

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on 11th March 2008 commencing at 7.05 p.m.

Present: Chairman: Cllr. London

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Lake

District Councillors: Coates, Mrs. Davison, Mrs. Dawson, Dibsall, Underwood and Williamson.

County Councillors: Messrs. Brazier, Chard, Fittock, Gough, London and Parry.

There were no apologies for absence.

Officers: Mr. Ash (KCC), Mr. Burton (KCC), Mr. Connor (SDC), Mr. Dines (KCC), Mrs. Hamlin-Hawes, Mr. Jiwaji (KCC) and Mr. Wilson (SDC).

Cllrs. Brookbank, Loney, Ryan, Waller and Walshe, two Parish Councillors and eight members of the public were also present.

638. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

639. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in respect of any matter discussed or voted on during the meeting.

640. **MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman went through the Action Points from the minutes of the previous meeting and the following items were commented on or remained outstanding:

Action 2 (12.12.07) Kent Highways Services (KHS) to inform Mrs. Walmsley of the date of the box junction implementation at A25/Worships Hill, Riverhead. *Post meeting note: The yellow box at the Witches Lane junction with A25 Worships Hill had been installed by 18th December 2007.*

ACTION 1 Officers to confirm if the yellow box at the junction of Witches Lane and the A25 had been installed as stated in the minutes (12.012.07).

Action 3 (12.12.07) KHS Officers to meet with Hever Parish Council in relation to possible traffic management measures for Five Fields Lane, Hever. *The Board were advised that the results of surveys were expected shortly and the results would be discussed with the Parish Council and reported to the June meeting of the Board.*

ACTION 2 A report on the results of the traffic survey carried out in the Four Elms area and Five Fields Lane be included on the agenda for the June meeting of the Board.

Action 5 (12.12.07) Cllr. Williamson to ask Halstead Primary School (SEV 3 – 06/07 Otford Lane, Footway Extension, Halstead refers) to respond to the letter from KHS as a matter of urgency. *Cllr. Williamson said that the Chairman of the Board of Governors' had responded to the letter and had heard nothing further. Mr. Burton asked that a copy of that letter be sent to him direct and he would pursue the matter.*

Action 7 (12.12.07) Mr. Fitzgerald to vigorously pursue the matter of the unfinished work regarding the interactive speed sign at Ash Road, Hartley (SEV 12 07/08) with Jacobs. Mr Moreton to pursue the same issue with EDF. Both Officers to report back to the Chairman of the Board and Mr. Brazier. *Mr. Brazier informed the Board that the speed sign was still inoperative. It was suggested that this might have been due to a failure in the electrical supply to the column.*

Action 8 (12.12.07) Mr. Fitzgerald to pursue the installation of dropped kerbs for wheelchair users between Newports and Broadway in Crockenhill and report back to Cllr. Dibsall. *The Board was informed that this work would be carried out in the 2009/10 period. Cllr. Dibsall and Messrs. Gough and Lake were dismayed that this would not be completed earlier than this date and requested that it be moved to the top of the priority list.*

Action 10 (12.12.07) Mr. Fitzgerald to ask that Mr. Munn contact Otford Parish Council in relation to footpath 49. *A report had been received by Officers who were hopeful that consultation with the Parish Council would begin in April 2008. It was agreed that a report on the outcome of the consultation be considered at the June meeting of the Board.*

Action 11 (12.12.07) – Mr. Dines undertook to resend an invitation to a PIPKIN demo to Members and Officers. *The Board was informed that a demonstration of the system had taken place at the Stakis Hotel in Maidstone and Chairmen of Joint Boards from across the County had attended. Members discussed how they might wish to receive the same, and it was agreed that a copy of the Powerpoint presentation would be circulated to all Members of the Board. A Question and Answer session would be included on the agenda for the meeting in June.*

641. SEAL HOLLOW ROAD, SEVENOAKS – PETITION FOR SPEED REDUCTION MEASURES RECEIVED (REPORT NO. 4 – 11.03.08)

A petition had been received from local residents who were concerned about the general safety of vehicle and pedestrian movements on Seal Hollow Road.

The Chairman invited Ms. Baker to speak on behalf of the petitioners, who outlined the points of concern such as the speed that vehicles travelled, and the poor visibility for pedestrians crossing, particularly from the 'hole in the wall' of the Knole Estate. The petitioners had made a number of suggestions for improvements such as speed indicator signs, exclusion of HGV's or a reduction of the speed limit. To emphasise her concern, Miss Baker circulated photographs of a recent vehicular accident involving a van and a HGV.

Mrs. Meakins, a fellow petitioner, added that in order to cross from 'the hole in the wall', pedestrians had to listen for vehicles as the poor visibility and speed at which vehicles travelled along this stretch meant that safe passage could not be judged by sight alone.

Cllr. Walshe, speaking as a local Member, supported the views put forward by Miss Baker and Mrs. Meakins. He considered that the current signs were inadequate and should indicate that the road was narrow and possibly unsuitable for large vehicles. Furthermore, he suggested that the white dividing line be strengthened at the narrowest point.

Mr. London divided the road into three sections. The first section ran adjacent to the Vine to the start of the narrow section alongside the hole in the wall. The second from the hole in the wall to the intersection with Sevenoaks (Knole?) Golf Club, and the third from the Golf Club to the traffic lights at the intersection with the A25. Mr. London outlined the difficulty crossing from the hole in the wall and the need for a crossing near traffic lights with the A25 for pupils crossing to Wildernesse School.

Cllr. Coates asked if data was available on the number of times that the Speed Camera Partnership had sited a mobile unit on the road as, in his experience, it was not a frequent occurrence.

Mr. Chard believed that the road had been used more as a cut through by lorries and agreed that speeding was a problem. Mr. Chard had seen mobile speed-check units at the site.

Mr. Brazier concurred with the opinion of the previous speakers and added that he found the section along the hole-in-the-wall particularly intimidating due to the tunnelling effect of the road and the speed of oncoming vehicles.

Cllr. Mrs. Davison suggested that traffic signals might be installed at the start and end of the walled section.

Cllr. Dibsall suggested narrowing the road by installing passing priority points.

Cllr. Mrs Dawson asked that, if it was agreed that the footpath along the wall be moved inside Knole Estate, a surface suitable for buggies, wheelchairs and pedestrians be used.

Mr. Parry agreed with the majority of the suggestions put forward, but felt that the strengthening of white lines and the installation of a rumble strip to indicate to drivers that they were crossing the middle way of the road might be a suitable solution to reduce speed.

ACTION 3 Officers were asked to investigate possible remedial action to improve the safety of pedestrians and vehicles travelling along Seal Hollow Road and in due course, report back to the Board.

The Chairman thanked the petitioners for bringing this issue to the attention of the Board and everyone who had contributed to the debate.

Recommendation: That Officers investigate possible actions to reduce speed and improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles on Seal Hollow Road; and

(b) that a report on the proposed speed reduction measures return to a future meeting of the Board.

642. THE WORK OF THE MEMBER/OFFICER AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP

The notes of the Group meeting held on 4th March were tabled at the start of the meeting, and the Chairman had agreed to consider the suggestion put forward by the Group that:

‘A scheme to make alterations to the west to east leg of the junction on Bradbourne Vale Road to help reduce the current eastwards peak flow which stacks at the lights and impedes the traffic flowing straight ahead and turning right.’

It was noted that the proposal had scored well under PIPKIN and it was hoped that the work could be included in the 2008/09 Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme. The scheme was a ‘quick win’ solution to improve air quality at the junction by improving traffic flow.

The Board considered the proposals and agreed that if the 2008/09 LTP programme of works had not been finalised, the above suggestion would be considered.

ACTION 4 That the proposed alterations to the west to east leg of the Bradbourne Vale Road/Bat and Ball junction be submitted for consideration in the 2008/09 LTP as a scheme to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in this area..

643. THE ROADWORKS CO-ORDINATOR (AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Burton explained that as a result of the ongoing reorganisation of Kent Highways Services, the position of a full-time Road Works Co-ordinator had been vacant for some time. Interviews had taken place. However no suitable candidates had been found.

Mr. Burton said that no major works had been requested for Sevenoaks Town in the coming three months, and he was hopeful that by June 2008 a designated co-ordinator would be in place.

Looking toward the future, the Traffic Management Act required the Highway Authority to provide utility companies with a window in which to carry out work. It was anticipated that utility companies might rush to complete all works before such regulations came into force (end of 2008 or early 2009).

On the advice of the Chamber of Commerce, replacement of the pavement in the High Street and subsequent road closures, might be delayed until August 2008 to minimise disruption to the Traders.

Members asked for a minimum three weeks’ notice of road closures to allow time for alternative routes to be put forward for consideration. It was explained that this

currently would not be possible due to the quick turnaround required for authorisation following receipt of the notice and work commencing (six weeks).

Officers were reminded of the importance of notifying the Parish and Town Councils and the District and County Councillors of road closures.

644. A25/WORSHIPS HILL, RIVERHEAD, TRAFFIC CALMING – RESULTS OF SURVEYS (VERBAL REPORT NO. 6 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Jiwaji gave a verbal update on the progress gained.

The Traffic Survey had indicated:

- That 17,500 vehicles travelled along the stretch between Bessels Green and the Riverhead roundabout on the 21st November 2008 (50/50 split).
- That the speed at which vehicles travelled along the road was within 30-35 miles per hour.
- That visibility was poor when exiting from junctions along the route onto the A25.

Recommendations arising from the report included widening the footpath and relocating the pedestrian crossing at the Riverhead roundabout.

ACTION 5 That a report on the findings of the Traffic Survey carried out on the stretch of the A25 between Bessels Green and the Riverhead roundabout return to the June 2008 meeting of the Board.

Mrs. Walsmley, believed that vehicles travelled in excess of the 35 miles per hour and said that Riverhead Parish Council had offered funding for the provision of an interactive sign.

Mr. Parry supported the opinion of Mrs. Walsmley and asked that full consideration be given to all possible solutions before the pedestrian crossing in Riverhead was moved but urged the Officers to expedite work to improve safety along the stretch of road.

Mr. Dines said that the results of the survey carried out from Bessels Green to Riverhead had highlighted some concerns and that the stretch from Bessels Green to Westerham would be surveyed in the first quarter of 2008/9.

The timescale for completion would depend on the scope of the work to be carried out. It was envisaged that minor work could be included in the 08/09 maintenance budget, however more major work, such as the widening of the footway, may need to be considered in the 09/10 programme of works.

645. REQUEST FOR A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IN CHILDSBRIDGE LANE, KEMSING – OUTLINE SCHEME (REPORT NO. 7 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Jiwaji outlined the background to the request for a pedestrian crossing in

Childsbridge Lane. He drew Members' attention to a typographical error in the report and noted that the cost for the installation of the crossing should read £30 – 35,000 and it was anticipated that work commence in 2009/10 .

ACTION 6 Officers to report the PIPKIN score for the project to install a crossing in the south side of Childsbridge Lane to the Board.

The petitioner, Mrs. Boulind, and the Parish Council were in favour of the proposed crossing in the location identified as the south side of Childsbridge Lane. Mr. Chard urged Officers to progress from an outline design to a full design in the event that funding could be secured for the works in the 2008/09 period.

Officers were reluctant to progress the scheme until funding had been secured as the additional pressure on resources at the current time would mean that progress on other projects would be delayed.

ACTION 7 Mr. Chard to speak with the County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, Mr. Ferrin and attempt to secure funding for the project.

646. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ACT 2004 PART 6 (REPORT NO. 8 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Connor outlined to the Board the content of the report and the implications arising from the change in legislation relating to parking enforcement.

The main changes were highlighted to the Board and the following comments were noted:

- Parking Attendants would become known as Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs)
- Differential penalties would apply depending upon the seriousness of the parking contravention, which will be designated as higher or lower level. This would have a negative financial impact on the income received by the Council of approximately 26% on Band 1 contraventions and 9% on Band 2.
- Kent Parking Group comprised Officers from the District and County Council's.

647. CIRCULAR ROADS 1/2006 SETTING LOCAL SPEED LIMITS (UPDATE)
(REPORT NO. 9 – 11.03.08)

Further to the meeting of the Board (12.12.07), the report explained that the exercise underway in the south of Maidstone, whereby the speed of vehicles travelling on twelve roads and some 'A' and 'B', had been monitored for a period of time. The aim of the exercise was to provide a consistent standard for speed limits across the country. The results of the exercise indicated a need to change 27% of the existing speed limits, along with improvements to speed indicator signs. Detailed designs and full consultation of the demonstration area would take place in the 08/09 financial year with implementation of the demonstration area in 2009/10.

The work indicated that the County should be split into three areas on a rolling programme to be completed in 2012/13. Work would commence in Mid Kent and there may be some significant time before the scheme would be rolled out in Sevenoaks District.

Cllr. Mrs. Davison commented that it appeared a long time to wait until changes would be made to the District and asked what could be done to speed up the process.

Mr. Dines suggested that email communication to the County Transport Manager (the author of the report) which highlighted the serious nature of the subject and the disparity of the speed limits applied by Kent and neighbouring Surrey and Sussex authorities may progress work for the District.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

648. KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES – THE DIRECTORS UPDATE (REPORT NO. 10 – 13.03.08)

The generic report looked back at the work of the Highways Unit in the previous twelve months and highlighted some of the achievements made by the staff of Kent County Council, Ringway, Jacobs and TSUK. It was noted that staff from across the alliance had been involved in an organisational review for well over a year and still delivered some significant, innovative improvements to service delivery and kept pace with challenging performance targets.

Mr. Burton gave a verbal update of the situation facing the West Kent Unit:

- Community Operations (reactive/planned repairs) would be overseen by Mr. David Aspinall and there were no day-to-day changes to the current service provision.
- Technical Services (streets/drainage/structures) had a number of vacancies to fill.
- Countrywide Improvements (programmed works and the LTP) would lose responsibility for drainage which would move to Technical Services.
- Mr. Ray Dines would be replaced by Mr. Alan Ash as the Manager of Transport and Development for the Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells areas.
- Network Management (including Roadworks co-ordination) would be headed up by Mr. David Latham. There were a number of vacancies in this service area.
- Mrs. Sue Ireland would continue to be Members' sole day-to-day point of contact with officers at Kent Highway Services

The Chairman congratulated the Authority for the recent award of 'Transport Authority of the Year'.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

649. FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2008/09 (REPORT NO. 11 – 11.03.08)

The Board noted the proposed revised fees and charges for 2008/09 in respect of a wide range of services provided by Kent Highway Services including the siting of skips and scaffolding, road safety (Cyclist training and National Driver Improvement Scheme) and Developer Funded Highway Schemes.

650. PROGRESS ON HIGHWAYS WORKS PROGRAMME 2007/08 (REPORT NO. 12 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Burton outlined the content of the report and drew Members' attention to changes to the status of the following works:

- SEV 2 Hartfield Road, Cowden – KHS are attempting to acquire land to improve visibility in Blowers Hill at the junction with Hartfield Road.

SEV 11 Main Road Sundridge – “current progress” stated that the visibility improvements from Dryhill Lane were not to be pursued when in fact, KHS are to meet with local Members to seek a resolution.

Hildenborough Road, Leigh – work on the new footway had been postponed following issues over ownership of the land and KHS were in negotiations with the landowner.

The Board went through the report and appendices page by page and the following points were noted:

- Mr. Chard asked for an update on the proposed safety improvements on Childsbridge Lane, Seal (12.06.07). Mr. Dines explained that the design that had been put forward by Officers had failed the safety audit and the re-design would be sent to the Parish Council for consideration before any work could be carried out.
- Cllr. Williamson stated that the works proposed for Otford Lane, Halstead remain on the programme due to the errant communication between KHS and the Halstead Place School.
- Mr. Gough was concerned that the PIPKIN score applied to the proposed footway at Station Road, Shoreham had failed to gain sufficient priority to attract funding for 2008/09. He asked if Officers were unable to source alternate means of funding the project, the work would ‘drop off’ the programme. Mr. Dines explained that works that failed to meet the programme for the year in hand were most likely to be carried over to the next financial period. Mr. Burton confirmed that Officers were seeking alternate funding for this project via other County Council budgets (e.g. public rights of way development)
- SEV 1 – Cllr. Mrs. Davison recounted how Mr. Cook from KHS received a cheer at a recent the meeting of the Edenbridge Town Council in recognition and thanks for the high quality of the work that had been carried out in the High Street.

- Cllr. Dibsall asked when the signage on the bridge in Eynsford would be improved. Mr. Burton confirmed that works had been ordered, but he was unable to give a precise date for it to be carried out.

ACTION 8 Mr. Burton to confirm to the Board when the improved signage would be installed in Eynsford.

- Mr. Burton said that there was uncertainty regarding funding for flood remedial repair works in the next financial period. He confirmed that the work on the sites in Kemsing and Springcroft, Hartley would be carried out. However, he could not give a guarantee that work would be carried out in Crockehill.

651. REPRESENTATIVE FROM EDF ENERGY (AGENDA ITEM NO. 13 – 11.03.08)

Mr. Burton explained to the Board that despite repeated requests, EDF Energy had failed to put forward a representative to attend the meeting.

EDF Energy are the Government appointed providers of energy to householders and streetlights. Unlike householders, the energy supplied to streetlights was a non-metered service and as such the Electricity Regulator (OFGEN) allows EDF to treat service defects as a lower priority.

The Council was not alone in their experience of the service they received and Mr. Ferrin (County Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste) had engaged in high-level meetings with EDF to highlight the concerns.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.20 P.M.

Chairman

