
SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting held via Skype on Monday, 1 March 2021 from 5.30 pm - 7.21 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock, Simon Clark, Alastair Gould, Benjamin Martin, Julian Saunders (Vice-Chairman), Bill Tatton and Eddie Thomas.

Kent County Councillors: Andy Booth, Andrew Bowles (Chairman), Jason Clinch, Antony Hook, Ken Pugh and John Wright.

Kent Association of Local Councils: Parish Councillors Cameron Beart, Richard Palmer and Jeff Tutt.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Billy Attaway, Alan Blackburn, Martyn Cassell, Philippa Davies, Jay Jenkins, Mike Knowles, Dean Radmore, Larissa Reed, Jamie Watson and Emma Wiggins.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Derek Carnell, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Elliott Jayes, Ben J Martin, Ken Rowles, Paul Stephen, Roger Truelove and Tony Winckless.

APOLOGY: Kent County Councillor Mike Whiting.

485 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held 7 December 2020 (Minute Nos. 302 – 316) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

A Member drew attention to Minute No. 307, Bus Parking in Swale. He explained that following the update to Members in December 2020 which stated that a consultation would take place, residents of Adelaide Drive and Sydney Avenue, Sittingbourne had not received any communication. The Member asked why the consultation had not taken place. The Swale District Manager said that he would speak to the relevant officers and respond to the Member, and he would also copy the Chairman and Vice-Chairman into the response.

486 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Simon Clark declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 7, Extension to Sittingbourne Residents' Parking Scheme. Councillor Clark explained that as he had campaigned in favour of the extension, he would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Benjamin Martin declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of item 10, A251 Ashford Road and A2 Canterbury Road, Faversham – Junction Improvements Scheme. Councillor Martin said he would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

487 PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman welcomed the speaker to the meeting.

Mr Tim Stonor spoke on item 10 of the agenda, A251 Ashford Road and A2 Canterbury Road, Faversham – Junction Improvements Scheme. He asked for significantly improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on all arms of the junction; and to significantly improve the overall quality of urban design to reflect the future central setting of the junction. Mr Stonor asked Kent County Council (KCC) to engage with the transport planning and urban design experts. He said the current design did nothing for the importance of the place, and welcomed the pedestrian crossings on three out of the four arms of the junction, but added that there were barely any facilities for cyclists. He referred to Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 guidance introduced by the Government in July 2020 in terms of cycle infrastructure and he considered the design was not consistent with these guidelines, and the junction would encourage more car travel. Mr Stonor requested that the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) asked KCC to engage with this group, hold a workshop and work on the design together.

Recommendations for Swale Borough Council's Cabinet**488 FORMAL OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER SWALE AMENDMENT 21**

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided details of an objection and comments received in relation to the recently advertised Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), Swale Amendment 21, which proposed the introduction of a Residents' Parking Scheme in Fox Hill, Bapchild.

Recommended:

(1) That the formal objection and comments received to the advertised Traffic Regulation Order be noted and the Order be progressed as advertised.

489 FORMAL OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER SWALE AMENDMENT 20

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided details of objections and comments received in relation to the recently advertised TRO, Swale Amendment 20, which covered various amendments to on-street waiting restrictions in the Swale Area.

A Member welcomed progression of recommendation (1).

Members spoke in support of recommendation (2). A Member explained that this was a very dangerous junction and said the second part of the recommendation (consideration be given to additional lining in a future Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)) should not be pursued at the moment.

Recommended:

- (1) That the proposed double yellow lines in Cormorant Road and Wigeon Road, Iwade, be progressed.**
- (2) That the proposed double yellow lines in Dark Hill, Faversham, be progressed.**
- (3) That the proposed extension to the double yellow lines, and reduction of residents' parking bay at the side of 6 East Street, in St Mary's Road, Faversham, be progressed.**
- (4) That the proposed double yellow lines in Nutfields, Sittingbourne, be abandoned.**
- (5) That the proposed formalising of the existing disabled persons' parking bay in Invicta Road, Sheerness, be progressed.**

490 EXTENSION TO SITTINGBOURNE RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which summarised action to-date following the submission of a petition to the Swale Joint Transportation Board in June 2019, for an extension to the existing Sittingbourne Residents' Parking Scheme, and sought a definitive recommendation from Members as to whether to proceed with this extension.

A visiting Ward Member spoke in support of the extension and said that a large part of Park Road was already part of a Residents' Parking Scheme which had resulted in displacement of vehicles onto other roads that were not within the scheme.

A KCC Member agreed with the Ward Member, and noted that the consultation responses were in support of the scheme going ahead. The Member asked about the layout of the scheme in Park Road which residents appeared to be against. The Seafront and Engineering Manager explained that the majority of objections received during the consultation on the proposed scheme layout were against the implementation of the scheme itself rather than the layout design.

Recommended:

- (1) That the report be noted and that officers proceed with drafting a Traffic Regulation Order to extend the current Sittingbourne Residents' Parking Scheme to include all of Park Road and Ufton Lane.**

491 INFORMAL CONSULTATION RESULTS - VARIOUS PROPOSALS

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided details of recent informal consultations undertaken on various proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in the Borough.

A Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Member spoke in support of Recommendation (1) being progressed. He said that parking was a problem in this

location, with the road being both narrow and a dead-end, and he explained that parked vehicles obstructed pedestrian access to the properties in the road.

A Ward Member spoke in support of Recommendation (2) being progressed and explained that this part of St Catherine's Drive did not have off-street parking.

Recommended:

(1) That the proposed double yellow lines in Clarence Row, Sheerness, be progressed.

(2) That the proposed reduction of the existing single yellow line outside Nos.2-8 St Catherine's Drive, Faversham, be progressed.

(3) That the proposed double yellow lines in Monarch Drive, Sittingbourne, be abandoned.

(4) That the proposed double yellow lines in Attlee Way, Milton Regis, be progressed.

492 REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME, EDITH ROAD, FAVERSHAM

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which advised of a Ward Member's request for consideration of parking controls in Edith Road, Faversham, and the possible undertaking of a consultation with residents.

A Visiting Ward Member spoke in support of the recommendation.

Recommended:

(1) That the report be noted and that officers proceed with an informal consultation with residents of Edith Road on a possible extension to the Residents' Parking Scheme.

Recommendation for Kent County Council's Cabinet

493 A251 ASHFORD ROAD AND A2 CANTERBURY ROAD, FAVERSHAM - JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

The Senior Programme Manager introduced the report which summarised the actions and results of a consultation carried out between August and September 2020 and outlined the proposed highway junction improvements on the A251 Ashford Road and the A2 Canterbury Road, Faversham.

He explained that the adopted Swale Local Plan included significant development in Faversham, much of which had already commenced. Funding from the developments, through Section 106 Agreements, would go towards mitigating the developments' impact on the A2/A251 junction. Highways England had also required that improvements were made to the current junction due to concerns on the safe operation of junction 6 of the M2. The proposed scheme reduced queuing

on the A251 and reduced any backing-up of traffic which would prevent traffic from exiting the high speed M20. He said it was imperative to deliver the scheme as early as possible in terms of the safety and operation of these junctions.

The Senior Programme Manager drew attention to the Consultation Report; Annex 1, Consultation Report summary; Annex 2, List of Consultation responses and Annex 3, Proposed design to be progressed to construction. He said the aim of the scheme was to control traffic to allow the A251 to operate safely and to provide a safe crossing of both roads for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The Senior Programme Manager explained that on the revised design, following the consultation, there were crossings on all approaches. A shared footway/cycleway was also being incorporated from the A251 and Abbey School entrance, and a footway from the A251 heading east along the A2 was also included. He said there was insufficient land on the A251 and A2 for a cycle lane and it was not possible to link-up with The Mall because of the distance between the junctions. Traffic would also be controlled at this point on the A2 by traffic lights and yellow box section. He said the scheme was a medium-term solution. The Senior Programme Manager outlined the different phases, as set-out on page 96 of the report pack. The A251 needed to be closed for 11 weeks whilst the work was being carried out. Temporary two-way lights would be installed and there would also be diversions, followed by three-way lights which would mimic the end scenario. He summarised by saying that the Board was requested to approve the recommendation to proceed to construction, and for the programme of works to start immediately to take advantage of the available road space, increase in daylight hours and the allocated funding.

Mr Tim Stonor spoke on this item and this is recorded in the Public Session part of the minutes.

In the debate which followed, Members raised points which included:

- The scheme had improved a bit, with the pedestrian crossings;
- would like to see improvements for cyclists, particularly on the westbound carriageway, and suggested incorporating an advanced stop line for cyclists, which would make a big difference, and help when turning down into The Mall;
- using the footway as a shared space on the south side would help;
- staggered crossing were not a good system, they needed to be more direct and user-friendly;
- endorse the speaker's recommendations to work with the people who were already involved in designs in Faversham;
- in terms of traffic modelling, what implications would increased housing and industrial development at Brenley Corner have on the way this junction had been reviewed?
- acknowledged the importance to move this forward to improve traffic flow;
- lights were a better option than a roundabout;
- welcomed the three pedestrian crossing points;
- weakness of the scheme is the lack of facilities for cyclists;
- would like KCC to work with Faversham Town Council on this; and
- needed to create a better sense of place at the junction.

Councillor Julian Saunders moved the following amendment:

That in implementing the scheme KCC should continue to work actively with the Town Council and the local community to:

- a. Further address the constraints on cycling and walking around this junction and on the A2.
- b. create a better sense of place at the junction.

That it should report back regularly to the JTB on progress against this condition.

Members made further comments which included:

- Concerned that work had already begun;
- what would be the consequences of going back and looking at the amendments that were suggested?
- a lot of people were pleased that something was now happening at this junction;
- appreciated the work officers had done so far;
- agreed with the importance of sense of place and look and feel;
- this location would be more central to Faversham in the future;
- cycling needed to be catered for more at the junction;
- was there a Toucan crossing here?
- welcomed the footpath to the Abbey School;
- was there going to be a crossing at The Mall?
- was it possible to make improvements for cyclists as set-out in the LTN 1/20?
- the original scheme had much improved, but there was still room for improvement;
- this was a medium-term solution, much need by residents and it should be progressed;
- there were frequent issues of vehicles using rat-runs, suggested using gatemen on rural lanes; and
- what were the consequences if this scheme did not go ahead?

The Senior Programme Manager responded to the questions and points made, as noted below:

- The design was never intended to be place-making, it was a standard design, with no urban design advice;
- the scheme was well advanced on design, there could be alterations, but the geometry of some of the lines meant that it would not be a quick fix;
- officers were aware of the LTN 1/20 and pedestrian and cycling facilities had been included at the junction;
- the crossings were Toucan crossings;
- there was no additional space for cyclists, unless it was taken from land assigned for vehicular use, but the aim was to try and increase the capacity of the junction;

- there was no highway space on the A2 for cycle facilities for any length, lead-ups were needed to encourage cyclists, so needed to be segregated;
- an advanced stop line for cyclists was possible, but it caused a short delay when the lights turned green;
- land to the east of the A251 was at a premium;
- could have a look at direct crossings, although staggered crossings enabled more space on the central islands, and to-date staggered seemed to be the most appropriate;
- happy to work with Faversham Town Council;
- if there were any significant changes to the scheme this would cause a delay;
- traffic modelling included all known developments in the area, with some spare capacity;
- this was medium-term capacity, and could change in the future;
- officers could talk with Faversham Town Council about improving cycle provision;
- there was limited funding for the junction;
- in terms of the amendment, need to consider the demand for road space, and there could be a knock-on effect on the schedule;
- The Mall was being looked at to see if the pedestrian facilities could be improved, it was unlikely to be straight across because of the narrow footway, and further improvements would be required;
- officers could try and do further improvements and follow LTN 1/20, and work with Faversham Town Council; and
- the issue of rat-runs could be looked at to see what was practicable on the nearby country lanes.

The Chairman asked that Ospringle, Sheldwich and Selling Parish Councils be included in any discussions on the rat-run issues.

Councillor Julian Saunders spoke on his amendment and said that he was not looking to slow down work on the scheme, but he wanted constant dialogue. His amendment was seconded by Councillor Eddie Thomas.

In response to a question about whether the amendment would delay progress of the scheme, the Senior Programme Manager explained that this would depend what came out of the meetings, but if matters could be kept moving, it should not be a problem.

Members voted on the recommendation in the report, with the amendment noted above and the vote was agreed. The Chairman asked that it be recorded that he abstained from the vote.

Recommended:

(1) That construction of the scheme be recommended.

(2) That in implementing the scheme KCC should continue to work actively with the Town Council and the local community to:

a. Further address the constraints on cycling and walking around this junction and on the A2;

b. create a better sense of place at the junction; and that it should report back regularly to the JTB on progress against this condition.

Items for noting

494 **TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES IN FAVERSHAM, SHEERNESS AND SITTINGBOURNE**

The Capital Projects Manager introduced the report which was in response to the questions raised by a County Member, and provided details on what decisions had been made, by whom, and when, taking into account what factors, detailing Equality Impact Assessments, had been part of the process and what medical or public health evidence informed the decisions in relation to the town centre closures in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness. He explained that these measures had been implemented in June 2020 to support Government social distancing guidelines. The closures were extended in January 2021 for a further year, up to the maximum period of 18 months allowed for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). An informal consultation had been carried to gauge the appetite of local stakeholders to continue with the closures. The TTROs did not have to be used, but were in place if required.

In the debate that followed, Members raised points which included:

- Regular comments were received by Members on the road closures in Sheerness;
- considered there had been a lack of consultation;
- did not see the justification for the road closures;
- request that the JTB sees the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for this;
- unfortunate that Faversham Town Council were not advised of the consultation, this was a missed opportunity;
- needed to know when and who decided to extend the closures;
- more openness was need in the process;
- public health evidence was needed to back-up the justification for the closures;
- expert advice needed to be identified;
- issue with emergency services accessing the closed-off roads;
- a request was made for some modification of the hours of closure in Faversham, but this was refused by KCC;
- needed to know why KCC turned this down;
- the closures were an issue with people with disabilities and shop owners; and
- would like to see more information on any disadvantages the road closures had, not just the benefits.

The Director of Regeneration responded to questions and comments as noted below:

- The EIA was carried out internally and could be shared with the Board (post meeting note: this was emailed to the JTB on 2 March 2021);

- SBC asked KCC to extend the then emergency TRO to a temporary TRO in November 2020;
- there was no particular medical evidence for the TTRO, but since June 2020, officers had followed Government guidelines to make sure users of the high street were as safe as possible;
- emergency access had been reviewed, with those who needed to use it having a coded lock;
- revised time scales were considered by SBC but KCC did not want the times to be amended; and
- there could be more permanent TROs in the future, and following consultation all the issues would be looked into.

Members made further comments which included:

- It was important to remember that Swale was going through a major health crisis;
- a consistent and long-term approach had been sensible;
- welcomed process of looking into pedestrianisation in the future;
- this needed to be progressed as fast as possible now to find out what residents thought;
- the three town centres should be considered separately;
- we should find out what residents and businesses thought and move forward; and
- this had been a useful discussion with Members and officers.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

495 HIGHWAYS WORK PROGRAMME

The Swale District Manager introduced the report which provided an update on identified schemes approved for construction. He advised that work on Norton Crossroads on page 155 of the report had been delayed because of the snow, but the work was now complete.

The Chairman said there was not a parish called 'Staplestreet', as listed under 'Parish' on the same page, and on page 157, it should say 'Church Road, Sittingbourne'.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

496 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

Page 180

410/03/19 – A Member provided an update and advised that land was being obtained through a Section 106 agreement for the addition of a footpath.

Page 181

404/02/20 – A Member requested an update.

Page 183

306/12/20 – A Member requested further information on Plough Road, Eastchurch.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

497 RECORD OF THANKS

A Member wished the Chairman a happy retirement and acknowledged his work over the years, with his significant impact on the people and communities of Swale.

The Chairman thanked Members and officers and wished them well in the future.

498 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Swale JTB would be at 5.30 pm on Monday 21 June 2021.

Chairman

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