
SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting held via Skype on Monday, 6 September 2021 from 5.30 pm - 7.03 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Alastair Gould, Elliott Jayes, Ben J Martin (Substitute for Councillor Eddie Thomas), Julian Saunders (Chairman) and Paul Stephen.

Kent County Councillors: Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Mike Dendor, Antony Hook, Rich Lehmann and John Wright (Vice-Chairman).

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Alan Blackburn (KCC), Martyn Cassell, Philippa Davies, Charlotte Hudson, Mike Knowles, Kellie MacKenzie, Sophia Ramm and Richard Shelton (KCC).

Amy Hulley - Project Manager, Highways England
Jonathan Wright - Stakeholder & Communications Manager, Grahams
Ellen Dennison - Stakeholder & Communications Manager, Grahams

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Monique Bonney, Steve Davey, Oliver Eakin, Tim Gibson, Carole Jackson, Pete Neal, Hannah Perkin, Roger Truelove and Tony Winckless.

APOLOGIES: Kent County Councillor Andy Booth, Councillors Simon Clark and Eddie Thomas.

217 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 June 2021 (Minute Nos. 82 – 95) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

218 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

219 **PUBLIC SESSION**

The Chairman invited Mr Harold Goodwin, Chairman of the Faversham Society, to speak on item 6 of the agenda – Temporary Town Road Closures – Informal Consultation Analysis and next steps. Mr Goodwin requested that further work was carried out to develop a pedestrianisation scheme in Faversham town centre. He noted the responses to the consultation where 51% were in favour of the closure of the town centre and 46% were against. Mr Goodwin highlighted the positive aspects of closing Faversham town centre to traffic, and requested that discussion took place with key stakeholders about how to overcome the disadvantages of closing the town centre from 10am to 4pm on some days of the week. He

suggested a market cart be purchased to facilitate deliveries within the town centre. Mr Goodwin also requested that discussions took place with disability groups and Age UK to ensure their access requirements were taken into consideration.

The Chairman thanked Mr Goodwin and explained that the Board would discuss the item later in the meeting.

Recommendations for Swale Borough Council's Cabinet

220 INFORMAL CONSULTATION RESULTS - EXTENSION OF RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME - EDITH ROAD, FAVERSHAM

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report which provided details of a recent informal consultation undertaken with residents of Edith Road, Faversham, on the possible extension of the existing Residents' Parking Scheme, following the previous report and recommendation by the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB) in March 2021.

A Ward Member explained that a survey carried out by Ward Members in late Summer 2020, had produced a higher return, with residents closer to The Mall more keen to be included within the scheme.

Councillor Ben J Martin proposed that the scheme to include Edith Road be progressed, and this was seconded by Kent County Councillor Antony Hook.

Recommended:

(1) That the results of the recent informal consultation be noted and the extension of the existing Residents' Parking Scheme to include Edith Road, Faversham be progressed.

Items for Noting

221 TEMPORARY TOWN CENTRE ROAD CLOSURES – INFORMAL CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS AND NEXT STEPS

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property introduced the report which included the results from the analysis carried out by the specialist consultant following the informal consultation undertaken for Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham between 21 May 2021 and 14 June 2021 to gauge stakeholders' views on the implementation of permanent road closures. The report also set out the next steps that Swale Borough Council (SBC) intended to take following discussion with members of the JTB.

The Cabinet Member gave an overview of the temporary road closures put in place during the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the informal consultation process. She advised that the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO's) remained available for use but following Government guidance were no longer in force. The Cabinet Member drew attention to the work that had been carried out by the specialist consultant and the results of the informal consultation. She explained that the Council was trying to improve town centres within the Borough, and this included whether the

temporary orders became permanent. Going forward, the intention was to seek expert advice, design a scheme and carry out a formal consultation.

Members made comments which included:

- The experience as a Ward Member in Faversham was that the majority of residents were in support of pedestrianisation, with those with mobility issues feeling safer when the road was closed;
- supported the introduction of a market cart to aid deliveries, such as a low-speed electric buggy, but concerned how this would be financed, and how it would fit within the Kent County Council (KCC) Highways model;
- welcomed the report, and acknowledged that the responses to the informal consultation were higher than usual;
- more information was needed on timescales;
- acknowledged that residents in Sheerness and Sittingbourne were not as keen to have town centre closures, what was going to happen now?
- this was a thorough and meaningful report; and
- parishes and town councils should be consulted to get their views; Sittingbourne, not having a town council, might be excluded though.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property explained the following:

- Any measures to continue with the town centre road closures could be considered alongside other schemes that were going forward, for example schemes which promoted more walking and cycling;
- funding would need to be arranged for additional schemes, such as a market cart;
- what did come through from all the responses was that residents wished for space to move and be safe in, and these responses could be taken forward as ways of improving the environment in town centres;
- high streets needed to change and adapt;
- there had been regular discussion on town centre issues at meetings held with town and parish councils and KCC; and
- it was up to Members whose Ward covered Sittingbourne town centre or the Sittingbourne Area Committee to ensure that feedback was received from residents in that area.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property for the report.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

222 UPDATE FROM HIGHWAYS ENGLAND ON THE M2/JUNCTION 5 IMPROVEMENTS

The Stakeholder & Communications Manager, Grahams (contractor for M2, J5) introduced the presentation which was available to view [online](#) and covered the following topics:

- Project Introduction – Location and the need;
- Project Introduction – What we're doing;
- Current Position & Look Ahead – Stage 5 pre-construction and Stage 6 construction;
- One year look ahead – work activities from September 2021;
- One year look ahead – work activities January 2022 – Winter 2022; and
- Stakeholder Management & Community Engagement.

Members of the Board were invited to ask questions and make comments and the Project Manager, Highways England and Stakeholder & Communications Manager, Grahams, responded, as below:

- The A249 would not be closed in its entirety, there would either be a full northbound closure or a full southbound closure;
- there were no traffic lights in the vicinity of the flyover, the traffic would be free-flowing;
- there would be discussions with bus companies to look at any potential disturbance of bus routes;
- talks would be held with the Key Street and Grovehurst Road, Sittingbourne developers to ensure minimal disruption whilst work was being carried out on the three schemes;
- parish councils which would be affected by the works would be kept up-to-date with information and contacted directly;
- spoil from the works would be retained on site; and
- provision of pedestrian routes had been dealt with through the public inquiry, however, the west side of the A249 was being looked at as a potential pedestrian route.

The Chairman thanked the Project Manager and Stakeholder & Communications Manager for attending the meeting.

Resolved:

- (1) That the presentation be noted.***

223 UPDATE ON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS KEY STREET AND GROVEHURST ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE

The Project Manager – Major Capital Programmes introduced the report which provided an update on the A249 Junction Improvement Schemes at Key Street and Grovehurst Road, Sittingbourne. He confirmed that KCC and Homes England had entered into a Grant Determination Agreement in September 2020, and the two schemes had been subject to a consultation process. He explained that the report

showing the results of the consultation had been completed, but had not yet been added to the KCC website. He said that he would confirm when this was ready to view. **Post Meeting Note: The Consultation reports had now been uploaded onto the KCC website: <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/a249-key-street-and-grovehurst-road-junction-improvement-schemes>**

The Project Manager explained that the Grovehurst Road scheme had been fairly well received, with general acceptance for the need for the improvements. Following the consultation, the scheme was amended to provide a more direct pedestrian route through the junction. This was indicated at Appendix C in the report. The Project Manager said there had been good progress in land agreements, with land from three adjacent sites being safeguarded.

In terms of Chestnut Street and Key Street, responses to the options for improvements had opposing opinions. He said the Secretary of State had made the decision that the Wises Lane development went ahead, and this would include a roundabout on Chestnut Street, with a new slip road onto the A249, closing the existing slip road. This was indicated in the report at Appendix A, with Wises Lane development roundabout on Chestnut Street, and Appendix B, without Wises Lane Developer roundabout on Chestnut Street. He was awaiting details of the roundabout from this development. The Project Manager outlined the current programme of work, set-out on page 179 of the report, with completion in July 2024.

The Project Manager confirmed that KCC and Highways England were communicating with each other, including how they could dovetail the two sets of works at Key Street and the M2, J5, and manage the work on all three projects in stages to minimise disruption. He advised that there was a recovery strategy as part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid to obtain other monies that would have been provided from other developer-funds available for use on other infrastructure improvements within Swale to unlock housing and this would be managed by KCC's Transportation Planning Team.

A Member asked about a couple of right hand turns which he considered to negate the benefits of the slip road. The Project Manager explained that there was further work to be done on the general arrangement and layout, and once the details of the Wises Lane development were finalised, the right hand turn might not be required. The Member also requested that Highways England worked closer with Borden Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked the Project Manager for attending the meeting.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

224 REQUESTS MADE BY COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF JTB

The Chairman introduced the paper and invited Members to make comments.

The Swale District Manager requested that any Member who had not yet received a response to the issues they had raised, to contact him and he would forward to the relevant officer.

A Member requested that any updates to issues be forwarded to all members of the JTB. The Chairman referred to The Broadway, Minster petition and suggested an update be included as an item on the next JTB agenda. The Members who had received responses thanked officers for their feedback. The Vice-Chairman considered a review of grass cutting in the Borough should be included on a future agenda.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

225 HIGHWAYS FORWARD WORKS PROGRAMME: 2021/22 AND 2022/23

The Swale District Manager introduced the report which provided an update on identified schemes approved for construction. He updated the Board to advise that the works at Bramley Avenue, Faversham, set out on page 194 of the report, were completed at the beginning of September 2021.

A Member considered that works on the A2/Love Lane, Faversham junction and at Whitstable Road, Faversham should also have been included within the report. Another Member asked if the works at Tonge Road, Murston, on pages 196 and 200 were connected. The Swale District Manager agreed to investigate this. A Member advised that the works at Elm Lane, Minster, on page 197 of the report were currently underway.

The Chairman suggested a presentation on drainage issues in the Borough at a future meeting, and another Member suggested that representatives from Southern Water, as well as KCC, be invited to attend.

Officers were thanked for the work that had been completed.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

226 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

A Member thanked officers for the updated information on the A2/A251 junction.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

227 MEMBERS NOTE ON HIGHWAY ISSUES AND ITEMS FOR THE SWALE JTB

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

228 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Swale JTB would be at 5.30 pm on Monday 6 December 2021.

Chairman

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