

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY
2016**

Present: Councillor Burton (Chairman), and
Councillors Ash, Bird, Mrs Blackmore, Brown, Carter,
Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cuming, Daley, English,
Hotson, T Sams, Vizzard, Willis and J.A. Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Gooch, Mrs Ring, Springett
and Mrs Wilson

135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Fort and Stockell.

136. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Blackmore substituted for Councillor Fort.

137. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Visiting Members were in attendance:

- Councillor Gooch to speak on item 11
- Councillor Ring to speak on items 12 and 14
- Mr Balfour and Councillor F. Wilson were in attendance as observers.

138. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

139. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

It was noted that all Members had been lobbied on item 14.

Councillors Bird, Burton and Cooke disclosed that they had been lobbied on item 12.

140. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 2015

The democratic services officer advised the Board of an error in recording the name of a speaker.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the following amendment:

At paragraph 131 on page 5, that the name Mr David Bates be removed, and Mr Donald Bates inserted.

141. PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

142. QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Bob Hinder stated that bikes and all-terrain vehicles were disturbing the Boxley Warren area, and attempts to tackle this had resulted in instances of anti-social behaviour. Mr Hinder requested reconsideration of the design of the current entrance.

Mr Carter arrived at 5.11 p.m.

Mr Donald Bates stated that the partial closure of Cranborne Avenue would not reduce the lengthening queues travelling north towards the town. Mr Bates raised concerns regarding the level of pollution in the Wheatsheaf area.

143. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF TRANSPORTATION - VERBAL UPDATE ON PETITIONS SUBMITTED TO KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES

The Chairman had noted that the petitions received to the previous meeting regarding the closure of Cranborne Avenue would be addressed by item 14.

Kirstie Williams, KCC Mid Kent Highways Manager, provided an update on the petition regarding the junction of Old Tovil Road with Postley and Hayle Road. The Board was advised that Councillors Rob Bird and Dan Daley had agreed an investigation into crossing options funded by their combined grant, with an update on findings to be brought to the next meeting.

Tim Read, KCC Head of Highways and Transportation, provided an update on the petition regarding the proposed Leeds-Langley relief road. It was explained that the previous meeting of the Board had resolved to develop the justification for the relief road and sources of funding.

144. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF TRANSPORTATION - JTB AGREEMENT VERBAL UPDATE

Kirstie Williams, Mid Kent Highways Manager, advised that consensus had not been reached across the JTBS regarding the issue of parish representative voting rights, and that the Board could move forward independently with its own arrangements.

It was noted that the Board would like to include two parish representatives, and that the agreement required updating as per Maidstone's governance change.

The Chairman advised the Board that the JTB agreement stated that, subject to procedural rules outlined in the agreement, the host Council's procedural rules would apply to JTB meetings as if they were Council committees. It was put forward that questions and statements from members of the public should therefore be administered as per the Council's procedures.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a draft updated JTB agreement including the suggestions made be considered at the next meeting of the Board.
- 2) That a question or statement may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing (including by electronic mail) to the proper officer no later than close of the office one clear working day (ignoring the date of the meeting i.e. two days) before the day of the meeting.

145. REPORT OF KCC'S HEAD OF COUNTYWIDE IMPROVEMENTS - HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The report was for information only.

A Member made reference to the pedestrian crossing on Marden Road. It was requested that Ms Williams look into the matter and provide details to the Member.

Councillor Gooch spoke on the item as a visiting member.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

146. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION - REQUEST FOR A 18 TONNE WEIGHT LIMIT ON WILLINGTON STREET AND AN ALTERNATIVE REQUEST FOR POSITIVE SIGNING OF ALL MOTORWAY TRAFFIC TO USE WILLINGTON STREET

The report was for information only.

Councillor Ring spoke on the item as a visiting Member.

During discussion it was raised that the proposed Leeds-Langley Relief Road would provide a solution to the traffic on Willington Street in the long term.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

147. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND WASTE - SAFE AND SENSIBLE STREET LIGHTING UPDATE

Rob Clarke, KCC LED Street Lighting Programme Manager, introduced the report detailing areas that had been identified for removal of street lighting.

Mr Clarke explained that:

- Street lights had been switched off in certain areas as a trial, and there had been minimal or no negative impact.
- The cost of maintenance, column replacement and running of the street lights would double the cost of removal.
- The aim was to remove the identified street lights before conversion of the current lanterns to LED (light emitting diode) took place.
- Conversion to LED would save money and reduce carbon emissions.

In response to questions it was stated that:

- The programme for conversion to LED across Kent would start in March and take up to fourteen months to complete. Maidstone would be within the last three of nine districts to be converted.
- New building developments would require street lighting to be reconsidered.

RESOLVED:

That the KCC Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport be recommended to remove the street lights identified in the report of the KCC LED Street Lighting Programme Manager.

For – 15 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

148. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF TRANSPORTATION - A229 LOOSE ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY, MAIDSTONE

Councillor Sams left the meeting at 6.12 p.m. Councillor Gooch substituted for Councillor Sams.

Brendan Wright introduced the report outlining proposals arising from a review of the A229 corridor.

It was explained that removal of the Cranbourne Avenue egress and a partial conversion of Cranborne Avenue to one-way eastbound was expected to increase green time to 17 seconds, and allow an additional 340 vehicles through the junction per hour.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Members had received communication from members of the public objecting to the proposed removal of the Cranborne Avenue egress.
- Modelling should be undertaken to demonstrate the effect of the conversion of Cranborne Avenue on nearby roads.
- The measures proposed were interim not exhaustive, and could be brought forward quickly and cost effectively without impacting further measures.

RESOLVED:

That the following measures be approved:

1. Loose Road/Upper Stone Street/Sheals Crescent
Proposed lane marking alterations.
2. Sheals Crescent to Armstrong Road
Proposed alterations to lane allocations and pedestrian crossing arrangements.
3. Bus Stops
Proposed relocation and removal of bus stops.

For – 15 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

RESOLVED:

That option three, the proposed removal of the Cranborne Avenue egress and partial conversion of Cranborne Avenue to one way eastbound, be dismissed.

For – 11 Against – 0 Abstain – 4

149. REPORT OF THE KCC HEAD OF TRANSPORTATION - RESULTS OF THE VISUM TRANSPORT MODELLING

Stephen Whittaker from AMEY provided a presentation on the results of recent VISUM transport modelling. The model projected up to a midpoint of 2022, this being the year of the Local Plan review, and worked on the assumption that 14,034 of the 18,560 independently assessed housing need would be in place by that midpoint.

In response to questions it was explained that:

- KCC had not worded or approved the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy, however officers at KCC and MBC had been in conversation regarding the contents of the Strategy.

- The modelling gave a broad network-wide picture, and demonstrated a level of impact on the highway network that would not be regarded as severe in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Four potential routes for the Leeds-Langley relief road had been identified, but no formal technical work or environmental studies had been undertaken.
- It was raised that the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy had been expected to come to a special meeting of the Board in January, but this did not occur as Officers and Members were in agreement that this would be too early for the relevant modelling to be completed.

The KCC Head of Transportation advised that an additional paragraph had not been included in the report as the authors had not anticipated the confusion the report would cause. A verbal update was provided as follows:

The modelling undertaken for the 2022 scenario provides Members with a broad network-wide picture in terms of average journey time increases above 2014 levels, and a framework upon which to base the transport strategy over that time period. Members should note that this does not mean that the impact of the 14,043 new dwellings will be the same across the whole network. It also does not mean that individual planning applications can now be considered as acceptable in highway terms, as these must continue to be assessed on their own merits.

For clarity, the position of KCC as Highway Authority as stated in July 2015 that allocating further growth in the south and south east sector of the town would have an unacceptably severe impact on the highway network remains valid. These sectors of the town are the most severely constrained by highway capacity and the most disproportionately affected by the Local Plan proposals for new housing.

As referred to in the report (page 47, paragraphs 4.4 and 5.2) a relief road connecting the A20 to the A274 around Leeds and Langley remains the most effective solution to congestion in this particular part of the town. However, there is a much greater degree of uncertainty concerning the funding and provision of this solution than with the package of local highway improvements in the other sectors of the town. This further emphasises the need for constraint in this area and makes the early completion of the necessary preparatory work for the scheme imperative in the period up to 2022.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.

For – 15

Against – 0

Abstain - 0

2. That the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy be considered at the next available meeting of the Board after the conclusion of consultation.

For – 15 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

3. That the initial work on options for the Leeds Langley relief road, including potential routes, costings and research on funding, be brought to the meeting of the Board on 20 April 2016.

For – 15 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

150. INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY: PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROGRESS

Paul Spooner, the interim Director of Planning and Development, introduced the report setting out the progress made on public transport interventions.

Mr Spooner told the Board that:

- Work had been undertaken with public transport operators to improve the quality and frequency of services. Proposals from operators had included subsidies.
- There was a proposal to refresh the bus station in Maidstone which included its becoming self-financing. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Officers would liaise to arrange a date for further detail to come to the Board.

Concerns raised by the Board included the recent stopping of a Park and Ride service and fair pricing for public transport within the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

151. DURATION OF MEETING

5.02 p.m. to 8.09 p.m.