

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER
2019**

Present: Councillor D Burton (Chairman), and
Councillors Bird, Brindle, Brown, D Burton,
Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cooper, Cuming, Daley,
Hinder, Hotson, Kimmance, Powell, Prendergast,
T Sams and Wilson

127. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Carter
- Councillor Stockell
- Councillor Wilby

It was noted that apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Prendergast.

128. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Cox was substituting for Councillor Wilby.

129. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

130. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

131. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

132. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

133. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

134. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

135. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

136. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Willis asked the following question of the Chairman of the Board:

"A statement was made to the Joint Transportation Board by Kent Highways some three years ago, agreeing to enable funding for a pedestrian crossing at the Hermitage Lane/Fountain Lane intersection, which was backed by local residents.

Some three years ago, Ms Lizzie Hare submitted a petition/presentation and despite much hard work, nothing appears to have happened to make this a reality.

As this is an extremely acute safety issue, please could you advise me on the progress of this matter?"

Mr Willis asked the following supplementary question:

"This is an extremely sensitive issue, and a lot of people in the room would feel guilty if a child was injured in this area as we have all tried to push this work forward. Could you provide further details regarding timescales for this work?"

The Chairman responded to both the question and supplementary question. The full response was recorded on the webcast and was made available on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

137. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board commented that it was prudent to remove "Establishment of a Public Transport Forum" from the Work Programme until further research into available options had been undertaken.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted, as amended.

138. VERBAL UPDATE - M2 JUNCTION 5/A249

The Programme Leader, Regional Investment Programme (Highways England), explained to the Board that the M2 Junction 5/A249 Stockbury Roundabout improvements scheme consisted of enhancements to slip roads and approaches. During consultation, eight statutory objections, seven non-statutory objections, three further representations and eleven

letters of support had been received. A public enquiry had been scheduled for 11 February 2020, which would not progress if the statutory objectors withdrew their representations. Work was being undertaken to engage objectors, while surveys at the site were also underway.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

Note: Councillor Prendergast arrived during consideration of this item and advised that she had been lobbied on Item 16. A20 Harrietsham Highway Improvements.

139. VERBAL UPDATE - M20 SAFETY

The Programme Leader, Regional Investment Programme (Highways England), explained that he would report questions from the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board to the appropriate team at Highways England.

The Board requested that the following be considered:

- There were safety concerns between Junction 8 and Junction 9, as safety provisions such as a hard shoulder or overhead signs were not present. The Board explained that if a car was to break down, it would be stuck on the carriageway and oncoming vehicles could not be warned. This problem was exacerbated by vehicles not adhering to the speed limit.
- There was no indication that cars and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) should be in different lanes between Junction 8 and Junction 9.
- The Operation Brock barrier was a safety risk. It was difficult to see the barrier when there was limited daylight. There was also the potential for cars to be spun or flipped if they collided with the barrier.
- Due to the narrow carriageways, there was a heightened risk of collisions.
- A safety audit, assessing sections of the road with high incident rates, needed to be considered by Highways England.
- Further information regarding the monitoring and enforcement of speed limits, using mobile cameras, was requested.
- Clarification regarding the arrangements for removing the Operation Brock barrier and the length of time that it was to remain on the motorway was needed.

The Board requested that a written response be provided by Highways England. Furthermore, the Board suggested that Highways England provide written reports, supported by attendance at the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board, for future updates.

RESOLVED: That the comments be noted.

140. A229 AND A249 LINKS BETWEEN M2 AND M20 WITH THE PROPOSED NEW LOWER THAMES CROSSING

The Board commented that:

- The potential for increased development in the North of the Borough, as a result of the Lower Thames Crossing, needed to be explored.
- Traffic was likely to increase prior to the implementation of the Lower Thames Crossing. Improvements needed to be implemented as soon as possible.
- The Maidstone Local Plan Review, which was to be considered at the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee, presented an opportunity to explore funding mechanisms for large local major schemes.
- It was important to understand whether Kent County Council continued to support the case for the M20 Junction 3 to be included in the project.

The Board requested that the report be discussed at a future meeting of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board when an Officer was available to answer questions on the matter.

RESOLVED: That the item be adjourned to a future meeting of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

141. THAMESLINK ROUTE UPDATE

The Board commented that:

- It was disappointed with the lack of progress.
- Work to explore the detrimental economic impact resulting from delays to the implementation of the Thameslink service was to be considered. The funding and management of this work needed to be agreed by Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council.
- It would continue to lobby appropriate individuals and authorities on the matter.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

142. A20 HARRIETSHAM HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The Senior Programme Manager (Kent County Council), outlined that the A20 Harrietsham Highway Improvements scheme had been separated into

two phases. Phase One was nearing completion, while the Section 106 monies required to progress to Phase Two had been secured.

The Board welcomed the positive update and thanked Officers. The Board requested that appropriate materials were used for micro-surfacing, to ensure that the road surface could withstand seasonal temperature changes.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by KCC to progress to Phase 2 of the A20 Harrietsham Highway Improvements scheme be noted.

143. BRIDGES GYRATORY POST-SCHEME MONITORING REPORT

The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager explained that further interrogation of data had been undertaken to understand the trends associated with pedestrians and cyclists using the Bridges Gyratory. It was stated that a minority of users crossed the road in an unsafe manner, however, there had been no recorded incidents. Overall, the scheme had been delivered successfully, however, the additional capacity incorporated into the road network had begun to saturate.

The Board commented that:

- The network lacked resilience, particularly if issues were experienced with nearby water mains and gas pipes.
- Further modelling, after the Maidstone Local Plan Review, would be beneficial to understand the future capacity expectations for the Bridges Gyratory.
- Plans to implement a Red Route restriction, preventing vehicles stopping on Palace Avenue, Lower Stone Street and Upper Stone Street had been agreed by the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee. Consideration was to be given to how the introduction of the Red Route impacted upon the Bridges Gyratory.

In response to questions from the Board, the Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager said that:

- The delivery of the Bridges Gyratory had improved capacity. The road network would have been inferior had mitigations not been implemented.
- KCC Officers were progressing the manufacturing and fitting of the flood barriers. The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager was to contact the consultant imminently on this matter.
- The no-entry signs were the largest size possible at the site. Further measures to prevent traffic from using no-entry roads, such as the inclusion of lines in yellow box junctions, were being explored.

- The raw data used for traffic modelling allowed Officers to assess the impact of Local Plan growth in the area.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

144. VERBAL UPDATE - LEEDS LANGLEY RELIEF ROAD

The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager said that a Leeds Langley Relief Road was expected to provide a capacity benefit to the immediate area. It was challenging, however, to demonstrate wider benefits arising from the scheme. Officers were continuing to work on scheme modelling and a further report was to be submitted to the Maidstone Strategic Infrastructure Working Group.

The Board commented that:

- The expected development in the area, and subsequent impact on the road network, had not been fully realised. The potential for future development, and therefore an increase in vehicles, needed to be considered.
- The introduction of a relief road had the potential to provide an alternative route for HGVs, which would have a positive impact on the capacity of Willington Street.
- Further work to demonstrate a cost-benefit ratio was underway. A further report on the matter was to be submitted to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board when appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

Note: Councillor Wilson left the meeting during consideration of this item.

145. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE (MITP)

The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager outlined that construction was due to commence in 2020, and that the work was expected to be completed before the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) deadline. It was explained that the scheme had been over-programmed to ensure that all available funding could be utilised. This meant that additional capacity benefits, exceeding initial expectations, could be achieved. A consultation period was due to commence, and three engagement sessions had been organised to ensure that residents had the opportunity to speak to teams working on the scheme. The results of the consultation were to be presented to the next appropriate Maidstone Joint Transportation Board meeting.

The Board acknowledged the positive nature of the report and recognised the progress that had been made. Concerns were raised regarding the capacity benefits expected at Willington Street and Cripple Street. Furthermore, the Board commented that it was important to consider the

interplay between the modelling for the MITP and Leeds Langley Relief Road.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

146. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

147. DURATION OF MEETING

5.00 p.m. to 6.47 p.m.