
Swale Joint Transportation Board

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Monday, 26 June 2023 from 5.31 pm - 7.08 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Simon Clark (Chair), Alastair Gould, Angela Harrison, Paul Stephen, and Karen Watson.

KENT COUNTY COUNCILLORS: Andy Booth, Mike Dendor, and Mike Whiting.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Kent County Councillor Antony Hook.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mike Knowles, Kellie MacKenzie and Jo Millard.

OFFICERS PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Alan Blackburn, Sophia Ramm and Richard Shelton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (VIRTUALLY): Councillors Ann Cavanagh and Tim Gibson and Daniel Rollinson (National Highways).

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mike Baldock and Kent County Councillor John Wright.

133 **Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Councillor Simon Clark was confirmed as Chair and Kent County Councillor John Wright was confirmed as Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2023-24.

134 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

135 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

136 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 February 2023 (Minute Nos. 718 – 731) were taken as read, agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

137 **Public Session**

There were no registered speakers.

138 **Change to the order of Business**

The Chair altered the order of business as minuted.

Part B Minutes for Information

139 **M2 Junction 5 Update Report**

The National Highways (NH) Project Manager for M2 Junction 5 Improvement works

gave a verbal update on the progress of the works.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions and points raised included:

- Congratulated NH on how they had progressed the works and considered that that communication with the local community was much improved;
- raised safety concerns in respect of the Oad Street, Borden T-junction once motorists had left the A249 (Maidstone Road). Drivers were confronted with traffic travelling from Tunstall on the right-hand side over the brow of a very steep hill with very short sightlines. Could traffic from the A249 (Maidstone Road) travelling up the new hill be given right of way?;
- traffic management was poor in respect of the flow from Maidstone. The left hand-lane should also be going north to Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey which would help to ease traffic congestion;
- travelling from the M2 (Medway direction) the bend turning north on the eastbound slip road was too sharp for HGVs and needed to be altered;
- why was work taking so long? the contractors should be working 24/7 to reduced costs of the works;
- Kent County Council (KCC) Planning Committee had met the contractors on-site which had been very beneficial, and another visit was planned;
- would the A249 be closed during the Kent County Show weekend, 7 to 9 July 2023?; and
- concerned that drivers travelling from Maidstone were not getting in lane and cutting-in at the last minute. Could lane delineation be put in at this point?

In response to points raised the NH Project Manager said in respect of the Oad Street, T-junction it would have been assessed and passed a safety audit. He agreed to speak to the Safety Auditor and KCC about the Member's concerns. The northbound traffic lane set-up approaching the roundabout was the only safe option and traffic modelling indicated that it was currently an even-split in terms of traffic and he agreed to forward the relevant reasoning for the traffic flows to the relevant Member. The NH Project Manager said that with regard to concerns about the sharp bend on the eastbound slip road a Swept Path Analysis, safety audit and risk assessment had been carried out and it was shown to be a safe road and complied with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards. He said that despite challenges outside of their control they maintained the end date of the works on a very sensitive junction which was a huge achievement. He said that it was not always efficient or feasible to work 24/7 and it was commercially beneficial to the contractor to work as efficiently and cost effectively as they could.

The NH Project Manager confirmed that the A249 would not be closed during the Kent County Show weekend in July 2023. He appreciated the frustration in respect of some driver's not staying in-line however it was not safe to put in a hard barrier and it would be difficult to enforce.

The Chair thanked the NH Project Manager for the update.

Resolved:

- (1) That the verbal update from NH be noted.***

Resources Committee**140 Proposed Coach Parking - Church Road/Upper Brents, Faversham**

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions. Comments and questions raised included:

- Would there be sufficient turning space in Church Road for coaches?;
- the bays would be adjacent to the Bramble Hill Road junction and on a very strange bend and considered it was a “peculiar” location for a coach bay;
- aware of parking problems in the location;
- double yellow lines should be installed opposite the bays in Church Road/Upper Brents, rather than single yellow lines, if the proposed parking bay was going to be retained;
- prudent comments had been raised within the consultation response;
- traffic turning left out of The Brents car park could meet traffic travelling north-east along Church Road and did not support the proposal;
- considered a wider consultation should be undertaken;
- concerned about the location and considered that Love Lane, Faversham was more appropriate as it was wider; and
- suggested that the item be referred back to the Faversham Destination Marketing Group to review the proposed location and consider other options including Love Lane, Faversham. Also to consult with Faversham Football Club to establish whether any of their land was available in Salters Lane.

In response the Seafront and Engineering Manager said sufficient turning space had been raised as a concern following the consultation as set-out in Annex B of the report. He said that he would liaise with the relevant KCC officer about this concern prior to any Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). He did not believe the location of the bays was directly on Bramble Hill Road junction, which he considered was further south. He said it was opposite the Brents Car Park but agreed to investigate the exact location and inform the relevant Member. The Active Travel Co-Ordinator confirmed the location was outside the Church. The Seafront and Engineering Manager explained that a single yellow line could be timed which would help to minimise the impact on on-street parking. The Seafront and Engineering Manager said that if this was to progress to a TRO then it would be advertised on-site and via the local press, but if a wider consultation was deemed appropriate then officers could pursue. He said he was unaware of the current arrangements for the Macknade coach parking trial and there was some urgency to resolving the issue of coach parking but it was important that whatever was agreed worked and was going to be used. Once the location of the bays had been agreed then a formal TRO would be progressed which would take approximately 12 months from start to finish. Any formal objections received would be reported back to the JTB.

KCC Andy Booth moved the following amendment: That the proposed coach parking bay in Church Road/Upper Brents, Faversham be not progressed, and an alternative location be found. This was seconded by KCC Councillor Mike Dendor.

Councillor Angela Harrison moved the following addendum to the amendment: That the proposed coach parking bay in Church Road/Upper Brents, Faversham be held in abeyance until further discussions with Faversham Town Council and ward members

had taken place. This was seconded by the Chair. The proposer and seconder of the original amendment agreed the addendum.

Recommended:

- (1) ***That the results of the recent informal consultation on a proposed coach parking bay in Church Road/Upper Brents, Faversham be noted, and that the proposed coach parking bay in Church Road/Upper Brents, Faversham be held in abeyance until further discussions with Faversham Town Council and ward members had taken place.***

141 Formal Objection to Traffic Regulation Order - Swale Amendment 44 2023

The Seafront and Engineering Manager introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers.

Recommended:

- (1) ***That the report be noted and the proposed double yellow lines in Recreation Way, Sittingbourne be progressed.***

Part B Minutes for Information

142 A249 Key Street and Grovehurst Road roundabout update

The Project Manager (Major Capital Programme Team, KCC) introduced the report which provided updates on the A249 Junction Improvement Schemes at Key Street and Grovehurst Road, Sittingbourne.

The Chair invited questions from Members and points raised included:

Key Street Roundabout

- What was happening to the land to the north of Chestnut Street and the A249?;
- how would people be able to access the Tudor Rose, Chestnut Street, Borden?;
- would pedestrian lighting be installed on the controlled crossing?;
- astounded that the pedestrian crossing across the slip road would not be lit or controlled;
- thanked the officer for the report and KCC for securing the funding for the improvements and requested a six monthly update report on progress;
- had every faith that the planners at KCC had both pedestrian and driver interests to ensure that both could use the roundabout in a safe manner without hold-ups;
- what would be the route for cyclists heading north up Chestnut Street and would the proposed footway be shared footway/cycleway?;
- would there be crossings to enable cyclists to cross the roundabout?; and
- was there anything that could be done to improve the desired line across the last piece of verge as it was a long detour, and could the road be narrowed to allow more room for the footway/cycleway?;

In response the Project Manager said that there was no proposal for pedestrian lighting on the controlled crossings which would be standard tactile crossings, he added that

there was no intention to encourage pedestrians to cross the slip road, the design was for pedestrians to walk up Chestnut Street past The Tudor Rose and cross on the east side of Chestnut Street and then across the access road into the new development. He agreed to circulate to Members of the Board details of how vehicles could access The Tudor Rose as it was not intended to isolate that venue. The piece of land referred to north of Chestnut Street was probably going to be landscaped by the developer.

The Project Manager advised that the footway on the east side of Chestnut Street would be a combined footway/cycleway. He said the intention was that cyclists travelling up Chestnut Street towards Key Street would be on the existing Chestnut Street as they approached the roundabout and there was a footway/cycleway all the way through the housing development and footway/cycleway provisions around the whole of Key Street. He agreed to confirm the footway/cycleway widths.

Grovehurst Road Roundabout

KCC Mike Whiting said that often too many traffic lights led to traffic congestion. The roundabout at Key Street was a good example of how traffic flow worked well on a roundabout with only two sets of traffic lights at the correct location points. The Grovehurst Roundabout would work better with two sets of traffic lights, one controlling the off-slip northbound off the A249 and one controlling the south slip off the A249.

KCC Andy Booth agreed that only two sets of traffic lights were required. The biggest issue would be tail backs onto the A249 southbound end and northbound during peak times.

Councillor Alastair Gould said he would be in favour of the traffic lights remaining to give pedestrians and cyclists a chance.

The Project Manager confirmed that traffic lights were planned on the northbound exit slip road, and southbound exit slip road and there would be four sets of lights on the roundabout. The pedestrian desire line would be controlled by the traffic lights system.

In response to comments about having only two sets of traffic lights, the Project Manager said this was a much larger gyratory roundabout than the current one at Stockbury, with adequate queue lengths. He considered the proposals put forward were the best solution for the site. The Project Manager agreed to explore the options put forward in respect of reducing the amount of traffic lights and update members of the JTB as soon as possible.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

143 Highways Work Programme

The Swale District Manager introduced the report which provided an update and summarised schemes programmed for delivery in 2022/23 and 2023/24. He asked Members to contact him after the meeting if they had any questions on particular schemes. He would then forward their question to the appropriate KCC officer.

The Chair invited comments from Members.

- KCC Mike Whiting sought clarification that the A250 Halfway Road machine resurfacing works on page 39 of Appendix A of the report fell under Queenborough which was an unparished area and not Minster-on-Sea parish as stated?;
- Parish Councillor Jeff Tutt referred to page 39 of Annex A which stated that the Canterbury Road (Boughton Hill) Machine Resurfacing works would be completed by June 2023, but they were not. They were meant to be completed early May 2023 and now not until 21 July 2023. It was now open, with single file traffic lights and the joint between the new and old pieces of road was appalling so KCC need to look at;
- Parish Councillor Peter MacDonald referred to SW/003090 (Preston Skreens) Minster Road, Minster on page 52 of Appendix E (Developer Funded Works) following the works the road drain has been blocked and needs exploring;
- Parish Cllr Peter MacDonald referred to SW/003108 Chequers Road, Minster also on page 52, the footway was incomplete. The Member asked to meet someone on-site to progress. Also SW/003469 Danedale Stables, Minster-on-Sea the footway was also incomplete;
- Councillor Angela Harrison referred to Appendix F (Bridge Works) on page 61 and said the posts were sinking and needed to be inspected urgently on the bridge over Brielle Way, Sheerness; and
- KCC Mike Dendor referred to North Street, Milton Regis and said work from the original design had not been completed and asked to speak to the relevant KCC officers about this.

The Swale District Manager noted all comments and agreed to liaise with the relevant officers as requested.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

144 Progress Update Report

KCC Mike Dendor queried why parking concerns on Eurolink Way, Sittingbourne near the scrap metal site, were not included as an item on the agenda as requested at the previous meeting? The Swale District Manager said that there had been a Stage 2 Safety Audit visit with KCC's Agreements Engineer at the site and so it was not appropriate for it to be considered at this time. The parking issue was now being considered by the relevant team at KCC to resolve the issue.

Town Parish Councillor Eddie Thomas requested an update on the proposed parking bays and double yellow lines on Forbes Road, Faversham. In response, the Seafront & Engineering Manager said that following consultation with the Ward Member and Faversham Town Council, a TRO (Swale Amendment 46) had been drafted and was currently being considered by KCC's Parking Manager.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

145 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Swale Joint Transportation Board would be at 5.30 pm on Monday 2 October 2023.

Chair

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

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