

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 APRIL
2022**

Present: Councillors Burton, Cannon, Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cooper, Cuming, Fort, Hinder, Kimmance, T Sams, Springett (Chairman) and S Webb

Also Present: Councillor Holmes

224. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Brown, Khadka, Prendergast and Wilson.

225. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Kimmance was present as Substitute Member for Councillor Khadka.

226. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman intended to take two urgent items due to the length of time until the next meeting. These were Item 16 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package Update Report and Item 17 – Briefing Note – Traffic Management Act – Part 6 Amendments.

227. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman stated that they intended to take Item 16 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package Update before Item 13 – Process for Requests for 20 mph schemes and Item 17 – Briefing Note – Traffic Management Act 2004 – Part 6 Amendments, before Item 15 – Maidstone Highway Works Programme.

228. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Holmes was present as a Visiting Member for Item 14 – Update on the Review of the proposed new bus route into the Orchard Fields and Pea Field Development.

229. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

230. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors Burton, Cannon, Clark, Cooke, Cuming and Springett had been lobbied on Item 14 – Update on the Review of the proposed bus route into the Orchards Fields and Pea Field Development.

Councillor Springett had been lobbied on Item 16 – Maidstone Integrated Transport Package Update.

231. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

232. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2021

As the Board’s previous meeting was held informally, formal agreement to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 January 2021 was required.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

233. MINUTES OF THE (INFORMAL) MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the (Informal) meeting held on 12 January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

234. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

235. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

236. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

A request was made to include the A229 and A249 links between the M2 and M20 within an update on the progress of the Lower Thames Crossing.

Reassurance was given that Local Bus Service providers would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board in the next municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the amended Committee Work Programme be noted.

237. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE UPDATE

The Senior Project Manager introduced the report and stated that the Council’s Planning Committee would be considering Kent County Council’s (KCC) application to review the listed building consent required to progress the A20 Ashford Road/Willington Street scheme. The outcome would be reported to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) by the end of April 2022, for a decision on the required funding’s

provision. The works were expected to commence from April 2023, subject to co-ordination with the A229 Loose Road junction with the A274 Sutton Road scheme.

In relation to the A249 Bearsted Road Major Infrastructure Project, planning consent had been achieved for the Heavy Goods Vehicle link to Newham Court Road. Due to the project's delay, the schemes design had been reviewed with several changes made to improve the scheme. The changes were outlined, which included the provision of a dual carriageway between the A249 and Bearsted Road roundabouts. A formal opinion would be obtained from KCCs Planning Department on the achievement of the dual carriageway within permitted development rights.

A higher retaining wall on the north side of Bearsted Road would be required, but it was hoped that landscaping could be achieved behind 75% of the wall.

The designs for the amended scheme were being produced to allow the works to commence once the other required consents were achieved, with an expected start date of May 2022 over a 12-month period. Residents would be updated when possible.

A two-stage procurement process had begun for the A20 Coldharbour Roundabout/A20 London Road – Hall Road Scheme, with a contractor to be appointed in October 2022 to commence the works in January 2023. The works would be co-ordinated with the A249 Bearsted Road Major Infrastructure Project to minimise any adverse impact on the M20 corridor.

The experimental traffic regulation order (TRO) for the closure of Cranbourne Avenue, in relation to the A229 Loose Road junction/A274 Sutton Road scheme, had been implemented in March 2022. KCC would continue to respond to comments from local resident's following its installation. The traffic flow to the surrounding road network would be monitored and subsequently used to verify the scheme's purpose. The remaining works were due to start in Spring 2023.

The A229 Loose Road Junction/Armstrong Road scheme works would commence in September 2022, to be completed by Christmas 2022 and would take place alongside the minor Sheals Crescent junction works. The A229 Loose Road Junction/Cripple Street/Boughton Lane scheme had been redesigned following consultation with local Ward Members, to reduce the impact to shop fronts and was being costed. The scheme would struggle to achieve benefits for the local road network.

In response to questions, the Senior Project Manager stated that the local Councillors would be consulted on the retaining wall's landscaping within the A249 Bearsted Road scheme. The wall's design and the construction environmental management plan would be shared once available. It was confirmed that the amended design reduced vegetation loss in places. Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum had been and would continue to be informed about the improved cycle facilities within the amended design.

The Senior Project Manager stated that there was no intention to re-open Cranbourne Avenue during the delivery of the A229 Loose Road junction/A274 Sutton Road scheme.

The prioritisation of the schemes within the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP) that were subject to time-restricted funding was reiterated.

The Board expressed support for the progress made on the MITP and strongly reiterated the importance of its continuation. Several Members expressed concerns over the cost benefit ratio of the amended design for the A229 Loose Road Junction/Cripple Street/Boughton Lane scheme, when compared to the other proposed junction improvements.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

238. PROCESS FOR REQUESTS FOR 20MPH SCHEMES

Prior to the report's introduction, Mr Stuart Jeffery address the Committee.

The Schemes Project Manager introduced the report and stated that the process for submitting 20mph speed limit requests had been reviewed in May 2019. Achieving compliance to a 20mph scheme should occur without reliance on Kent Police and through the creation of a suitable environment for drivers to recognise that they are in a low-speed area.

Particular attention was drawn to the requirement for evidenced community support for a 20mph scheme, alongside informal engagement with local business and residents. A strong safety campaign would be required.

Any 20 mph schemes would have to be self-funded as there was no designated funding available within Kent County Council. The scheme's promoter would be expected to pay for the required surveys and traffic regulation orders associated with the scheme, alongside its implementation.

The Board were informed that the Schemes Planning and Delivery Teams were undergoing a restructure, with it possible that the request process could be reviewed.

The Chairman highlighted a motion recently agreed by the full Council, to support default schemes of 20mph speed limits on residential neighbourhoods and streets, where these were supported and led by the community.

In response to questions, the Schemes Project Manager confirmed that Parish Councils, District Councils and County Council Members were usually the promoters of 20mph schemes. Residents Associations could promote a scheme, provided that the organisation possessed the required funds for the scheme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

239. UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED NEW BUS ROUTE INTO THE ORCHARD FIELDS AND PEA FIELD DEVELOPMENT

The Head of Planning and Development introduced the report and stated that a Section 106 agreement had been signed between the Council and the developer, as part of the planning permission granted for the development. The agreement would provide funding for a bus service to the development; as the development had not commenced the financial contribution had not been received by the Council.

Several Members felt that the monies should not be spent on providing the bus route as there were other local services nearby and that demand for the service had dropped in recent years. It was felt that the funds could be re-directed to the required local road infrastructure improvements, such as at Fountain Lane, to improve the traffic congestion.

In response to questions, the Head of Planning and Development confirmed that any variation to the Section 106 agreement would need to be supported by the developer and subject to reconsideration by the Council's Planning Committee. The Head of Planning and Development stated that they understood that the developer had been approached by the Local Ward Member and did not wish to vary the agreement. The Council's Adopted Local Plan contained a policy whereby site developers off of Hermitage Lane would be requested to contribute to bus service provision.

It was noted that the Council had moved towards collecting Community Infrastructure Levy funding, as opposed to Section 106 agreements, as it provided greater flexibility for the funding's use.

The Board felt that further efforts should be made to re-negotiate the Section 106 agreement, to be carried out by the relevant Member on the Executive post May 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends that the relevant Member on the Executive post May 2022 explores alternative options for the particular Section 106 Agreement.

240. BRIEFING NOTE - TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ACT 2004 - PART 6 AMENDMENTS.

The relevant Officers were unable to attend the meeting, with any questions to be addressed outside of the meeting.

The Board supported the proposed actions as contained within the briefing note and resulting public consultation.

The list of signs as mentioned within the document would be distributed to the Board's Members.

RESOLVED: That the briefing note be noted.

241. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

242. DURATION OF MEETING

5 p.m. to 6.45 p.m.