
SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Monday, 4 March 2019 from 5.00pm - 7.32pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Derek Conway, James Hunt, Ken Ingleton (Vice-Chairman) and David Simmons.

Kent County Councillors: Andy Booth, Bowles (Chairman), Mike Whiting and John Wright.

Kent Association of Local Councils: Parish Councillors Peter Macdonald, Richard Palmer and Jeff Tutt.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Alan Blackburn (District Manager KCC), Paul Brand (Schemes Project Manager KCC), Philippa Davies, Colin Finch (Principal Transport and Development Planner KCC), Mike Knowles and Jamie Watson (Senior Schemes Programme Manager KCC).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Sarah Aldridge, Monique Bonney, Roger Clark and Mike Henderson and Mike Henderson.

APOLOGIES: Kent County Councillors Sue Gent and Ken Pugh.

529 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman ensured that those present were aware of the emergency evacuation procedure.

530 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 December 2018 (Minute Nos. 390 – 403) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

531 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

532 PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman welcomed Harshal Cholake (Project Manager, Atkins) and Camelia Lichtl (Project Manager, Highways England) to the meeting.

Mr Cholake gave a presentation on the M2 Junction 5 Improvements which provided an update on the scheme and covered the following:

Project Background

- Why were these improvements required; and
- scheme objectives.

Project Progress

- Scheme stages;
- Option 12a presented at Public Consultation;
- results of Public Consultation on Proposed Option;
- 68% of the respondents disagreed with Option 12a;
- the alternative solutions proposed by respondents steered towards a fly-over of the roundabout for the A249;
- Option 4H1 was developed after the public consultation, and a flyover option was announced as the preferred route on 30 May 2018; and
- the scheme was now at Stage 3 – Preliminary Design for the flyover and roundabout without signalling, with dedicated left turns.

Programme

- Construction was expected to commence in March 2020, with completion by August 2021.

Members' comments and questions were invited.

A Member asked whether there would be a delay due to funding not being fully committed, and what the impact on traffic would be over the 18 months of construction? Ms Lichtl explained that Highways England (HE) had been liaising with Kent County Council (KCC) to identify other sources of funding. Funds from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) amounted to £2.5million. She explained that risk workshops had been carried out to drive efficiencies and keep costs down, and the scheme was based on minimum land uptake. The Member asked how large the funding gap was and Ms Lichtl explained that it remained at £20million, but this might go down a bit. The HE Commercial Team continually reassessed the project, and rising VAT costs caused variances. Mr Cholake explained that traffic management during construction was being looked at with the contractor, with offline construction being carried out first, then worked from outside to inside.

A Member asked for details of the footpath from Stockbury Church. Ms Lichtl explained that a business case had been developed for a footbridge, with an additional pot of money for this, and it was hoped that this would be approved on 11 March 2019. The Member was disappointed that with regard to the turn-off from the A2 from London, no improvements had been proposed on the right-hand turn, with traffic still queued up along the motorway. He suggested it was better to have a dedicated lane further down the A249, and considered the present scheme was a short term fix, and with additional housing in five to 10 years, the same congestion would result. Ms Lichtl explained that changes to this junction had been taken out because they were too expensive. Traffic modelling had been carried out based on the current Local Plan. Mr Cholake added that the modelling had not included projected modelling for the future Local Plan. A modelled dedicated left-turn at 40mph had not indicated queuing. He acknowledged there were issues, but proposals to reduce the speed limit would help mitigate these.

A Parish Councillor considered the slip road northbound to the A249 was substandard, particularly when taking into account the amount of heavy goods vehicles that used this route. He requested the freight figures used in the modelling and Mr Cholake confirmed that he would send them to him.

A Kent County Council Member advised that he had heard from the Minister that the scheme would be delivered on time. He asked how bus services would be effected by the construction works and requested information on the diversion routes, and whether these were capable of taking double-decker buses. Mr Cholake confirmed that he would forward this information to the Member. He also informed Members that the information within the presentation was available to view online.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cholake and Ms Lichtl for attending the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public to the meeting.

Mr Ben Martin, a local resident, presented a petition for a bypass to the village of Ospringe on the A2 at Faversham, on behalf of local residents. Mr Martin explained that the air pollution regularly exceeded international safety standards, and the road was too narrow for HGVs. He added that sometimes the lorries mounted the pavements, and this together with the air pollution, and traffic noise was very dangerous to local primary school children. Mr Martin considered the situation had gone on too long and action needed to be taken.

The Chairman accepted the petition which was passed to officers so that a report could be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

Mr Michael Dowe, a local resident, requested that parking permits be introduced for residents in Capel Road, Sittingbourne. He explained that the parking bays had already been installed, and that Capel Road was becoming extremely busy, and often used by commuters to park there. He considered all that was now required was for the signage to be added. Mr Dowe explained that if parking permits were introduced for Capel Road, this would put the road on the same footing as Park Road and Albany Road, Sittingbourne and would be a great value to local residents.

Mr Peter Jacobs, a local resident, also spoke on the introduction of parking permits on Capel Road, Sittingbourne. He outlined the history of the road, where-by past residents had not wanted to have permits, but he considered the permits would give residents the option to park outside their houses.

The Chairman advised that officers would write a report on this matter for submission to a future meeting of the Board.

Recommendations to Swale Borough Council's Cabinet

533 CONYER ROAD, TEYNHAM - UPDATE ON PETITION FOR REVIEW OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided an update to the petition submitted to the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB) in June 2018, by residents of Conyer Road, Teynham, requesting a review of the current on-street parking in the area. He explained that there had been many consultations on this in the past. Teynham Parish Council were not in agreement with the option of the removal of the single yellow line on the eastern side of Conyer

Road, and they wanted the existing situation to remain in place. The Seafront and Engineering Manager welcomed the views of the Board on which recommendation they preferred.

A Borough Ward Member acknowledged the views of the local residents and the Parish Council. He considered that if the double yellow lines were extended on the west side of Conyer Road, and the single yellow lines taken away, this could provide residents with additional parking and be far enough away from the corner for wide vehicles.

Kent County Councillor Mike Whiting proposed: That option 'b' in the report be carried forward. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock.

Members raised points which included: this was a very nasty junction, used regularly by agricultural traffic; acknowledged both the Parish Council views, and those from local residents; and suggested that the views of the Parish Council be taken into account as they had frequently looked into this issue.

Recommended:

(1) That officers undertake an informal consultation with residents to remove the single yellow line on one side of Conyer Road and slightly extend the double yellow lines.

534 FORMAL OBJECTIONS TO TRO AMENDMENT 15 - REPORT ON TWO FORMAL OBJECTIONS RECEIVED ON PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES IN TERRACE ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided details of two formal objections received in relation to the recently advertised Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) Swale Amendment 15 for amendments to various parking restrictions in the Borough.

A Member asked whether part of the road was a private road? The District Manager confirmed that it was all public.

A visiting Ward Member spoke in support of the recommendation for safety reasons.

Members raised the following points:

- Supported double yellow lines here as it would improve access to the road;
- it was against the Highway Code to park near a junction in any case;
- could not see any reason not to have double yellow lines at this location;
- this was an obvious step to make, and endorsed the recommendation; and
- the quicker this was implemented, the better.

Recommended:

(1) That the report be noted and that officers proceed with the proposed installation of double yellow lines on the junction of Terrace Road and Murston Road, Sittingbourne.

Recommendation to Kent County Council's Cabinet**535 HIGHSTED ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE PROPOSED FOOTWAY - REPORT ON THE RESULTS FROM THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

The Schemes Project Manager introduced the report which summarised previous investigations and development work on proposals to install a footway on Highsted Road between its junctions with Farm Crescent and Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne. The report also summarised the results of a public consultation on four options, and it sought a recommendation from the JTB on any further actions.

The Schemes Project Manager explained that it was not possible to have two-way traffic, plus a footpath, as the road was too narrow. There was an option to make the road one-way either southbound (Option 1), northbound (Option 2), or closure to all traffic except bicycles (Option 3), with pedestrians using the route as well. He explained that the designs had been done, with consultation carried out in December 2018 – January 2019. The summary of results were included in the appendix to the report. There was not an over-riding consensus on any individual option, and so it had been difficult to make a recommendation, other than no further action to be taken.

Members raised the following points:

- Disappointed with the recommendation;
- disappointed that report focussed just on providing a footpath;
- there was heavy traffic in the area as the road served two schools and a hospital;
- heavy lorries and agricultural vehicles clogged up the road;
- Option 1 was preferred;
- a footpath was needed;
- HGVs should not be using the road;
- traffic flow needed to be considered;
- if nothing was done, the issues would get worse;
- road safety issues for the children using this route;
- would like KCC to go back to the school and re-negotiate, this is what residents wanted;
- there would be an accident here without a footpath;
- surprised nothing more is to be done, which did not reflect the consultation results;
- something needed to be done;
- preferred Option 1, together with speaking to the school again;
- there was clearly a desire not to leave this as is; and
- the option for no change was not supported by the majority in the consultation.

Visiting adjacent Ward Members made the following points: disappointed with the report, a lot of residents used Highsted Road, and road users were often unaware of the pedestrians on the road; this was within KCC's remit to sort out; and there needed to be a pathway so that the road was safe for pedestrians and road users.

Kent County Councillor John Wright proposed: That Option 1 be implemented. This was seconded by the Chairman.

The Senior Schemes Programme Manager explained that a steer was needed from the Board and that the recommendation was based on no majority preference of the options.

The Proposer explained that the issue was also about inappropriate parking, with traffic grinding to a halt, and to minimise this, the road needed to be closed-off, which would help residents in Highsted Road. He added that Option 1 was still the preferred option, but did not want a footpath that was unsafe.

A Ward Member explained that he would like to support Option 1, but this was about providing a footpath. Residents had stated that acquiring land either to the east or west of the road was their preferred option. He suggested that further talks be had with the school.

Recommended:

(1) That Option 1 be the preferred way forward, and that KCC look at other options as well.

Information Items

536 A2/A251 JUNCTION

The Principal Transport and Development Planner introduced the report which provided an update on the completed studies of the A2/A251 and A2/B2041 junctions in Faversham. He explained that there had been two studies. One had evaluated the roundabout and traffic light scheme designs in respect of the cumulative Local Plan and recently committed growth. The second study looked at the feasibility of evolving design options for growth up to 2031. He explained that the surveys had been compared to the results of the study carried out at the same junction in 2013 when the Perry Court application was submitted. The Principal Transport and Development Planner outlined the two options and summarised that Option 1 would provide some benefit in the short term, but not in the long term with increase in demand; Option 2 had slightly better performance, but neither option would cope with the projected 2031 growth. A feasibility study was carried out in 2018 and resulted in two further options, a larger scale of both the roundabout, and signalised options. Of the two, the roundabout option provided spare capacity in a 2031 Local Plan build-out scenario. A further report would be submitted to the next JTB meeting in June 2019.

A Ward Member was not surprised that there was little difference between the 2013 and 2018 results as the Perry Court development had not yet been built. He raised

concern with the addition of more traffic due if a (planned) supermarket was built on the Ashford Road.

Members spoke both for against the two options and raised the following points:

- Some signalled pedestrian crossings would be needed;
- traffic lights and roundabouts together did not work; and
- this was premature, bearing in mind the potential impact of the proposed garden villages.

The Principal Transport and Development Planner explained that the addition of any garden villages would take a long time to build out, so these could not be taken into consideration at this time.

The Chairman thanked the Principal Transport and Development Planner for his report.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

537 HIGHWAYS WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered the report which provided an update on the identified schemes approved for consideration in 2018/19.

A Member requested more information on the drainage repairs in Quinton Road, Sittingbourne.

The Schemes Project Manager confirmed that KCC had sealed the traffic order to make Danley Road, Halfway, one-way to all traffic in 2016. Traffic signs for the restriction had been ordered and would be installed at the same time as those for the 20 miles per hour speed limit on the same road.

The District Manager explained that the sustainable drainage works in the High Street, Sittingbourne were not going ahead, but other works would be carried out as part of routine maintenance.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

538 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

Members considered the report which gave an update on the progress made regarding various schemes in the Borough.

Update on the 20's Plenty for Faversham Working Group

A visiting Member provided a further update and explained that KCC talks had gone well. KCC had stated that they did not believe Oare Road, Faversham could be added to the scheme. However, the Member explained that with development at

this location, traffic calming was needed and the road added to the scheme at some point in the future.

A Member thanked KCC officers for the work they had done on this scheme. He referred to the suggestion regarding Oare Road and noted that there was also development taking place along Love Lane and the Western Link, Faversham.

Parking at The Leas, Minster

A Member applauded the restrictions that were going to be put in place.

One-way system option on Church Road, Eastchurch

The Schemes Project Manager reported that he was working on a slight change he had proposed for the scheme to deal with an objection that had been received during the public consultation for the traffic order.

Bell Road/Highsted Road, Sittingbourne, Traffic

The Seafront and Engineering Manager confirmed that the TRO had been drafted and the consultation would commence on 8 March 2019 for three weeks.

The Chairman agreed that there would be an update on Holmside Avenue, Sheerness at the next meeting.

Sydney Avenue, Sittingbourne Parking Restrictions

The Principal Transport and Development Planner confirmed that the TRO was for term-time only.

A Member raised the issue of enforcing restrictions and it was agreed that this should be an item at the next meeting. The Seafront and Engineering Manager briefly explained that if a bus was genuinely dropping passengers off, that was permitted, but if they parked where there was a restriction, that was an offence.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

539 AGREEMENT ON JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARDS

Members discussed the draft Agreement.

Councillor Mike Baldock made the following proposal: That under paragraph 2.2, the final sentence be amended to reverse the last half of the sentence so that it read: The parish or town council representatives may speak, vote and propose a motion or an amendment.

This was fully endorsed by the Board.

Recommended:

(1) That the last sentence in paragraph 2.2 be amended to read: The parish or town council representatives may speak, vote and propose a motion or an amendment.

540 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board would be at 5.30pm on Monday 24 June 2019.

541 RECORD OF THANKS

The Chairman thanked officers, Members and Visiting Members for their input over the past municipal year.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel