

CCPC14 March 2022

Motion:

“That we discuss whether new Lorry regulations would be beneficial to Purbeck”

Supporting statement

Lorry sizes have increased considerably over the decades with 44-ton lorries more commonplace. Lorry movements have increased as well. They are the core of the nation's delivery system and doing without lorries is not an option. The economies of transport are such that the number of large vehicles will increase. The Government currently has a trial which permits a limited number of “Longer Semi Trailers” (LSTs) up to 18.55 metres (44 tons) with the number permitted set to increase from 1800 to 2800. The lorries are so long that they cannot be used in Europe.

However the road system was not designed for the volume and size of lorry traffic. The issue is of particular relevance to Corfe Castle as most traffic to Swanage has to come through the village and around the Bankes Arms corner.

The A351 near the Bankes corner and 100 metres either side is not wide enough for two large vehicles to pass. There is a particular issue for deliveries to the Village shop as articulated or large flat bed lorries have to back into Station Road causing congestion, damaging the barriers and pavements and blocking Station Rd. Traffic to Swanage includes regular mobile home transports and long articulated lorry transports for the Coop.

The Swanworth quarry lorries are heavy (32 ton) but are not as large as others. The Lovell quarry however uses lorries with trailers.

There are of course many other places in Dorset where long vehicles are unsuitable!

Questions

Is the issue serious enough to warrant some regulation?

What would regulation look like? Options include requiring operators of very large vehicles to demonstrate that in designated areas there is not a feasible alternative, regulating the hours of use avoiding the busiest times, ensuring that very large vehicles are directed on timing e.g. one way timing slots to ensure that they do not meet in Corfe Castle. Operators would need a licence and pay an admin charge.

Environmentally very large vehicles have a smaller pollution footprint than a larger number of smaller vehicles but if they create congestion this adds to pollution. Cities such as London and Portsmouth are introducing or

strengthening low emission zones. In the longer term lorries will have to switch to alternative fuels such as hydrogen.

If the change did mean smaller delivery vehicles (say under 20 tons) this could mean higher operating costs and could mean higher prices: supermarkets in Swanage are already more expensive than elsewhere.

Do powers exist?

The only area with comprehensive powers is London with controls on timing of the use of lorries, the congestion charge and two zones for reducing pollution.

New legislation would be needed and local authorities would need to agree that they want such discretionary powers and persuade the Government to promote legislation. The timescale to achieve this would be measured in years but has to start somewhere. If change was desired the initial steps would be to seek support in Purbeck and if forthcoming Dorset Council which would be the highway and licensing authority.

A couple of interim steps would be

1-to ask the Department of Transport (which licences LSTs) to require that they only use full size carriageway roads

2-to seek a voluntary agreement with the major regular users such as supermarkets /delivery companies/mobile home transporters on the size of vehicles and hours of use if very large vehicles have to be used.

Steve Clarke
5.03.22