

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30 JULY 2024

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillor Cooper (Chairman), and Councillors Ash, Cannon, Carter, Chittenden, Clark, Coulling, Higson, Jeffery, Passmore, Russell, T Sams, Springett, Sweetman and J Wilkinson
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54. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burke, Cooke, Parfitt and Prendergast.

55. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

56. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

57. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

58. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

59. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors Cooper and J Wilkinson stated that they had been lobbied on Item 15 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package.

60. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

61. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2024

The Board expressed its disappointment that KCC Highways officers had not attended previous meetings of the Board and it was requested that a letter be sent to the Cabinet Member of Highways and Corporate Director from the Chairman to address this concern.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the inclusion of South East

Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funds in Item 3 of the Work Programme - Allocation of Community Infrastructure Level, Section 106 monies and Developer Fund Contributions.

62. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

63. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from Local Residents.

64. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

65. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board requested that an item on the Local Bus Focus Group be added to the Work Programme

RESOLVED: That the Local Bus Focus Group be added to the Board's Work Programme.

Note: Councillor Jeffery arrived during the discussion of the item at 6.41 p.m.

66. PETITION RESPONSE - REPLACEMENT OF CAMERA IN LOOSE ROAD, MAIDSTONE

The Project Manager introduced the report and stated that the former speed camera on Loose Road could not be replaced as the new technology required for modern speed cameras could not be installed in that location. The results of the speed data collected by the former speed camera were outlined and it was stated that the camera had a limited impact on excessive speed in that location. The previous camera was removed as part of an update on all speed cameras in the county via the Safe Camera Partnership and because it posed a risk to the public after its camera housing rusted.

Members of the Board felt that the technology change in speed cameras was not a suitable reason to justify the lack of replacement for a camera in that location, and that there was originally justification for a speed camera on Loose Road when the camera was installed.

In response to questions from the Board, the Project Manager stated that the previous camera technology involved wet film cameras and contemporary cameras required 3/4G sim cards to store images. It was explained the new camera infrastructure was not the same footprint as the old camera, and that the manufacturers could not replace it exactly.

In response to further questions from the Board, the Project Manager stated that costs were not the reason the camera was not replaced, and that it had been originally installed by the Department for Transport, not Kent Highways.

The Board felt that alternatives besides a speed camera could be explored at the locations and requested that a report be brought back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That a report on a replacement of camera in Loose Road, Maidstone, be brought back to the Board.

67. PETITION RESPONSE - REQUEST FOR SAFETY (SPEED) CAMERAS ON A20 ASHFORD ROAD AND AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SPEED LIMITS

The Senior Transport Planner introduced the report and stated that the section on A20 Ashford Road outlined in the petition did not meet the criteria for speed cameras as outlined by the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership. Kent Highways was conducting a route study on this section and was involving ward members in the discussions. It was explained that no further actions could be implemented without understanding the implications across the whole A20 Ashford Road.

The Board felt that a study of the whole A20 Ashford Road would be welcome, particularly in regard to speed limits, and that ward members be involved in future discussions on the road. Variable speed restrictions on the road were discussed and it was highlighted that a balanced approach would be required.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

68. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE

The Assistant Project Manager stated that the Major Projects Team Manager was unable to attend the meeting, but would be able to provide written answers on the schemes in the report, to Board members if requested. An update was provided on the A20 Coldharbour Roundabout/A20 London Road – Hall Road scheme.

During the discussion, several Board Members expressed concern with the lack of detail, timescales or updates on the schemes in the report. It was highlighted that Section 106 and South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELP) monies had been allocated to the schemes but not spent, and that the Board should be aware of the status of the monies for individual schemes. It was further stated that several schemes included on previous Maidstone Integrated Transport Package reports, including Fountain Lane, had not been included in the contemporary report.

Further concerns were raised over the lack of development of Cranborne Road and the impact of increased housebuilding on the A26 Tonbridge Road.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Board adjourned between 8:00 p.m. to 8:10 p.m.

69. HART STREET/BARKER ROAD - EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME OUTCOMES

The Senior Transport Planner introduced the report and stated that congestion had been an issue on Hart Street and Barker Road. An experimental one-way scheme was installed in between the roads to mitigate congestion, and while it noted that traffic rerouting can be recognised as controversial, feedback from nearby residents and businesses had been positive.

The Board welcomed the one-way scheme and noted that feedback from residents had initially been negative, but had since become positive as the scheme had been improved.

In response to a question, the Senior Transport Planner stated that accessibility for pedestrians including dropped kerbs could be explored at the location.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends that the one-way experimental scheme on Hart Street be made permanent.

70. A229 BLUE BELL HILL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The Project Manager introduced the report and stated that strategic outline business case for the A229 Blue Bell Hill scheme had been approved by the government in October 2023 and that the next stage was now ongoing. This included reappointing consultants to undertake design development, conduct modelling exercises in a post-covid scenario and collaborating with traffic management to prevent disruption during construction. Financial pressures on the scheme were outlined and that the scheme relied on contributions from the Department of Transport (DfT) to complete the outline business case for final submission which would be submitted by early 2026. It was stated the aim was to complete the scheme before the Lower Thames Crossing opened.

The Board expressed an interest in the scheme, and highlighted the need for monies to complete the project and reducing collisions on the surrounding road network.

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

71. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 5 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Board expressed disappointment that there were no Officers in attendance from Kent County Council for the report.

During the discussion, some members of the Board stated that the A229 Linton Crossroads junction improvements should be included in the consultation. Step free access to rail stations in Marden, Maidstone West and Yalding was welcomed but emphasised that other stations could be adapted to become step free.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

72. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

73. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8:43 p.m.