

## **Department for Transport acoustic camera trial**

**To: Joint Transportation Board**

**By: Community Safety & Wellbeing Service**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**Classification: For information**

**Ward: Across the Borough – Various**

### **Summary:**

The Department for Transport (DfT) has commissioned a prototype noise camera to be tested at several locations over the next 7 months. These cameras are designed to measure the sound levels of passing vehicles to detect those that are breaking legal noise limits and could use automated number plate recognition to help enforce the law.

### **Background**

1. The DfT have commissioned the trial as studies have shown that exposure to noise can have significant physical and mental health implications - with heart attacks, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and stress all linked to long term contact with loud environments.
2. Currently, enforcement is mainly reactive and relies on subjective judgment, mainly from a Police Officer in relation to The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. Therefore the aim of the trial is to provide guidance for objectively and subjectively appraising noise levels emitted from exhaust systems would ensure a consistent nationwide approach to enforcement.

### **Summary of the trial**

3. The DfT has commissioned a prototype noise camera to be tested at several identified locations over the next 7 months (commenced in June 2019). The new technology will aim to detect illegal, excessively noise vehicles and help create quieter streets. The cameras could work like speed cameras to target law-breaking drivers automatically.
4. The trial is not intended to target law-abiding drivers, but those who are flouting laws around noise and impacting on communities.

5. Once the trial has been completed it will be evaluated and if the trials are successful, recommendations will be made to further develop the system across the UK.

### **Next Steps**

6. Await for the trial to come to an end and review the recommendations when published.
7. Bring a further paper to the JTB once the trial recommendations have been reviewed to decide on next steps.
8. Please note that Kent County Council are also aware of the trial and have indicated that at this early stage they would support ABC in implementing such technology but would be at the cost to ourselves as an environmental matter.

*Alison Oates – Community Safety and Wellbeing Manager*

[alison.oates@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:alison.oates@ashford.gov.uk)

*Reporting to Sheila Davison, Head of Community Safety & Wellbeing*

*Neil Edwards, Traffic Manager, Kent County Council*

[neil.edwards@kent.gov.uk](mailto:neil.edwards@kent.gov.uk)