

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 JANUARY 2023

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillors Cooper (Chairman), Clark, Holmes, Knatchbull, Parfitt-Reid, Prendergast, Russell, T Sams, Webb, Young, Jeffery and Garten
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276. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brown, Cannon, Chittenden, Cooke, Grigg, Kimmance and Springett.

277. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

- Councillor Garten for Councillor Springett
- Councillor Jeffery for Councillor Grigg

278. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

As the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were unavailable to attend the Meeting, the Committee were requested to elect a Chairman for the duration of the Meeting.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Cooper be elected as Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

279. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

280. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

281. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Sams disclosed that as he was a Harrietsham Parish Councillor he intended to speak, but not vote, on Item 13 – Results of the public consultation for a proposed 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Harrietsham.

Councillor Pendergast disclosed that she was named within Item 13 – Results of the public consultation for a proposed 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Harrietsham.

282. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor Pendergast said that they had been lobbied on Item 13 – Results of the public consultation for a proposed 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Harrietsham.

283. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

284. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

285. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

286. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There was one question from a Member of the Public.

Question from Rachel Rodwell to the Chairman of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

"In view of the extremely hazardous conditions endured by motorists and pedestrians alike during the recent icy weather, could you tell me when either MBC or KCC last conducted a comprehensive audit and assessment of the need and placement of salt bins across the Borough?"

The Chairman responded to the question.

Rachel Rodwell asked the following supplementary question:

"Regarding where salt bins are actually allocated, I was wondering what the criteria is to actually place a salt bin? I know that there have been salt bins that are empty, but in the whole of the Allington Ward there is only one salt bin for the area, because that seems like a very large area to not be covered and I know it caused significant problem in the area on those days, which I know were unprecedented, but there was a sense of no preparation at all. The residents couldn't access the primary roads because they couldn't get off their hilly roads, such as Castle Road which is on a hill and cars just weren't able to get up from Braunston Drive".

The Chairman responded to the supplementary question.

The full responses were recorded on the webcast and made available to view on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

To access the webcast, please use the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Uc8_x4F_o4

287. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS

Councillor Jeffery asked the following question of the Chairman of the Board:

"At the last MJTB the "Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan" was presented in outline. We were told that the funding was still "indicative" and had not been confirmed by central government. As services continue to decline the arrival of this funding increases in importance. Can you tell me whether the funding has now arrived, whether it has been confirmed or whether it remains "indicative"?"

The Chairman of the Board responded to the question.

Councillor Jeffery asked a follow up question of the Chairman of the Board:

"Do you agree it appalling deletions by central government in face of a disastrous time for bus services and will you be asking KCC colleagues to write to Grant Chapps for an explanation?"

The Chairman of the Board responded to the question.

The full responses were recorded on the webcast and made available to view on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

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288. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

In response to comments, the Principal Democratic Services Officer stated that the previously requested six-monthly updates concerning the Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan and National Bus Strategy Funding Update would be added to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

289. RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR A PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ON VARIOUS ROADS IN HARRIETSHAM

The Board were informed the purpose of the report was to consider objections received to the proposed 20mph schemes and discuss the results of the public consultation.

In considering the scheme the Board noted that the scheme had been a priority for a while and that the funding from KCC and report were welcome. The Board had a number of questions relating to the operation of the scheme, alternative uses of street furniture, concerns over enforcement and whether the views of residents had been taken into account. Officers agreed to consider the views of the Board and provide responses to the questions raised. The Board felt that, generally, if the parish supported the scheme it should be supported but also raised concerns about the number of roads included in the scheme.

It was noted that the purpose of the scheme was not just to reduce collisions but also to have wider impacts on pedestrian safety and other road users, and to improve health and other factors.

RESOLVED: That

1. the value of the scheme presented be noted; and
2. the Board recommend that the number of roads included in the scheme be reviewed to take into account the feedback from local residents, and brought back to a future meeting of the Board.

Note: Councillor Prendergast and Councillor Sams left the meeting after this item.

290. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE

The Board were updated that there had been delay on the works on Armstrong Road due to extreme weather, it was noted they would commence the day after the meeting.

Clarification was requested on schemes at Sheal's Crescent and Cripple St. It was the intent to review the Sheal's Crescent scheme after the Armstrong Road Scheme had been completed, and it was the aim to bring Cripple Street to the next meeting.

It was reiterated that the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package specifically was aimed at dealing with the constrained highways network in Maidstone and achieving capacity benefits.

In response to a question it was noted that a small amount of s106 funding for the A26 junction with Fountain Lane would expire in late 2025, with the larger proportion having an expiry of 2026 to 2031.

A request was made for the plans for A20 Coldharbour Roundabout/A20 London Road – Hall Road in relation to tree removal which officers took away to action.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

291. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

The Board considered the report and a concern was expressed that works in Marden had been carried out under poor weather conditions, with snow on the roads, which resulted in traffic being diverted from a main road to side roads that were not gritted. The issue had been raised with KCC officers and was being reviewed including the risk assessment carried out on the scheme.

The issue of potholes was raised and whether an accelerated programme was underway given the increasing number of them. The Board were informed that potholes were the main priority throughout Maidstone for the team.

The Board made several requests via individual Councillors for updates to schemes including schemes in Coxheath, the traffic signal scheme at Hermitage Lane and Fullingpits Avenue, and Bicknor Road. Officers undertook to respond separately to the relevant Councillors on those matters.

KCC Officers were thanked for being responsive to requests for information on schemes, and for their hard work over a difficult three week period.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

292. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.