
SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Monday, 7 March 2016 from 5.30 - 7.35 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Cameron Beart, Bryan Mulhern, Prescott, Ken Pugh, Ghlin Whelan and Mike Whiting (Chairman).

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

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Alan Blackburn (KCC Officer), Philippa Davies, Ian Grigor (KCC Officer), Jeff Kitson, Mike Knowles, Lyn Newton, Jill Read and Kirstie Williams (KCC Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Roger Clark, Mike Cosgrove, James Hunt, Mike Henderson, David Simmons and Ted Wilcox.

APOLOGIES: Councillor June Garrad and Parish Councillor Dave Austin.

561 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the evacuation procedure.

562 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 December 2015 (Minute Nos. 373 – 385) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to an amendment on the top of page 411, to read 'double yellow lines', rather than 'double yellow lanes', and to include Councillor Mike Whiting in the recorded vote for that item.

Parish Councillor Peter Macdonald reminded Members that he had requested that several roads in Minster be included within the Quiet Lanes scheme.

563 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Parish Councillor Peter Macdonald declared a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest on the 'Swale Rail Line between Sittingbourne and Sheerness-on-Sea' item reported in the Progress Update Item on page 132 of the report.

564 PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public who had registered to speak at the meeting. He advised that those items further down the agenda, where members of the public had registered to speak, would be brought forward.

Kent County Councillor Roger Truelove presented a petition to the Board from residents of Lime Grove, Sittingbourne. The petition was handed to the Seafront & Engineering Manager for a report to be submitted at the next meeting of the Board on 4 July 2016.

Mrs Amanda Russell gave a presentation as representative of the Faversham '20's Plenty' campaign group. She explained that she had a petition with 150 signatures so far, in support of 20 is plenty. Mrs Russell advised that 25% of the UK population lived in Boroughs where 20mph zones had been implemented or were about to be implemented. She outlined the cost implications and explained that 20mph was more popular after implementation, with 66% of drivers saying that 20mph was a good idea. Faversham Town Council and the Faversham Society supported 20 is plenty in Faversham. Mrs Russell reported that in September 2015, KCC had refused to fund the scheme as they considered it too expensive, and that Faversham had the wrong qualifying indicators for the scheme to go ahead. She outlined the crash statistics in Faversham; 140 incidents included two fatalities. Mrs Russell outlined how 20mph could benefit KCC and Faversham by creating safer streets and she provided data on the decrease in injuries as a result in slower speeds. Mrs Russell explained that a reduction in speed could significantly reduce the injuries on pedestrians and cyclists. She explained that having a 20mph limit also helped to encourage more walking and cycling, created cleaner streets and reduced pollution. Mrs Russell requested that a working group be set-up to examine how 20mph could be implemented throughout all residential streets in Faversham.

Members commented on the presentation as follows: support the reduction in the speed limit; this could be introduced Borough-wide, not just within Faversham; a working group should be set-up; by choosing to go Borough-wide, this could delay the implementation in Faversham; and maybe start in Faversham, then develop it further throughout the Borough.

Councillor Bryan Mulhern moved a motion to set up a working group. This was seconded by Kent County Councillor Harrison.

Kent County Councillor Mike Baldock moved an amendment that the working group first looked at a 20mph limit in Faversham, with a remit to then look Borough-wide. This was seconded by Councillor Bryan Mulhern. On being put to the vote the amendment was agreed.

Recommended:

- (1) That a working group be set-up to examine how a 20mph limit could be implemented in Faversham and then rolled-out Borough-wide.***

Mr Lynch spoke on Item 9 of the agenda, Fairview Road Area, Sittingbourne – Parking Review. He highlighted problems of safety, and of access, particularly to emergency vehicles, caused by commuter parking on both sides of the road.

Mrs Kelsy-Jansen did not speak on this item.

Mr Tim Stonor spoke on Item 11 of the agenda – A2/A251, Faversham – Junction Improvement Update. Mr Stonor acknowledged the need for improvement at the junction, but considered the roundabout option was not the right one. He explained that congestion was mainly at peak times, and the roundabout option did not allow for formal pedestrian crossing points or formal cycle lane provision. Mr Stonor considered the roundabout option to be expensive. He suggested banning the right-hand turn from the Mall to the A2 would generate issues of ‘rat-runs’ through other nearby streets. Mr Stonor suggested the matter should ‘go back to the drawing board’, that the speed limit be decreased to 20mph, involve the public with the design, and traffic lights should be considered at the junction.

Helen Knell, Chairman of Lower Road Campaign Group, spoke on Item 12 of the agenda – Lower Road, Isle of Sheppey, petition. Mrs Knell explained that safety on Lower Road was a major issue to anyone using the road. She explained that as a link to the eastern end of the Isle of Sheppey, it was essential that the road was fit for purpose. She was encouraged by the Local Growth Fund Bids that had been put forward for highway improvements along the Lower Road, including proposals for widening the road for pedestrians and cycle facilities. Mrs Knell asked that commitment be given to improve the road and make the modifications happen.

Mr Clive Eglinton, Managing Director, Chalkwell Garage and Coach Hire Ltd spoke on Item 7 of the agenda – Formal Objections – Traffic Regulation Order for Proposed Sittingbourne Market Re-location. Mr Eglinton explained that buses brought business to the High Street. He considered the present market was small, and that any change to the bus timetable on different days would be disruptive to passengers. He stated that the proposed transport hub, near to the station was too far from the High Street, and that buses needed to be accessible. Mr Eglinton considered the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was counter-productive.

565 VERGE AND FOOTWAY PARKING IN SWALE

This report provided an update of options and relative implications following the decision by Cabinet on 3 February 2016 that in view of the significant implications of changing the current byelaw to include footway parking, that the matter be referred back to the JTB for further consideration.

The Seafront and Engineering Manager reported that under Paragraph 2.4 in the report, the voting should have been recorded as being eight votes to five in favour of Swale’s current byelaw covering parking on grassed verges to be extended to include footway parking.

The Chairman moved the following motion: That the previous decision made by the Board be reversed, so there was not a Borough-wide ban on parking on footways, but that existing byelaws and enforcement powers be used to address specific issues. This was seconded by Councillor Cameron Beart.

Members made the following comments: parking issues like this were a common problem throughout the urban Wards in the Borough; people who parked consistently on footways should be targeted; if residents parked correctly, some roads would be impassable; enforcement was an issue; if parked totally on road, parking restrictions would be needed on the other side; could sensibly apply the

byelaw; enforcement was very labour intensive; and a line could be put on the footpath as a guide to where vehicles could park to still allow access for pedestrians, but this was an expensive option as it meant that footpaths had to be 'made up' to be able to cope with the additional weight of a vehicle.

Recommended:

- (1) That the previous decision made by the Board be reversed, so there was not a Borough-wide ban on parking on footways, but that existing byelaws and enforcement powers be used to address specific issues.**

566 FORMAL OBJECTIONS - TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO) FOR PROPOSED SITTINGBOURNE MARKET RE-LOCATION

This report provided a summary of formal objections received in relation to the recently advertised TRO to accommodate the proposed re-location of the Sittingbourne Market into the High Street.

The Economic and Community Services Manager reminded Members that this project had commenced in 2012, with informal consultation in 2013. It had originally been proposed that the market would be held in the entire length of the High Street, but this had been amended to relocate it to the upper part only, and this had also been consulted on. She explained that this was part of the wider vision for the regeneration of Sittingbourne.

Members made the following comments: consider that the alternative route for the buses was suitable; the success of the market would be a 'crowd puller'; the bus companies needed to be more flexible and be prepared to alter their routes/timetables, which the public would adapt to; amending bus routes was a protracted process; the whole of Sittingbourne transport routes needed to be looked at; some members of the public were not happy with the changes to the timetable; there were already alternative bus routes when the Saturday market was in place; and the market would increase the viability of the High Street.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration explained that the market re-location was part of the regeneration of Sittingbourne and he welcomed the move from its present location into the High Street, with synergy between the market traders and the shops in the High Street. He acknowledged the changes that the bus companies faced, but considered over time people would adapt. There was a need to be flexible and he considered the increased footfall generated by the change in location of the market could benefit the bus companies as well.

Recommended:

- (1) That the report be noted and the proposed Traffic Regulation Order be progressed.**

567 FORMAL OBJECTIONS - TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER AMENDMENT 17 (GRAYSHOTT CLOSE, SITTINGBOURNE AND CHURCH ROAD, EASTCHURCH)

This report provided a summary of formal objections received in relation to the recently advertised TRO Swale Amendment 17.

Recommended:

- (1) That the report be noted and the proposed Traffic Regulation Order be progressed.***

568 FAIRVIEW ROAD AREA, SITTINGBOURNE - PARKING REVIEW

Following an initial report submitted to the Joint Transportation Board in December 2015, this report provided a more detailed analysis of the recent informal consultation with residents and property owners in the Fairview Road, Lavender Court, Aubretia Walk, Heather Close and East Street areas in Sittingbourne.

In response to the comments made by Mr Lynch in the Public Session, the Seafront and Engineering Manager reported that he had contacted the Watch Manager at Sittingbourne Fire Station regarding access issues in this area for fire engines. He particularly highlighted the S-bend at Chilton Avenue/Fairview Road. Discussions with the Fire Service were ongoing, and the Seafront and Engineering Manager reported that there would be further consultation on this matter.

A Member supported the recommendations in the report and stated that a solution was needed to the parking problem. He acknowledged that residents were not keen to have a residents' parking scheme, and suggested that an alternative public car parking facility should be funded in the area which could help to address commuter parking. Another Member suggested that the vacant land next to East Street be looked at for a possible site for a car park.

Recommended:

- (1) That a Residents' Parking Scheme is not implemented in the Fairview Road area due to the percentages of support received.***
- (2) That officers continue to liaise with Kent Fire and Rescue and carry out further consultation with residents in the vicinity of any subsequent proposed restrictions in Fairview Road.***
- (3) That officers report the enforcement comments to the Parking Enforcement Team to ensure resource is committed when required.***

569 INFORMATION CONSULTATIONS ON PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS

This report provided a summary of informal consultation results with residents and statutory consultees on proposals to install waiting restrictions in Wildish Road, Faversham and The Street/Canterbury Road in Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk.

A Ward Member spoke of the local support for the proposed restrictions in Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk.

A Member spoke in support of the bus stand in Wildish Road.

Recommended:

- (1) That the comments from the consultation be taken back to the Swale Quality Bus Partnership for further discussion prior to implementing restrictions in Wildish Road, Faversham.**
- (2) That the proposed restrictions in The Street/Canterbury Road in Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk be progressed but with the amendments suggested by Kent County Council and subject to the agreement of both Parish Councils who are funding the works.**

570 A2/A251, FAVERSHAM - JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

The Project Manager (Schemes Planning and Delivery, Highways, Transportation & Waste) drew Members' attention to the tabled report for this item which outlined the costs of the diversion of utilities in the area. Negotiations were ongoing and the project was now on hold pending the outcome of negotiations with the utility companies.

A Member spoke in support of the traffic light option and explained that this option enabled the implementation of pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes. Another Member questioned the costs for moving utilities if traffic lights were installed, rather than a roundabout. Another Member explained that the Perry Court planning application could have an impact on the junction.

Recommended:

- (1) That the tabled report be noted.**

571 LOWER ROAD, ISLE OF SHEPPEY, PETITION

This report provided an update following the receipt of a petition from the Lower Road Campaign Group, and proposals for Lower Road/Barton Hill Drive.

A Member paid tribute to Mrs Knell and the campaign for their commitment.

Members made the following comments: this road was dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists; the report's response was not substantial, would like to see a more positive response to the issue; improvements to the road were required; there were other funding bids that could be used; this was long overdue, safe cycle routes were needed; this road was designated as an 'A' road, but it did not meet the minimum standards; and cycling routes should be included as part of the Transport Plan/Local Plan.

The Chairman suggested that the Cycling Strategy be brought to a future JTB meeting.

Resolved:

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

572 SWALE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

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

Members went through the report and the following comments and responses were made:

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The District Manager confirmed that there would be a further site meeting at Dawes Road, Dunkirk, and that works on Park Road, Sittingbourne would take place overnight on 13/14 April 2016.

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The District Manager advised that he was aware of the issues at Stickfast Lane, Bobbing and confirmed that no KCC funding had been used.

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A Member confirmed that negotiations were ongoing for the release of land to create a new footway at Highsted Road, Sittingbourne.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the tabled papers that provided an update on LED street lighting, and HGV parking.

Resolved:

(1) That the report and tabled papers be noted.

573 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

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

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

574 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT RESPONSE TO THE CLOSURE OF THE A249

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the Department of Transport response to the closure of the A249.

During discussion of the item, the Chairman advised that Southern Water were attending the Sheppey Local Engagement Forum on Tuesday 8 March 2016.

Resolved:

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

Chairman

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