
SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Monday, 9 March 2015 from 5.30 - 7.30 pm.

PRESENT:

Swale Borough Councillors: Andy Booth (substitute for Councillor Ken Pugh), Bryan Mulhern, Prescott, Pat Sandle, Ghlin Whelan and Mike Whiting (Vice-Chairman).

Kent County Councillors: Mike Baldock, Bowles, Lee Burgess, Adrian Crowther, Tom Gates (Chairman), Harrison and Roger Truelove.

Parish Council Members: Peter Macdonald and Richard Palmer.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Alan Blackburn and Ruth Goudie (KCC Officers), Joanne Hammond, Gill Harris, Mike Knowles and Brian Planner.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Mike Henderson.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ken Pugh and Parish Councillor Keith Johnson.

526 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 December 2014 (Minute Nos. 388 – 395) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

527 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Kent County Councillor Tom Gates declared a non-pecuniary interest as his brother, Town Councillor Mick Gates, was speaking under Public Session.

528 PUBLIC SESSION

Mrs Kerry Capes spoke in relation to the Draft Swale Transportation Strategy. She advised that residents from the Great Easthall Estate were required to cross Tonge Road to access Lansdowne School; it was a dangerous road which crossed into the national speed limit and she called for urgent improvements to the pedestrian route from Great Easthall across Tonge Road. She submitted a petition to the Chairman with 467 signatures from residents of Great Easthall which “called upon the Swale JTB to ensure that plans to provide a safe crossing on Tonge Road from Easton Drive to Peel Drive are carried out as a matter of urgency, with improvements to the approaching footpaths carried out at the same time. Both are provided for by the s.106 agreement with the developers for Great Easthall.”

Mr Andrew Lees spoke in relation to the proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in South Road, Faversham. He objected to the proposal for double yellow lines and requested that officers consider an alternative proposal to relax the parking restrictions further up South Road from 5pm to 10am, as the restrictions were currently pushing drivers further down the road to park. He also suggested the removal of permit parking in Tanners Street.

Mr Ozgur Ozel spoke in relation to the proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in Preston Street, Faversham. He explained that he owned a restaurant and take-away

business in Preston Street and the current waiting restrictions were having a severe adverse impact on his business. He referred to a petition signed by 220 people supporting the changes to the waiting restriction times and noted that Faversham Town Council supported the proposed changes.

Town Councillor Mick Gates from Faversham Town Council spoke in relation to the proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in Preston Street, Faversham. He reported that Faversham Town Council strongly supported the proposed changes to the waiting restriction times and that only one objection had been received. He considered that there were a number of well-established businesses in Preston Street and the Council needed to support local businesses and promote the local economy.

Mrs Helen Knell spoke in relation to the Eastchurch to Leysdown Cycle Route. She advised that she was a member of the Lower Road Campaign Group, supported by CTC the national cycling charity, which campaigned for safe cycle routes on Sheppey. She considered that the report from Sustrans was impressive and detailed, but she outlined proposals for an alternative, less ambitious plan which could be delivered within a reasonable timeframe and was less expensive. She outlined an alternative route from Warden Bay Road into Warden, Beach Approach, Thornhill Road, leading into Donkey Lane and linking to Warden Road and Plough Road north of Eastchurch. The proposal would require the surfacing of Donkey Lane, which could then be used as an alternative route for emergency services, but gated to prevent the road being used as a rat-run. She suggested that any financial savings could be used to provide safe cycle and pedestrian routes across other parts of Sheppey.

PART ONE - MINUTES FOR RECOMMENDATION TO KENT COUNTY COUNCIL'S CABINET

529 DRAFT SWALE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

The Strategic Transportation Planner, Kent County Council (KCC) Highways introduced the draft Swale Transportation Strategy, which had been produced to underpin the Swale Local Plan. She gave a short presentation outlining the themes of the strategy, infrastructure improvements, targets and share mode targets.

With regard to Mrs Capes' comments under Public Session, the Strategic Transportation Planner advised that a scheme to provide an improved crossing at Tonge Road was being designed which would include road surfacing and clearing out of the underpass. She undertook to request further information on the programme for this work and report back to Members.

- Strategic Transportation Planner

Members made the following comments in relation to Tonge Road: it was an important issue; needed a full report back to the next meeting on the wider transport issues to and from Lansdowne School; and it was an extremely dangerous road and a report to a future meeting should not preclude the urgency of the work or slow down the process.

Discussion ensued on the draft Swale Transportation Strategy and the following comments were made: it was important to move the Strategy on as it underpins the Local Plan but it was far too optimistic in some areas and not enough in others; the road infrastructure would be unable to cope with the provision in the Local Plan for development in north-west Sittingbourne; Junction 5 improvements were potentially five years away; Grovehurst Road junction needed urgent attention; the Strategy needed to be more ambitious for the Lower Road on Sheppey; Tunstall crossroads was of concern to local residents – could officers

comment?; disappointing report; the Board needed to have been more involved in developing the Strategy; data in the Strategy was out of date; need to consider increasing rail capacity and removing traffic from roads; no solutions being proposed to air quality issues; Strategy was seriously flawed; no mention was made of the Southern Relief Road; increase in traffic was certain; concern regarding the proposals for bus routes and bus priority measures and whether they were achievable; lack of parking strategy; no realistic achievements; no alternatives proposed for rural roads and horse-riders; needed to link bridle paths; not fit for purpose; essential to extend Northern Relief Road to motorway – must be in the plan; Swale Rail needed the same designation as the Medway Line as a Community Rail line – people should be encouraged onto the rail network; need to remove traffic lights at Lower Road and Barton Hill Drive; the Lower Road was undersized and unsatisfactory and needed to be brought up to A-Road standard; a cycle route on Sheppey had been promised years ago and there was European Union (EU) funding available for cycle routes; Strategy was not forward thinking; Swale would suffer and it would result in gridlocked roads; the Strategy was a wishlist; more consideration was needed for rural roads and car parking on rural developments; there was no alternative sustainable transport for the eastern end of Sheppey; more work needed to be done to address the Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration plans; this was a specific strategy that related to the Local Plan; and the Strategy had been previously considered at the Local Development Framework Panel.

The Strategic Transportation Planner advised that the Strategy was not intended to include all the desirable transport interventions across the Borough; it was intended to reflect the Local Plan proposals and to present affordable options based on possible developments. She explained that one of the constraints of the Local Plan was the need for viable developments to fund transport schemes.

The Planning Policy Manager explained the background to the Local Plan and the need to demonstrate that the proposals were viable and deliverable within the Plan's period. The Swale Transportation Strategy would form part of the evidence being submitted to the Inspector for adoption.

Following further discussion, Members of the Board felt unable to endorse the Strategy. Councillor Mike Whiting proposed that the comments raised by the Board be sent to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and the KCC Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee and that the Strategy be noted. This was seconded by the Chairman and upon being put to the vote this was agreed.

RECOMMENDED:

(1) That the comments raised by the Board be sent to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and the KCC Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee and that the Swale Transportation Strategy be noted.

PART TWO - MINUTES FOR RECOMMENDATION TO SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CABINET

530 AMENDMENTS TO WAITING RESTRICTIONS - SOUTH ROAD AND PRESTON STREET, FAVERSHAM

The Engineer introduced the report which provided a summary of informal consultation results with residents and formal consultees on proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in South Road and Preston Street, Faversham as reported to the Board in December 2014. He reported that he had received an email from Stagecoach, outside of the formal consultation period, which supported the proposal for double yellow lines in South Road and objected to the relaxation of waiting restriction times in Preston Street.

The recommendation in the report regarding South Road was agreed.

With regard to Preston Street, Members made the following comments: sympathise with the desire to support businesses but concerned that Preston Street was a major bus route – Stagecoach had objected; it would be unfair on the coachworks to amend the waiting restrictions as they needed to be able to access their driveway and move coaches on and off site; the coachworks had not responded to the consultation and could access their premises during the day; and it was a reasonable adjustment to the waiting restrictions.

RECOMMENDED:

(1) That further investigation be carried out on the proposed double yellow lines in South Road, Faversham.

(2) That the times of the single yellow lines in Preston Street, Faversham be changed from 8.30am to 6.30pm to 8.30am to 5.00pm.

PART THREE - MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

531 EASTCHURCH TO LEYSDOWN CYCLE ROUTE

The Board considered the report which introduced a study into the feasibility of constructing an off-road cycle link between Leysdown and Eastchurch, commissioned by Outreach Sheppey and undertaken by Sustrans in 2013.

The Board made the following comments: welcome the report; need to apply for EU monies for cycle routes through the Local Enterprise Partnerships; and could a report be produced responding to the comments made by Mrs Knell, on behalf of the Lower Road Campaign Group.

Councillor Pat Sandle requested a copy of the Sustrans report.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the report be noted.

532 HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME 2014/15

The Board considered the report which provided an update on the identified schemes approved for construction in 2014/15.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Highway Works Programme 2014/15 report be noted.

533 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

The Board noted the link to KCC's Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee meeting on 5 December 2014 and the Highway Drainage report.

534 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

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

Kent County Councillor Mike Baldock referred to the earlier request made by Kent County Councillor Andrew Bowles for a report on transport issues relating to Lansdowne School and seconded this proposal. Upon being put to the vote this was agreed.

590/03/12 – Councillor Pat Sandle requested an update on the School Safety Zone programme outside Eastchurch CE Primary School, as no response had been received from KCC officers to-date.

The District Manager undertook to request a response.

Sittingbourne Retail Park – A Member asked if funding had been identified?

The Strategic Transportation Planner confirmed that funding had been received from Morrisons and the design work was underway.

70/06/14 – Councillor Mike Baldock requested an update from officers. The Head of Service Delivery undertook to request a response from the Economy and Community Services Manager.

216/09/14 – The District Manager advised that the Transport Minister met with the MP and has agreed to request a review of the Sheppey Crossing.

392/12/14 – The Engineer confirmed that the proposed amendments to waiting restrictions in Belvedere Road, Faversham would be included within the next round of consultations and reported back to the next JTB meeting.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the progress report be noted.

(2) That a report be provided to the next JTB meeting on transport issues relating to Lansdowne School, Sittingbourne.

Chairman

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