

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2022

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillors Gary Cooke (Chairman), Springett (Vice Chairman), Cannon, Cooper, Chittenden, Mrs Grigg, Holmes, Kimmance, Knatchbull, Parfitt-Reid, Russell, English, Jeffery and Spooner
Visiting Members:	Councillor Cleator

261. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter, Clark, Daley, Prendergast, Sams, Webb and Young.

262. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were present:

Councillor English for Councillor Clark;
Councillor Jeffery for Councillor Sams; and
Councillor Spooner for Councillor Young.

263. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items, however the Chairman informed the Committee that an incorrect appendix was attached to the agenda papers for Item 12 – Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan and National Bus Strategy Funding Update. A printed copy of the correct appendix had been distributed and would be published following the meeting.

264. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Cleator was present as a Visiting Member for Item 13 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package.

265. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

266. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor Parfitt-Reid had been lobbied on Item 12 - Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan and National Bus Strategy Funding Update.

Councillors Cannon and Grigg had been lobbied on Item 13 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package.

267. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

268. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 August 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the following amendment to the note at Minute 255:

'Councillor Parfitt-Reid left the meeting during this item' amended to *'Councillor Parfitt-Reid left the meeting at the end of this item'*.

269. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

270. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

271. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

272. KENT BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY FUNDING UPDATE

Ahead of introducing the report, the Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager (KCC) explained that Appendix A had been attached to the report in error, and should be replaced by the updated version which had been distributed to the Committee and would be published with the Minutes.

The Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager (KCC) explained that the National Bus Strategy published in 2021 provided a guide to recover services following the impacts of the pandemic, and also to drive improvements across the bus network. Having fulfilled the criteria of submitting a Bus Service Improvement Plan and forming Enhanced Partnership Agreements with bus operators, KCC received an indicative funding allocation of £35.1 million. Details of the proposed use of the funding were set out in Appendix A, and was in line with the Department for Transport guidance.

The next steps would be for the funding to be confirmed which was expected in the following few weeks. After reviewing conditions attached to the funding, revised schemes would be developed in early 2023.

Members of the Committee felt that the conditions on how the funding could be spent were too restrictive, and there would be significant benefit to sustaining existing networks. However it was understood that the conditions had been applied by DfT and were not likely to be revised.

Responding to questions, the Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager explained that the principle behind DfT's condition was to look at different ways of providing a service, rather than supporting a service that consistently required subsidies to run. It was clarified that of the three schemes priority schemes mentioned, two were accounted for within the allocation to line IP16 of Appendix 1, 'Feasibility studies and delivery of bus priority measures (two schemes)', and one within line ADM14, 'Development of a Superbus scheme – i.e bus priority with reciprocal benefits'.

Driver training had not formed part of the initial funding bid as it was submitted a year previously, and did not present as a priority at that point. However since then, low driver recruitment had become a prevalent issue nationally, and discussions were taking place between KCC and bus operators to this regard. The initial bid had contained a significant funding request to improve emissions standards, particularly for buses running in Air Quality Improvement Areas. The indicative grant however was much less than requested and therefore areas were prioritised following consultation.

The funding allocation to 'Continued support of Community Transport sector through facilitation role' listed in Appendix A was intended to bolster the funding that already existed to Parishes and community groups, and was not related to any specific service.

An update could be given to the Committee on a six-monthly basis, although it was highlighted that when funding was allocated, decisions would need to be made very quickly.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

273. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE

The Major Projects Team Project Manager introduced the report.

The A249 Bearsted Road Major Infrastructure Project was initially due to commence in August 2022, however the main construction works were now expected to commence in January 2023. This was due to delays in finalising the detailed design, which impacted the discharge of pre-commencement planning conditions. MBC had submitted a bid for funding for capacity improvements at J7 of the M20, alongside which KCC had applied for Strategic CIL funds, should MBC's bid be unsuccessful.

The A20 Coldharbour Roundabout / A20 London Road – Hall Road scheme procurement process had been deferred following delays to the commencement of the Bearsted Road scheme. It was expected that works would commence in September 2023, and would be carried out over nine to twelve months.

The A229 Loose Road Corridor Scheme would comprise four separate junction improvements. The junction with the A274 Sutton Road (Wheatsheaf junction) had seen the first phase of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and responses to the consultation were being collated. Of the 96 representations received, 73 were against the TRO, the majority of which were from the local community rather than those using the junction. However there had been an overall improvement in traffic flow and it was expected that the traffic data would show capacity benefits. The second phase of the scheme would be carried out

between Spring 2023 and Spring 2024, and would include the demolition of the pub and construction of the new junction.

The A229 Loose Road junction with Armstrong Road / Park Way works were expected to be completed prior to Christmas 2022.

The A229 Loose Road junction with Sheals Crescent works would be delayed to allow the impact of the Armstrong Road / Park Way works to be assessed.

The A229 Loose Road junction with Cripple Street / Boughton Lane works remained the same as reported to the August meeting of the Board.

The A20 Ashford Road junction with Willington Street works would need to be coordinated with the completion of the A249 Bearsted Road project, and the Wheatsheaf improvement scheme. It was expected that the works would be delivered after January 2024.

The A26 Tonbridge Road junction with Fountain Lane scheme remained the same as reported to the August meeting of the Board.

The A274 Sutton Road junction with Willington Street scheme would be delivered at the end of the programme, in order that the delivery of projects with funding constraints be prioritised.

In response to questions, the Major Projects Team Project Manager acknowledged that the disruption caused by junction improvement works would be a continuing problem. A team was in place to coordinate the programme of works, however when emergencies happen, there would be an impact on road users. The delay in delivering half bus laybys at the Loose Road junction with Cripple Street was due to the location of utilities, which would need to be diverted if the carriageway was widened. A report would be presented to the Board so Members would have an opportunity to feedback on that item once costs and benefits had been fully considered.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

274. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

275. DURATION OF MEETING

6.31 p.m. to 7.59 p.m.

Minute Item 272

Appendix A

BSIP Ref	Revised Initiative	Proposed Allocation	Capital	Revenue
FTI2	Special fares and promotions to support the network and identified groups	2,000,000	-	2,000,000
ADMI4	Development of a Superbus scheme – i.e bus priority with reciprocal benefits	5,500,000	5,500,000	-
HNMI2	Highway Interventions to aid bus punctuality and to support PIPs	1,500,000	1,500,000	-
FTI3	Support operators in enhancing ETMs in order to develop more innovative ticketing solutions	1,393,245	1,177,840	215,405
IPI6	Feasibility studies and delivery of bus priority measures (two schemes)	11,000,000	11,000,000	-
IPI7	Infrastructure schemes to support BRT – i.e. Pencester Road infrastructure	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
FTI1	Provision of multi operator ticketing	289,500	-	289,500
IDAI2	Drive a data led approach for network planning	240,000	100,000	140,000
IDAI3	Delivery of a MaaS back office system	1,450,000	1,450,000	-
NDI2	Introduction of new or improved services to build on a base network level in Oct 2022	7,500,000	-	7,500,000
ADMI5	Delivery of a DRT back office system	80,000	80,000	-
HNMI7	Bus Gate Enforcement – capital equipment costs	450,000	450,000	-
HNMI8	Appointment of a dedicated Roadworks / Parking Enforcement Officer	250,000	-	250,000
ADMI3	Continued support of Community Transport sector through facilitation role	100,000	100,000	-
PTI1	Development of Kent Connected journey planner	200,000	140,000	60,000
HNMI9	Review of link between parking facilities and charges vs bus use	150,000	-	150,000
IDAI4	Key technological advancements (off bus) i.e. RTI displays	700,000	700,000	-
PTI3	Develop use of QR codes at bus stops to report issues and link to information	325,000	-	325,000