

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation
Committee**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER
2015 6:30PM**

Present: Councillor Burton (Chairman), and Councillors Chittenden, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer, Paine, Mrs Ring, and Springett

Also Present: Councillors Boughton, Harper, Newton, Perry, Sargeant, Mrs Stockell and Willis

146. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor English
- Councillor de Wiggondene

Councillor Springett arrived at 6:32pm.

147. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following substitute members were noted:

- Councillor Chittenden for Councillor English
- Councillor Ring for Councillor de Wiggondene

148. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Members were in attendance reserving their right to speak on the items identified (where appropriate):

- Councillor Boughton – item 12
- Councillor Harper – items 12, 13 and 14
- Councillor Newton
- Councillor Perry – item 14
- Councillor Sargeant – item 12
- Councillor Stockell
- Councillor Willis – 13, 14 and 17

149. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

150. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

It was noted that all Committee Members had been lobbied on item 14 – Integrated Transport Strategy.

151. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

152. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

- Minute 130 – change *of* to *or*.
- Minute 137 – Recommendation c) to include at the end of the sentence *Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee*.
- Minute 141 – insert the correct spelling of Farleigh in two places.

153. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the update report of the Head of Planning for item 14 – Integrated Transport Strategy and item 15 – Objections to Off Street Parking Places order – Mote Park should be taken as urgent items as they contained further information relating to these agenda items.

154. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

155. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question to the Chairman from Mr Mike Fitzgerald of the Kent Community Rail Partnership regarding how the infrastructure required for Medway Valley Line was arrived at:

"I would like to understand how the type of infrastructure required, in respect of the stations on the Medway Valley Line was arrived at.

As some is very specific and some less so and I just feel that if I can get an explanation to that it might be helpful going forward if the Kent Community Rail Partnership was consulted."

The Chairman responded as follows:

"Detailed infrastructure requirements at railway stations within the Borough are discussed with South Eastern and monies are available

through the LSTF (Local Sustainable Transport Fund) and Section 106 contributions.

Improvements to station in the Borough have to date concentrated on the Rural Service Centres (none of which have stations on the Medway Valley Line) and in Maidstone Town Centre (which does include Maidstone West) as these are potentially most directly affected by development, and where improvements have been secured through LSTF funding or directly through Section 106 agreements (where the necessary legal tests for such contributions have been met).

As work to improve cycling and walking networks moves forward, there is scope to improve connections from these networks to public transport hubs, including rail stations within the Borough on the Medway Valley Line.

In terms of the future participation of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, as outlined in the future work programme on Agenda item 11 of tonight's papers (page 12), a report is due to be presented to this Committee in February 2016 regarding the reformation of the Maidstone Public Transport Operators Group. The Kent Community Rail Partnership could be included in the group."

Mr Fitzgerald asked a supplementary question regarding how the number of cycle stands at Maidstone West railway station had been arrived at and had been consulted on that decision.

The Chairman responded by saying that he did not have the information at hand as to how this number was arrived at but did restate that the improvements were arrived at through discussions with South Eastern Rail. Going forward with the re-formation of the Maidstone Public Transport Operators Group the Kent Community Rail Partnership could be involved in discussions in the future.

156. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR NOTING

RESOLVED: That the Committee's work programme and update by the Chairman be noted.

157. MAIDSTONE BRIDGES GYRATORY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Councillors Boughton and Harper addressed the Committee in support of the scheme.

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities.

The Committee heard that the detailed design work was ready for the project contract to go out to tender in January 2016, with the main body of works starting in May 2016. As well as improved road capacity and a reduction in traffic delays, the wider benefits of the scheme included,

public realm and environmental improvements and pedestrian crossings and safety.

Prior to commencing the tendering process, approval from the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee was required to progress with the project.

The Committee congratulated officers for their work in addressing the concerns that had been raised regarding the scheme.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the draft final designs set out in Appendix I, II, III and IV of the report to Committee dated 1 December 2015 be approved.

Voting: For - 9

- 2) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to agree the final designs that go out to tender.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstention - 1

- 3) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Place and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to agree and enter into a funding agreement with Kent County Council.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstention - 1

- 4) That an update on progress be reported at a subsequent meeting of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee and the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

Voting: For – 9

158. RIVER MEDWAY TOWPATH - MAIDSTONE SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT LEP SCHEME

Councillors Harper and Willis addressed the Committee regarding the River Medway Towpath Scheme.

The Director of Regeneration and Communities explained that Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council Officers had worked closely on the designs for the Scheme and outlined the benefits it would bring.

The Committee considered the update on the River Medway Towpath – Maidstone Sustainable Access to Employment Project to create a cycle path along the River Medway from Aylesford to Barming Bridge.

RESOLVED:

1. That Maidstone Borough Council contribute up to £500,000 towards the creation of the River Medway Cycle Towpath project as set out in Appendix I to V of the report presented to the Committee on 1 December 2015.

Voting: For – 9

2. That the proposed creation of a “cycling hub” at Lockmeadow be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services to negotiate and enter into a lease with the operator of Lockmeadow.

Voting: For – 9

3. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Place, and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to agree and enter into a funding agreement with Kent County Council.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstention – 1

159. INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Councillors Perry, Willis and Harper addressed the Committee.

The Committee considered the draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) and the update from the Head of Planning and Development who confirmed the report was for noting. Issues raised by Members would be noted.

The following issues were raised and noted:

- A request for more detail on the phasing of the strategy – when/what infrastructure and how it will be funded
- Inclusion of a section on School Travel Plans
- Thorough cumulative impact assessments to be carried out
- Clarity of the review process for the ITS – that if adopted in 2016 details of work to be carried out by officers and reported to members in the preceding 5 years leading to 2022 in order for a review to take place
- Change the wording on page 44 (3.3) regarding the Objectively Assessed Housing Need – should not read “*the Maidstone Borough LP will meet in full the identified OAN of 18,560...*”
- Action plans to be more aspirational – include SMART targets
- Include measures to encourage the use of electric cars
- Ensure the ITS covers the whole of the Borough and not just focus on one area of concern

Park and Ride

- Remove any reference to Park and Ride
- Include information on the alternative to Park and Ride – including a short term strategy from February 2016 when the Sittingbourne Road site closes

Buses

- Consider the use of Section 106 contributions to subsidise rural bus routes and improve reliability
- Consider the use of Section 106 contributions to improve/increase electric signage and not rely on just mobile apps for real-time service information
- Consider the use of Section 106 contributions for bus shelters
- Improvements to parking enforcement to reduce the impact on bus reliability
- Improvements to Maidstone Bus Station

And

- Do not refer to specific bus operators – aim to work with all operators
- Emphasise the work with Kent County Council (KCC) and bus operators on improving services
- Investigate extending the existing 6X service between Maidstone and Pembury hospitals into the town centres to reduce congestion on A26
- Work with KCC and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to implement bus prioritisation measures along the A26 to help improve the frequency of services to and from Maidstone
- Investigate using rail station car parks in the Rural Service Centres for buses to pull into to pick up passengers, using Section 106 contributions where appropriate

Rail

- Investigate the possibility of using the funds provided for a bridge over the Medway Valley Line at Tovil to replace with a halt instead
- Include a reference to a halt in Tovil to protect the area from development
- Investigate rail halts at Teston and Allington
- Include clear signage for getting from Maidstone East rail station to Maidstone West rails station– and vice versa
- Include aspirations for a rail link to Gatwick

Cycling

- Make targets more ambitious
- Week Street proposal to be open to cyclists only during certain times – 8pm to 8am too restrictive – consider 6pm to 9am
- Include additional policy to look at opportunities for road closures and contraflows to accommodate cycling
- Include the joining up of cycle routes in the action plan

Roads

- Clarify situation regarding proposals for the closure of Cranbourne Avenue at the Wheatsheaf Junction
- Clarify what is meant by bus priority measures
- Include junction improvements on the A229 in Tovil
- Signal intention for a Leeds/Langley relief
- Include improvements to the junction at the bottom of Willington Street

The Committee requested further details of the following:

1. Cranbourne Avenue measures to be clarified via email to all Committee Members following the Maidstone Joint Transport Board meeting on 7 December 2015.
2. The headlines of the consultant's report on the corridor analysis suggesting highway improvements (such as bus prioritisation) to be shared with the Committee Members on or before the meeting on 14 December 2015.
3. The three Section 106 deeds in relation to the major sites along Sutton Road which are contributing towards bus prioritisation and highways improvements to the A274 corridor be provided to Committee Members.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the draft Integrated Transport Strategy.

160. OBJECTIONS TO OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER - MOTE PARK

The Committee considered the results of the consultation in relation to The Borough of Maidstone (Off Street Parking Places) (Variation No7) Order 2015 which formally proposed the introduction of pay and display parking and season ticket parking in Mote Park and the sealing of the Parking Places Order.

The Committee agreed that monitoring the roads surrounding Mote Park following the implementation of the order to identify any localised parking problems related to potential displaced parking was important.

RESOLVED:

1. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Mid Kent Legal Partnership to make The Borough of Maidstone (Off Street Parking Places)(Variation No7) Order 2015 under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 in relation to Mote Park, Maidstone.

Voting: For – 8 Against - 1

2. That following the implementation of the Order monitoring of potential displaced parking in roads surrounding Mote Park be undertaken.

Voting: For – 8 Against - 1

161. BROOMFIELD AND KINGSWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Committee considered the formal response of the Borough Council to the consultation on the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015) according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee agreed the Council's consultation responses to the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015) as presented in the report to the Committee 1 December 2015 and that this be used as the basis for the Council's formal representations according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

Voting: For – 9

162. RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF TRANSPORT IN MAIDSTONE 2015

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the responses to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of Transport in Maidstone 2015, received from Guy Scofield, Project Officer for Kent Community Rail Partnership.

163. DURATION OF MEETING

6:30pm to 9:37pm