

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY
2021**

Present: Councillors Bird, Brown, Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cooper (Chairman), Cox, Cuming, Daley, Hinder, Hotson, Kimmance, Prendergast, T Sams and Wilson

Also Present: Councillors English and Springett

187. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Brindle, D Burton, Carter, Stockell and Wilby.

188. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Mortimer was present as Substitute Member for Councillor Wilby.

Councillor Perry was present as Substitute Member for Councillor Brindle.

189. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

190. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillors English was present as a Visiting Member for Item 14 – Emergency Active Travel Fund – Maidstone.

Councillor Springett was present as a Visiting Member for Item 13 – Verbal Update – Update Following the End of the Brexit Transition Period and Item 14 – Emergency Active Travel Fund – Maidstone.

191. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

192. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors Bird, Cooke, Cox, Cuming, Kimmance, Perry and Prendergast had been lobbied on Item 14 – Emergency Active Travel Fund – Maidstone.

Councillors Cuming, Kimmance and Perry had been lobbied on Item 15 – Update on the Leeds Langley Relief Road – MJTB Resolution 14 October 2020.

193. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

194. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date.

195. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

196. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were two questions from Members of the Public.

Question from Mr Duncan Edwards to the Chairman of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

'This meeting agenda includes the results of the Active Travel Fund tranche 1 in King Street and reports: "response to the attitudinal surveys has been positive". Surveys across the country have borne out the desire of around 80% of the public for improved cycle infrastructure.

The tranche 2 Active Travel Schemes are now in consultation across Kent, but the committee will be aware that there is more to this than just a funding stream, it is part of an initiative called Gear Change run by the Department for Transport which is supported by a set of infrastructure standards called LTN1/20.

The DoT intend to make future funding dependent on audited compliance with LTN1/20 so should Kent adopt this standard now for all new cycle infrastructure schemes?'

The Chairman responded to the question.

Mr Edwards asked the following supplementary question:

'Many residents in Maidstone feel they have critical congestion in their area and this affects all road users in terms of delays, pollution and road safety. Sometimes residents, KCC and MBC agree on critical congestion issues, but despite this there is a definition of what congestion isn't but not for what it is. This is a central government issues, but this gives local pain. Is there anything we can do locally to seek a resolution?'

The Chairman responded that a written response would be provided.

Question from Mr Chris Passmore to the Chairman of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

'As a long-term driver and occasional cyclist of Hermitage Lane it can take over 15 minutes to cover the 2 miles and is clear that the level of congestion in the road will continue to increase with even more developments along the road some of which are in the TMBC area. This increasing congestion will critically affect access to Maidstone Hospital for Emergency Services and staff as well as local residents and those travelling from further afield to go to and from the M20. I understand that there was a good and productive meeting about one part of the solution after the last JTB however there needs to be effective "cross border working" to create a holistic plan for the whole "Hermitage Lane Corridor" to secure the right contributions from all the developers to manage all aspects of the road, including having an effective active travel plan for the whole length of the road.

This problem is highlighted by the fact that there isn't even the money to develop the short but extremely hazardous stretch between the Barming Station and Maidstone Hospital which is used by many 10's of pedestrians and cyclists each day.

What can be done by MBC or KCC to ensure this and other projects involve collective working with both sides of the border?'

The Chairman responded to the question.

Mr Passmore asked the following supplementary question:

'Looking at the minutes of the last meeting, covering Section 106 schemes, it is stated that that is still a shortfall of funding gap for the cycle way improvements between Barming Station and the hospital. How close are we to closing this gap and is there a timeline for the improvements to be made?'

The Chairman stated that a written response would be provided.

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

To access the webcast recording, please use the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWtM45e08uM>

197. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

It was requested that the A26 Tonbridge Road junction with Fountain Lane and the junctions within the Junction Improvement Plan be added to the work programme.

It was confirmed that the Board's request that the previous A274 Willington Street/Sutton Road scheme would not be added to the work programme as the scheme was no longer available.

The Rail Project Manager would be invited to attend the next meeting of the Board following the publication of the Kent Rail Strategy 2021-2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board Work Programme be noted.

198. 20 MPH DEFAULT SPEED LIMIT ON NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

The District Manager introduced the report and noted that the Kent Design Guide (KDG) required that all new developments have design speeds of 20mph through the road layout and traffic calming measures. The KDG was currently under revision, however this principle would remain.

No policy or requirement existed to install a 20mph speed limit on those roads designed with a target speed of 20mph or lower; additional signage and road lining measures were therefore deemed unnecessary. The District Manager highlighted that Kent Police would not be able to enforce 20mph speed limits, in reference to public expectations should the speed limit be introduced.

The Board expressed concerns on Kent Police's inability to enforce speed limits, with the Kent County Council (KCC) Well Managed Highways Framework and Vision Zero – Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2021-2026 referenced. The comments received would be passed to the relevant teams at KCC, with any response given to be shared with Members of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

199. VERBAL UPDATE - UPDATE FOLLOWING THE END OF BREXIT TRANSITION PERIOD

The Senior Highway Manager gave a verbal update and stated that the traffic management plan, as presented during the Member Briefing at the 14 October 2020 Board meeting, had been implemented since 1 January 2021. The border control issues between the United Kingdom and France over the Christmas period had provided the opportunity to test Operation Fennel.

Travellers to France would continue to be tested for Covid-19 before travelling for the foreseeable. Fewer vehicles than expected had been recorded since Operation BROCC's implementation.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that British hauliers have up to 28 days to pay fines, with any other haulier expected to pay fines immediately or their vehicle would be clamped. Due to Covid-19, the number of CSAS officers available to patrol the M20 following the Junction 8 roadblock had decreased. Police Officers would be present until additional Highways Officers were available. There were no plans for an additional Government inland border facility in Kent.

The Board expressed their thanks to all Officers involved for their hard work in recent weeks.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update provided be noted.

200. EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND - MAIDSTONE

The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager introduced the report and referenced the Emergency Active Travel Fund created in direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Tranche One schemes had been implemented without prior consultation, which had become a requirement for Tranche Two schemes.

It was confirmed that the King Street pop-up cycle lane would be removed due to the Council's upcoming bus station improvement project, most likely in February 2021.

Two attitudinal surveys had been undertaken on the King Street and Earl Street schemes. In response, a permanent King Street scheme would be considered in line with the government guidance for cycleways and prior public consultation. The Earl Street scheme would be retained for the foreseeable future, with further consideration to be given to moving the parklets and parking to maximise their utility and local economic recovery once the lockdown period ended.

A consultation process on the concept of the Tranche Two schemes was ongoing, with further consultation to take place once the schemes to be taken forward had been decided.

The Board expressed support for the public consultations to be undertaken and highlighted the importance of disability parking bays. The Senior Major Capital Programme Project Manager extended a meeting invitation to the relevant Members for Earl Street in relation to the active travel scheme in place.

Confirmation was given that Equality Impact Assessments would be undertaken for these schemes. The disability parking bays that had been moved to Church Street would be re-instated in King Street once the cycle lane had been removed. Additional disability parking bays should have been placed outside the Hazlitt.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Note: Councillor Brown exited the meeting during the item's presentation.

201. UPDATE ON THE LEEDS LANGLEY RELIEF ROAD – MJTB RESOLUTION 14 OCTOBER 2020

The continued commitment of Kent County Council and the Council to work jointly was highlighted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

202. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

203. DURATION OF MEETING

5.00 p.m. to 7.02 p.m.

Note: The meeting was adjourned between 6.45 p.m. to 6.50 p.m. in order that technical difficulties could be resolved.