions available too – check out the Family Centre timetables at www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/familysupport . Some of the courses start later on in the term and some are bookable so take a look at all the details.

Warren Whyte is Buckinghamshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services. He said:

"It's great to see our new Family Centres offering such a wide range of support for local families. As people will see, we still offer lots of open sessions for parents and carers with babies and young children. But now we cater for families with children of all ages and our new timetables reflect this.

We are continuing to develop what's on offer at all of our Family Centres and are exploring the needs of all local children and families. We welcome feedback and we aim to carry on introducing new courses depending on what local people want and need."

- Buckinghamshire's new Family Support Service launched by the county council in September 2019
- It aims to help local families who might be facing challenges so they can solve their problems before they reach crisis point
- The Family Support Service helps local families who are facing issues such as money problems, poor family relationships, mental health problems and problems with drugs or alcohol
- To find out more and to find out how to contact the service go to www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/familysupport