

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**28 JULY 2010**

**REPORT OF KCC'S HEAD OF COUNTYWIDE IMPROVEMENTS**

**Report prepared by Andrew Burton, KCC Highway Schemes Manager**

**HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES**

**1.1 Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- 1.1.1 **Note** the progress of the highway improvement programme and the withdrawal of funding from two schemes that were to be delivered in 2010-11.
- 1.1.2 Endorse Officers' recommendation that no additional permanent chicane is installed in Dunn Street, Bredhurst.

**1.2 Background Documents**

- 1.2.1 On 25 March 2010, Kent County Council's (KCC's) Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste announced the programme of works that would comprise the Integrated Transport Strategy 2010-11.

**2 Discussion**

- 2.1 On June 29 2010, as a result of the national savings in spending that the Government recently announced, KCC published details of those schemes it expected to be affected by a £4.1 million reduction in this year's integrated transport budget. These savings were confirmed at the meeting of Cabinet on 12 July 2010:

<b>2010/11 Local Transport Plan Schemes NOT now to be Funded in 2010-11</b>	Original budget
Bus Infrastructure Improvements - <b>routes 71 &amp; 101</b>	£116,000
Medway Valley Line: Improved Access to Train Stations	£70,000

- 2.2 The schemes selected for withdrawal of funding are based on the degree to which their objectives meet four criteria: whether a scheme improves road safety; reduces congestion; is already underway; or has generated significant external funding that would otherwise be lost.

- 2.3 Whilst the removal of these schemes is a loss, the traveling public will still see the benefit from the following significant highway improvements in the Borough:

<b>2010/11 Local Transport Plan Schemes Still Funded in 2010-11</b>	<b>Original budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>
Maidstone Quality Bus, upgrade of corridors in Shepway Estate PHASE 2 ("bus-friendly" road humps)	£100,000	<b>£25,000</b>
Leeds Rd/Maidstone Rd (A274 Five Wents) - junction alteration <b>Crash Remedial Measure</b>	£28,000	<b>£28,000</b>
Nettlestead Safety Improvements	£29,000	<b>£29,000</b>
Running Horse Roundabout (M20 Junction 6) <b>Crash Remedial Measure</b>	£13,000	<b>£13,000</b>
Wamlake Rd/High St, Sutton Valence - junction improvement <b>Crash Remedial Measure</b>	£18,000	<b>£18,000</b>
A20, Harrietsham - Right-Turn Lane at West Street	£7,000	<b>£6,000</b>
Laddingford - speed limit modification	£2,500	<b>£2,500</b>
Pheasant Lane, Maidstone - road closure	£5,500	<b>£6,000</b>

- 2.4 Some schemes affected by the Government reductions may yet receive partial funding from Kent County Council Members through the dedicated fund that each Member has to spend on roads in their area. Other schemes that have already received funding approval from this budget and have either been installed or are shortly be installed are:

<b>Member Highway Fund Schemes Approved For Implementation</b>
Boxley Rd Signing Improvements ( <b>Mr Chittenden</b> )
Romney Place, Maidstone - pedestrian improvements ( <b>Mr Robertson</b> )
Offens Drive, Staplehurst - "Health Centre" sign - ( <b>Mr Hotson</b> )
Station Approach, Staplehurst: five pram ramps ( <b>Mr Hotson</b> )
The Quarries, Boughton Monchelsea: Signs of pedestrians in road ( <b>Mr Hotson</b> )
Croft Gdns, Lenham: Pram Ramp ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )
Dickley Lane, Lenham: two pram ramps ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )
Ham Lane, Lenham: Pram Ramp Mrs ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )
Lenham Sq, Lenham: Pram Ramp ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )
Loder Close, Lenham: Pram Ramp ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )
Smarden Rd Headcorn (nr Kennels) - "Duck" crossing sign ( <b>Mrs Whittle</b> )

- 2.5 Two schemes previously reported to this Board as complete remain the subject of ongoing reviews; the traffic calming schemes in Coxheath and Bredhurst.
- 2.6 At the last meeting of this Board, officers advised a review of the traffic calming scheme in **Coxheath** would be carried in time to report the outcome to this Board. Unfortunately, major temporary traffic management caused by the roadworks necessary for Scotia Gas Networks' mains replacement have prevented meaningful data to be gathered. Accordingly, the Coxheath review has been deferred until the roadworks are complete and the traffic calming features are reinstated.
- 2.7 At **Dunn Street, Bredhurst**, one aspect of the traffic calming remains a source of dissatisfaction with some local residents and the Parish Council. Towards the southern end of the village, the consultation plan had included a physical chicane outside Camellia that was designed to ensure speeds would be low in the newly traffic calmed area. During detailed design, however, it became apparent that a physical chicane at this location could potentially cause traffic to come to a standstill because larger vehicles that had priority would be unable to pass a larger vehicle that was waiting at the "give-way" for oncoming traffic to pass. The disadvantage in deleting the physical build out was that drivers would, over time, ignore the road markings and drive through this gateway regardless of the traffic signs and road markings. Nonetheless, the independent safety audit that was carried out upon the scheme's completion did not mention that this was a problem that needed resolving and the scheme was therefore signed off as being complete.
- 2.8 Recognising some local disquiet at this, in April 2010, KCC arranged for a temporary physical chicane to be installed outside Camellia for a trial for three weeks to assess the actual impact on traffic flow. KCC received no reports of traffic coming to a standstill and the majority of people who contacted the Parish Council during the trial supported it being made permanent; as a result, the Parish Council is very much in favour of this structure being made permanent. Of the local Members, Cllr Greer (MBC Member for Boxley) is of the opinion that no chicane should be installed and Cllr Mrs Hinder (MBC Member for Boxley) considers that the cost to install a permanent is unwarranted and that the traffic calming measures already in place are sufficient.
- 2.9 Whilst the work itself would cost an estimated £3,800, the road would need to be closed to carry out the work and this would add £4,800 to the cost. In view of the budgetary constraints described earlier in this report, this Board is asked to endorse the officer's recommendation that these costs are out of proportion to the level of benefit a physical chicane would bring and that no further work should be carried out.