

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2010

PRESENT: **Maidstone Borough Council**

**Councillors Beerling, Mrs Blackmore, English,
Hinder, Marchant, Parr, Ross, J E Wilson and
J.A. Wilson**

Kent County Council

**County Councillors Cooke (Chairman), Carter,
Chell, Chittenden, Mrs Stockell and Whittle**

ALSO PRESENT: **Councillors Mrs Gooch and Horne**

18. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daley and Hotson.

19. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no Substitute Members.

20. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Horne indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 10 – Joint Transportation Update on Signs and Lines Policy and Technical Directive, Revision of the Scheme Prioritisation System and Winter Service.

Councillor Gooch was in attendance.

21. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Councillor Hinder declared a personal interest in Agenda Items 12 and 13 as he is a member of Boxley Parish Council.

22. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

The Chairman declared on behalf of all Members that they had been lobbied with regard to Agenda Item 9 – Policy for Obstructions and Temporary Items on the Highway.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

24. PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no Petitions, however the Chairman read the following statement:-

"At the last meeting, a Petition was presented following which I stated that there was to be no discussion by Members and that it would be included on the next meeting's Agenda and, as you will have seen, it is included in the Petitions Update at Agenda Item 10 for this meeting and any Member wishing to speak will have an opportunity to do so.

Following the last meeting, an enquiry was made to the Monitoring Officer as to whether the correct procedures had been followed.

I can confirm, the Maidstone Borough Council Constitution states:-

"For Committee or Sub-Committee, Cabinet or appropriate Cabinet Member meetings at the conclusion of the speech of the presenter the petition will be:

- referred without further discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee or to the Cabinet or appropriate Cabinet Member when it will be included in the appropriate officer's report; or
- considered at the meeting in conjunction with any report that has been placed on the agenda concerning the matter raised in the petition; or
- considered at the meeting if Members feel that a report is not necessary."

I therefore suggest that, following the presentation of any petitions at future meetings of the JTB, the Chairman recommends one of the above options to the Board for their agreement."

RESOLVED: That the Chairman's recommendation above be agreed.

25. QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Neville Butteriss addressed the Board with regard to Item 9 – Policy for Obstructions and Temporary Items on the Highway. Mr Butteriss informed the Board that he was the original instigator of a campaign to abolish advertising boards on the streets. The campaign has progressed very well after meeting with Mr Burr and Councillor Chittenden backed the campaign by walking through the town with a blindfold on to highlight the hazards of these boards. Mr Butteriss stated that his petition currently

has 2,300 signatures and he suggested that shop should be allowed to have small hanging signs outside on walls instead. He urged members of the Board to support his campaign and thanked Councillor Chittenden and Miss Brooks of the RNIB who had come down from London for this meeting. He said Kent could be the first County to deal with this problem and make a name for itself.

Mr Ivan White of the Federation of Small businesses addressed the Board with regard to Item 9 – Policy for Obstructions and Temporary Items on the Highway. Mr White said he was very disappointed that the policy had been introduced without consultation with businesses, especially as they have an accord with KCC for this sort of matter. He said that he realises that some A-Boards have become a problem in the town and that smaller out of town shopping areas rely on the A-Boards to attract business. Mr White also felt that the charging regime was problematic, in that, KCC say the charge is to cover the administration only, but he felt that charging £65 for the re-issue of the licence should be substantially lower. Also, why £150 pa for tables and chair irrespective of the size of area and the number of tables?

Mr Paul Alcock, Chairman of Town Centre Management addressed the Board with regard to Item 9 – Policy for Obstructions and Temporary Items on the Highway. Mr Alcock stated that he was due to address the KCC Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting, but was stood down the day before. The consultation – so what that no-one in Maidstone knew about it? We know regeneration is needed. We are experiencing very difficult trading conditions – is a fee really required for this? The 2nd year should be reduced. Small cafes and businesses that we have encouraged will withdraw because of the cost.

Ms Lynsey Brooks from the Royal National Institute for the Blind addressed the Board with regard to Item 9 – Policy for Obstructions and Temporary Items on the Highway. Ms Brooks stated that most of us take for granted the obstacles that they can step around. It is important that they are regulated and removed from narrow pavements.

Mr Martin Pepper, Chairman of Boxley Parish Council, addressed the Board regarding a reduced speed Limit for Boxley Road & Beechen Road from 60mph to 30mph. A petition will be presented to KCC Highways which is full of facts and he requested that the matter be formally managed by the Board.

Mrs Janetta Sams addressed the Board regarding Item 13 – Update on Petitions. Mrs Sams spoke with regard to the Petition submitted at the previous meeting about a 20mph speed limit outside schools. She said the residents of Harrietsham and Lenham feel let down by KCC, but they are determined to continue. Public safety is paramount and we should be pro-active rather than reactive. In Maidstone we do not have a 20mph speed limit. Mrs Sams is aware there is a cost, but she states it is a small cost compared to a death. What is the cost of an accident – NHS, emergency services etc. She stated that they do not want to be putting flowers first, they want the 20mph speed limit first. She asked the Board

to be pro-active and do something about this now.

26. POLICY FOR OBSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPORARY ITEMS ON THE HIGHWAY

The Board considered the report of the Director of Kent Highway Services – Policy for Obstructions and temporary Items on the Highway.

Members thanked the members of the public who had attended this meeting and spoke about this item. Members shared their concerns regarding the lack of consultation and were pleased to hear that the Cabinet Member has been asked to review this matter. A number of comments were made by members, including there should be a different rate for the number of tables and chairs on the pavement, rather than a flat rate across the board, the A-Boards should have a fixed position and not moved around, the A-Boards should only be used on pavements where there was still adequate access for mobility scooters, wheelchairs, prams etc to get past.

A senior KCC Member stated that he wanted this Policy taken back and reviewed by the collective KCC Cabinet and arising therefrom, at the suggestion of the Chairman, it was

RESOLVED: That the Chairman send a letter to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste recommending that this policy is reviewed and a further consultation takes place with all business and relevant bodies/groups.

27. JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD UPDATE ON SIGNS AND LINES POLICY AND TECHNICAL DIRECTIVE, REVISION OF THE SCHEME PRIORITISATION SYSTEM AND WINTER SERVICE

The Board considered the report of the Director of Kent Highway Services which provided an update on the Signs and Lines Policy and Technical Directive, the Revision of the Scheme Prioritisation System and the Winter Service.

Signs and Lines Policy and Technical Directive

Members raised a number of queries, which were dealt with by the Highways Officer. Members were informed that it is highly legislated as to what we can use, size and where they can be placed. Officers are aware of the problem with HGVs and that currently only one sign is approved for use. Trials of another sign have been done throughout the Country, but approval of this sign has not yet been given by the Department of Transport.

Revision of the Scheme Prioritisation System

Members were concerned that the weighting of 45% to growth without gridlock would ensure that many areas will lose out.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

28. HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES AND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Board considered the report of the head of Countywide Improvement regarding Highway Improvement Schemes and Local Transport Plan.

Members asked questions regarding some specific schemes which were answered by Officers.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

29. THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE ARRIVA 101 SERVICE FROM BUS STOPS AT COBTREE GOLF COURSE AND SALISBURY ROAD, KITS COTY

The Board considered the report of the Head of Transport and Development regarding the withdrawal of the Arriva 101 service from Bus Stops at Cobtree Golf Course and Salisbury Road, Kits Coty.

Members were informed that further quotations are being sought with regard to Option 2 in order to try and reduce the costs further.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

30. UPDATE ON PETITIONS SUBMITTED TO KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES

The Board considered the report of the Head of Transport and Development regarding an update on petitions submitted to Kent Highway Services.

Members were informed that the current policy on 20 mph speed limits was adopted in July 2008. At that time it was thought that a blanket policy was not appropriate. The petition with regard to 20 mph speed limits has been forwarded to the Highways Safety Manager.

It was suggested that the Member Highway Fund was an alternative option for funding signs, Traffic Regulation Orders and whatever else may be necessary to help the problem areas and the Member requested that costings are drawn up.

A Member asked if the Sutton Road Service Road issue of repairing had been addressed and Officers agreed to look into this and respond directly to the Member.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

31. UPDATE ON THE FREIGHT STRATEGY FOR KENT

The Board considered the report of the Head of Transport and Development regarding an update on the Freight Strategy for Kent.

Members were informed that Officers have contacted Wales with regard to their scheme and that the Government are giving consideration to another non-verbal sign so these issues are now moving forward.

A Member informed the Board that the Minister had still not responded to a letter regarding the work the Government was doing on satellite navigation for freight and Officers were requested to follow this up.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

32. HIGHWAY DRAINAGE

The Board considered the report of the Head of Technical Services regarding highway drainage.

Members asked that the relevant Officers be thanked for their hard work on this issue and that a big improvement has been noticed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

33. DURATION OF MEETING

5.00 pm to 7.25 pm.