

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2018

Present: Councillor D Burton (Chairman) and Councillors Bird, Carter, Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cooper, Cuming, Daley, Hastie, Hotson, Perry, Prendergast, Springett, Mrs Stockell, Willis and Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Adkinson, Barned, M Burton, Harper and Spooner

32. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies were received from Councillors Brown, Garten, T Sams and Wilby.

It was noted that apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Carter.

33. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Perry was substituting for Councillor Garten.

34. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman informed the Board that he had accepted an urgent update relating to Agenda Item 17 – A274 Sutton Road, as it contained additional information which was supplied after the publication deadline.

35. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

The following Visiting Members were noted:

- Councillor Adkinson attended the meeting to present a Petition relating to Gatland Lane and indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 13 – Reference from Planning Committee- 17/502072 – Land South of Forstal Lane, Coxheath, Kent and Agenda Item 16 – Gatland Lane, Maidstone;
- Councillor Barned indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 17 – A274 Sutton Road Maidstone;
- Councillor M Burton indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 17 – A274 Sutton Road Maidstone;
- Councillor Harper attended the meeting to present a Petition relating to Gatland Lane and indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 13 – Reference from Planning Committee- 17/502072 – Land

South of Forstal Lane, Coxheath, Kent and Agenda Item 16 –
Gatland Lane, Maidstone; and

- Councillor Spooner was in attendance as an observer.

36. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

37. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All Members stated that they had been lobbied on Agenda Item 17 – A274 Sutton Road Maidstone.

Councillors D Burton, Prendergast and Springett stated that they had been lobbied on the question which was to be asked about Detling Aerodrome Approach.

Councillor Carter stated that he had been lobbied on Agenda Item 15 – B2246 Hermitage Lane.

38. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

39. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

40. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Chairman informed the Board that he had relaxed the restriction that no more than three petitions should be presented at a meeting. This was because three of the petitions related to A274 Sutton Road/Willington Street Improvements.

- A) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We object to the plans to install double yellow lines in Gatland Lane, we want to see single yellow lines operating Monday to Friday 8am to 10am and 2pm to 5pm. This will enable residents and their visitors to park freely at weekends and out of school drop off times.

It was noted that the Chairman had agreed to waive the requirement for the wording of a petition to be given in writing at least two weeks before the day of the meeting. The Chairman also agreed to waive the requirement that the petition must contain 100 signatures from within the Borough.

Councillor Harper presented the petition to the Board and it was noted that he was pleased to see that Officers had recommended that the double yellow lines be replaced with single yellow lines with no waiting between 8am – 10am and 2pm – 5pm.

RESOLVED: That this petition be taken in conjunction with Agenda Item 16 – Gatland Lane Maidstone.

- B) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We the residents of Sutton Road have learned to our dismay of the planned works in front of our properties.

These planned works will have a dramatic effect on our lives as the road will be that much closer to our homes. This will lead to noise and, more importantly, pollution. Some residents have health problems, i.e. asthma, and this will have a massive impact on their lives. We have a right, before you commence the works, to be consulted on this major concern. What protection are you going to give us from the noise and pollution?

It was noted that the Chairman had agreed to waive the requirement for the wording of a petition to be given in writing at least two weeks before the day of the meeting. The Chairman also agreed to waive the requirement that the petition must contain 100 signatures from within the Borough.

- C) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We do not want the Sutton Rd traffic "improvements" to go ahead, turning four lanes into six lanes. We do not want all the old trees + shrubs removed all the way from Bell Meadow to the cemetery. This will cause more pollution, more noise and de-value our homes and we would still have bottlenecks where the road would have to return to four lanes. Our best protection from the pollution and noise is the trees!

It was noted that the Chairman had agreed to waive the requirement for the wording of a petition to be given in writing at least two weeks before the day of the meeting.

- D) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

A274 Sutton Road/Willington Street Improvement Scheme

Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council are proposing to widen the A274 Sutton Road junction with Willington Street into six lanes, beginning in February 2018 by destroying mature Prunus cherry trees in Bell Meadow and mature trees/hedges along the

Sutton Road, which screen properties and soak up emissions from passing traffic. These trees are also one of the few pleasant and welcoming sights to people entering the County Town through this increasingly built-up southern corridor.

We the undersigned believe that the current design is far too drastic, and that any minimal gains will not outweigh the destruction. Improvements could be made by using other, cheaper and less disruptive, methods. Compared with a number of other junctions, such as at the Wheatsheaf and the other end of Willington Street, any problems at this junction are relatively trivial and there is only a very limited period where traffic might, occasionally, need to wait for more than one change of traffic lights. Increasing the throughput through this junction, because it appears to be the only one with scope to do anything, can only exacerbate the more serious congestion problems at Morrison's, the Wheatsheaf and the Ashford Road/Willington Street junction.

We therefore call upon Kent Highways to:

- 1. Ask Mr Wilkin and the other officers involved to read in full the Forestry Commission's Report "The Case for Trees", about the importance of trees in an urban environment - [https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-casefortrees.pdf/\\$file/eng-casefortrees.pdf](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/eng-casefortrees.pdf/$file/eng-casefortrees.pdf) - before putting any part of this scheme in its present form into action, so that they understand the true value of these trees;*
- 2. Give residents a firm assurance that no trees will be felled before we have had a proper consultation and all other options have been considered and agreed, including -*
 - a. Giving traffic coming from Maidstone and turning left into Willington Street a slightly longer dedicated lane with its own traffic light filter, as originally planned, widening the road up to the hedge - which was planted some years ago for that specific purpose; and*
 - b. Creating a filter lane from Sutton Road into the Wallis Avenue industrial estate so that traffic going southwards doesn't have to queue behind vehicles waiting for a gap in oncoming traffic in order to turn right into that road;*
- 3. Ensure that adequate measures to eliminate pollution and traffic noise will be put in place;*
- 4. Make publicly available all measurements of current noise and pollution levels, and also the results of the traffic surveys - i.e. traffic flow at all times of the day and night, times, facts, figures, evidence - on which the business case for this scheme is based;*

5. *Give the residents of Bell Meadow and Sutton Road a proper consultation on these and other measures before January 2018, as we are aware that the trees are due to be destroyed in February 2018; and*
6. *Include in any public consultation and on both council websites information about how affected residents can apply for compensation, reduction in council tax and other mitigating measures for the loss of value in our homes and quality of life if the proposed scheme still goes ahead and we do lose our trees."*

It was noted that the Chairman had agreed to waive the requirement for the wording of a petition to be given in writing at least two weeks before the day of the meeting.

Mr Richard Weeks presented petitions B, C and D to the Board, which all related to A274 Sutton Road/Willington Street Improvements.

Mr Weeks raised the following concerns:

- Residents had not been properly consulted on the scheme;
- Thirteen mature cherry trees, along with a hedge, a verge and 17 further large trees were to be felled;
- Reducing congestion at the A274 Sutton Road/Willington Street junction would make congestion even worse at pinch points further along; and
- This scheme had no support from local residents.

Mr Weeks stated that residents would prefer no scheme at all, but if something needed to be done then it needed to be on a smaller scale and the land and the trees had to be retained.

RESOLVED: That these petitions be taken in conjunction with Agenda Item 17 – A274 Sutton Road Maidstone.

41. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Lyle Cathcart asked the following question of the Chairman of the Board, on behalf of Stockbury and Thurnham Parish Councils:

Aerodrome Approach, Detling – this is the road off the A249 which serves the entrance to the Detling Aerodrome Industrial Estate and to Bimbury Lane which leads to villages of Stockbury and Hartlip and I have forwarded outline information and photographs to all members of this Board.

Parking along Aerodrome Approach has been a problem since 1982 and Kent CC and Maidstone BC have taken progressive piecemeal measures over the years to address the parking, associated environmental and

unsociable behaviour problems with infrastructure measures and finally Double Yellow Lines being introduced in 2010 to all but approximately 120 metres.

The absence of the completion of this section of DYLS is now a serious safety hazard with vehicles parking on a two way traffic blind bend especially at night when HGVs are parking without the required legal lighting. Recent visits by MBC Parking Enforcement has lessened but not cured the parking on the established DYLS but has increased the parking on the section without the agreed DYLS.

When will these outstanding DYLS be completed, as previously agreed at meetings with the authorities, to ensure the future safety along this road?

The Chairman of the Board replied that:

Thank you for your question.

Aerodrome Approach, Detling is regularly patrolled by Maidstone Borough Council's Civil Enforcement Officers and action is taken against any vehicle observed as parked on active restrictions. Enforcement action has had some positive impact, however a number of vehicles have elected to migrate to uncontrolled areas of the highway further along Aerodrome Approach. Patrols will continue in an effort to reduce levels of inconsiderate parking on the yellow line restrictions.

Unfortunately Civil Parking Enforcement powers do not extend to areas of highway where no traffic order or line marking exists to manage driver behaviour.

Kent County Council are aware of the lorry parking issues with Aerodrome Approach, Detling and will look at progressing a Traffic Regulation Order and installing additional double yellow lines after April 2018 when funding becomes available.

42. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Board considered the 2017/18 Work Programme.

Councillor Willis requested that an item be added to the Board's Work Programme to consider Rail Services, such as Thameslink and the South Eastern Rail Franchise. The Chairman agreed to consider the items alongside the Vice-Chairman at a future agenda setting meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board Work Programme 2017/18 be noted.

43. REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE - 17/502072 - LAND SOUTH OF FORSTAL LANE, COXHEATH, KENT

The Board considered the Reference from Planning Committee relating to Land South of Forstal Lane, Coxheath, Kent.

RESOLVED: That an item be included in the Board's Work Programme to monitor, after 50% occupation, the effectiveness of the measures put in place in order to prevent a right turn from the above development into Forstal Lane towards Well Street and whether changes need to be made and/or a Traffic Regulation Order introduced.

44. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - BRIDGES GYRATORY SYSTEM

The Board considered the Reference from Council relating to the Bridges Gyratory System.

Councillor Harper addressed the Board on this item.

It was noted the Board already had an item on the Work Programme to review the Bridges Gyratory System and therefore the points raised within the motion would be included in the review.

The Chairman agreed to include an item on the Work Programme of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee in order to address the issue of outstanding works, such as the Broadway subway which was still under repair.

It was noted that Members of the Board raised further issues which they would like incorporated into the Review:

- Councillor Bird stated that consideration should be given to increasing the size of the refuge in the middle of Bishops Way.
- Councillor Clark stated that he had provided Officers with feedback regarding the safety of the Gyratory System and asked that it be considered.
- Councillor Daley stated that the no entry signs to prevent vehicles from entering the one way carriageway were too small.

RESOLVED: That this Board considers the motion relating to the Bridges Gyratory System when reviewing the performance of the System later in the year.

45. PETITION REPORT - PLATTS HEATH SAFE TRANSPORT SCHEME

Mr Jamie Watson, KCC's Senior Schemes Programme Manager, updated the Board on the Platts Heath petition.

It was highlighted to the Board that KCC had met with the lead petitioner, Lenham Parish Council and Boughton Malherbe Parish Council to discuss the issues that were raised within the petition. Following this meeting it was agreed that the Parish Councils would produce a Highway Improvement Plan, to list their concerns in priority order so that KCC

Officers could investigate and agree an action plan with the Parish Councils. To date, KCC had not received the Highway Improvement Plan.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Note: Councillor Carter arrived at 5.46 p.m. during consideration of this item.

46. PETITION REPORT - B2246 HERMITAGE LANE

Mr Brendan Wright, KCC's Principal Transport and Development Planner, presented this item to the Board.

It was highlighted to the Board that this report was in response to a petition which was presented in October 2017 and had four specific requests.

It was noted that since the publication of the agenda, the B2246 had been declared a high priority route by the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee and therefore would form part of the Kent Lane Rental Scheme.

Mr Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager, informed the Board that recent modelling work had been undertaken which confirmed that the air quality did not exceed the national air quality objective.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

47. GATLAND LANE, MAIDSTONE

Mr Jamie Watson, KCC's Senior Schemes Programme Manager, presented this item to the Board.

Councillor Harper addressed the Board on this item.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr Watson replied that in order to extend single yellow lines further south west down Gatland Lane Officers would have to reconsult.

RESOLVED: That the Board support the following:

- Existing double yellow line corner protection at:
 - Ridgway, junction with Gatland Lane
 - Chamberlain Avenue, junction with Gatland Lane
 - Burghclere Drive, junction with Gatland Lane
 - The Gatland Lane vehicle entrance to Jubilee Primary School
- The implementation of a single yellow line parking restriction, outside numbers 21 to 29 Gatland Lane, with 'no waiting' from 0800 to 1000 and 1400 to 1700 hours Monday to Friday only (as

depicted in Appendix 1 drawing reference Maidstone JTB IG.01) to replace the double yellow lines marked on the ground.

- The implementation of 'School Keep Clear' road markings outside Gatland House (as depicted in Appendix 2 drawing reference Maidstone JTB IG.02).

Voting: Unanimous

48. A274 SUTTON ROAD MAIDSTONE

Mr Russell Boorman, KCC's Major Capital Programme Manager, presented this item to the Board.

Mr Russell Fitzpatrick, Planning Lawyer, Mr Rob Jarman, the Head of Planning and Development and Mr Mark Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager addressed the Board on this item.

It was noted that Councillors Barned and M Burton, Mr Alex Geeves and Mr Brian Smith-Lowther addressed the Board in objection to the recommended scheme.

The Chairman reminded Members about the urgent update which had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

It was highlighted to the Board that:

- In October 2015, the Board agreed to progress work at this junction as part of the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package.
- In March 2016, approval was given by the KCC Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to deliver the junction improvement at both ends of Willington Street.
- The layout that received the Key Decision in March 2016 also required the removal of highway vegetation (which included cherry trees) to accommodate the widening of the southern side of the A274 fronting onto Bell Meadow. However, during the development of this scheme the initial layout of the junction was found to reach saturation point in the first year after construction, i.e. it would be operating beyond full capacity. Therefore a re-design was necessary to ensure that the scheme delivered the required benefits, which were to increase capacity and reduce congestion.
- The first public engagement event was held on 18 August 2017 and it provided Officers with four common areas of concern, which were that:
 - The scheme may not achieve the benefits that it set out to do;
 - The scheme would impact the vegetation fronting Bell Meadow and Sutton Roads service roads;

- The scheme may increase noise and air pollution; and that
- The scheme could result in devaluation of property.
- A further engagement event was held on 1 December 2017 to share the proposed mitigation measures and welcome further feedback.
- Extensive design work was undertaken following public engagement with a view to addressing the concerns whilst still demonstrating a value for money scheme.
- The urgent update provided information on bus prioritisation. It had been demonstrated that this system would not have a detrimental effect to the travelling public and could benefit those travelling in close proximity to the bus.

It was noted that the Board raised the following concerns regarding the scheme:

- There were a large number of objections from local residents;
- The scheme seemed out of proportion compared with the amount of congestion at the junction;
- The scheme would exacerbate bottlenecks further down the road and would therefore impact on air quality there; and that
- The scheme did not deal with problem of traffic turning into Willington Street from Wallis Avenue, whereby road users are blocked by the filter to turn right.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr Boorman replied that:

- The scheme would work with and without the bus prioritisation in place.
- A smaller scheme would not be feasible as it would not provide the benefits that were required.

RESOLVED: That the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board recommends this scheme be not accepted as currently proposed and recommends that Kent County Council be asked to amend the scheme to a smaller scale, retaining the grass verges and trees whilst paying more attention to local pinch points. It is inherent that some of the green verges will have to be removed.

Voting: For – 11 Against – 1 Abstentions – 5

49. MAIDSTONE HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

The Board considered the Maidstone Highway Works Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Maidstone Highway Works Programme be noted.

50. DURATION OF MEETING

5.01 p.m. to 8.11 p.m.