

AGENDA

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 8 March 2016
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Burton (Chairman), English,
Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer,
Paine, Springett, de Wiggondene and
Mrs Wilson

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Notification of Visiting Members

Continued Over/:

Issued on Monday 29 February 2016

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Tessa Ware on 01622 602621**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2016

Present: Councillor Burton (Chairman), and Councillors English, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer, Paine, Springett, de Wiggondene and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Round and Sargeant

210. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

211. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no substitute members.

212. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

213. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Round was in attendance for item 17 and Councillor Sargeant was in attendance reserving his right to speak.

214. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

215. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that all members had been lobbied on item 17 – Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan.

It was also noted that Councillor English and Councillor Paine had been lobbied on item 16 – Responses to consultation on the Prospectus for 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' and Kent County Council's Draft Consultation on the New South Eastern Franchise.

216. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2016

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

217. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2016

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

218. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

219. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Dave Andrews of Headcorn Parish Council put Headcorn Parish Council's Councillor Lyn Selby's question to the Chairman as follows:

"Can the Chairman point to the paragraph(s) within the NPPF that states that a rural service centre is not subject to the policies on rural housing and sustainability within the NPPF, and if not can the Chairman please explain in what sense Headcorn's Neighbourhood Plan, which has the overwhelming support of the local community; provides for between 250-280 new houses over the plan period (far more than the assessed need even based on the numbers in MBC's SHMA); takes sustainability extremely seriously; is completely aligned to government policy on housing provision to promote growth, as well as NPPF policy on housing in rural areas, has not been positively prepared and therefore how the retention of paragraph 5 of MBC's report can be justified?"

The Chairman responded by referring Councillor Andrews to the report in the agenda that sets out in detail the issues based on Officer advice. The Chairman stated it would be wrong for him to give a personal opinion on the suggested consultation response in the report and to do so may prejudice the Committee's debate. The Committee's deliberations may result in a change to the suggested submission.

Councillor Andrews did not have a supplementary question.

220. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED:

That items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

221. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED:

That item 17 – Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan be taken as the first item of business.

222. HEADCORN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Spatial Policy Team Leader explained to the Committee the process that Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) had been through to date. The Borough Council was responsible for the conduct of the public consultation which was required by Regulation 16, and the Council could also make its own representations on the HNP as part of the consultation process. Comments may be made with regard to the extent to which the council believes the HNP had satisfied the basic conditions of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations and these are passed to the Independent Examiner at the next stage of the process.

The Committee were provided with an overview of the report and it was explained that the HNP's main area of divergence was in relation to the emerging Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which should both be considered when preparing neighbourhood plans. The main concerns were that no specific sites had been allocated and the plan did not take account of the Borough's objectively assessed housing needs, as required by the NPPF. This meant the plan failed at the first step in conformity with the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan because appropriate provision for housing had not been made and did not provide the certainty of plan led development.

The Committee were informed of two changes to the report:

1. The reference in the report to paragraph 9 of the NPPF should read as paragraph 69, which referred to the significance and role of neighbourhood planning as noted in paragraph 2.13 of the report; and,
2. Paragraph 2.37 be removed as it no longer reflects HNP policy.

Councillor Round addressed the Committee.

The Committee went on to consider the report of the Head of Planning and Development - Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) - dated 9 February 2016 constituting the formal response of the Council to the consultation on the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

The Committee heard that the Officer's specific concern with the HNP was the cap of 90 dwellings for the plan period 2022 to 2031. The Committee heard that it was the Officer's view that this did not demonstrate positive planning as Headcorn was considered a sustainable location for development. This meant that the HNP was not in conformity with the

NPPF or the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The Committee asked that the concern regarding the cap of 90 dwellings in the HNP be made specific in the Council's consultation response.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee approves the report to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee dated 9 February 2016 as the basis for the Council's formal representations on the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015), attached to the report as Appendix A, according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Plan regulations 2012, and approves the Council's consultation responses to the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015) described in more detail in paragraphs 2.11 and 2.48 of the report to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee dated 9 February 2016, subject to the amendment to paragraph 2.13 to refer to paragraph 69 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the removal of paragraph 2.37 and with the addition of a specific reference to the Committee's concerns regarding the cap of 90 dwellings for the period of 2022-2031 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

2. That the Committee note the Headcorn Neighbourhood Development Plan (July 2015) has been assessed at this stage, to not require a Strategic Environment Assessments or Habitats Regulations Assessment.
3. That the Committee notes the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan policies are in general conformity with the adopted Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan policies with the exception of those identified in paragraphs 2.16 to 2.38 of the report.
4. That the Committee notes that the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan is not in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework or the Local Plan (Regulation 19) in respect of not being positively prepared and making provision for objectively assessed need for housing and employment; specifically regarding the cap of 90 dwellings for the period of 2022-2031 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

223. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - FOR INFORMATION AND NOTING

A suggestion was noted that the Committee take all landscape related issues as one report and take forward in the programme of Supplementary Planning Documents in consultation with the Chairman and the Vice Chairman.

The Committee was reminded that the date of the April meeting had changed from 5 April to 18 April 2016.

The Committee was informed that a report on the Lower Thames Crossing and a report on the Council's responses to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation will be on the agenda for the meeting on 8 March 2016.

Concern was raised that the Council's responses to consultation documents appeared to be coming to the Committee after the closing date of the consultation.

RESOLVED:

That Officers be instructed to bring draft consultation responses relevant to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee before the submission date for the responses.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

224. **VERBAL UPDATES FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Committee heard and noted the following updates from representatives from Outside Bodies:

Maidstone Bridges Gyratory Scheme – plans all in conformity with the approved scheme with more detail needed on the green areas. The project was proceeding to the tender process.

Destination Management Plan

River – no meetings arranged to date.

Town – one meeting attended and concern was raised that significant pieces of work were taking place elsewhere. Assurances were given that this would be looked at.

Kent Community Rail Partnership and the Medway Valley Line Group – several meetings had been held and it was reported that a large amount of good work was underway, much of which the Council could support, for example via the Integrated Transport Strategy.

Strategic Board for Maidstone East Railway Station – no meetings yet.

Teston and Aylesford Tow Path Scheme – no meetings yet, however a site meeting was held regarding the siting of the tree planting.

The Committee also noted that the Town Centre Management Board and the Town Team were merging into one Community Interest Company called One Maidstone as of 1 April 2016.

225. PARKING SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015

The Committee considered the Parking Services' Annual Report 2014/2015 detailing the Council's achievements in providing civil parking enforcement services and to confirm all associated income and expenditure and to consider whether to publish the document on the Council's website in accordance with Guidance issued under s87 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The Committee asked that the following typographical errors be corrected in the section 'Background to Parking in the Borough of Maidstone' before publication of the report:

- First line of the third paragraph should read 'increasingly' rather than increasing
- First line of the fifth paragraph should read 'This change in...' rather than 'This change is...'

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approves the Parking Services' Annual Report 2014/2015 for publication on the Council's website, subject to two typographical corrections as noted by the Committee, in accordance with the Statutory guidance published by the Secretary of State for Transport under section 87 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

226. VERBAL UPDATE- THE REFORMATION OF MAIDSTONE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS GROUP

The Committee received a verbal update on the progress of the reformation of the Maidstone Public Transport Operators Group. The Committee heard that the report was currently incomplete. A further update would be provided to the Committee at its meeting of 8 March 2016.

227. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE PROSPECTUS FOR 'A NEW APPROACH TO RAIL PASSENGER SERVICES IN LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST' AND KENT COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT CONSULTATION ON THE NEW SOUTH EASTERN FRANCHISE

The Committee considered the Council's draft consultation responses to the prospectus document entitled 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' being carried out by the Department for Transport and Transport for London; and, to consider the Council's draft consultation responses to the Kent County Council consultation on the New Southeastern Franchise.

RESOLVED:

That officers clarify the Council's priorities, taking account of the Committee's comments and suggestions on the services provided, with the specific assistance of Councillor de Wiggondene and Councillor English, and that the report be brought back to the Committee at its meeting on 8 March 2016 in order that the Council's fully deliberated responses are able to be submitted to the relevant bodies by the deadline of 18 March 2016.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

228. DURATION OF MEETING

6:30pm to 7:55pm



Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee Work Programme

∞

Democratic Services Team
E: democraticservices@maidstone.gov.uk

Publication Date:
5 January 2016 (for 13 January 2016)

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the decisions to be taken by the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee of Maidstone Borough Council on a rolling basis. This document will be published as updated with new decisions required to be made.

DECISIONS WHICH COMMITTEES INTEND TO MAKE IN PRIVATE

The Committee hereby gives notice that it intends to meet in private after its public meeting to consider reports and/or appendices which contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The private meeting of any Committee is open only to Committee Members, other Councillors and Council officers.

Reports and/or appendices to decisions which Committee will take at their private meetings are indicated in the list below, with the reasons for the decision being made in private. Any person is able to make representations to the Committee if he/she believes the decision should instead be made in the public part of that Committee meeting. If you want to make such representations, please email committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk. You will then be sent a response in reply to your representations. Both your representations and the Committee's response will be published on the Council's website at least 5 working days before the Committee meeting.

ACCESS TO COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reports to be considered at any of the Committee's public meetings will be available on the Council's website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) a minimum of 5 working days before the meeting.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

The Council actively encourages people to express their views on decisions it plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or to the relevant Chairman of a Committee.

Alternatively, you can submit a question to the relevant Committee, details are on our website (www.maidstone.gov.uk).

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Position Statement	Sue Whiteside	Public		
9 June 2015	Strategic Housing Market Assessment update – implications of the 2012-based household projections	Sarah Anderton	Public	SHMA Update – Implications of 2012 Based Household Projections	SHMA Update – Implications of 2012 Based Household Projections
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Housing Sites Update	Sarah Anderton	Public		
9 June 2015	Neighbourhood Planning: changes to decision making arrangements	Jillian Barr	Public		
14 July 2015	Retail and mixed use site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		Final Review
14 July 2015	Landscape and Open Space – policies and site allocations	Jillian Barr	Public		
14 July 2015	Affordable Housing policy	Sue Whiteside	Public		
14 July 2015	Recommendations from PTD OSC review of Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car	Tessa Mallett	Public	Final review report	
14 July 2015	Reconsideration of previously rejected MBCLP Reg 18 draft and SHLASS housing sites	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Results of the VISUM transport modelling	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Policies for new land allocations (Older's Field, Hubbards Lane, Bentletts Yard)	Sue Whiteside	Public		
18 August 2015	Gypsy and Traveller site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		
18 August 2015	Employment site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
18 August 2015	Future locations for housing growth	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (supplementary report)	Sue Whiteside	Public		
18 August 2015	Open space allocations	Chris Berry	Public		
18 August 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – mixed use allocations (deferred item)	Sarah Anderton	Public		
8 Sept 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – transport policies		Public		
8 Sept 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (deferred item)		Public		
8 Sept 2015	5 year housing supply position		Public		
6 Oct 2015	North Loose Neighbourhood Plan		Public		2 October 2015 – MBC LP Reg 18 Consultation on key policy and site allocation changes (4 weeks)
10 Nov 2015	Maidstone Local Development Scheme Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 onwards – including Exempt Appendix		Public		
18 Nov 2015	Adjourned date		Public		

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
1 Dec 2015	Draft Integrated Transport Strategy for consultation – for noting Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan Reg 16 consultation proposed response Maidstone Bridges Gyratory Improvement Scheme River Medway Towpath – Maidstone Sustainable Access to Education and Employment LEP Scheme (Cycling Infrastructure) Moat Park Car Park Charges Responses to OSC recommendations from review of transport – from Sustrans – for noting	 Abi Lewis Fran Wallis Jeff Kitson	Public		Pre-Regulation 19 Consultation workshops 3 & 15 December – for Parish and Borough Councillors 21 December – Borough Councillors only
2 Dec 2015	Adjourned date				
14 Dec 2015	Active Frontages report Results of the Regulation 18 consultation Agree the draft Integrated Transport Strategy	Steve Clarke Sue Whiteside Chris Berry	Public		
15 Dec 2015	Adjourned date				
13 Jan 2016	Consideration of the Publication version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for consultation (Reg 19) Draft Integrated Transport Strategy IDP	Sue Whiteside Chris Berry Andrew Thompson	Public		

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
14 Jan 2016 10am POSTPONED	Refresh of Strategic Plan Mid term Budget				
19 January 2016 5pm	North Loose Neighbourhood Plan Refresh of Strategic Plan Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 onwards Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 onwards – fees and charges				
9 Feb 2016	Parking Services draft Annual Report Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan Responses to consultation on 'a New Approach to Rail Passenger Service in London and South East'	Matt Cotton Chris Berry Chris Berry	Public		Feb/Mar 2016 – MBC LP Regulation 19 consultation (6 weeks)
15 Feb 2016	Adjourned date				
8 Mar 2016	Response to consultation on Lower Thames Crossing Brief report - Reformation of the Maidstone Public Transport Operators Group (formerly Maidstone Public Transport Users Group) Response to NPPF consultation North Loose Neighbourhood Plan for recommendation to Council Deferred report - Responses to consultation on 'a New Approach to Rail Passenger Service in London and South East' 20 MPH Speed limits scoping report Draft Low Emissions Strategy	Steve Clarke Steve Clarke Steve Clarke Sarah Anderton Cheryl Parks Steve Clarke Steve Clarke Stuart Maxwell	Public		
16 Mar 2016	Adjourned date				

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
18 Apr 2016	Report to consider the resources needed to provide the planning service CIL Draft Charging Schedule Results of the Reg 19 Local Plan Consultation	Tay Arnold Andrew Thompson Cheryl Parks			May 2016 – Submission of MBC LP 2016 to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination
19 Apr 2016	Adjourned date				

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

8 March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

North Loose Neighbourhood Plan

Final Decision-Maker	Council
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Cheryl Parks, Project Manager, Local Plan
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Loose, South, Shepway North, Park Wood, Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton, High Street

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee notes the result of the referendum of 3 March 2016 on the North Loose Neighbourhood Plan as set out in the urgent update report.
2. That the Committee considers the recommendations set out in the urgent update report that will reflect the referendum result.
3. That the Committee makes any necessary recommendation to Council for consideration on 13 April 2016.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough - the 'made' plan will form part of the Development Plan for Maidstone and will be used in the determining of planning applications for the plan area.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	8 March 2016
Council	13 April 2016

North Loose Neighbourhood Plan

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report secures an agenda item for the Committee meeting on 8 March 2016 to discuss the outcome of the referendum on the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan, the results of which will not be known until after the agenda is published.
 - 1.2 With the agreement of the Chairman, the referendum result and subsequent recommendations will be presented in a separate urgent update report to be published after the Committee agenda, but in advance of the actual Committee meeting date. To avoid any further delays to the potential 'making' of the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan, such an approach is necessary to allow for ratification of any recommendations of this Committee at Council on 13 April 2016.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2015 this Committee approved the Council's response to the formal consultation on the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan. The response, along with all others received, was considered by the appointed examiner, Ann Skippers, during the latter part of 2015 as part of the independent examination of the Plan.
 - 2.2 Ms Skippers completed her Examiner's report in December 2015 and at January's meeting this Committee recommended that Full approve the final version of the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan, incorporating the minor modifications suggested by the Examiner, for referendum. Full Council subsequently approved the Neighbourhood Development Plan for referendum at the meeting of 25 January 2016.
 - 2.3 The referendum is scheduled for 3 March 2016. If the outcome of the referendum is a 'Yes' (i.e. more than half of those voting vote in favour of the Plan), section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Council must make (adopt) the Plan as soon as reasonably practicable after the referendum. Procedural recommendations will be proposed regarding the making of the Plan into the Development Plan for Maidstone. Should the outcome of the referendum be a 'No' then the recommendation will be that the Plan is not made. The only other circumstances in which the Committee could decide not to make the Plan is if to do so would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (s.38A(6) PCPA 2004). A local plan's compatibility with EU obligations and Directives is tested during the examination process and cannot proceed to referendum until it meets this basic condition. Unless there are any new matters in relation to this point which the Committee considers were not raised by the Examiner then the Council is under a statutory duty to make the Plan in accordance with section 38A(4) if the result is a 'Yes' from the referendum.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 As with any voting process, the outcome of the referendum cannot be predicted. Given the required timescales for reporting to Committees and the desire to achieve consideration by Council on 13 April 2016 to prevent any further delay, Councillors are recommended to note this report and its recommendations and then consider those subsequent recommendations as set out in the urgent update report that will follow.
- 3.2 An alternate option would be to not accept an urgent update report and instead wait for the next scheduled meeting of this Committee on 18 April 2016 to consider the outcomes of the referendum and the way forward. This option is not recommended for two reasons. Firstly, this would lead to a long delay in the recommendations of this Committee going on to Council given that the end of the municipal year is approaching and the next meeting of Council would likely be the Annual General Meeting in late May. This would not be favoured by North Loose Residents Association given that the Plan has been four years in the making. Secondly, the agenda for the meeting of this Committee on 18 April already contains substantial matters relating to the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. As such, there is a risk that the consideration of the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan could be delayed to an adjourned meeting if all other matters are not fully dealt with in the time frame permitted.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Councillors are recommended to follow the option set out at 3.1 above for the reasons already set out.
-

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 If Councillors agree to the officer recommendations set out in the urgent update report, this Committee is requested to make further recommendations to Council with regard to the 'making' of the North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan:-
- To 'make' the Plan if the outcome of the referendum is 'Yes'
 - Not to 'make' the Plan if the outcome of the referendum is 'No.'
-

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Neighbourhood Development Plan, once made will be part of the Development Plan for Maidstone, directly impacting the Corporate Priorities through its	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development

	consideration when determining planning applications in the plan area.	
Risk Management	There is potential for reputational damage should the plan not proceed at this late stage. It has been adjudged as sound and legally compliant by the appointed examiner and agreed by Council for a local referendum, so risks are low.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Financial	Referendum costs are recoverable through the Logasnet grant system. There is no cost involved in the adoption of the plan other than staff time.	Paul Riley, Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	Once the plan has been made it will need to be publicised and published on the council's website. This will be completed with the assistance of the council's web team.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Legal	Statute sets out the procedures to be followed as a result of the referendum. The Council is obliged to follow statutory requirements.	Kate Jardine, Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The needs of different groups have been considered by the North Loose Residents Association during the evolution of the plan.	Anna Collier, Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The plan has regard to sustainability and the natural environment as part of its policies. The approach has been agreed as part of the examination of the plan.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Community Safety	N/A	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Human Rights Act	N/A	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development

Procurement	There are no further procurement considerations at this stage of the process.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	N/A	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development

7. REPORT APPENDICES

There are none

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none

Agenda Item 13

STRATEGIC PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

8th March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting? **No**

Draft Low Emission Strategy Consultation Response

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing & Environment Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	John Littlemore Head of Housing & Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Dr Stuart Maxwell
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

That the Committee notes the report and the decision of the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone an attractive place for all – the Low Emission Strategy contributes towards providing a clean and safe environment that in turn will promote good health and well-being.

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transport Committee	8 March 2016

Low Emission Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Maidstone Borough Council is developing a Low Emission Strategy. The themes of the Low Emission Strategy were agreed by the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee in June 2015 and went out to public consultation during November and December of 2015. The consultation results were presented to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee in February 2016, and the Committee made a number of recommendations, given in Section 5
 - 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update members with regard to the responses received from the consultation and how they have been used to develop the Framework for the Low Emission Strategy, and the recommendations of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is developing a Low Emission Strategy in response to high levels of air pollution in specific parts of the Town Centre and other areas of identified concern. The Low Emission Strategy is designed to complement the existing Air Quality Action Plan, by addressing vehicle and other emissions.
- 2.2 Eight themes were previously approved by the committee for the Low Emission Strategy, namely:-
 - 1) Transport Emissions
 - 2) Public Health
 - 3) Carbon Management
 - 4) Planning and Development Control
 - 5) Procurement
 - 6) Non Transport Emissions
 - 7) Economic Development
 - 8) Air Quality Management Area
- 2.3 These themes were put forward for public consultation between 28th October and 24th December 2015. The consultation comprised three questions, which are given as Appendix A, along with the consultation responses and the responses of the Environmental Health Team.
- 2.4 It is proposed that the Strategy is delivered through a 'live' and evolving action plan. The Environmental Health Team will coordinate and meet with key internal and external agencies in order to develop the feasibility of individual actions that contribute to the specific themes.
- 2.5 Where the actions can be delivered from within existing resources and are not contentious the team will go ahead and deliver the action under the direction of the Head of Service. Actions that require new or additional resource, or are likely to prove

contentious will be reported first to the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee for approval before implementation.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transport Committee notes the content of the framework for the Low Emissions Strategy and endorses the approach taken.
 - 3.2 The Committee may decide to recommend changes to the framework within its remit for consideration by the CHE Committee.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As the Low Emission Strategy supports a range of key priorities for the Council, including keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all and encouraging good health and well-being, it is recommended that the Council has a Low Emission Strategy. The preferred option is for the Committee to keep the list of previously approved themes unchanged and that the Low Emission Strategy is adopted in its current form.
 - 4.2 The Environmental Health Department will then liaise with both internal and external partners in order to develop and evaluate specific actions to be carried out under each of the themes. Where simple, straightforward actions are identified; that can be funded from existing budgets, the Environmental Health Team will implement them without further reference to the Committee.
 - 4.3 Where the actions identified have unbudgeted cost implications, or might be controversial, the Environmental Health Team will bring the action back to the Committee for approval.
 - 4.4 In addition the Head of Housing & Community Services will provide an annual report to the Committee on progress with the Low Emission Strategy.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The results of the consultation are given in Appendix A
- 5.2 The consultation response was very limited, with only three respondents taking part. Two of the three respondents agreed with the aims of the Low Emission Strategy, and all three respondents agreed with the themes.
- 5.3 The comments received generally referred to a lack of detail, however, the purpose of the exercise was only to agree the themes of this high level strategy with specific actions being evaluated and decided upon in due course.

5.4 This report was presented to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee on 16th February 2016, where the following recommendations were approved

- 1) That the framework for the Low Emission Strategy attached at Appendix B of the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services be adopted.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing and Community Services to develop an action plan to deliver against the priorities in the framework for the Low Emission Strategy. The development work should be informed by the views of representatives from all stakeholder groups.
- 3) That the resulting Low Emissions Strategy be reported back to the Committee once the actions have been prioritised and Council actions have been identified separately from other stakeholder actions. Actions that are resourced should be identified separately from actions that require resourcing.
- 4) That an annual update on progress of the actions in the Low Emissions Strategy be provided to the Committee once agreed.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The following timetable is proposed:

Action	Start	End
The CH&E Committee approves the Framework for the Low Emission Strategy		16/02/2016
Framework approved, implementation commences	17/02/2016	March 2021
Workshop comprising representatives of various committees plus relevant officers, to develop the specific actions of the strategy	June/July 2016	
Liaison with internal and external partners on detailed actions in support of each theme assessment of benefits, risks, costs, and feasibility of actions.	17/02/2016	March 2021
An annual report submitted to CH&E Committee on actions taken to implement the Strategy	March 2017	March 2021
Actions incorporated in annual service plans and delivered/implemented	March 2017	March 2021

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Covered in the report	Head of Housing &

		Community Services
Risk Management		
Financial	Actions that can be delivered within existing budgets will be delivered but actions that require growth will be brought to the Committee for consideration.	
Staffing		Head of Housing & Community Services
Legal		Legal Team
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	None identified at this stage. Further consideration of equality impacts may need to be considered following the formulation of the action plan.	Clare Wood. Policy & Performance Officer
Environmental/Sustainable Development		Head of Housing & Community Services
Community Safety	None	Head of Housing & Community Services
Human Rights Act	None	Head of Housing & Community Services
Procurement		
Asset Management		

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A Low Emission Strategy; Consultation Questions and Responses
- Appendix B Draft Low Emission Strategy

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None identified.

APPENDIX A. Low Emission Strategy; Consultation Questions and Responses

Consultation Question:

Question 1. The aims of the Low Emission Strategy are to (in no particular order):

- To achieve a higher standard of air quality across Maidstone.
- To embed an innovative approach to vehicle emission reduction through integrated policy development and implementation in Maidstone and across the region
- To improve the emissions of the vehicle fleet in Maidstone beyond the 'business as usual' projection, through the promotion and uptake of low and ultra low emission vehicles
- To reduce emissions through an integrated approach covering all appropriate municipal policy areas.

Under each aim, specific actions aimed at reducing emissions will be included. Do you agree with the proposed aims?

Consultation Responses:

2 people agree

1 person disagrees

Comments

Far too vague. The Strategy must prioritise action to bring air quality into line with EU / WHO limits. A clear timetable and targets are required. Monitoring to ensure immediate action against any exceedance should be central to Strategy.

Environmental Health Response:

The question specifically focuses on the aims of the Low Emission Strategy, and therefore it is not appropriate or necessary to include targets or a timetable at this early stage. Air quality monitoring is undertaken as part of the Council's Local Air Quality Management responsibilities and does not form part of the Low Emission Strategy.

Consultation Question:

Question 2. The draft Local Emission Strategy has identified several themes that we believe cover the relevant issues in this area. Do you agree with these themes?

Consultation Responses:

3 people agree with these themes

0 people disagree

Comments: *Planting and vegetation are the only practical means of tackling traffic pollution in urban areas. A detailed planting strategy should be specifically headlined. Emergency*

measures such as car free days and closure of polluted areas to traffic may need a separate heading.

Environmental Health Response:

Planting and vegetation are demonstrably not the only practical means of tackling traffic pollution. Furthermore, the Low Emission Strategy is concerned with reducing vehicle and other emissions. Whilst vegetation may absorb certain types of pollution, it does not reduce emissions and therefore would not be included in a Low Emission Strategy. Car free days and closure of areas to traffic would not really be practical as the impact on both the Town and surrounding areas would be too severe. Such measures would also be largely outside of the control of the Borough Council.

Consultation Question:

Question 3. Do you have any other comments about emissions or our proposed aims and themes?

Consultation Responses:

- 1. Much better empirical data on the health impacts and numbers of deaths attributable to pollution within the Borough are required. The impacts of climate change, urbanisation, loss of street trees and other vegetation, and population growth all require more attention.*
- 2. I think Maidstone needs to focus on renewable energy sources that release a minimum amount of emissions. This is really the only way forward. Also, to encourage alternative forms of transport like cycling, it is IMPERATIVE that Maidstone Borough Council create more cycle lanes or safe places for cyclists to go as currently it's extremely dangerous and puts many (myself included) off cycling. It needs to be safer.*

Environmental Health Response:

Public Health is one of the themes of the Low Emission Strategy, however, at the specific actions to be undertaken under this theme have not been decided at this early stage.



DRAFT
LOW EMISSION
STRATEGY

January 2016

Maidstone Borough Council

Low Emission Strategy

1 INTRODUCTION



In common with most other Local Authorities, Maidstone Borough has areas of poor air quality.

In 2008, the Council designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) covering the whole urban area due to elevated concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) at residential receptors in six areas of the Borough. NO₂ levels at some key locations near to major roads and junctions remain above the EU Limit

Value with no discernible downward trend. The UK is now in breach of the EU Air Quality Directive and infringement proceedings have commenced. The level of fines could reach 400 million Euros and under the reserve powers of Part 2 of the Localism Act 2011, these fines can be passed on to any public authority whose act or omission has contributed to these breaches.

The predominant source of these elevated levels is the emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) from road transport vehicles. Road transport vehicles are also a significant source of fine particulate concentrations in Maidstone and, although levels fall below the EU threshold, it is estimated that approximately 5.6% of deaths in Maidstone are attributable to fine particulate concentrations (less than 2.5 microns in size). In 2013, the World Health Organisation (WHO) classified diesel exhaust emissions as carcinogenic to humans.

The Maidstone Carbon Management Plan states that 35% of all Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions caused by Maidstone Borough Council are due to fleet operations and business travel with little progress made in reducing these emissions.

Maidstone Borough Council considered introducing a Low Emission Zone for the urban area, however, analysis showed that the costs would outweigh the potential benefits in the exceedance areas. Therefore, this Low Emission Strategy (LES), is being adopted, which will not only help improve health and the environment but will provide a platform for inward investment and competitive advantage for Maidstone.

2 AIMS

The aims of the Low Emission Strategy are as follows:-

- 1.** To achieve a higher standard of air quality across Maidstone
- 2.** To embed an innovative approach to vehicle emission reduction through integrated policy development and implementation in Maidstone and across the region
- 3.** To improve the emissions of the vehicle fleet in Maidstone beyond the 'business as usual' projection, through the promotion and uptake of low and ultra low emission vehicles
- 4.** To reduce emissions through an integrated approach covering all appropriate municipal policy areas. Under each area, the specific actions aimed at reducing emissions will be developed

3 ACTIONS

This strategy is divided into a number of themes. We will develop and carry out actions under each of these themes. The themes are shown below together with case studies illustrating what has been done in each area by other local authorities and other organisations, demonstrating what is possible. These examples are indicative but other schemes will be investigated in developing the final actions.

3.1 TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

Since transport is the main cause of the pollution affecting Maidstone Borough, the Transport section of the Low Emission Strategy will be the most important. This section will complement other Council Policies such as the Local Transport Plan and the Air Quality Action Plan but whereas these Policies attempt to deal with the problem by reducing congestion and encouraging so called modal shift, i.e. reducing the use of private cars by encouraging increased use of public transport, walking and cycling, the Low Emission Strategy attempts to tackle the vehicle emissions themselves.

3.1.1 Public Transport; Buses

The latest UK road-traffic emission factors show that buses are significantly higher emitters of NOx than cars, LGVs and even HGVs. The level of emissions is mainly dependent upon the emission technology (Euro classes). The bus fleet in Maidstone contains a proportion of the older Euro I, Euro II and Euro III vehicles, and MBC should investigate ways to improve the composition of the bus fleet in the Borough.



Increasingly, Local Authorities are introducing Emissions Standards for the bus fleets within their Boroughs. One consequence of this is that, as bus fleet operators use their newer, cleaner buses in areas where emissions standards have been introduced, they shift their older more polluting buses to the areas where no standards apply.

Case Study 1 - Brighton and Hove City Council Low Emission Zone

Brighton and Hove City Council introduced a Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) in January 2015. The area of the zone is small, but almost 98% of bus movements in the city centre pass through it. All buses passing through the LEZ will be required to be Euro V or higher, although operators have been given 5 years to bring their entire fleets up to this standard. CCTV will be used to ensure that only registered buses meeting the required standard enter the LEZ. Furthermore, buses are prohibited from leaving their engines idling in the LEZ for more than one minute, except for reasons of passenger comfort in extremely hot or cold weather. BHCC has worked with bus companies to secure grant funding to retrofit buses with suitable equipment to reduce both NO₂ and particulate emissions, and currently has 100 vehicles, used in the city centre, which are being upgraded.



3.1.2 Taxis

Whilst Taxis are far less significant polluters than buses, MBC should still be forward thinking and encouraging the shift towards low and ultra-low emission vehicles. The present Taxi Licensing Policy sets a vehicle age standard, however, a standard based on vehicle emissions, coupled with measures to encourage the use of hybrid and electric vehicles as taxis would represent a significant improvement.

Case Study 2 - Brighton and Hove City Council Taxi Policy

Brighton and Hove City Council has a policy prohibiting taxis from idling whilst stationary at taxi ranks. BHCC's taxi policy also has more generous age restrictions for hybrid and electric vehicles.

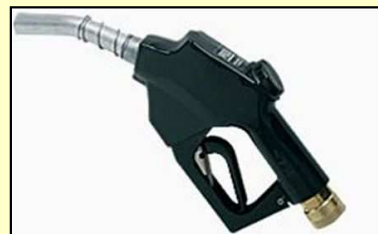
3.1.3 Freight Emission Strategy

The council should enter into dialogue with freight owners to find ways to improve the emissions of the HGV and LGV fleets using the Borough's road network. One of the simplest ways of doing this is by changing driver behaviour (so called eco-driving) and there are a number of commercially available driver aids designed to assist with this.

One such device is called Lightfoot, which consists of a simple display which shows the driver when the engine speed is in the most economical range. Lightfoot has been independently tested at Bath University, and was shown to reduce fuel consumption by approximately 10% whilst reducing CO₂ emissions by 10%, NOx emissions by 20%, and particulate emissions by 15%.

Case Study 3 – Northumberland County Council introduce the Lightfoot Eco-driving Aid

Northumberland County Council undertook a two week trial of Lightfoot and were so impressed with the results that they have now installed it in 250 vehicles in their light vehicle fleet. This fleet includes light commercial vehicles and car derived vans, delivering a wide variety of services. The response from drivers to the new technology has been very supportive and a 7% fuel cost saving has been achieved.



Lightfoot has also been adopted by a number of Local Authorities including Nottingham and Oxford's City Councils, as well as many commercial vehicle fleets including Royal Mail and Autoglass. It has also been shown to bring about a reduction in accident rates.

MBC's own vehicle fleet currently uses some 130,000 litres of fuel annually, thus a device with the potential to reduce this by up to 10% appears to be worthy of further consideration.

Fleet Recognition Schemes, are schemes which encourage fleet operators to improve the performance and efficiency of their fleets, and offer some system of recognition for the improvements achieved. The two main schemes are ECOstars, which would be implemented and paid for by the council, and is free to fleet operators, and FORS (Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme) which individual fleet operators pay to join. The disadvantage of ECOstars is that is quite expensive for the Council, DEFRA grant funding is no longer available, as it once was, and the precise benefits are unclear at present.

Case Study 4 – EcoStars

EcoStars was created in 2008 by the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities. The second scheme started in Devon in 2010 and the third in 2012. There are now more than 20 schemes running in the UK, with the London Boroughs of Sutton and Croydon launching the newest scheme in March 2015. Originally intended for HGVs the scheme has been extended to include buses and taxis too. EcoStars now has a total of over 300 members with a total of 14000 vehicles.



3.1.4 Promoting Low Emission Vehicles and Infrastructure

Compressed natural gas (CNG), a form of methane, is a relatively clean fuel which can be used in place of petrol, diesel, and LPG. It produces lower emissions of NOx, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulates, and un-burnt hydrocarbons than other fuels. At present, there is no CNG refuelling infrastructure in Kent, which is a major obstacle to uptake, as it means that any fleet operator wishing to switch to CNG will need to travel to London or Essex to refuel.



There is anecdotal evidence that some fleet operators would like to switch to CNG, and there is further anecdotal evidence that supplier will install the infrastructure free of charge if sufficient demand can be identified.

Some grant funding is still available for electric vehicle charging points.

Case Study 5 – Milton Keynes Council promote the use of electric vehicles

Milton Keynes Council has to date installed 170 fast/standard charging points and 56 rapid charging points, all of which are publicly available and located throughout the borough. Cars may park for free to use the charging points and are eligible for parking discounts at other times, and there are restricted parking bays in a number of car parks, which are reserved for electric vehicles.



4 PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health is one of the key drivers behind the Low Emission Strategy. Air pollution is known to exacerbate asthma and allergies, and disproportionately affects the young, the elderly and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as bronchitis and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). It also causes increased rates of hospital admission and premature deaths. Diesel fumes are now known to be carcinogenic.

Case Study 6 – GLA Air Quality Guides for Public Health Professionals

In 2012 the Greater London Authority produced borough specific guides on air quality for public health professionals. The aim of these documents is to provide an overview of the health impacts of air pollution in each London Borough. The documents examine the key pollutants of concern in London and the health risks associated with these. They examine the concentrations of these pollutants each borough, and the health impacts of each, along with information on vulnerable groups and the number of deaths in the borough which can be attributed to exposure to air pollution.

AIR QUALITY IN
WANDSWORTH:
A GUIDE FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS

MAYOR OF LONDON

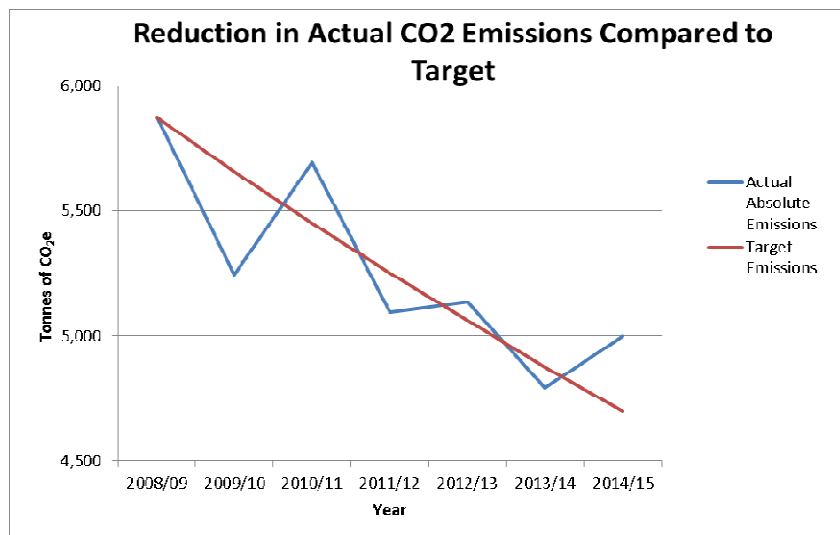
5 CARBON MANAGEMENT

MBC produced a Carbon Management Plan, with the aim of reducing CO₂ emissions from its activities by 20% from the 2008-09 baseline by 2015. This equates to 5,295 tonnes CO₂ with a cumulative value of £1.6 million. The baseline emissions for transport (fleet and business travel) is 2,024 tonnes.

The Carbon Management Plan comprised some 44 actions and projects, some straightforward, and some aspirational, by which the target should be met.

The Plan is now complete, and the graph shows the actual annual CO₂ reductions which the plan achieved.

In future years, carbon management will form part of the Low Emission Strategy, rather than being a stand alone document. Actions to be investigated include the use of LED lighting in and additional PV panels in Council buildings. Such projects will be assessed on a case by case basis.



6 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Effective planning policies can play a significant role in helping sustain air quality improvements by both discouraging the use of high emission vehicles and supporting the uptake of low emission vehicles, including the provision of low emission vehicle refuelling facilities, such as EV charging points.

Recently published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that mitigation may include the contribution of “funding to measures, including those identified in **air quality action plans** and **low emission strategies**, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development”. While air quality is only one of many considerations that are relevant to planning, the NPPG states that where sustained compliance with EU Limit Values is prevented, a local authority is to “consider whether planning permission should be refused”.

It is increasingly recognised that developers should be required to use mitigation measures to offset the environmental damage caused by their new developments.

A number of Local Authorities have developed Supplementary Planning Guidance which includes the integration of mitigation measures into scheme design as standard and uses a damage cost approach to inform the scale of mitigation required for major schemes. This approach should work very well in Maidstone Borough.

7 PROCUREMENT

The purchasing power of the public sector is significant in Maidstone and Kent. Recent legislation and guidance encourages the public sector to support the uptake and deployment of low emission vehicles through sustainable procurement decisions. The Maidstone LES development provides an opportunity to review sustainable procurement practices in both the Borough and County and identify specific principles and measures that could benefit both air quality and carbon reduction targets. The review provides an opportunity to look at 3 areas of procurement that could help reduce vehicle emissions:

7.1 Contracts relating to goods and services provided to the Council

Public sector organisations are required to look at best value, rather than lowest cost, when making procurement decisions. The **Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012** came into force on the 31st January 2013. The Act, for the first time, places a duty on public bodies to consider social value, including environmental considerations, ahead of a procurement exercise.

Local sourcing is practised widely by local authorities, whereby local suppliers are encouraged to bid for council contracts. Such initiatives have the potential to support the local economy while helping reduce overall mileage. Local sourcing offers the potential for lighter goods/low emission vehicles to be used in delivery. Helping local suppliers develop emission strategies can provide competitive advantage in procurement decisions.

7.2 Procurement of vehicles by the Council

The **Cleaner Road Transport Vehicles Regulations 2011** bring into force the requirements of the **EU Clean Vehicles Directive 2009** and require public sector organisations to consider the energy use and environmental impact of vehicles they buy or lease. A key concept of the Regulations is the consideration of whole life costs whereby the operational costs over a vehicle life, including pollution damage costs, are taken into account rather than just the purchase price. This helps to redress the issue of low emission vehicles costing more than conventional vehicles, while potentially having lower operating costs that outweigh the purchase increment.

Case Study 7 – Low Emission Strategies Partnership Guidance



The Low Emission Strategies Partnership has produced guidance in order to assist public sector organisations in meeting their environmental obligations with respect to Air Quality Management and Climate Change commitments, by providing practical advice and examples of best practice in the use of procurement to reduce road transport emissions. The guidance is aimed at professionals and politicians, without a background in public sector procurement, to understand how they can expand their capabilities, in addition to traditional approaches, to tackle the problems they are facing in

securing environmental improvements. Similarly, the guidance also aims to provide an understanding of vehicle emission reduction possibilities for procurement officers.

7.3 Partnerships

The Council should examine the increased potential for purchase cost savings when buying low emission vehicles and deploying low emission vehicle infrastructure through innovative partnerships with both public sector organisations and the private sector.

Maidstone's Procurement Strategy should reflect all of the above legislation and guidance.

8 NON-TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

Whilst transport emissions are the major source of pollution in the Borough, non transport emissions contribute a significant percentage of background emissions. Examples of non transport emission sources include, residential and commercial buildings, combined heat and power plants, and construction sites, and permitted processes.

9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The LES also aims to provide a platform for inward investment, not only in terms of accessing funding, but through the encouragement of the low emission vehicle supply chain and ancillary services to locate in the borough.

The LES will build on the Maidstone Economic Development Strategy, whose stated aim is "a model 21st century town , a distinctive place, known for its blend of sustainable rural and urban living, excellence in public services, dynamic service sector-based economy, and above all, quality of life."

The LES will also compliment the Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone 2009-2020 and the work of the Local Strategic Partnership.

10 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA



There are six air quality hotspots within the Borough. Having identified these hotspots, rather than declare six individual Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), a single AQMA was declared, covering the entire urban area of the Borough. There were very good reasons for doing this, for example, administering 6 individual AQMAs can be significantly more

onerous than administering a single AQMA. However, it does give rise to potential anomalies, since the single AQMA includes many properties where we know the air quality to be perfectly acceptable. This can cause difficulties, for example, when dealing with planning applications, where applying measures designed to tackle poor air quality, is hard to justify at some locations. The boundaries of the AQMA will therefore need to be kept under review as the LES is implemented. The Air Quality Action Plan also needs to be updated to reflect the latest guidance and legislation.

Agenda Item 14

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

08 March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Response to consultation on 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' and Kent County Council's Draft Consultation on the New South Eastern Franchise

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke: Principal Planning Officer Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. Councillors agree the suggested response to the prospectus document as set out in the report and that the report is forwarded to Transport for London prior to 18 March 2016.
2. Councillors agree the suggested response to the consultation by Kent County Council on the new Southeastern Franchise and that this is forwarded to the Principal Transport Planner-Rail at Kent County Council.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – A reliable and well-connected train service is a key element in the drive to securing a successful local economy

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee	08 March 2016

Response to consultation on 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' and Kent County Council's Draft Consultation on the New South Eastern Franchise

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Councillors considered a report on this issue at their meeting held on Tuesday 9 February 2016. The Committee resolved as follows:

'That officers clarify the Council's priorities, taking account of the Committee's comments and suggestions on the services provided, with the specific assistance of Councillor de Wiggondene and Councillor English, and that the report be brought back to the Committee at its meeting on 8 March 2016 in order that the Council's fully deliberated responses are able to be submitted to the relevant bodies by the deadline of 18 March 2016'

- 1.2 This revised report seeks to clarify the Council's priorities.
- 1.3 The report has been prepared in the light of two consultation documents, one issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL) and the other by Kent County Council and which has been circulated to KMEP (Kent & Medway Economic Partnership) members.
- 1.4 On 21st January 2016, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL) jointly published a prospectus seeking to set out a commitment to improve capacity and service levels across London and the South East's rail network. The document: 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' is attached at Appendix One.
- 1.5 The document foreshadows the DfT and TfL working together with other partners and stakeholders to create a more 'joined-up' London rail network with more frequent services, increased capacity and better customer service to include integrated fares, travel information and a more accessible network, whilst at the same time seeking to ensure a greater input into train services by the South East's towns and cities.
- 1.6 The prospectus seeks answers to six questions regarding the possible future procurement, management and delivery of rail services in London and the South East. TfL have requested that responses are forwarded to them by 18 March 2016.
- 1.7 The report sets out the six questions and provides a suggested response to each and recommends that Councillors agree the responses for onward transmission to TfL prior to the deadline of 18 March 2016.
- 1.8 This report also considers a draft consultation document prepared by Kent County Council that has been circulated to KMEP (Kent & Medway Economic Partnership) Members relating to the new Southeastern franchise to inform the official responses that the County Council and Medway Council will

prepare for submission to the DfT later in the year. It is anticipated that the DfT will commence formal consultation on the new Southeastern franchise in June 2016 which will run until October 2016.

- 1.9 It considers the questions posed and sets out a suggested response to be forwarded to Kent County Council.

2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 21 January 2016, the DfT and TfL jointly published a prospectus seeking to set out a commitment to improve capacity and service levels across London and the South East's rail network. The document: 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East' is attached at Appendix One.
- 2.2 The document foreshadows the DfT and TfL working together with other partners and stakeholders to create a more 'joined-up' London rail network with more frequent services, increased capacity and better customer service to include integrated fares, travel information and a more accessible network, whilst at the same time seeking to ensure a greater input into train services by the South East's towns and cities.
- 2.3 The prospectus seeks answers to six questions regarding potential future procurement, management and delivery of rail services in London and the South East. TfL have requested that responses are forwarded to them by 18 March 2016.
- 2.4 The publication of this prospectus comes in the run-up to the awarding of a new operational franchise for Southeastern which is due in 2018. It is understood that Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the south eastern area will be sought in November 2016 with Invitations to Tender (ITT) for shortlisted bidders issued in April 2017 with the contract awarded in February 2018 commencing in June 2018.
- 2.5 For Councillors' information it is already anticipated that from January 2018 additional direct Thameslink services to Blackfriars and beyond will be introduced serving Maidstone East. The currently anticipated level of service will be two trains per hour to and from Maidstone East. These services will be during the AM and PM peaks and there will also be a more limited service in off-peak hours. As part of our response we will strongly recommend that the Thameslink proposals should include London to Maidstone peak services to enhance the business economy of Maidstone.
- 2.6 As indicated above, KMEP members have been circulated a questionnaire relating to the new Southeastern franchise and have been asked to provide comments to the Public Transport Officer (Rail) at Kent County Council. The questionnaire is attached at Appendix Two and asks a series of questions specifically related to user responses although KMEP members can submit a single response covering issues relevant to their interests.

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option One: Councillors consider and respond to the prospectus and the issues it raises, in line with the suggested responses set out in this report. This will ensure that their views are conveyed to and are taken into account by TfL and the DfT as the planned further integration and envisaged partnership process moves forward.
 - 3.2 This consultation comes at a key time in the build-up to the awarding of a new Southeastern franchise that is due to take place in 2018. The proposed partnership offers a potential additional channel that would enable the Borough Council, on behalf of the local community, to press for further improvements in terms of speed, reliability and choice of destination to rail services operating to and from the Borough. Responding to the KEMP questionnaire also provides a further opportunity for the Borough Council to make its view known regarding the new Southeastern franchise.
 - 3.3 Option Two: Councillors could choose not to respond to the questions raised in the prospectus and the KEMP questionnaire. In doing so, the opportunity to have an input into how the proposed partnership arrangements would work would be lost. The further channel for enabling Maidstone's 'voice' to be heard during the run-up to the awarding the new South Eastern franchise in 2018 would also be potentially lost as would the opportunity to make comments via KEMP.
-

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option One is the preferred way forward. This will enable the DfT and TfL to be made aware of the Borough Council's views and will provide another potential channel for the Borough Council to lobby decision-makers relating to rail services in the Borough in the run-up to the new operating franchise for the South Eastern area being awarded which is anticipated for 2018. The further opportunity to make the Borough Council's views on the new Southeastern franchise known through KEMP is also welcomed.

A NEW APPROACH TO RAIL PASSENGER SERVICES IN LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST

- 4.2 This prospectus document covers four main themes and there are six questions relating to these themes.

A partnership approach

- 4.3 The document envisages a new partnership approach to oversee the specification of rail passenger services. The partnership would be between the DfT and TfL working closely with rail operators, Network Rail and the supply chain. It is also intended to provide a forum for all LEPS, local authorities and other local and regional bodies to have a say in the specification and management of rail services.
- 4.4 A central ambition of the partnership is a clear focus on local and regional issues with the aim of ensuring better links between local development

potential and the railway investment upon which it often depends. In providing such links and bringing together differing funding sources and the specification and management of service delivery, it is anticipated that the delivery process will be speeded up and outcomes will more certain.

Q1: Do you agree with the principle of a partnership to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East?

Suggested Response:

In principle, a partnership approach to the integration of rail passenger services in London and the South East is a good idea and is supported by Maidstone Borough Council. The Council's biggest concern is that the communities and rail users in the outlying areas will not be given the same level of priority afforded to services in London and the inner suburban services if they are brought under the 'umbrella' of TfL.

The key will be to ensure that there are effective channels for the LEPs and local authorities representing communities and rail users in these outer areas to enable them to influence the procurement, specification and delivery of services to ensure investment and service provision is better related to planned local development and that much needed improvements to service punctuality and reliability are actually delivered in practice.

Principles for success

4.5 Three principles for success are outlined:

- 1: More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity;
Different needs of different uses should be recognised, e.g. improvement of fast, longer distance services to support commuting and regional growth and the need for services that stop frequently to provide a 'metro' style service within London. Need for investment in high performing rolling-stock to assist in the delivery of improvements.
- 2: Greater reliability for all passengers;
Where different rail services share the same infrastructure this is key and services should be planned and specified to ensure an increase in performance and customer satisfaction.
- 3: High standards of customer service;
These should be common to all services, regardless of the specifying body. Fares and passenger information should be integrated wherever possible and the travel environment, accessibility and the availability of staff all improved.

Q2: Do you agree with the principles that the partnership will work to? Are there any specific issues that have not been captured?

Suggested response:

The principles outlined above that the new partnership would work to are supported by Maidstone Borough Council. The principles should be an integral and a closely monitored requirement of any new train operating franchise that may be awarded.

Key areas of concern to the Borough Council are:

- The restoration of direct services between Maidstone and the City of London (Cannon Street/London Bridge) in the AM and PM weekday peaks.
- Significantly reduced journey times to Victoria. The current fastest journey-time is around 1 hour.

It will be essential to ensure that appropriate train pathways are provided once the inner suburban area is reached in order that longer distance commuters are not disadvantaged.

Governance and timing

- 4.6 The proposed partnership would cover train operator contracts specified by either the DfT or TfL. The prospectus makes it clear that the proposed partnership would have a responsibility to take into account the views of local authorities and LEPs and other local organisations as part of its work to recommend the specification and management arrangements for those train operator contracts. The principles relating to the contracts would be established by the partnership and then applied by either of the two awarding bodies.
- 4.7 A key element of the new governance arrangements would be for the responsibility for inner suburban services that operate mostly or wholly within Greater London to be transferred to TfL from the DfT; the DfT would continue to be responsible for outer suburban services. The precise boundaries will be subject to discussion/agreement before the current franchise ends.
- 4.8 It is also indicated that all local authorities will have greater input, including the ability to specify service enhancements depending on local priorities and funding arrangements.
- 4.9 Page 21 of the prospectus sets out the currently proposed timings for the procurement of new train operator contracts. As stated previously, the next Southeastern franchise is phased for 2018. The aim is to establish the partnership to meet the published timetable for new contracts being awarded.
- 4.10 Safeguards would be put in place relating to the transfer of responsibility for inner-suburban services. In particular that there is no detrimental effect on fares (either those operated by TfL or outside London) and no adverse impact on frequency of journey times or stopping patterns of longer distance services to and from London. It is specifically noted that additional capacity on peak local London services would only be added if there was no negative impact on longer distance services.

Q3: Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

Suggested response:

Maidstone Borough Council is broadly supportive of the governance arrangements. However, it will be vitally important to ensure that the process is clear and transparent and to show how the views of local authorities etc. have been taken into account.

Q4: What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs could take?

Suggested response:

Maidstone Borough Council considers that it should formally be consulted on the potential new rail operator contract in order that its views can be made clear on what level of service provision should be secured.

This should be done in addition to any consultation via the LEP or Kent County Council in order that the Borough Council can fully represent the views of transport user groups in the Borough.

The Borough Council will also work with its partners at Kent County Council and the LEP who can provide a more strategic overview and input into the process.

Q5: Do you agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TFL as set out here?

Suggested response:

Key issues for Maidstone Borough Council:

- Ensuring that the proposed safeguards for the longer distance services from outside the proposed TfL administered area are put in place and subsequently maintained as part of any new franchise contract.
- The direct service to the City of London from Maidstone East was cut a number of years ago and an AM and PM peak weekday service should be reinstated as part of any new Southeastern contract that is awarded.
- Journey times from Maidstone East to London Victoria should be significantly reduced.
- The Borough Council would not want to see the opportunity for service improvements and speed lost due to the lack of safeguarded potential train routeing pathways once the proposed TfL administered area is reached.

What can be achieved?

More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity

- 4.11 It is recognised in the document that considerable investment has and continues to take place on the network and its infrastructure. It highlights areas (pages 23 and 24) where additional improvements such as better signalling and shorter turn-round times at London Termini for example could increase capacity further. It also recognises that, in tandem with the proposed 'London Suburban Metro', improvements must be made to services that connect London with the wider South East and that extra capacity on suburban routes should not be at the expense of longer distance travellers into London. Providing more services is good but this should not be at the expense of overall journey time.
- 4.12 Travel-time and choice of destination are key issues for services to and from the Borough, especially on the Maidstone East line, where direct

services to the City of London have been lost in the recent past. The quickest train journey into London from Maidstone East remains at around 1 hour, which compares unfavourably with neighbouring towns. A case could be made for additional stops by trains on the Chatham line at Swanley to enable a wider choice of and quicker connection between London and the Maidstone East Line. The Borough Council should be pressing via this new partnership for service speed, as well as choice, to be increased.

- 4.13 Clearly, the planned introduction of additional Thameslink services in 2018 is a very welcome step, but by then the new train operating contract for the South East will be about to be awarded. Now is the time to press for changes to enhance the connectivity of the Borough. The prospectus talks about enhanced services from Surrey, Hampshire, Hertfordshire and Essex but no mention is made of Kent.

Greater reliability for all passengers

- 4.14 The prospectus cites what has been achieved with greater collaborative working between train operators, the DfT and TfL on the London Overground and C2C in Essex. It sets out an ambition to use the focus in what has been achieved on these routes as a benchmark for all train operator contracts going forward. As an example, it indicates that if all services were set a minimum 95.5% Public Performance Measure (PPM), this would equate to 50 million fewer delayed journeys each year than currently is the case. If this could be achieved in the South Eastern area, this would be a significant improvement from the current moving average annual PPM of 88.3%¹

High standards of Customer Service

- 4.15 The prospectus indicates that the partnership will work to ensure common minimum standards for all rail services across the region. It indicates, helpfully, that visible and available station staffing is essential as is technology that helps staff and customers on the move. Measures that could be considered include:

- i) Wi-Fi and free open data to bring travel advice directly to mobile devices
- ii) Real Time Information to en-route passengers, to enable them to make choices to avoid delays.

All the information a passenger needs should be coordinated and easily accessible and suitable for their whole journey across a range of alternative channels.

- 4.16 The partnership would look at Sunday services so that they are more comparable to those provided on Saturdays given that people's lifestyles have so rapidly changed over the last few decades.
- 4.17 In terms of accessibility, the partnership would work towards a situation where disabled passengers are able to turn-up-and-go like everyone else with no requirement to book ahead. This is particularly important so as to ensure equal access to the rail network by all sections of the community.

¹ <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/about/performance/>

- 4.18 With regard to fares and ticketing, the partnership would work towards a simpler and more integrated payment system for travel. New ticketing technology should be acceptable across London and the whole of the South East, and operators should work to the point where passengers who are due refunds receive this automatically on their cards (smartcard, contactless or Oyster card). The DfT is promoting ITSO (which is a national standard for smart ticketing) and is designed to ensure that all travel operators (not just train operating companies) develop compatible smart ticketing systems.
- 4.19 Stations should be clean and welcoming. Opportunities exist for other services such as retail or parcel lockers to be provided at stations. Third party funding also provides an opportunity for coordinated investment in station facilities.

Q6: Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?

Suggested response:

Key concerns for Maidstone Borough Council:

- The principle of safe, staffed and welcoming stations should apply beyond the suburban metro area particularly at stations in the more rural areas of the Borough, many of which are now unmanned, with closed and boarded-up station buildings and unwelcoming.
- There is a danger that the focus will be on the proposed suburban metro network at the expense of other stations and railway lines outside Greater London. A two-tier approach would not be acceptable.
- A significant number of rail passengers travel from the stations across Maidstone Borough to Central London and pay very significant prices for their tickets. For example, an annual 'All Zones' Travelcard (including potential for use on HS1) is now £5868.00 from one of Maidstone's three Town Centre stations whilst a similar ticket from Staplehurst is £6776.00.
- It is important that the Borough's rail-users see the benefits from the new partnership and procurement arrangements in their daily journeys and travel experiences. The continual delays and lack of reliability and punctuality which are sadly all too currently prevalent are not acceptable.

KCC CONSULTATION ON NEW SOUTHEASTERN FRANCHISE

- 4.20 As Councillors will see, there are 18 questions on the questionnaire attached at Appendix Two. However, KMEP Members have also been advised that they can also submit a brief written response setting out the main areas for development of the rail network. It is proposed that the Borough Council's response will take the latter form.
- 4.21 The new Southeastern franchise will be awarded at a time of significant background growth in rail travel across the network and when there will also be significant planned growth in housing and employment not only

within Kent and Medway but also in neighbouring counties by 2031. The existing network is already approaching capacity and there is a clear need, in conjunction with Network Rail, to plan for that growth and also at the same time secure improved connectivity, speed and reliability for rail journeys within and beyond the County boundary.

Suggested response:

The Borough Council welcomes the proposed introduction of the new Thameslink service in 2018 to Maidstone East along with the new rolling stock that it will bring.

The Borough Council also welcomes the potential for a reduced service time from Maidstone East to Victoria but calls for this to be made a clear requirement of the new franchise.

Additional services that should form an integral requirement of the new franchise award

- In addition to the Thameslink improvements, the Borough Council calls for the introduction of direct AM and PM Peak Weekday services to and from Cannon Street and London Bridge and Maidstone East. The services that were withdrawn in 2009 operated off-peak and at weekends and were cancelled due to a 'lack of demand'.
- The HS1 service from Maidstone West should become an all-day service moving from the current 3 trains to London AM and 3 from London PM, service.
- Consideration being given to more trains on the Chatham-line stopping at Swanley to allow a greater choice of connection for passengers on the Maidstone East Line.

Medway Valley Line

The Medway Valley Line has seen a considerable increase in patronage in recent years since the formation of the Community Rail Partnership. The line has potential for further growth with the possible increased HS1 services referred to above, but also through better connectivity with the communities in the south west of the Borough and also relating to tourism along the Medway Valley.

- The Borough Council would wish to see, particularly in the event that the Syngenta Site at Yalding is redeveloped and in partnership with the developer, improvements at Yalding station not only for commuters but also reflecting its tourism potential. The station is currently unmanned and closed-up and is not a welcoming place, neither are both platforms accessible to all.
- Additional parking provision and better public transport connections/information at Maidstone West should also be explored.
- The provision of additional halts (which would largely be beneficial for local commuting to and from Maidstone itself) along the Medway Valley line should be considered.

Accessibility/Customer service

- The new franchise should include a requirement for improvements to ensure all platforms at Maidstone West and Barracks, East Farleigh

Harrietsham, Hollingbourne, Headcorn, Marden and Yalding stations are fully accessible and that disabled travellers can 'turn-up-and-go' without booking in advance.

- Where stations are unmanned, consideration given to them being re-staffed as boarded-up unmanned stations are not welcoming or inherently safe places.

Major station improvement

- The new franchise should include a firm commitment to investment in the redevelopment of Maidstone East station as part of a wider area and public transport interchange improvement project.

5 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 The next steps will be for the report which comprises the Borough Council's response to be forwarded to TfL before the comment deadline of 18 March 2016 and also to forward the Borough Council's response on the KCC/KMEP consultation to Kent County Council.

6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The promotion and delivery of a good rail service will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Financial	No implications directly arising from this report	Paul Riley Head of Finance & Resources and Finance Team
Staffing	No implications directly arising from this report	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Legal	No implications directly arising from this report	Kate Jardine Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services

Equality Impact Needs Assessment	Promotion and increased use of the rail network will take account of the needs of all groups including those without access to a car.	[Policy & Information Manager]
Environmental/Sustainable Development	Promotion and increased use of the rail network may encourage a reduction in the use of the private car.	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development and Paul Riley Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development

7 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: 'A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East.'
- Appendix 2: Kent County Council draft consultation on the new Southeastern Franchise

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East

Working in partnership to improve services and support growth

MAYOR OF LONDON



Department
for Transport



TRANSPORT
FOR LONDON
EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS

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A message from the Secretary of State for Transport and the Mayor of London

We've come a long way since the days of the steam engine and the Victorian pioneers who laid the foundations of the railway network as we know it today. The phenomenal growth of London and the South East over the past 150 years or so is without doubt directly linked to the development enabled by our railways.

Today, our trains and stations help to carry a tremendous number of people from A to B. But as anyone who travels regularly in or around the region will observe, our railway is under huge pressure. London's population is set to rise from 8.6 million today to 10 million by 2030, while the population in the adjacent travel-to-work areas of southeast and eastern England is expected to increase too from 15 to 17 million over the same period.¹

Consequently the number of passengers on the region's transport system is growing very quickly. Given that job growth predominates in the cities which are better served by rail, action is needed now to ensure our rail network can continue to support jobs, apprenticeships and housing across the country, as well as enhance our quality of life.

While there have been considerable successes, incidents such as the disruption caused at London Bridge last year show that we need a much more joined-up approach to delivery. When completed, the London Bridge project and the wider Thameslink capacity upgrade that it supports will be a huge boost to the entire region. Additional capacity through the heart of London will enable faster access to jobs and leisure opportunities, and additional capacity at the station itself will in turn allow greater numbers of trains to be run throughout the wider network in Kent, Sussex and beyond.

This demonstrates the simple fact that our rail network is a shared resource – it carries huge flows of people in and out of the capital to the surrounding region, and it also caters for local journeys to and from regional centres outside of London such as Cambridge, Tunbridge Wells, Brighton, Reading, Basingstoke, and Southampton.

1. Office for National Statistics



Patrick McLoughlin
Secretary of State for Transport



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

For them to thrive, access to jobs and housing has to improve. At the same time the level of customer service provided has to match the expectations of people travelling on the services.

Journeys across the region need to be seamless, and the barriers that prevent people from travelling easily, such as the complexity of the ticketing system or variety of service standards, need to be addressed.

We have seen through the introduction of smart cards such as Oyster in the London area how this allows customers to travel when they want and with confidence that they will pay

the cheapest fare. The launch of contactless payment directly from bank cards across London has further reinforced our position as a world leader in this area.

Such improvements are, like the journeys they support, fundamentally local. London remains at the heart of the national rail network, with 63 per cent of all journeys starting or finishing in London. The busiest London terminal, Waterloo, has nearly 99 million passenger trips a year and has seen nearly 60 per cent growth over the last decade.² This is a national network, but a regional growth story.

2. Office of Rail and Road

This Government has set a bold path for ensuring that decisions affecting infrastructure that supports local and regional growth are placed in the hands of those who know the needs of that region best and are able to deliver the local jobs and housing that our economic growth depends on. Before Christmas the announcement of £1.2bn of investment in rail services in the north of England, delivered by the national franchising system but to be managed locally through Rail North, shows what can be achieved.

In the South East the success of the c2c franchise and the London Overground are examples upon which we need to build.

In this prospectus we set out a path towards a joined-up regional approach, where local authorities inside and outside London can have a greater say in the way in which services are planned and specified by both the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL). In doing so we recognise that there needs to be a greater partnership between our two organisations to ensure that we can collectively get the best from the great legacy of Victorian rail infrastructure which the region enjoys.

Under the published national franchising programme, all the major franchises in the region are due to be retendered and specified over the next five years. In total these services carry 740 million of the region's rail passengers every year.

We propose to form a partnership between TfL and the DfT to provide strategic direction for the specification and management of future train operator contracts and to provide a place where all local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and other local bodies can have a direct input to how passenger services are improved.

The opportunity presented by this sequence of franchise renewals is vast. The need to support local growth through better rail services is a high priority for all. We are pleased to embark on this joint endeavour and look forward to an exciting new chapter in the history of our railways.

Patrick McLoughlin: Secretary of State for Transport
Boris Johnson: Mayor of London

Executive summary

- With growth across London and the South East set to continue, our rail network is essential to providing extra housing and jobs, as well as enhancing people's quality of life
- Parts of the network have been transformed – for example the DfT's c2c franchise and TfL's London Overground. Large scale infrastructure investments such as the Thameslink programme and Crossrail are underway
- However across our region much more needs to be done to ensure that the specification and management of rail passenger services fully reflect local priorities for growth, and deliver better outcomes for local people. And we need to make best use of our shared railway infrastructure
- To address these issues, we propose to establish a partnership between the DfT and TfL that will provide joined-up strategic direction for the specification and management of rail passenger services across London and the South East
- New mechanisms will be established to enable LEPs and local authorities to input to the specification of these passenger services, providing a stronger voice for local people and helping to leverage local investment to drive growth
- Three key principles for success will form the starting point of the partnership's work on the specification of future services in the South East region:
 1. More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity – to support growth, carry more people and help address crowding
 2. Greater reliability for all passengers – putting excellent performance at the heart of train operator contracts
 3. High standards of customer service – including more integrated information, fares and ticketing, as well as weekend and night services and a more accessible network
- This proposal includes the transfer of responsibility from the DfT to TfL for inner suburban rail services that operate mostly or wholly within Greater London, as current franchises fall due for renewal. The DfT will continue to be responsible for outer suburban services. The partnership will ensure that all the region's passengers benefit from a joined-up approach
- As we progress this proposal we are keen to hear views and suggestions from local authorities, LEPs, elected representatives and other stakeholders. Questions are posed throughout the prospectus, and information about how to get in touch is on page 36

Introduction

Rail's role in London and the South East's success

A modern, high-performing rail network is fundamentally important to our economy, environment and quality of life.

Rail has played a vital role in the emergence of London as a world city at the heart of a thriving region – a huge asset for the UK in the competitive global economy. Journeys on rail-based transport in London have almost doubled in the last 25 years. Growth has been particularly strong outside traditional peak hours, as London's wealth of leisure, retail and cultural attractions draws visitors from across the UK and overseas. Major towns and cities outside London such as Cambridge, Brighton and Reading have seen similar trends.

Businesses have chosen to locate in London and the South East because the extensive rail network provides access to the largest potential labour force, customer base and supply chain in Europe. The railways need to enable people to move easily to, from and within the Capital, and to and from key regional economic centres as well.

Over 90%

of all office development in London since 2000 has occurred within 500 metres of a station

2 million

extra people have been accommodated in London since 1980 without building on green belt land, partly thanks to rail

31%

of the UK's Gross Value Added is generated in London and the South East

4x

as many rail trips are made by residents of London and the South East each year than by those living elsewhere in the UK





Because rail is so critical to accessing employment, people also want to live close to stations with excellent rail services. This means better railways are fundamental to building more homes and supporting the growing population.

Rail is central to quality of life too. It enables access to social and leisure opportunities, reduces carbon emissions and air pollution, and helps reduce congestion on the road network. Transporting freight by rail creates economies in goods distribution, helps remove trucks from the roads and relieves congestion.

London is growing at an unprecedented rate and substantial growth is expected over the wider South East.

There is a huge opportunity for local, regional and national economies to grow, creating new jobs and housing. But the region's full potential will not be realised without the right infrastructure and transport services in place.

Recent years have seen good progress in modernising parts of the rail network; but sometimes opportunities have been

missed through fragmentation of decision making and a failure to recognise the vital role local priorities play in securing development and growth.

With the region's railways under more pressure than ever, we can't afford to focus only on the needs of London or the South East individually, ignoring the reality that the economy of the region as a whole has to work together.

Our railways play a critical role in joining the region together – commuters coming in and out of London are vital for London's economy, but also critical in the local economies in the areas where they live, supporting town centres and regional services.

That same rail infrastructure supports local journeys from within London, especially south of the river where the London Underground system is not as widespread.

We have also seen over recent years the growth of regional centres, attracting their own jobs and growth and demanding regional rail journeys which don't focus purely on radial flows to and from London.

Our rail system has to accommodate all these needs. The customers of the railways aren't just customers of one rail company or local area, they often make journeys across our region, accessing different transport services within London and further afield.

A work in progress

Recent growth has been possible because of major improvements to many parts of the rail network.

On the National Rail network, competition between operators for contracts to run services has brought innovation. The industry has worked together to provide more capacity, with longer trains on a number of routes. The launch of domestic services on High Speed 1 has cut journey times from Kent by as much as 50 per cent and many of the large stations, such as Blackfriars, King's Cross, St. Pancras, Reading and Gatwick Airport, have been rebuilt or are about to be improved.

The high performance of and good customer satisfaction with c2c, the operator of services from London to South Essex, shows the value of continuous improvement and what could potentially be achieved on other parts of the DfT-sponsored rail network. The modernisation of London Underground, funded by both TfL and Government, has led to world-class train frequencies, shorter journey times, increased capacity on modernised lines and significant reductions in delays. Another success story is the collaboration between TfL and the rest of the rail industry to create London Overground, which recently expanded to include more routes in northeast London.



c2c

On this route franchising has delivered improvements through significant investment in services and passenger facilities. National Express, the route's franchisee since 2000, has established a reputation as a highly regarded modern train operator, achieving 97.1 per cent punctuality last year, the highest of all the UK's train operators. A new 15 year franchise was awarded to National Express in 2014.

296
new
vehicles

Introduced a fleet of 296 modern air-conditioned vehicles, and will increase the fleet by 68 vehicles to provide for growth



Introduced its own smartcard this year in addition to accepting Oyster within the TfL area, and beyond to parts of Essex

86%
customer
satisfaction

Achieved a 86 per cent satisfaction score in the most recent National Passenger Survey



Is introducing better compensation for delays, including automatic smartcard credits

London Overground

Launched in 2007 London Overground is an orbital rail network for the Capital, formed from existing railways, including some that were previously dilapidated or disused



Growth in ridership

50%

Cut in delays

Ridership is up, delays are down and customers have gone from being among the least satisfied in the UK to among the most. Fare evasion is almost eradicated. These improving trends began immediately after launch, and before the effect of capital investment in new trains and infrastructure was felt

London Overground's success is down to effective partnership working between TfL, Network Rail and the train operator London Overground Railway Operations Limited (LOROL), plus the significant investment in the route

The contract with LOROL includes clear financial incentives to provide a consistently reliable and high-quality service

Local knowledge means TfL can invest in improvements that will best meet customers' needs

A partnership approach

We now need to develop a new partnership approach to oversee the specification of passenger services on our railway, to secure London's world city status and the economic benefits for the South East and the whole of the UK.

This prospectus sets out proposals for that partnership, which will provide strategic direction for the region's rail passenger services.

The partnership will be between DfT and TfL, working closely with train operators, Network Rail and the supply chain. Crucially it will provide a forum for all LEPs, local authorities and other local and regional bodies to have a say in the specification and management of rail services.

There is an intrinsic link between the frequency and quality of those services and the infrastructure upon which they operate, which is largely the responsibility of Network Rail.

The funding and structure of Network Rail is currently being reviewed by Nicola Shaw, Chief Executive of HS1. Major investments throughout the region are being reviewed by the National Infrastructure Commission.

This prospectus doesn't therefore commit to specific infrastructure proposals nor does it discuss changes to accountability for infrastructure. It focuses on the procurement, specification and management of the railway operators providing the day-to-day service to customers.

By providing a local and regional focus it will, however, better link up local development potential and the railway investment upon which it often depends.

Bringing together different funding sources with the specification and management of service delivery will see quicker delivery and greater certainty of outcomes.

10 million

people living in London by 2030

1/4
London and the South East
make up around a quarter
of the total UK population

Question 1

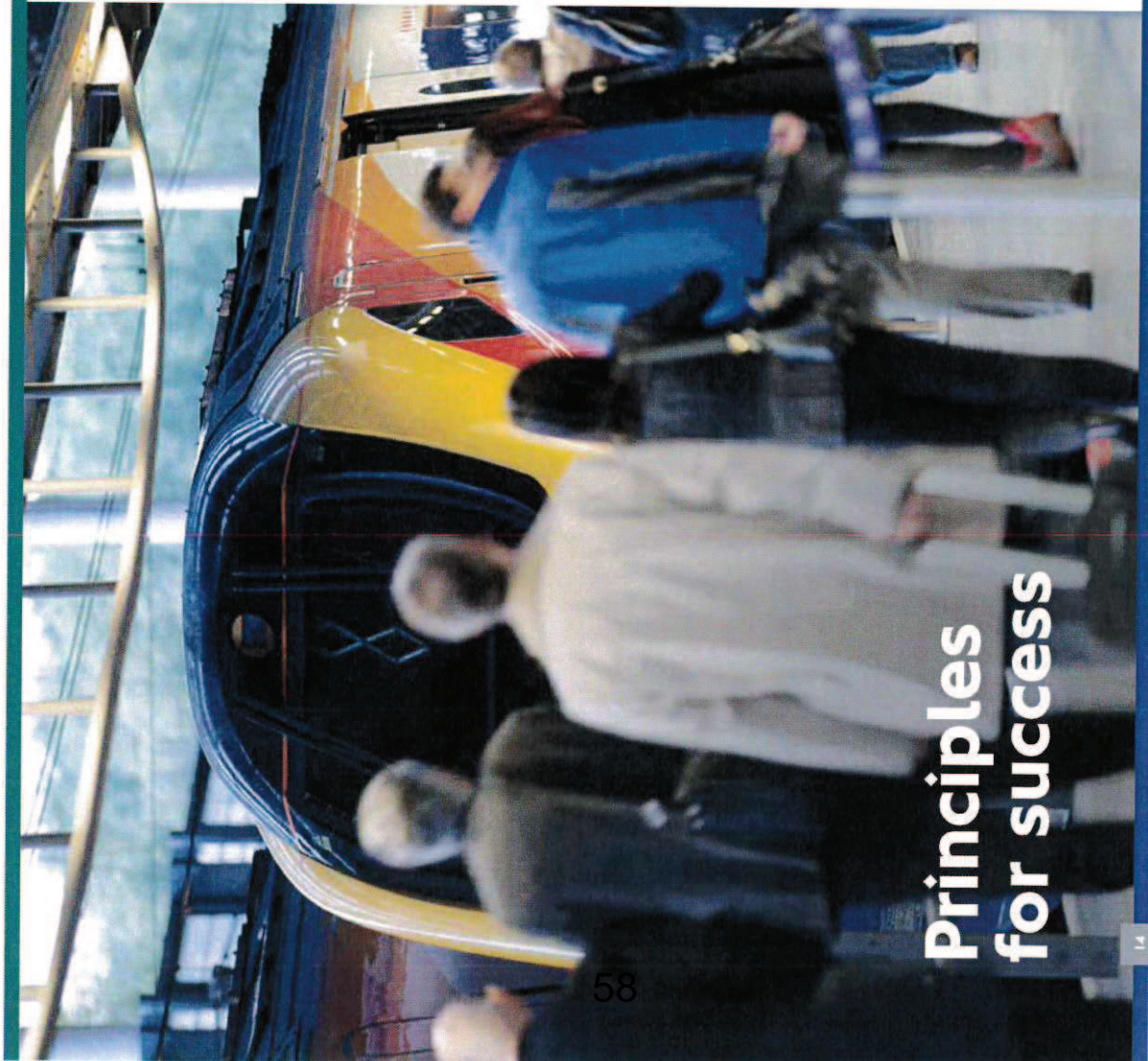
Do you agree with the principle of a partnership to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East?



Metropolitan line extension

An example of what an inclusive partnership can bring is the Metropolitan line extension, formerly known as the Croxley Rail Link. To be completed by the end of 2020, this new 5½km £300 million rail link will connect the Metropolitan line to Watford Junction and add four additional stations to the London Underground network, two of which are entirely new.

It is funded jointly by the LEP, Watford Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, the DfT and TfL and will be built by TfL and Network Rail in partnership. Services for the expected 1.6 million users will be specified and delivered by TfL as part of the London Underground network.



Principles for success

58

The following principles will guide the partnership's approach to rail passenger services, to support new housing and jobs and meet the needs of the future. They take as a given the need to invest to improve quality and capacity of outer suburban services as well as in the inner suburban network.

1. More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity should be provided wherever possible. This should recognise the different needs of the shared users of the railway, for example the need to improve fast longer distance services to support commuting and regional growth and the need for frequent stopping services to provide a 'metro style' local service within London. Investment in high performing rolling stock will facilitate better outcomes.

In delivering to these principles we will make the best possible use of new sources of funding, to reduce the cost to Government and taxpayers.

This includes the reinvestment of passenger fares in higher service standards and leveraging private sector finance through investment in new rolling stock. It could also include using the value in TfL and Network Rail property in and around stations or contributions from developers where improvements in transport unlocks housing and office developments.

2. Greater reliability for all passengers is essential where different rail services are sharing infrastructure, and services will be planned and specified to ensure an increase in performance and customer outcomes for all.

The partnership will take into account local views from authorities, LEPs and others across the region. It will provide a transparent mechanism for choices to be made and local investment to ensure local outcomes are delivered.

3. High standards of customer service should be common to all services, regardless of whether they are specified by TfL or DfT. This includes, where possible, integrated fares and information, plus an improved travel environment, better accessibility and staff available to help.

I. More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity

The areas south of the Thames are home to millions of people, and they include key opportunity areas as set out in the Mayor's London Plan. The plan indicates 390,000 more residents¹ and 200,000 new jobs² are expected in south London by 2031 and for existing and new communities to flourish, rail services need to improve.

Owing to the way the Capital and its transport network have developed over time, south London relies especially heavily on National Rail services.

With significant investment in projects such as Thameslink and platform extensions on a number of lines, some of the improvements we urgently need are already happening.

There are, however, opportunities to go further and explore the option of metro-style frequencies (at least four trains per hour and ideally six) on other lines. We have termed this the London Suburban Metro, and more details are on page 25.

While infrastructure investment is critical, so too is the management of the train services. The length of time a train is stopped at each station and at the terminal stations is a key constraint on how many trains are able to run over the tracks.

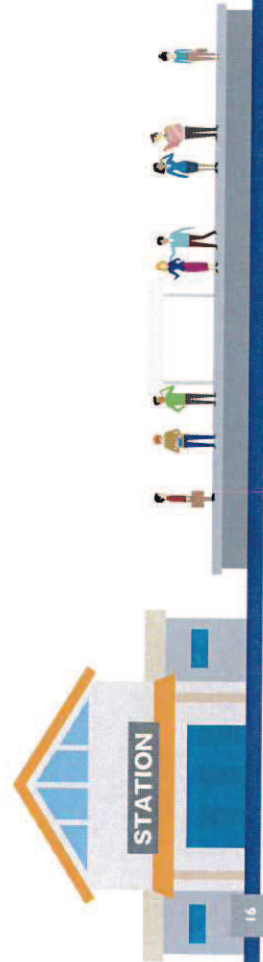
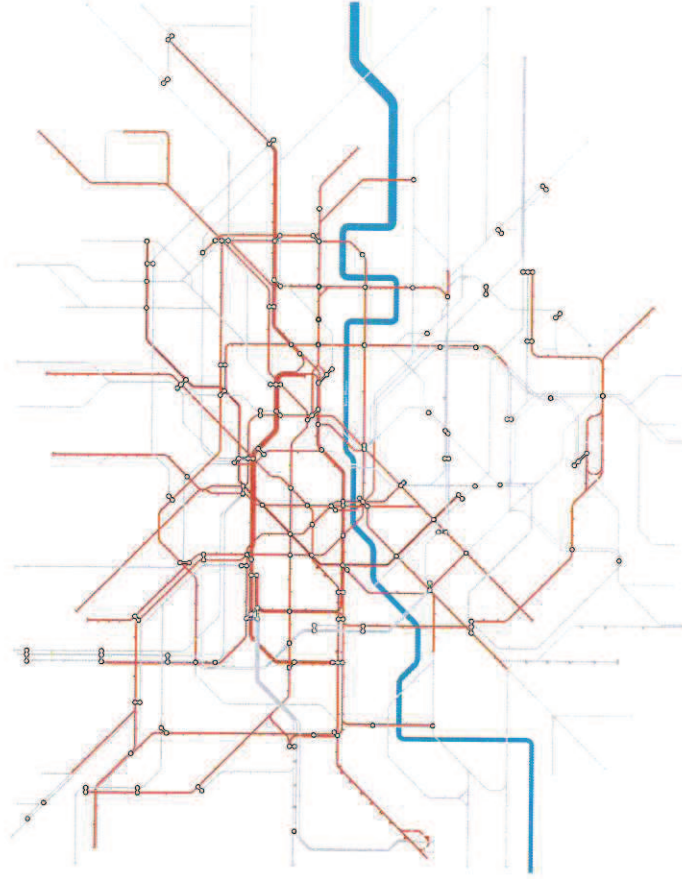
The use of dispatch staff to assist customers boarding and alighting trains is a common sight on the London Underground and at some of the region's busier national rail stations. Greater investment in staff can help to ensure the overall reliability of higher frequency services.

Through these sorts of initiatives we can seek to improve frequencies and reliability for inner and outer suburban services alike. The proposed partnership set out in this prospectus represents the first step towards realising this potential.

1. GLA 2013 SHLAA Capped Population Projections 2015 - 2031
2. The London Plan 2015

Frequency of rail service is variable across the Capital

- Lines with a consistent London terminus and stopping pattern, and stopping trains running at least every 10 minutes throughout the day
- Lines with an inconsistent or infrequent stopping pattern (less often than every 10 minutes) throughout the day





2. Greater reliability for all passengers

The allocation of paths for different train operators on shared infrastructure is the responsibility of Network Rail and is regulated by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). Network Rail is responsible for ensuring that the timetables for all operators and freight companies work together to ensure a reliable railway for all.

The specifications for passenger services set by DfT and TfL can also help improve reliability. Delays caused by one operator can spread to others, exacerbating the disruption. Age and reliability of infrastructure, availability of drivers, guards and station staff all have an impact on overall reliability.

Indeed, people all across the railway system

- train drivers, conductors, guards, platform staff, signallers and our customers themselves
- have a part to play in keeping the railway moving as we seek to carry ever increasing numbers of passengers.

The partnership will work to ensure high standards of reliability are at the heart of the specification and management of train operator contracts. This will include modernisation of rolling stock and depot facilities where appropriate.

3. High standards of customer service

There is considerable variation in the experience passengers have when using the railways. Satisfaction scores, as measured by the independent passenger body Transport Focus, differ widely between different rail operators for attributes such as information provision, the condition of stations and staff availability. We want to see improvements and are committed to using our respective train service contracts to ensure passengers experience a high-quality service, every time they travel.

There are good opportunities to better integrate TfL and DfT-sponsored services in areas such as real-time information and arrangements for access for disabled people. For example, on some routes passengers who use wheelchairs can turn up and go, whereas elsewhere they still have to book journeys in advance.

Fares across the region are not standardised and the price passengers pay depends on the service they are travelling on.

Today, there are three different fares tariffs – for TfL journeys, National Rail journeys, and trips made across the two networks, including from outside London.

Working with the train companies, we will explore the potential to develop a more closely integrated fares structure so that, in London, customers would pay the same for journeys over the same zones, irrespective of the services they are travelling on. Given the financial pressures that face both TfL and DfT this may take time. Outside London, we will continue to explore ways of simplifying fares valid across the two networks as much as possible.

Question 2

Do you agree with the principles that the partnership will work to? Are there any specific issues that have not been captured?

Governance and timing

The partnership that we propose would cover the train operator contracts specified by the DfT and TfL.

The partnership will have a responsibility to take into account the views of local authorities, LEPs and other local organisations as part of its work to recommend the specification and management arrangements to the Secretary of State for Transport or the Mayor of London depending on the rail service in question.

To ensure clear lines of accountability, passenger train operators will be appointed by either the DfT or TfL, with the contracts conforming to the principles established by the partnership. In line with the principles of devolution set out for Rail North, greater local accountability is proposed.

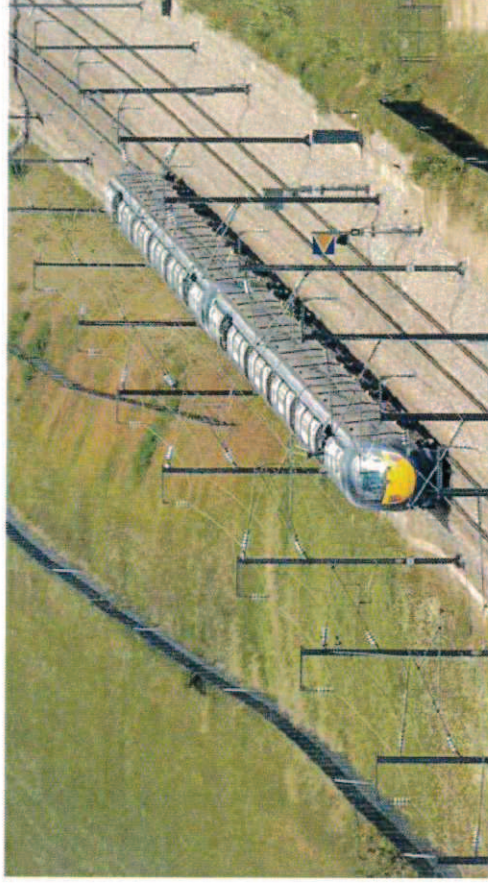
Our proposals include the transfer of responsibility from the DfT to TfL for inner suburban rail services that operate mostly or wholly within Greater London, as current franchises fall due for renewal. The DfT will continue to be responsible for outer suburban services.

The partnership will ensure that all the region's passengers benefit from a joined-up approach.

All services will have the benefit of greater input from local authorities, including the ability to specify service enhancements depending on local priorities and funding arrangements.

Timing of changes

The published national timetable for the procurement of new train operator contracts defines the timescales for any changes to specification or accountability. It is envisaged that the partnership will be established in time to provide input to the procurement processes set out on the opposite page.



Timeline

The timetable for the next phase of new train operator contracts in London and the South East is as follows:

2017

Services across the South West of the region currently operating under the **South Western** franchise

2018

Services under the current **South Eastern** franchise from Victoria, Charing Cross, Blackfriars and Cannon Street

2021 (or later if the extension in the contract is exercised)

Services to the south of London from Victoria and London Bridge, plus northern services from King's Cross and Moorgate currently operating as part of the **Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern** franchise

As set out previously, as part of the detailed specification of these contracts it is envisaged that responsibility for the inner suburban services will transfer from DfT to TfL, working together within the partnership.

In the case of the new South Western franchise it is envisaged that bidders will be asked to produce plans for a separable business unit for inner London services already set out in the franchise competition prospectus published in November 2015, potentially to be transferred to TfL in 2020 once capacity works at Waterloo are complete.

As is already established practice, appropriate arrangements will be agreed between TfL and DfT ahead of these transfers to ensure that the full range of issues are addressed. These include the effects on railway staff and infrastructure, and on both TfL's and the DfT's budgets. When services are transferred, TfL and DfT will agree arrangements to compensate for changes in the levels of financial premium or support in the services they are responsible for.

The partnership will work to ensure that any transfer of services ensures the following:

- **No detrimental effect on fares**, either at stations served by TfL services or at other stations outside London
- **No adverse impacts on the frequency, journey times or stopping patterns** of longer distance services to and from London. Extra capacity on peak local London services would only be added if there is no negative impact on longer distance services

The arrangements for each area will be subject to a decision by the Secretary of State at the appropriate time, taking into account value for money and other appropriate considerations.

Question 3

Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

Question 4

What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs could take?

Question 5

Do you agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TfL, as set out here?



What can be achieved?

1 More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity

To achieve significant changes in capacity, infrastructure investment will be required. Investment planned in Control Period 5 provides for some major enhancements, such as the Thameslink programme and Crossrail.

Infrastructure allowing for longer trains is in place or planned on a number of routes, including Essex Thameside, Wessex, the Brighton Mainline, and the Uckfield line.

Significant enhancements will be made to London Waterloo including lengthening of platforms and bringing into use additional platforms previously used for Eurostar services. Essex Thameside will also have extra trains.

New direct services from London Marylebone will be extended to Oxford station following the completion of the new link line.

The STAR project will introduce a third track between Stratford, Tottenham Hale and Angel Road to allow higher frequencies. Capacity will also be doubled between Barking and Gospel Oak by extending trains on this route from two to four cars following the electrification of the line.

The partnership will work to ensure that the benefits of these major infrastructure enhancements are translated into passenger outcomes through the specification and management of the train operator contracts.

This will include the case for investments to improve reliability and capacity through that process such as new, more capacious trains, greater levels of platform staffing as appropriate to improve reliability and greater operator focus on partnership working with Network Rail. That should reduce the likelihood of infrastructure failure and speed up the recovery of services in the event of an incident.

Services for Greater London

The creation of a London Suburban Metro is a proposal that would bring rapid, metro-style services to areas with lower service frequencies – as London Overground has done elsewhere – and help even out the discrepancies.

The network would be simple and easy to understand, with consistent stopping patterns and clear, identifiable routes augmented in the peaks with additional trains.

Enhancing infrastructure to enable extra trains to run will reduce waiting times, providing a service at least every 15 minutes (i.e. 'turn-up-and-go') every day. Such enhancements will be considered for implementation in the medium term. If the London Suburban Metro is taken

forward, more than 80 per cent of stations could have a train every 15 minutes, up from 67 per cent today.

As a result of better signalling, faster turnarounds at London termini and other improvements, south London inner suburban services via Clapham Junction could potentially increase from 14 per hour to up to 24 per hour. Frequency increases could also be possible on routes to southeast London and Kent.

A London Suburban Metro

A metro network for London offers great potential and the partnership will look at options such as:

- **New metro-style, high-performing trains** with better acceleration and braking to speed up journeys. More and wider doors, plus more standing space, would allow faster boarding and alighting
- Putting forth proposals for consideration in the national planning processes such as **improvements to track and signalling**, particularly at junctions, to allow more trains to run and at faster speeds in certain places. In the medium term this could mean substantial upgrades at some long-standing bottlenecks, especially those in south London
- **Consistent stopping patterns and clear, identifiable routes**, to make it easy to plan and make journeys

A London Suburban Metro will require significant investment and take some years to achieve. The partnership will work to identify options for funding this.



Hand-in-hand with the London Suburban Metro must go improvements to services that connect the Capital and the wider South East. A guiding principle is that train paths used by outer-London services would be unaffected by the London Suburban Metro and options to increase their capacity will be explored too.

Indeed, improvements on inner suburban routes will free up space for more and faster services to and from the rest of the South East. For example, in the long term, constructing Crossrail 2 would move inner suburban services onto new tracks, potentially leaving the main lines into London clearer for enhanced services from Surrey, Hampshire, Hertfordshire and Essex.

The Thameslink Programme

This project will upgrade existing lines to transform north-south travel through London from late 2018. Passengers will benefit from improved connections providing more travel options to more destinations. It is being sponsored by DfT, working with Network Rail, Govia Thameslink Railway, Southeastern and Siemens.

- **Connects Cambridgeshire to Kent, Gatwick Airport and Sussex, via central London**
- **Improved cross-London connectivity by improving peak time connections from London Bridge to St. Pancras International, and intermediate stations**

- **Improved capacity, accessibility and air conditioning provided by new, longer trains on many routes, with the first trains coming into service this year**
- **Services to run every two to three minutes in each direction into and across London at peak times**
- **A new transport hub at Farringdon connecting Thameslink with Crossrail and the Tube**
- **Redevelopment of Blackfriars and Farringdon (ready for Crossrail) is already completed, and London Bridge is under way.**

2

Greater reliability for all passengers

Through close working and focus, we are confident that a new joined-up approach will yield reliability benefits.

The c2c and London Overground operations are two of the best performing train operators nationally. Both have benefited from close working with their sponsor organisations, DfT and TfL respectively.

ensuring that these set the benchmark for all train operator contracts under the partnership's remit.

If all such services were to, as a minimum, achieve 95.5 per cent PPM then this would equate to 50 million fewer delayed journeys each year, than today.

Our ambition is to continue to focus on improvements to high performing routes.



High standards of customer service

Improving a customer's journey is an end in itself, but the benefits are multiplied with consistency of service across the whole transport network because it makes multi-operator or multi-modal journeys seamless.

The partnership will work to define common, minimum standards for rail services across the whole region and explore the best route to achieve these improvements.

Getting customer service right relies on both people and technology. Visible and available station staffing is essential, as is technology that helps staff and customers on the move.

Information

All the information a passenger needs, whether static or real-time, should be coordinated and easily accessible for their whole journey across a range of different channels.

Customers need to have the tools to be in control of their own journeys, through WiFi and free open data feeds that bring travel advice directly to mobile devices. As technology and customers' needs evolve, systems must keep pace. This could include the ability to send passengers personalised real-time information while they are en route, allowing them to avoid unnecessary delays.

Weekend and night services

Lifestyles have changed over the last 20 years. We want to consider how Sunday rail services can be further enhanced so they are more comparable to the level provided on Saturdays. London is already a 24-hour city, with passenger numbers on London Underground on Friday and Saturday nights up by 70 per cent since 2000.

Investment in the Underground is enabling TfL to introduce a 24-hour Tube, and we should investigate the opportunities to provide night services on London inner suburban services, while allowing Network Rail sufficient time to maintain the infrastructure.

Accessibility

The rail network should be accessible for everyone. We want, as quickly as possible, to move to a railway where disabled passengers are able to turn-up-and-go like everybody else, with no requirement to book ahead. When it opens Crossrail will be fully step-free between the street and the platform, and many more stations on all parts of the rail network are benefiting from step-free access and other accessibility enhancements.

Within six months of being launched **one in six** journeys on rail and Tube were being made using **contactless**



Fares and ticketing

Paying for travel should be simpler and more integrated. Oyster and contactless payment are available across the Capital and smartcard ticketing based on the DfT's 'ITSO' system already operates in parts of the South East too. ITSO is also accepted in London, and the objective should be for new ticketing technology to be fully available across London and the South East. When customers are entitled to a refund, this should be credited automatically to their smartcard, Oyster or contactless card.

Travel environment

Clean and refurbished stations create a welcoming ambience for customers, encouraging use of public transport and reducing crime and the fear of crime. The role of stations is changing and they are increasingly seen as a focal point of communities. High-quality retail and community facilities, plus other services such as parcel lockers can use surplus station space. This will enhance customers' journeys. Third party funding also presents an opportunity for coordinated investment in station facilities.

Formula for success



All day station staffing on the intensively used parts of the network



Movement towards a simpler and more integrated fare tariff over time



Fully integrated travel advice and information



WiFi and free open data feeds that bring travel advice directly to customers



Surplus station space put to uses that benefit passengers



A rail network that is accessible for everyone



Clean and refurbished stations

Question 6

Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?



Conclusion:

A world-class railway for the future

The outcomes set out in this prospectus will support future growth, more homes and jobs, and sustain London's position as a world city at the heart of a thriving region. Led by a new partnership our rail network must change and modernise more quickly if it is to be fit for the 21st century.

The network needs to expand to provide better connections across the whole region and passengers should increasingly benefit from turn-up-and-go services. Journey information and ticketing should be easy and seamless, while helpful staff should offer excellent service. In addition, integrated design, shops and other facilities should strengthen the connection between stations and the communities they serve.

Greater local accountability will unlock investment from the wider public and private sectors. Local authorities, LEPs and others will have an important role to play in inputting to specifications for future train operator contracts and local funding of schemes to generate jobs and homes.

When it comes to appointing and managing passenger train operators, we intend that TfL will take responsibility for more inner

suburban services while the DfT will remain accountable for outer suburban services. The precise boundaries will take time to agree, but we want to start those discussions as soon as we can, and in good time for transfer of South Eastern inner suburban services when the current franchise ends. Working with local authorities and other stakeholders we will agree clear safeguards about future services for passengers from outside London.

The creation of this joint initiative between DfT and TfL allowing greater input to the services from all across the region heralds a new era of partnership between national, regional and local government. It will provide strategic direction for London and the South East's railways and a strong voice in favour of the investment that will be necessary for some of the goals proposed in this prospectus.

Planned contract schedules for London and the South East operators

Appendix II:

Possible improvements in support of a London Suburban Metro

	South West London	South Central London	South East London	North (from Moorgate)
Current service levels (excluding fast services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60tph to Waterloo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14tph into Victoria • 2tph to West London • 12tph to London Bridge • 4tph to Blackfriars/Thameslink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8tph to Victoria • 39tph to Charing Cross/Cannon Street (including semi-fast) • 7tph to Blackfriars/Thameslink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 12tph in the peak • 6tph off-peak
Short term				
Planned improvements during current franchises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued rollout of 10-car trains through around 150 extra carriages • Re-opening of Waterloo International for additional Windsor line trains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New rolling stock including around 1140 new air-conditioned Thameslink carriages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Crossrail interchange at Abbey Wood • More rolling stock – around 92 extra carriages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moorgate open seven days a week • New rolling stock, 25 new 6-car trains • Additional 3 trains in morning and evening peaks
Medium term: what could be delivered				
Potential improvements under new train operator contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability improvements • All-day staffing, integrated fares, station deep cleans and refreshes, train refurbishment • Off-peak service enhancements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability improvements • All-day staffing, integrated fares, station deep cleans and refreshes, train refurbishment • Off-peak service enhancements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability improvements • All-day staffing, integrated fares, station deep cleans and refreshes, train refurbishment • Off-peak service enhancements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability improvements • All-day staffing, integrated fares, station deep cleans and refreshes, train refurbishment • Off-peak service enhancements – 8 trains per hour

	South West London	South Central London	South East London	North (from Moorgate)
Long term: what could be delivered				
Potential further improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded stations at Wimbledon, Clapham Junction and more • Crossrail-type high capacity trains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New interchanges at Streatham and Brockley • Upgraded stations such as East Croydon, West Croydon/Wallington • Better signalling for faster journeys and higher throughput, new high-capacity trains on inner suburban routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New interchange at Brockley • Potential for other upgrades like Lewisham hub • Better signalling, new high-capacity trains on inner suburban routes • 12-car operation as the norm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential re-signalling • Potential Automatic Train Operation
Total end result: service / capacity enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90tph (including Crossrail 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South London Metro • Trains every 2-3 minutes through Balham, 7-8 minutes through Peckham and every 3 minutes through Forest Hill • Consistent, easier-to-understand 'lines' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocation of capacity released by possible Bakerloo line extension being developed by TfL • Service from Lewisham to central London increases from 23tph to over 70tph including Bakerloo and DLR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further increases in peak and off-peak services

More information and feedback

The DfT, Mayor of London and TfL are interested to hear views on the ideas set out in this prospectus – in particular the six questions set out in the prospectus.

To discuss the proposals in more detail, seek further information or provide feedback, please contact us by 18 March 2016 at railprospectus@tfl.gov.uk



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Windsor House
42-50 Victoria Street
London, SW1H 0TL

Department for Transport
Great Minster House
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January 2016

tfl.gov.uk | dft.gov.uk

Kent County Council draft consultation on the New Southeastern Franchise

For KMEP Members: December 2015



Following the presentation made to KMEP Members on 14 September 2015, Kent County Council, with support for Medway Council, has prepared this consultation document in order **to seek the opinion of KMEP members** throughout the county on the New Southeastern franchise. These views will inform the official responses which Kent County Council and Medway Council will prepare for submission to the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2016.

There will be significant **background growth in rail travel** on which Network Rail would be expected to advise as a key component in their concurrent **Kent Route Study**. This will determine the outputs required, and the funding submission to support them, during Network Rail's Control Period 6 (CP6) (2019–2024).

Significant **growth in housing and employment** is expected by 2031, both within Kent and Medway and in neighbouring counties. The councils are particularly concerned about how demand for rail travel in and through the county will grow, and how such growth can be accommodated on a network already approaching capacity. Improved connectivity to destinations, and reduction in journey times within and beyond the county, are also important to both councils.

There is a clear need to plan for the **development of the rail network** to meet the expected demand from significant planned housing and commercial growth, as set out in the county's **Growth and Infrastructure Framework**. The councils would welcome any measures that could be introduced through the course of the franchise to assist in meeting this expected demand, and would welcome the opportunity to work with the new operator on these and other schemes to improve the passenger experience.

Questionnaire Responses

Responses are invited to all the questions set out in this document, but alternatively KMEP members may prefer to provide **a brief response** setting out the main areas for development of the rail network which they deem are necessary for inclusion in the next franchise.

Summary of key issues:

- Key passenger priorities to be addressed: capacity, service-wide punctuality / reliability, quality of rolling stock
- Key service enhancements: sufficient capacity to London & neighbouring areas, including enhanced service frequency on High Speed services to Ebbsfleet, Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone and Dover, with passive provision for extension to Hastings and Bexhill in East Sussex; enhanced services on Mainline routes serving Faversham, Sittingbourne, Maidstone East line, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Sevenoaks; improved capacity on all services during evenings & weekends; ensure Metro services meet needs of Thames Gateway (Kent) area if these transfer to TfL
- Commitment from Government to invest in enhanced HS fleet with up to 26 new 6-car sets if required level of HS service is to be delivered during course of new franchise
- Commitment to participate in a new Kent Quality Rail Partnership (QRP)
- Commitment to working with existing Community Rail Partnerships (CRP)
- Improve communication including during times of disruption
- Measures to improve on board experience on congested trains
- Provision of additional seating
- Proposed station improvements, including to station buildings/platforms and forecourts
- Inclusion of proposed new station of Thanet Parkway in new franchise service specification
- Security recommendations
- Key on-board facilities
- Key aspects of service provision to be monitored
- Provision of station travel plans to facilitate sustainable access to stations
- Other issues including access & mobility, ticketing, parking, partnership working, staffing, supporting employment, franchise length/targets/name
- Provision of Smartcard ticketing and contactless payment

Q1. Please select 3 of the Transport Focus recommendations set out below which you believe require particular attention in order to improve your end to end journey? If relevant please identify the rail line to which your answer relates.

- Delivering value for money
- Providing a punctual and reliable service
- Provision of sufficient capacity, both in terms of train frequency and the availability of seating on board the train
- Effective management of disruption, especially through information to passengers
- The availability of accurate information about trains and platforms
- The comfort and adequacy of accommodation on the train, especially on longer journeys
- The availability of train and station staff
- The ease of buying the most appropriate ticket for the journey at a ticket office, online, or via a ticket machine
- The ease of access to services for passengers with reduced mobility
- Free wi-fi available on trains

Q2. Are there any examples of outstanding customer service experiences, related or unrelated to passenger rail services, to which you believe the New Southeastern franchise should aspire? If so, please provide supporting details or evidence in your answer.

Q3. Are there any changes to the current passenger rail service (i.e. number of trains per

Kent County Council consultation on New Southeastern Franchise – KMEP members' Questionnaire, December 2015

hour/day), which you feel should be considered?

If so, please explain your rationale. For example, please identify specific local factors which might influence the future level of passenger demand which you consider should be reflected in the specification.

Q4. Results indicate that rail is not the preferred mode of transport when travelling from Kent to Gatwick Airport. What improvements do you believe should be made to the rail service in order to make this your first choice of travel?

Q5. What are your preferences for service enhancements in the new franchise?

Q6. Do you have any proposals to improve Community Rail Partnerships so as to deliver more of the beneficial outcomes for passengers achieved so far? Please provide any evidence in support of your proposals.

Q7. How can the franchise operator help you better during a) planned disruption, such as engineering works and forecasted bad weather, and b) unplanned on-the-day disruption? Please provide separate answers for both cases.

Q8. To improve the railway's capability to match growth in demand with appropriate levels of capacity, an increase of carriages per train, or in the number of services per hour, would help. When travelling on a service where capacity is stretched, what opportunities do you see which would improve your on board experience?

Q9. What are your views on removing first class seating in order to provide more overall seating and reduce standing?

Q10. Are there any specific stations or services that you feel could improve on reliability or punctuality?

Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question.

Q11. What sort of improvements would you like to see prioritised at the station(s) you use? Please provide details and reasoning for these as well as the name(s) of the station(s).

Q12. Do you have any proposals to improve security and safety at stations or on trains that you would like to consider? Please provide any supporting evidence and details of any specific stations which you feel merit consideration for future improvement under these schemes.

Q13. Are there areas of improvement in customer information and engagement you would like to see before, during and after your journey?

Q14. On a scale of 1 to 9, how would you rate the following on board passenger facilities

(1= not important; 9= very important):

- Luggage holds
- Cycle storage
- Audio passenger information
- Provision of different classes of service
- Catering
- Tables
- Staff presence
- Baby changing facilities
- Plug sockets

Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question. Please also identify any other on board passenger facilities not listed above that you deem very important.

Q15. What areas of customer service within your end-to-end journey would you expect to see monitored and reported on in the new franchise, in order to improve the service quality for passengers?

Q16. Based on your experience or knowledge of rail passenger services, do you have any observations that may assist us in our commitment to have due regard to the environment, equality, social value and the family in the development of the specification of passenger services for the New Southeastern franchise?

Q17. In summary, what three aspects of your current rail journey would you like to see improved to enhance your overall travel experience?

Q18. Please indicate if there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider and that have not already been addressed in this consultation.

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

08/03/2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Response to consultation by Highways England on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke: Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That Councillors agree the proposed response set out in section 4 of the report and that it is forwarded to Highways England as the Council's formal response to the Lower Thames Crossing Consultation by the deadline of 24th March 2016

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – Whilst the proposed route does not directly affect the Borough, the improved capacity and resilience as a result of the scheme, if constructed, would assist the connectivity of the Borough with the National Strategic Road Network and potentially boost economic activity within the Borough.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee	08/03/2016

Response to consultation by Highways England on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 On 26th January 2016, Highways England launched a public consultation on a number of potential routes for a proposed Lower Thames Crossing. The consultation closes on 24th March 2016. This report considers the consultation and recommends that the proposed response set out in Section 4 of the report is forwarded to Highways England as the Council's formal response.
- 1.2 A new crossing of the River Thames is needed to reduce congestion at the existing Dartford Crossing and to provide free-flowing north-south capacity. A government priority is also to unlock economic growth and to support the development of new homes and jobs in the region.
- 1.3 Following a series of earlier studies and a public consultation in 2013, the Government commissioned Highways England to carry out a more detailed assessment of two location options for the construction of a new Thames crossing.
- 1.4 Location A was the area in the vicinity of the existing Dartford Crossings and Location C east of Gravesend.
- 1.5 The Consultation focusses on Option C (east of Gravesend) as the preferred location and considers three route options north of the Thames (in Essex) for connections to the M25 and two to the south, both east of Gravesend, connecting the new crossing to the A2/M2 corridor (a western and eastern southern link).
- 1.6 The Consultation booklet is attached at Appendix One to this report. Attached at Appendix Two is the questionnaire prepared by Highways England for the Consultation. Full details of the technical assessment (including indicative route plans) undertaken by Highways England of the options which has led to Option C as the preferred location for the crossing, can be found on the Highways England Lower Thames Consultation website by following this link.
<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/cip/lower-thames-crossing-consultation>

The full suite of technical assessment documents is also available for viewing in The Gateway.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 26th January 2016, Highways England (HE) launched a public consultation on a number of potential routes for a proposed Lower Thames Crossing. The consultation closes on 24th March 2016. This report considers

the consultation and recommends that the proposed response set out in Section 4 of the report is forwarded to HE as the Council's formal response.

- 2.2 The Dartford Crossing is the only crossing of the River Thames east of London. The first 2-lane Dartford Tunnel was opened in 1963 and a second 2-lane tunnel added in 1980 and subsequently, the 4-lane QEII Bridge was opened in 1991. Free-flow tolling via the Dart Charge was introduced in 2014.
- 2.3 There are 50million crossings a year over the crossings which are designed for 135,000 daily crossings, a capacity which is regularly met. Some 25% of customer journeys through the crossings are made by Heavy and Light Goods Vehicles and this is expected to increase to 34% by 2041. Over the course of a year, the crossings are on average partially or fully closed 300 times and it typically takes 3-5 hours following a closure for the roads to clear. Alternative routes during closures are much longer and themselves become very congested during incidents.
- 2.4 The crossings themselves are not classed as a motorway but are linked either side to the M25 London Orbital Motorway and are a key part of the National Strategic Highway Network.
- 2.5 Transport for London (TfL) is working on three other Thames Crossings in East London.
- **Silvertown Tunnel:** This was subject to public consultation in 2015 and has received approval from TfL's Board for a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to be made. This would run from the A102 Blackwall Tunnel southern approach to Silvertown on the north bank of the Thames (roughly along the line of the current cable car crossing the Thames).
 - **Gallions Reach and Belvedere:** Consultation closed on 12th February 2016. Two crossings are proposed and could be either bridges or tunnels and would connect Thamesmead to the Royal Docks and Belvedere to the A13 at Rainham. A package of potential public transport provision associated with the two crossings was also consulted on.

However, these would serve East London and local traffic rather than provide additional capacity at Dartford.

- 2.6 HE was initially tasked with looking at three broad locations for a Lower Thames Crossing at A: Dartford, B: The Swanscombe Peninsular and C; East of Gravesend. Following a Ministerial Statement on 12th December 2013; HE was asked to only consider two location options with Option B having been abandoned as it passed through the site of the proposed Paramount Park at the Swanscombe Peninsular. The options studied were therefore:
- Option A: near the existing Dartford-Thurrock crossing
 - Option C a new link connecting the A2/M2 with the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30.

- Option C also had a proposed additional variation 'C Variant' which would see the existing A229 widened and improved between the Junction 6 of the M20 and Junction 3 of the M2 (i.e. Bluebell Hill).
- 2.7 Since then HE has actively been assessing the two potential route corridors in terms of actual routes, and also the type of crossing. For each crossing location, a bridge, immersed tunnel (similar to the Medway Tunnel) and a bored tunnel were considered.
- 2.8 HE inaugurated a Stakeholder Advisory Panel at an early stage. This comprised officers from affected local authorities and organisations such as Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. A number of meeting/engagement events were held to enable HE to elicit details of potential and committed development in the study area and other matters such as environmental and historical safeguarding and air quality data to assist in potential route assessment and traffic modelling. Briefings also took place with Senior Members and officers from each authority.
- 2.9 Detailed technical studies including environmental appraisal, traffic modelling, geological appraisal, cost benefit analysis and economic assessments have been undertaken on both option corridors.
- 2.10 A crossing at Location A would not increase the resilience of the network by providing an alternative and would have a limited wider economic value as no new communities would be connect to the highway network. The studies have concluded that for Location A, the adjusted Benefit Cost Ratio would be approximately 2.3 based on the most likely costs. A crossing at Location A could increase crossing capacity by 60% in its opening year and would deliver journey benefit times of 5mins.¹ Given, however, that no new route would be involved, additional traffic would be funnelled into the existing corridor from M25 J2 northwards to J29 and incidents would still cause delays on local roads. The existing 50mph limit on the approaches would remain.
- 2.11 From an ecological aspect, Location A would be likely to have a lower impact on protected habitats and species than Location C as it is further away from sensitive areas. However, the fact that additional traffic would be attracted to the existing corridor would make existing noise and air quality problems worse.
- 2.12 During implementation of a scheme at Location A, there would be at least six years of traffic disruption which would impact the M25 and connecting roads in the wider area. This would be very likely to negate any benefits that have arisen from the introduction of the Dart Charge and HE has estimated that the cost to the economy would be approximately £390million.
- 2.13 A crossing at Location C would provide a new road and link new communities to the road network north and south of the River Thames. This could unlock significant growth and regeneration, improving access to jobs and services and increasing business opportunity. Estimates of wider

¹Highways England: Lower Thames Crossing Summary Business Case p.10 para 2.7.2

economic benefits indicate that a crossing at Location C could increase GDP by over £7billion and create 5000 new jobs.² The adjusted Benefit Cost Ratios vary from 2.9 to 3.4 depending on the most likely costs and the route selected.

- 2.14 A Crossing at Location C would have a 70mph design speed along its length. North-south crossing capacity across the river would increase by 70% in its opening year and would not affect the existing Dartford crossing corridor during its construction. It is estimated that, on opening, the new crossing would draw some 13-14% of existing traffic away from Dartford, improving journey times at Dartford by 5 minutes and improving journeys from Kent to the M25 by up to 12 minutes using the new crossing.³
- 2.15 On the negative side, a crossing at Location C would be much closer to sensitive ecological areas and would require appropriate mitigation measures.
- 2.16 The result of the study is such that the Option C location has been chosen as the preferred corridor for the new crossing as it provides better value for money and would unlock greater regional economic growth and transport benefits in terms of capacity, improved flows and network resilience, than Location A.
- 2.17 The preferred form of crossing is a twin-bored tunnel due to the fact that this would result in the least potential environmental impact during construction and on-going operation, albeit it would be more expensive to build and subsequently maintain than a bridge or immersed tunnel. There would be a charge for users of the crossing.
- 2.18 Three potential routes north of the river in Essex have been identified and two south of the river. Attached at Appendix 3 is a plan showing the routes subject to the current consultation process.
- 2.19 HE has indicated that the Eastern Southern Link (ESL) that connects directly to M2 Junction 1/A2/A289, west of Strood, passing to the east and north of Shorne, south of the Thames; and Route 3 north of the Thames, which runs between Tilbury and East Tilbury and crosses the A13 south west of Orsett before joining the M25 between Junctions 29 and 30 are their preferred route choices. The proposed scheme is shown on the plan attached at Appendix 4. It is emphasised, however, that HE is seeking respondents' views on all Crossing C route options as well as the proposed scheme. The estimated cost for the proposed route is between £4.3bn and £5.9bn with and adjusted Benefit Cost Ratio of between 2.5 and 3.4. The Western Southern Link cost estimate is £4.1bn - £5.7bn but this has a lower Benefit Cost Ratio of between 2.2 and 3.1.
- 2.20 A formal public consultation exercise that seeks representations on the scheme and studies that have led to the recommended and preferred option corridor (C) and the route options serving that corridor commenced on 26th January 2016 and runs until 24th March 2016.

²Highways England: Lower Thames Crossing Summary Business Case p.10 para 2.7.5

³Highways England: Lower Thames Crossing Summary Business Case p.11 paras 2.7.6 and 2.7.7

- 2.21 As indicated in paragraph 2.6, back in 2013, HE was also requested to consider an Option C variant. Essentially, this would have involved the widening of the A229 Bluebell Hill between M20 Junction 6 and M2 Junction 3 as the shortest and most direct link between the two Motorways and a seemingly logical route from the Channel Tunnel and Ashford to the proposed road.
- 2.22 Four potential routes were initially considered as part of the longlist of route options. Two involving respectively, a bored tunnel and viaducts at M2 J3 (CV3) and twin bored tunnels at M2 J3 (CV4), were discounted at the first assessment stage on the grounds of the impact on Bluebell Hill village and construction impact at M2 junction 3 from CV3 and the significant environmental impact and high cost of tunnels in CV4.
- 2.23 Two further options were considered to merit further investigation as part of a shortened longlist of route options covering the whole scheme.
CV1: Would have involved a new London-bound viaduct from the M20 direct to the A229 northbound carriageway at M20 J6 and the widening of the existing carriageway up Bluebell Hill on the current line of the A229 as well as a new route onto the M2 London-bound direct from the A229. Coast-bound there would have been a tunnel from the M2 onto the A229 southbound.
CV2: A revised and re-worked M20 junction 6 and M2 junction 3 but no tunnels.
- 2.24 At the further longlist assessment stage, the remaining C variant options were discounted on the grounds that:
- There would be a relatively small impact on transferring M20 traffic from the existing Dartford Crossing onto new route at C (thus providing limited congestion relief)
 - Significant impact on AONB (biodiversity and landscape)
 - High Cost (capital cost) estimated to be in the region of £500million. Does not bring wider benefits that materially add value to the Lower Thames Crossing scheme (travel time savings and congestion relief).
- The decision was therefore made not to progress C variant beyond the shortlisting stage. The assessment documentation does, however, indicate that further consideration of the potential to upgrade the A229 will be given as part of HE's ongoing route planning.
- 2.25 Option C Variant is not therefore part of this consultation.
- 2.26 Recent mention has been made in the local press about an alternative improvement of the A249 between M20 J7 and M2 J5 at Sittingbourne and an improvement of the M2 between Junction 5 and Junction 4. I understand that this idea is being jointly promoted by the KCC Cabinet Member for Economic Development and the Leadership of Swale Borough Council.
- 2.27 For the avoidance of doubt, such a proposal does not form part of the current HE consultation.
- 2.28 Any improvement to the A249 between the M20 and M2 motorways would involve construction wholly within the Kent Downs AONB with similar

environmental concerns to Option C Variant. In addition, the route has not been modelled by HE and given that a M20/A249/M2 route would be longer and less direct than the A229 Bluebell Hill (which was shown not to bring any material wider benefits or congestion relief), it is considered that such a route would be even more unlikely to bring benefit.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 There are two options open to Councillors. Firstly, a formal response from the Council can be sent to Highways England; secondly, Councillors could choose not to make a formal response to the consultation.
 - 3.2 Choosing to make representations will enable the Council's views to be taken into account as further consideration of the project by Highways England takes place prior to the formal preferred route announcement being made and any subsequent application for a DCO is submitted.
 - 3.3 Councillors could choose not to make formal representations. This would result in a missed opportunity to set out the Council's position at a relatively early stage in the process. As indicated previously, however, the Council is still likely to have an opportunity at the formal DCO application stage to make representations, but this would be after any announcement of a 'preferred route' which by then would also have been safeguarded.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is for the Council to make representations on the current consultation within the timescale set-out by Highways England as this will make the Council's views known at an early stage and prior to any preferred route announcement expected later in 2016.
- 4.2 The consultation questionnaire seeks views on the following main questions:
 - 1. To what extent do respondents agree or not with the choice of location C as the crossing point and the reason(s) why.
 - 2. Which of the three route options or an alternative route or no route north of the River Thames should be chosen and why that is?
 - 3. In relation to each of the three routes north of the river, to what extent do you agree with HE's proposals?
 - 4. Should the route south of the river, be the western southern link, the eastern southern link, another route or none and why?
 - 5. In relation to the two routes south of the river, to what extent do you agree or not with HE's proposals?
 - 6. The HE proposed scheme following the evaluation process is a new bored tunnel road crossing at location C following Route 3 north of the river and the Eastern Southern Link south of the river. To what extent do you agree or not with HE's proposals and why?
 - 7. Do you have any comments in relation whether any additional junctions to those proposed (M2/A2, A226, A13 and M25) would be beneficial?

4.3 The suggested responses are as follows:

4.4 Question 1: To what extent do respondents agree or not with the choice of Location C as the crossing point and the reason(s) why.

A: The Council strongly agrees with the choice of Location C. A crossing at this location would provide greater longer-term capacity and resilience on the Strategic Highway Network and also the potential to alleviate capacity problems in the Dartford area that a crossing in Location A would not do. In addition, such a route has the potential to unlock greater regional economic benefits.

4.5 Question 2: Which of the three route options or an alternative route or no route north of the River Thames should be chosen and why that is?

A: The Council considers that Route 3 provides the best option as it is a 'free-standing' and more direct route that provides the best means of generating additional capacity on the highway network which is the purpose behind the crossing. Option 2 would involve considerable disruption to existing urban areas and routes and Option 4 is long and would involve considerable disruption to the A127 Corridor. However, Highways England should also consider the implications of the routes' potential connectivity to the London Gateway container terminal.

4.6 Question 3: In relation to each of the three routes north of the river, to what extent do you agree with HE's proposals?

A: The Council considers that it tends to disagree with Routes 2 and 4 for the reasons set out in response to Question 2 and that it tends strongly agrees with Route 3.

4.7 Question 4: Should the route south of the river, be the western southern link, the eastern southern link, another route or none and why?

A: The Council considers that the Eastern Southern Link to be the preferred route. This route provides a better connection to the A2/M2 corridor and has the potential to remove traffic and thus increase capacity/resilience earlier on the A2 than the Western Southern Link.

4.8 Question 5: In relation to the two routes south of the river, to what extent do you agree or not with HE's proposals?

A: In relation to the Western Southern Link the Council neither agrees nor disagrees with the proposal. In relation to the Eastern Southern Link the Council strongly agrees with HE's proposals

4.9 Question 6: The HE proposed scheme following the evaluation process is a new bored tunnel road crossing at location C following Route 3 north of the river and the Eastern Southern Link south of the river. To what extent do you agree or not with HE's proposals and why?

A: The Council strongly agrees with the proposed scheme as providing the best balance between improved capacity and resilience on the strategic road network, potential economic benefits and potential environmental impacts.

4.10 Question 7: Do you have any comments in relation whether any additional junctions to those proposed (M2/A2, A226, A13 and M25) would be beneficial?

A: The Council has no comment to make, other than that by adding additional junctions it considers this is quite likely to reduce the effectiveness of the new road as a piece of Strategic Road Infrastructure by adding greater levels of local traffic that 'junction-hop'.

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 The consultation closes on 24 March 2016. If agreed, the proposed response set out in this report will be forwarded to Highways England to meet that deadline.
- 5.2 Highways England will then consider all the consultation responses it has received and has indicated that a 'Preferred Route Announcement' would be made in mid-2016. At this stage the 'preferred route' is likely to be formally safeguarded. An Outline Business Case would be prepared by HE at this juncture.
- 5.3 As a project that comprises nationally significant infrastructure, the means of obtaining consent would be through a Development Consent Order (DCO). There would be further opportunity to make representations as part of this formal application process.
- 5.4 Assuming public funding is made available, indications are that the application for the DCO would be made in 2019 with a decision on the DCO anticipated in 2020 with construction commencing in early 2021 after the Full Business Case has been prepared, with the scheme opening in 2025.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The scheme if constructed is likely to assist the connectivity of the Borough with the National Strategic Road Network and potentially boost economic activity within the Borough.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	N/A	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning &

		Development
Financial	No implications directly arising from this report	Head of Finance and Resources and Finance Team
Staffing	No implications directly arising from this report	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Legal	No implications directly arising from this report	Kate Jardine Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No implications directly arising from this report	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The construction and use of the proposed new road will have an environmental impact including potentially on International, European and National designated Environmental and Heritage assets. These would be offset to some extent by the improved capacity and potential air quality benefits at the existing Dartford Crossing. The environmental impacts will need to be balanced against the wider economic benefits that would accrue from the scheme.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	N/A	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	N/A	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	N/A	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development and Head of Finance and Resources

Asset Management	N/A	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
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7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Lower Thames Crossing Route Consultation 2016 booklet
- Appendix 2: Lower Thames Crossing Consultation questionnaire
- Appendix 3: Lower Thames crossing Consultation Routes
- Appendix 4: Lower Thames Crossing Highways England Proposed Scheme

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Lower Thames Crossing Route Consultation 2016

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Introduction

Highways England is consulting on proposals for a new road crossing of the River Thames connecting Kent and Essex. A new crossing is needed to reduce congestion at the existing Dartford crossing and unlock economic growth, supporting the development of new homes and jobs in the region.

There are important choices to be made and your views on our proposals will inform the decision later this year on the route and crossing location.

Please take the time to read this booklet and the supporting material, attend an event and provide us with your comments using our questionnaire.

Background

For over 50 years, the Dartford Crossing has provided the only road crossing of the Thames east of London. It is a critical part of the UK's major road network carrying local, national and international traffic.

Congestion and closure of the existing crossing occur frequently and this, together with a lack of alternative transport links, creates significant disruption and pollution. This impacts communities and businesses locally, regionally and elsewhere within the UK.

The removal of payment barriers and the introduction of electronic payments recently improved traffic flow and journey times but do not address the need for increased capacity. Already carrying 50 million

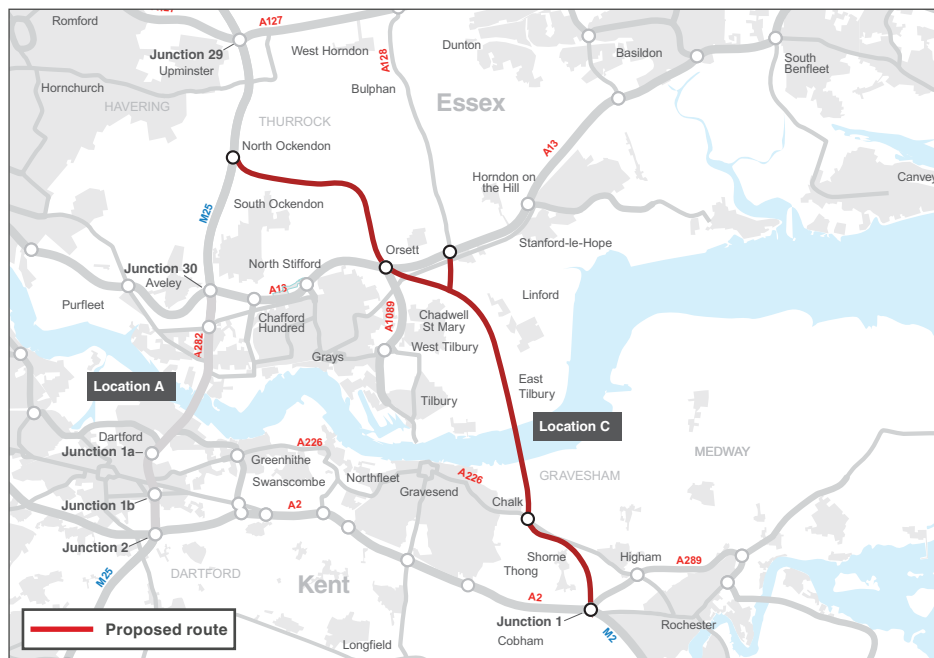
vehicles a year and with traffic volumes forecast to increase, the freeflow improvements will only relieve congestion in the short term and major improvements are needed to provide a long-lasting solution.

In addition to reducing delays for drivers, a new crossing could transform the region by providing a vital new connection across the Thames. It would stimulate economic growth by unlocking access to housing and job opportunities, and deliver benefits for generations to come. This would not only benefit the region but the whole of the UK, providing better journeys, enabling growth and building for the future.

A new crossing

Following a series of studies and a public consultation in 2013, the Government commissioned Highways England, the operator of the country's motorways and major roads, to consider options at two locations. These are shown on the map overleaf, at the site of the current crossing, known as Location A, or a new crossing location further east, known as Location C.

At both locations we have developed engineering solutions and assessed them in terms of their economic, traffic, environmental and community impacts. The assessment has also taken into account the significant growth and development plans for the region. At Location C, three potential route options have been identified north of the river in Essex and two south of the river in Kent.



Our proposal

We have completed our evaluation and are recommending a new road crossing through a bored tunnel at Location C.

Our proposed scheme would be a dual carriageway connecting junction 1 of the M2 to the M25 between junctions 29 and 30. This crosses under the River Thames just east of Gravesend and Tilbury. Of our potential options, this route would provide a 70mph motorway-to-motorway connection with the greatest improvement in journey times and a modern, high quality road along its entire length.

In addition to easing congestion and providing an alternative to the existing crossing, a new road and crossing at Location C would also offer wider economic benefits. Our economic assessment indicates that it could add over £7 billion to the economy by stimulating investment and business opportunities, and create over 5,000 new jobs nationally.

Estimated costs are between £4.3 and £5.9 billion (including allowances for inflation). User charges would be applied, in line with current government policy. Subject to the necessary funding and planning approvals, we anticipate that the new crossing would be open in 2025, if publicly funded. If private funding is also used to meet the costs of the project, we anticipate the crossing being open by 2027.

Have your say

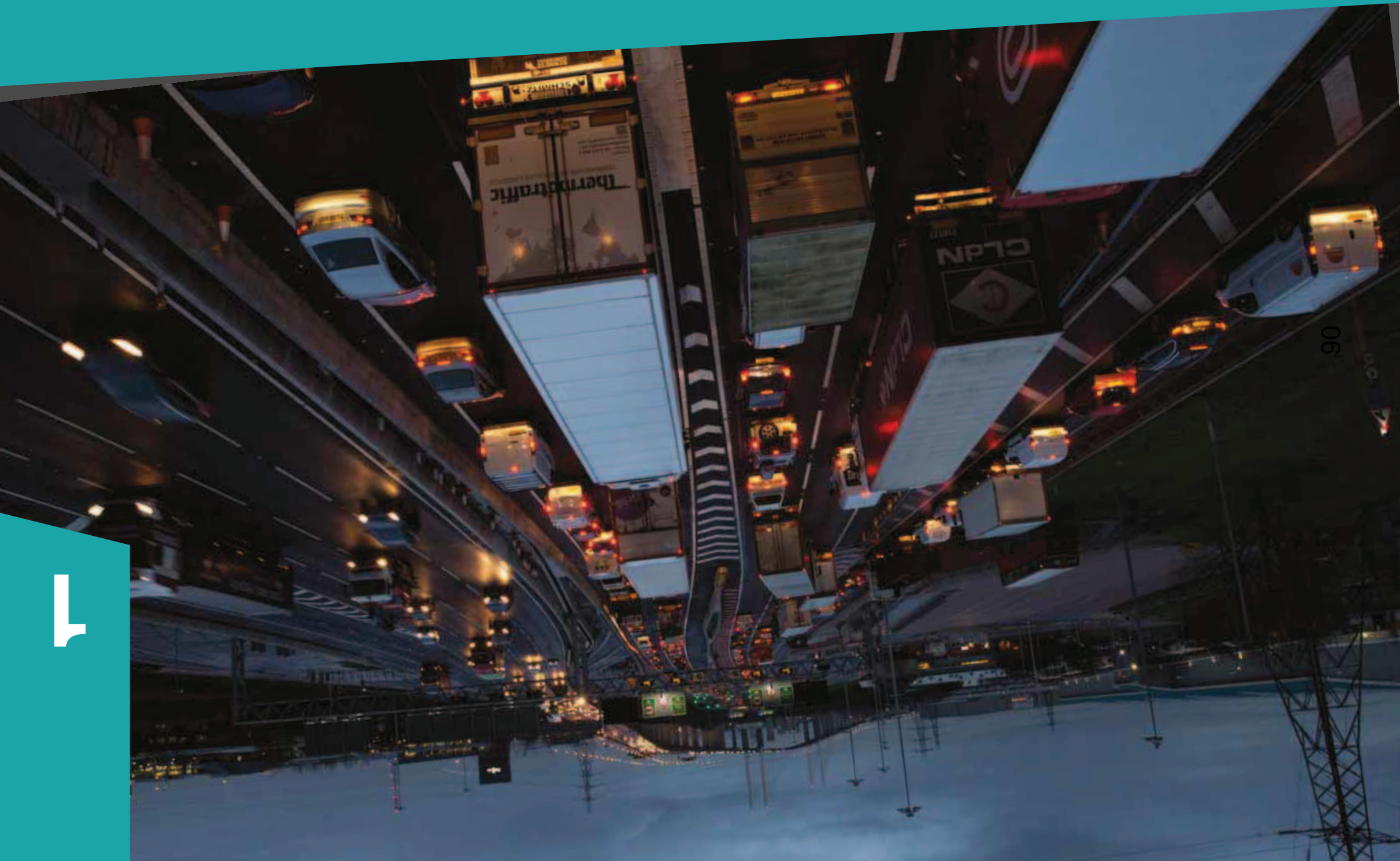
This is your opportunity to give your views on our proposals. In this booklet you will find a summary of these proposals, where to find further information and how to access our consultation questionnaire. See section six for details on how to respond.

Please get involved and provide your responses by 24 March 2016.

What happens next

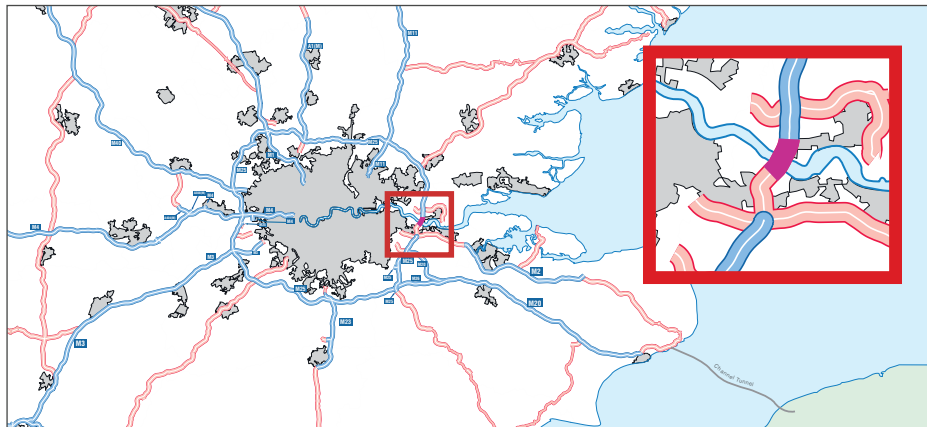
We will review the responses and report our findings and conclusions to the Department for Transport. Your views will help us to inform the Government prior to its decision on the location, route and type of crossing.

The need for a new crossing



The need for a new crossing

For over 50 years, the Dartford Crossing has provided the only road crossing of the Thames Estuary east of London. The crossing is a critical part of the country's road network. It connects communities and businesses and provides a vital link between the Channel ports, London and the rest of the UK.



Map showing the importance of the Dartford Crossing in the major road network

It is one of the busiest roads in the country, used 50 million times a year by commuters, business travellers, haulage companies, emergency services and holidaymakers. It is essential to the provision of reliable services and goods, to enable local businesses to operate effectively and for local residents to access housing, jobs, leisure and retail facilities north and south of the river.

With the exception of the removal of the toll booths and the introduction of electronic payments (Dart Charge), there has been no significant improvement in the capacity of the existing crossing for nearly 25 years,

during which time there have been major developments such as Lakeside (1990) and Bluewater (1999).

The existing crossing is at capacity for much of the time and is one of the least reliable sections of the UK's strategic road network of motorways and major roads. Road users regularly experience delays and unreliable journeys and, when there are incidents, the congestion at the crossing quickly causes congestion on local roads and arterial roads in and out of London.

As a consequence of the congestion and delays, the existing crossing is affecting productivity, constraining business and depriving the region of economic growth. Improvements would produce significant economic benefits locally, regionally and nationally. In a recent survey of local businesses, 73% of respondents told us that traffic congestion at Dartford is harming their business. Approximately 60% thought their business would grow and almost half said they could employ more people if the problem of congestion at the crossing were to be solved.

Dart Charge has improved journey times over the last 12 months but we have also seen increased usage of the crossing, meaning it only provides a shorter-term solution. Incidents will still cause major delays and, as traffic volumes increase further, congestion will return to pre-Dart Charge levels within the next ten years. Something needs to be done now to alleviate the problems in the long term and to prepare for the future.

Dartford Crossing facts and figures

Capacity

50 million
crossings a year and traffic
volumes are increasing.



which is
predicted to
increase to
34%
by 2041



Designed for **135,000** vehicle crossings
a day, regularly operating at capacity.

Performance

**Over 300
times a year**

the crossing is partially or fully closed,
on average, for around half an hour due
to incidents.

It typically takes

**3 to 5
hours**

for the roads to clear
following closure.



Road users have no alternative but to:

- wait it out
- use the Blackwall Tunnel – 30 extra miles
- go the other way around the M25 – 100 extra miles

Safety and environment

For much of a typical day, air quality
in many areas close to the crossing
**does not meet current air
quality standards.**

The western tunnel is

50
years old

resulting in restrictions to operate safely,
including height limit for HGVs.

**One of the highest
incident rates on the
major road network**



1963



West tunnel opened

1980



East tunnel opened

1991



QEII bridge opened

2014



Dart Charge

2016



East London river crossing proposals

Transport for London is developing proposals for up to three additional river crossings in East London, which are shown on the image above. The first of these would be the Silvertown Tunnel which could be open for traffic in 2022/2023. Additional crossings at Gallions Reach and Belvedere are also being considered for opening in 2025.

While these would reduce congestion and improve the reliability and resilience of the local road network within London, they would not provide significant improvement at the Dartford Crossing.

We are working with Transport for London to ensure that all new river crossing proposals take each other into account.

Previous studies



Previous studies

The opening of the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge in 1991 was followed by a period of growth in both traffic volumes and economic development. Traffic volumes grew quickly and the Department for Transport recognised the need to investigate options for additional crossing capacity as part of its long-term planning for the strategic road network.

In 2009 the Department examined five locations where an additional crossing could be built (referred to as locations A, B, C, D and E). The most easterly of these (at locations D and E), were found to be too far from the existing crossing to ease the problems at Dartford and were eliminated from further consideration. They would have been very expensive (because of the length of the roads and crossing structure), offered poor value for money and would have had significant adverse effects on the ecology of the area. The study also ruled out rail as a solution to the problems at Dartford.

The need for a new crossing was recognised in the *National Infrastructure Plan: November 2011*, where it was included as one of the Government's top 40 priority projects.

In 2012 the Department began an appraisal of the remaining location options A, B and C. This led to a public consultation in 2013, which looked at the need for a new crossing and invited views on locations A (at the existing crossing), B (connecting the A2 and Swanscombe Peninsula with the A1089), C (east of Gravesend) and C Variant (widening of the A229 between the M2 and M20).

Later that year the Government announced its decision not to proceed with location option B because of the impact on local development plans and the limited transport benefits. Further work was carried out to evaluate the remaining options.

The Government published its response to the consultation in July 2014, confirming that there is a need for an additional crossing between Essex and Kent, but that there was no consensus about where it should be.

The Government then commissioned Highways England to carry out a more detailed assessment of the remaining options, which has led to this consultation.



Developing the proposals

Developing the proposals

Since 2014 Highways England has been investigating and comparing feasible routes for a new crossing. This has involved meeting with local authorities, environmental bodies, commercial organisations and utility companies to understand the constraints, local priorities and development and growth plans.

Scheme objectives

We have assessed route and crossing options to identify solutions which best meet the following objectives:

Economic

- To support sustainable local development and regional economic growth in the medium to long term.
- To be affordable to Government and users.
- To achieve value for money.

Transport

- To relieve the congested Dartford Crossing and approach roads and improve their performance by providing free flowing north-south capacity.
- To improve resilience of the Thames crossings and the major road network.
- To improve safety.

Community and environment

- To minimise adverse impacts on health and the environment.

Assessing the options

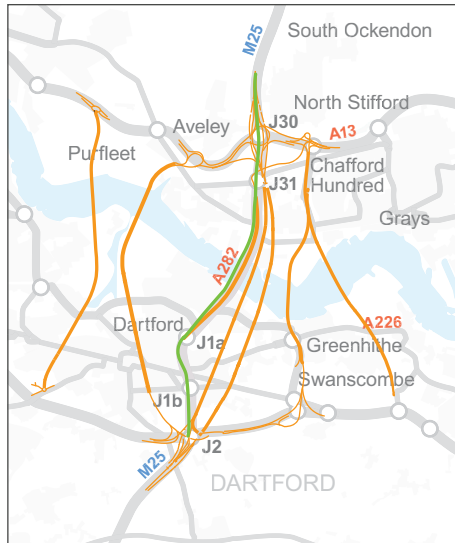
We developed and assessed a wide range of potential solutions and preliminary routes to identify options that were technically feasible. We tested these against the scheme objectives, taking into account traffic flow forecasts, using computer models to calculate reductions in journey times and congestion. These options were evaluated against technical, economic, environmental and traffic criteria as well as cost and value for money. These are illustrated in the maps and tables on page 13.

This early work concluded that four principal route options warranted further consideration. These options were taken forward to be developed and assessed in more detail, which is covered in section four of this booklet.

C Variant

In addition to assessing options for a new crossing, routes and junctions, we have also considered whether widening the A229 between the M2 and the M20 (called C Variant in earlier studies) would be a necessary part of a new crossing. Our assessment has concluded that this upgrade would have limited benefits, high environmental impact and high cost and is not essential as part of a new crossing scheme. We will give further consideration to this link separately as part of Highways England's ongoing regional route planning.

Potential solutions and findings



Location A options

Four lane bridge and twin bored tunnel crossing options immediately west of the existing crossing, with improvements to the approaches and enhancement of junctions 30 and 31.

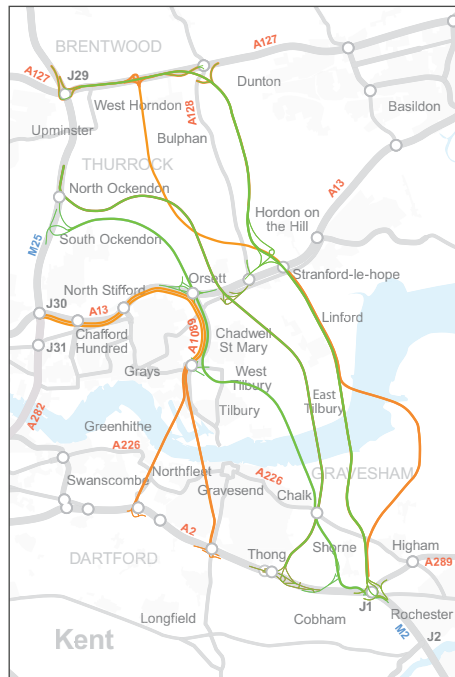
Bridge and tunnel crossings immediately to the east of the existing Dartford Crossing.

Crossings (bridges, immersed and bored tunnels) further to the east and west of the existing crossing.

Findings

These options had some merit and elements that warranted further consideration. They would relieve congestion at the Dartford Crossing and provide some resilience. However they are constrained by existing roads and junctions, existing development and infrastructure, restricting the speed limit to 50mph. There would also be substantial construction disruption.

Not taken forward due to a number of reasons including high cost, poor economic benefits, impact on development and commercial properties, significant disruption to river/jetty operations, high technical risks and potential impacts on sensitive environmental sites.



Location C options

Long bored tunnels to the east and west of Gravesend.

Bridge, bored or immersed tunnel crossings. Connects the A2, passing to the east of Chalk before connecting the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30.

Bridge, bored or immersed tunnel crossings. Connects the A2 near Shorne Woods Country Park. Enhancement to the A1089 before connecting with the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30.

Bridge, bored or immersed tunnel crossings. Connects the M2 to the east of Shorne before passing east of Chalk and Tilbury, joining the A127 and connecting into the M25 at junction 29.

Findings

Not taken forward due to high costs, poor economic benefits, impacts on Tilbury Docks and scheduled monuments. The most easterly route impacts more on sensitive environmental sites than other C routes.

These options had merit and had elements that warranted further consideration. In general, all these options would relieve congestion at the existing crossing, offer greater wider economic benefits, provide network resilience, and improve connectivity and journey times.

Shortlist

One option was shortlisted at Location A. Three options were shortlisted at Location C, based on routes described on page 13 and refined through our technical work and discussions with local authorities and environmental bodies.

The final shortlist is shown below and summarised in the table. These were taken forward to be developed and assessed in more detail. This is described in the next section.



Route 1	Location A: A bridge or bored tunnel adjacent to the existing Dartford Crossing	
Route 2	Location C: A bridge, bored tunnel or immersed tunnel	South of the river – using either a Western Southern Link from the A2 or an Eastern Southern Link from the M2.
Route 3		North of the river – from the crossing following a westerly line via the existing A1089 to the M25 between junctions 29 and 30.
Route 4		South of the river – using either a Western Southern Link from the A2 or an Eastern Southern Link from the M2.
		North of the river – from the crossing following an easterly line via the existing A127 to the M25 at junction 29.

Appraisal of the shortlist

4



Appraisal of the shortlist

In assessing the shortlist there have been three main considerations:

- **Location** – whether a new crossing should be built at Location A, close to the existing crossing, or at Location C, east of Gravesend and Tilbury.
- **The crossing** – whether the crossing structure should be a bridge or a tunnel.
- **Routes and junctions** – how to strike a balance of environmental factors, local access and highway design standards.

To assess the shortlist we have:

- carried out computer modelling of forecast traffic flows, taking into account planned housing and commercial developments
- developed engineering designs of feasible crossing types
- designed preliminary alignments for highways and junctions
- considered the impact on people and property
- identified the environmental and ecological impacts both long term and during construction
- estimated the costs and benefits to quantify the value for money that each route offers

Location

A new crossing at Location A (Route 1) performs poorly against the traffic related scheme objectives. As Location A does not provide an alternative route, traffic would still be funnelled through the existing corridor from junctions 2 to 29 and incidents at Dartford would potentially still cause long delays and severe congestion on local roads.

Route 1 would not provide additional connections to local roads and by attracting more traffic to the existing corridor, congestion on the adjacent A2 and A13 would also increase.

Construction would take at least six years and would cause considerable disruption to traffic using the existing Dartford Crossing with 40mph average speed restrictions and complex traffic management affecting millions of journeys. Even when the scheme is complete, there would be limited improvement for drivers as the current 50mph speed limit and closely spaced junctions would remain.

Additionally, a crossing at Location A would offer poor value for money in comparison to Location C and would perform poorly against other scheme objectives such as safety, noise and air quality.

A new crossing at Location C would provide a high quality, safer transport solution with a 70mph road providing improved journeys. Crossing capacity would increase by 70% in the opening year and, as a new route, it could be constructed without impacting the already congested Dartford corridor.

On opening it would draw 14% of existing traffic away from Dartford, improving journey times on the existing crossing by up to 5 minutes in peak time and improving journey times from Kent to the M25 by up to 12 minutes when using the new crossing. It would provide a clear alternative to the existing crossing when incidents occur and traffic flows on the A2 and the A13 would also improve.

Significant economic growth and regeneration would be enabled by connecting key areas (such as Ebbsfleet, Swanscombe and Gravesend to the south and Tilbury and wider areas of Thurrock to the north) to the national road network. Improved access to jobs and services, and more opportunities for new businesses are estimated to generate double the wider economic benefits at Location C compared with Location A.

A crossing at Location C would have greater ecological impacts than one at Location A.

Conclusion

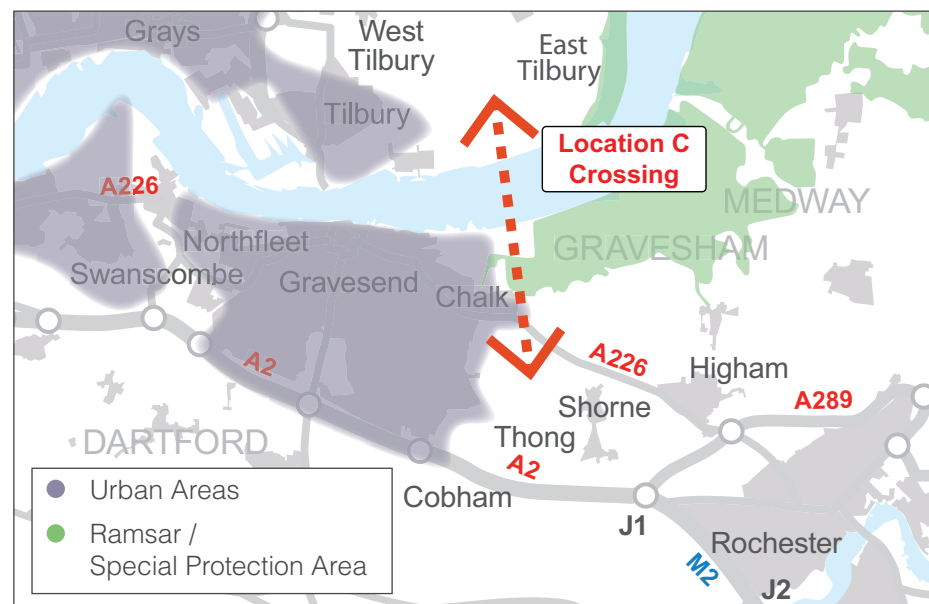
Location C is proposed because it offers far greater benefits than Location A. It would unlock significant wider economic growth and offers higher transport performance in terms of safety, capacity and resilience. In contrast, a new crossing at Location A would not meet the transport and economic objectives. Also, in comparison with Location C, it offers poor value for money.

We believe Location C best meets the economic and transport objectives, while balancing these with the community and

environmental benefits and impacts. The following sections consider the benefits and impacts of crossing type, routes and junctions for a crossing at Location C.

The crossing

As shown on the map below, there are limited options for the crossing location due a number of constraints. These result in a narrow corridor for the crossing, bounded by Gravesend and environmentally sensitive sites. A crossing west of this point increases the impact on residents and property, whilst moving further east increases the impact on these sensitive sites.



The environmentally sensitive sites south of the river are valuable wetland habitats, the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar site and the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA). These are recognised internationally and are protected by law.

We have considered three types of crossing structure: a bridge, a bored tunnel and an immersed tunnel. All of these are feasible at this location but a bored tunnel would generate the least noise and visual impact and would have the least impact on protected habitats and species by minimising disturbance over much of its length.

Conclusion

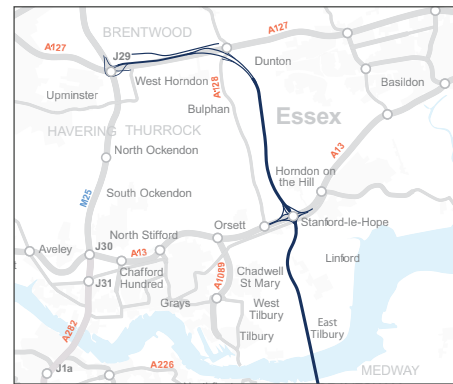
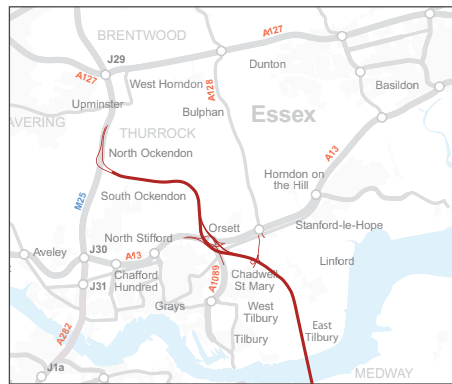
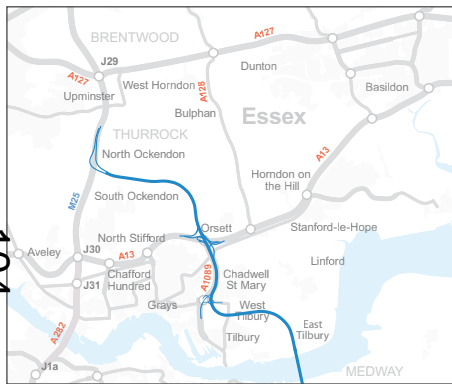
We propose separate northbound and southbound bored tunnels. This would provide a modern 70mph road. It would have the least impact on local communities with less noise and visual impact than a bridge. A bored tunnel structure would also have the lowest impact on protected habitats and species compared with a bridge or immersed tunnel structure.



Routes and junctions

North of the river in Essex

We are seeking your views on three routes north of the river. Each route would perform similarly with respect to solving the transport challenges and unlocking economic potential. Each would directly, to some extent, affect greenbelt and areas of ancient woodland.



Conclusion

Route 3 is proposed as it would provide the shortest route, the greatest improvement to journey time and, being an entirely new road, would deliver a modern high quality road. It would also have the lowest environmental impact of the three options.

Route 2 would be closest to existing urban areas and have greater noise impacts than Routes 3 and 4. It would also impact on ecological and heritage sites and affect an Environment Agency flood storage area. It would involve upgrading the existing A1089, is constrained by closely spaced junctions and would mix local with long distance traffic.

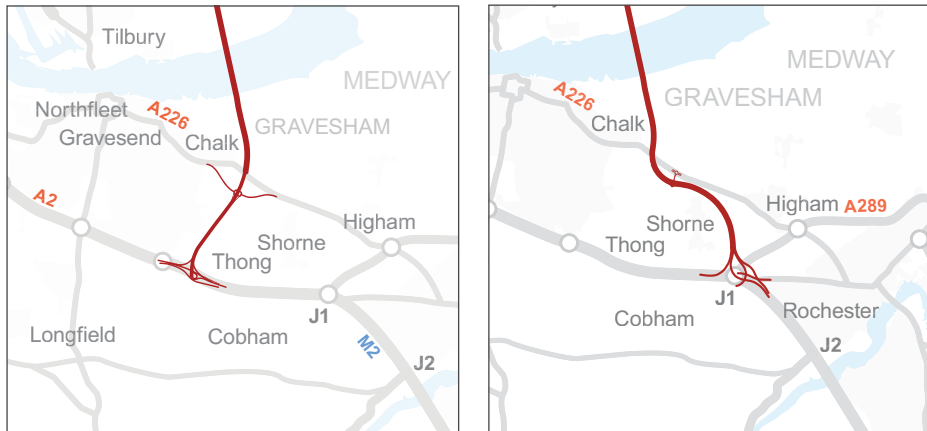
Route 3 would be the shortest route and would be a completely new road which could be designed to modern highway standards over its whole length. Although it would impact local ecological and heritage sites, the impact would be less than Routes 2 and 4.

Route 4 would involve a new road, an upgrade of the existing A127 and an upgraded junction where the A127 joins the M25. It would affect ancient woodland, a conservation area and a registered park and garden. The overall route is longer and more expensive than either Routes 2 or 3.

South of the river in Kent

We are seeking your views on two alternative routes south of the river.

These would both have an impact on existing communities and protected sites, but differ in terms of impacts on transport and economics.



A Western Southern Link would connect to a new junction on the A2. This would be constrained by the High Speed 1 rail line and existing development. The junction would need to be of compact design and as such, some connecting roads would be limited to 30mph. This route would have less impact on the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

An Eastern Southern Link would provide a direct connection from the M2 to the M25. This would create a motorway-to-motorway connection providing greater benefits than the Western Southern Link, estimated at £560m, at an additional cost of £200m. An Eastern Southern Link would impact Shorne village, would have a greater impact on ancient woodland, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would also affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Great Crabbles Wood).

Conclusion

The Eastern Southern Link is proposed as it would provide the most direct route and the greatest improvement to journey times, as it would create a motorway-to-motorway link. We recognise this proposal has significant implications for the local community. Section five outlines how we intend to address these in the next phase of the scheme, should this route be taken forward.

Junctions

Our route maps show where we are proposing to create junctions with existing roads including the M2/A2, A226, A13 and M25. We would like to understand if additional junctions would be beneficial as part of the Lower Thames Crossing scheme.

Comparison of community and environmental factors

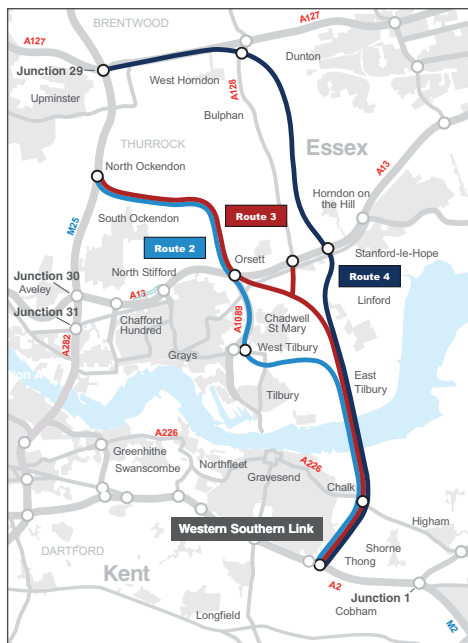
	North of river			South of river	
Feature	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4	Western Southern Link	Eastern Southern Link
Air quality	Limited impact on air quality immediately adjacent to the routes but improved air quality at Dartford.			Limited impact on air quality immediately adjacent to the routes but improved air quality at Dartford.	
Noise	All routes reduce noise disturbance for properties close to the existing Dartford Crossing.			Reduced noise disturbance for properties close to the existing Dartford Crossing. There is little to differentiate between the Eastern and Western Southern Links in terms of noise.	
	Has the greatest impact in terms of noise disturbance as the route is closer to more densely populated areas.	Noise disturbance is less than Route 2 but greater than Route 4.	Has the least impact in terms of noise disturbance as the route is further away from urban centres.		
Biodiversity	Routes 2 and 3 have lower impacts on ecological sites than Route 4.		Greatest impact on ecological sites.	Affects Claylane Wood ancient woodland and Shorne and Ashenbank Woods SSSI**. Less overall effect of the two options.	Affects areas of ancient woodland and local wildlife sites east of Shorne and Great Crabbles Wood SSSI**.
Landscape	Routes 2 and 3 run through greenbelt in Thurrock.		Route 4 runs through greenbelt in Thurrock and Brentwood.	Lesser area required within the Kent Downs AONB***.	Greater area required within the Kent Downs AONB***.
Cultural heritage	Requires land within West Tilbury conservation area and scheduled monuments. Potential impact on listed buildings.	Requires land within a scheduled monument. Potential impact on listed buildings. Avoids conservation areas. Has the least impact of Routes 2, 3 and 4.	Runs through Thorndon Park, a Registered Park and Garden and conservation area. Potential impact on listed buildings.	Potentially impacts the setting of listed buildings. Route is close to but not in the conservation area of Thong.	Potentially impacts the setting of listed buildings. Route is close to but not in the conservation area of Shorne.
Properties*	9 residential 3 agricultural	14 residential 22 traveller plots 3 agricultural	14 residential 9 commercial 3 agricultural	4 residential 3 commercial	10 residential 2 commercial

*Properties which may require demolition, based on preliminary illustrative route design

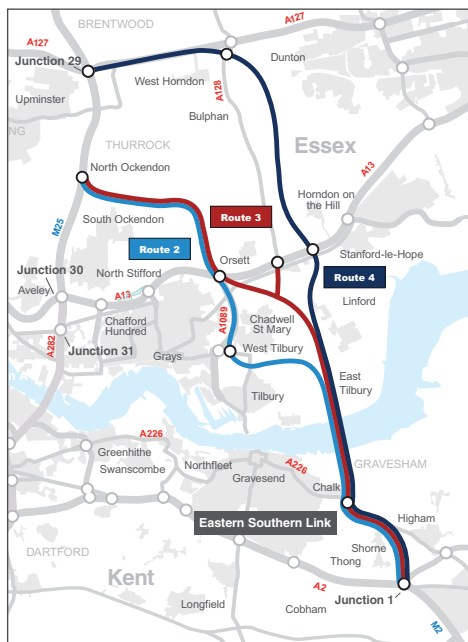
**SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest

***AONB = Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Comparison of costs, benefits and reductions in journey time



Features	Western Southern Link with		
	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
Estimated cost (nominal)	£4.1 - £5.8 billion	£4.1 - £5.7 billion	£4.4 - £6.2 billion
Adjusted benefit cost ratio*	3.1-2.2	3.1-2.2	2.9-2.1
Value for money*	High	High	High
Reduction in journey time between junctions 3 and 28 on M25 using the Dartford Crossing	3 mins southbound, 4.5 mins northbound	3 mins southbound, 4.5 mins northbound	3 mins southbound, 5 mins northbound
Reduction in journey time between M2 junction 4 and M25 junction 28 using new crossing at C	9 mins	10 mins	9 mins
Route length	13.8 miles	13.3 miles	15.9 miles

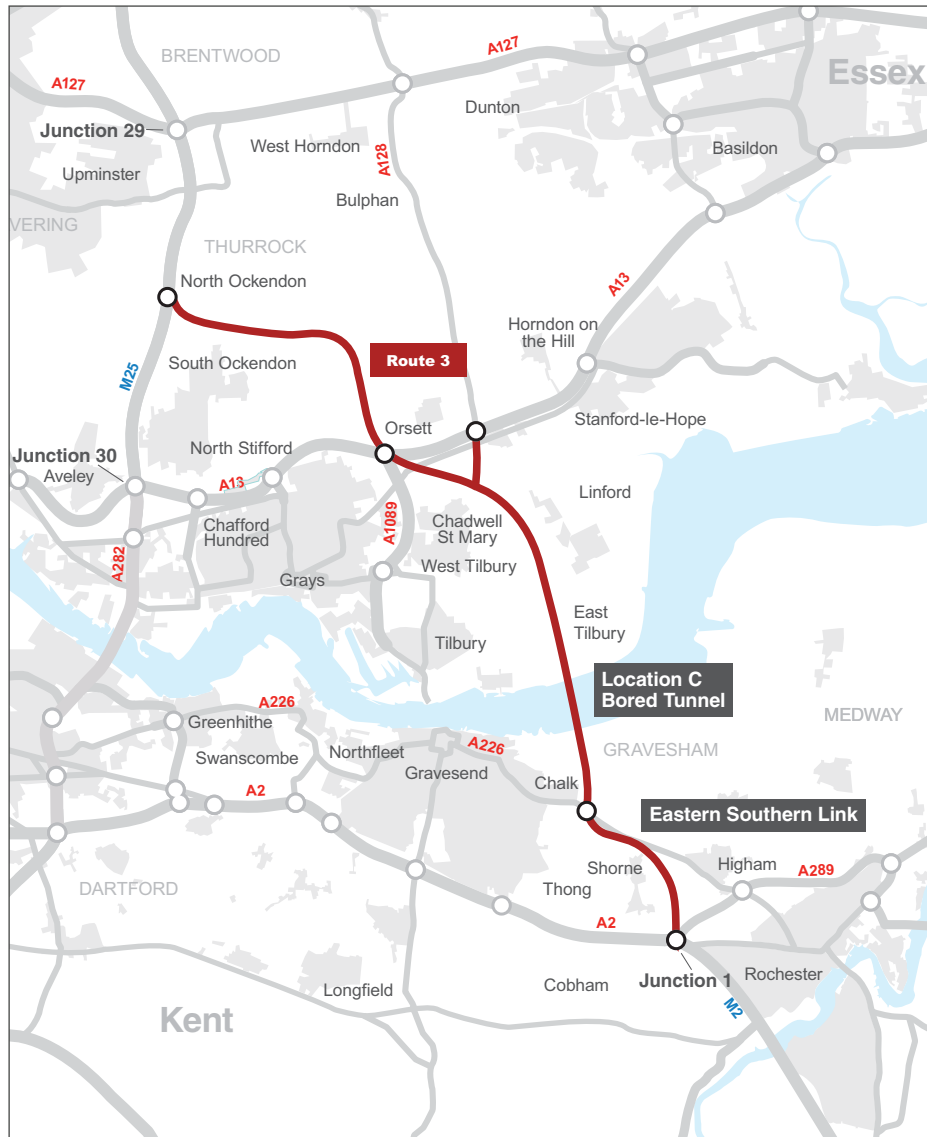


Features	Eastern Southern Link with		
	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
Estimated cost (nominal)	£4.3 - £6.0 billion	£4.3 - £5.9 billion	£4.6 - £6.4 billion
Adjusted benefit cost ratio*	3.3-2.4	3.4-2.5	3.1-2.2
Value for money*	High	High	High
Reduction in journey time between junctions 3 and 28 on M25 using the Dartford Crossing	3 mins southbound, 4.5 mins northbound	3 mins southbound, 4.5 mins northbound	3 mins southbound, 5 mins northbound
Reduction in journey time between M2 junction 4 and M25 junction 28 using new crossing at C	11 mins	12 mins	11 mins
Route length	14.7 miles	14.2 miles	16.8 miles

*To Department for Transport and Government guidelines

The proposed scheme and what this means for you

The proposed scheme



Key features of our proposal

Our proposed scheme would be a dual carriageway connecting junction 1 of the M2 to the M25 between junctions 29 and 30. This crosses under the River Thames just east of Gravesend and Tilbury. Of our potential options, this route would provide a 70mph motorway-to-motorway connection with the greatest improvement in journey times and a modern, high quality road along its entire length.

A **bored tunnel** would provide the required capacity and would have the least impact of all crossing types on local communities, protected habitats and species. It would have two lanes in each direction with space for future capacity and would be about two miles long.

Route 3 would pass to the west of East Tilbury and then between Chadwell St Mary and Linford. The route would cross the A13 where an upgraded junction would be provided. To the north of the A13 it would pass to the west of Orsett and then pass north of South Ockendon before connecting with the M25 with a one-way junction allowing travel to and from the north on the M25.

The **Eastern Southern Link** would provide a direct connection with junction 1 of the M2 thereby creating a motorway-to-motorway link. It would pass to the east and north of Shorne, with some sections in deep cutting, before connecting to a junction with the A226 east of Chalk.

What this means for you

For the economy

It would provide the greatest economic benefit of all the options, stimulating local and regional development as well as supporting national growth. This option offers the greatest value for money and return on investment.

Improving the transport connection at this critical part of the road network would make it easier for businesses to grow and employ more people. This would support both local businesses, employing people in the area, through to national companies and international trade through the Channel and Thames Estuary ports.

As a new route it would open up the region, unlocking potential for investment, housing and regeneration. It would support increased economic activity, enabling future prosperity for the region and the whole of the UK. This could add over £7 billion to the economy and create over 5,000 new jobs.

For transport

It would reduce congestion and delays at one of the busiest roads in the country, and on approach roads including the A13 and A2. This completely new road would be designed to modern highway standards providing a safer, faster, more reliable road, improving journeys for all users. As an alternative to the existing Dartford Crossing it would transform this critical part of the road network.

A modern 70mph, direct motorway-to-motorway connection would result in shorter journey times, whether it's your daily commute to work or travelling for leisure. This shorter route could save you up to twelve minutes but more importantly provide you with a more reliable journey. It would also enable faster, more reliable delivery of goods and services, both across the region, and from Europe through the rest of the UK.

For communities and the environment

It would connect communities in Kent and Essex, providing better access to jobs, housing, leisure and retail facilities either side of the river and for those in the east. This would open new opportunities for investment, regeneration and housing, for local businesses to grow and employ more people. The scheme would create jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities for local people during the construction phase and in the longer term.

We recognise that there would be noise and air quality impacts generated in the vicinity of the proposed scheme. Detailed air quality and noise modelling will be conducted during the next stage of the project to assess the potential effects and how best to mitigate these. By reducing congestion at the existing crossing, the proposed scheme would improve air quality and reduce traffic noise for residents nearby.

We have proposed a bored tunnel rather than a bridge or immersed tunnel as this significantly reduces the visual and noise impacts for those living in the area, as well as significantly reducing the impacts on the landscape, protected habitats and species.

We recognise that our proposed scheme would have an impact on local communities as well as cultural heritage and landscape. These include areas of greenbelt, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas of ancient woodland. As the scheme develops we will continue to work to understand how best to avoid and minimise impacts as we have successfully done on other schemes.

We will also conduct seasonal surveys of habitats to understand in more detail the plant and animal species that could be affected. This will help us minimise impacts and develop mitigation measures such as replacement habitats.

Future development of the scheme

We understand that construction of a new crossing would have impacts which need to be considered and, where possible, minimised. On a scheme of this scale there will also be opportunities to leave a lasting positive legacy and in the next phase we will explore these.

We are at an early stage of the development process and more detailed work will be undertaken at the next stage of the project. Route designs are illustrative at this stage. Once a route is selected, more detailed

design and planning would be done, which would involve further investigation and assessment of a wide range of factors. This would include noise, air quality, land and property impacts, cultural heritage, biodiversity, landscape, water resources, construction impacts, costs and charging.

As we progress the design in the next phase of the scheme, this would include developing plans to avoid or minimise impacts on local communities and the environment. Where impacts remain, we will seek to mitigate them as we have done successfully on other schemes.

This next stage of assessment, design and development would be the basis for an application for a Development Consent Order. We would consult on future proposals as part of the statutory planning process.

We are committed to ensuring that community and environmental impacts are fully taken into account in the development, planning and decision-making process. To achieve this we will work closely with local communities, local authorities, environmental bodies and major employers.

Subject to the necessary funding and planning approvals, we anticipate that the new crossing would be open in 2025, if publicly funded. If private funding is also used to meet the costs of the project, we anticipate the crossing being open by 2027.

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Have your say

9



Have your say

Having taken into account the existing conditions, the nature of the problems at Dartford and the needs and plans for the area, we are proposing a scheme which, in our view, best matches the objectives and balances the needs of road users, the community, the environment and business.

There are important choices to be made. Through this consultation we are inviting you to provide your views and comments on our proposals. Your views will be taken into consideration before a final decision is made by the Government later this year.

In summary, our assessment has shown that a crossing at Location A would not solve the traffic problem at Dartford and would do little for the economy locally, regionally or nationally. Our proposal is a bored tunnel crossing at Location C, east of Gravesend and Tilbury.

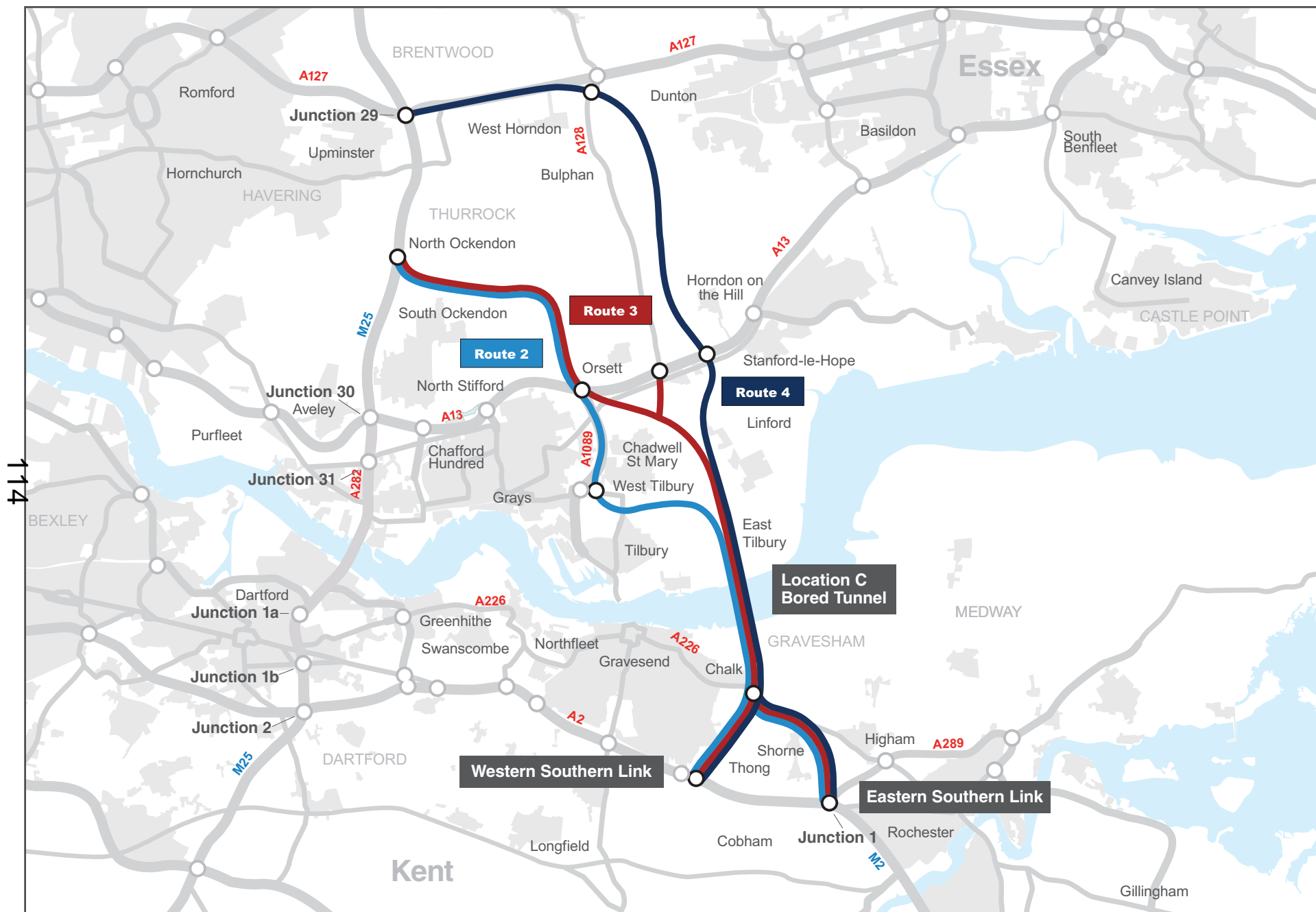
We have developed three routes north of the river and two routes south of the river which meet the scheme objectives and on which we are seeking your views.

North of the river - Essex

There are three routes to be considered. Each has potential to unlock opportunities for housing and jobs and all offer high value for money. They each meet the transport objectives, although they offer different opportunities to connect with local roads. While there are important differences in the local and environmental impacts of each option, we consider all of these options to be viable.

South of the river - Kent

There are two routes and we consider both of these to be viable. The Eastern Southern Link is a more direct, motorway-to-motorway connection and as a result better meets the economic and transport objectives. It has greater community and environmental impacts. The Western Southern Link has a lower community and environmental impact but, as a less direct route with a lower speed junction on the A2, it is weaker against the economic and transport objectives.



How to respond

To find out more about our proposals and to provide your views you can:

Visit our website

View and download maps and other information about our proposals, including factsheets, our pre-consultation scheme assessment report and summary business case.

You can provide your views by completing the questionnaire online at **www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk**

Join us at one of our events

Members of our team will be on hand to answer your questions.

View the proposals

Copies of consultation materials, maps and questionnaires are available to view at a number of locations in your area.

Phone us

Get in touch by calling **0300 123 5000**.

Send your response

Completed questionnaires can be sent by freepost to the following address (you do not need a stamp):

Freepost RTTH–GRYG–SCXZ
Lower Thames Crossing Consultation
PO Box 1188, Harrow
HA1 9NU

What happens next

Your responses to this consultation will be analysed and incorporated into our final recommendation to the Department for Transport. We are expecting Government to make an announcement later this year to confirm the route, location and type of crossing.

Consultation closes on 24 March 2016.

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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This document is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/highways

If you have any enquiries about this publication email info@highwaysengland.co.uk or call **0300 123 5000***. Please quote the Highways England publications code **PR111/15**

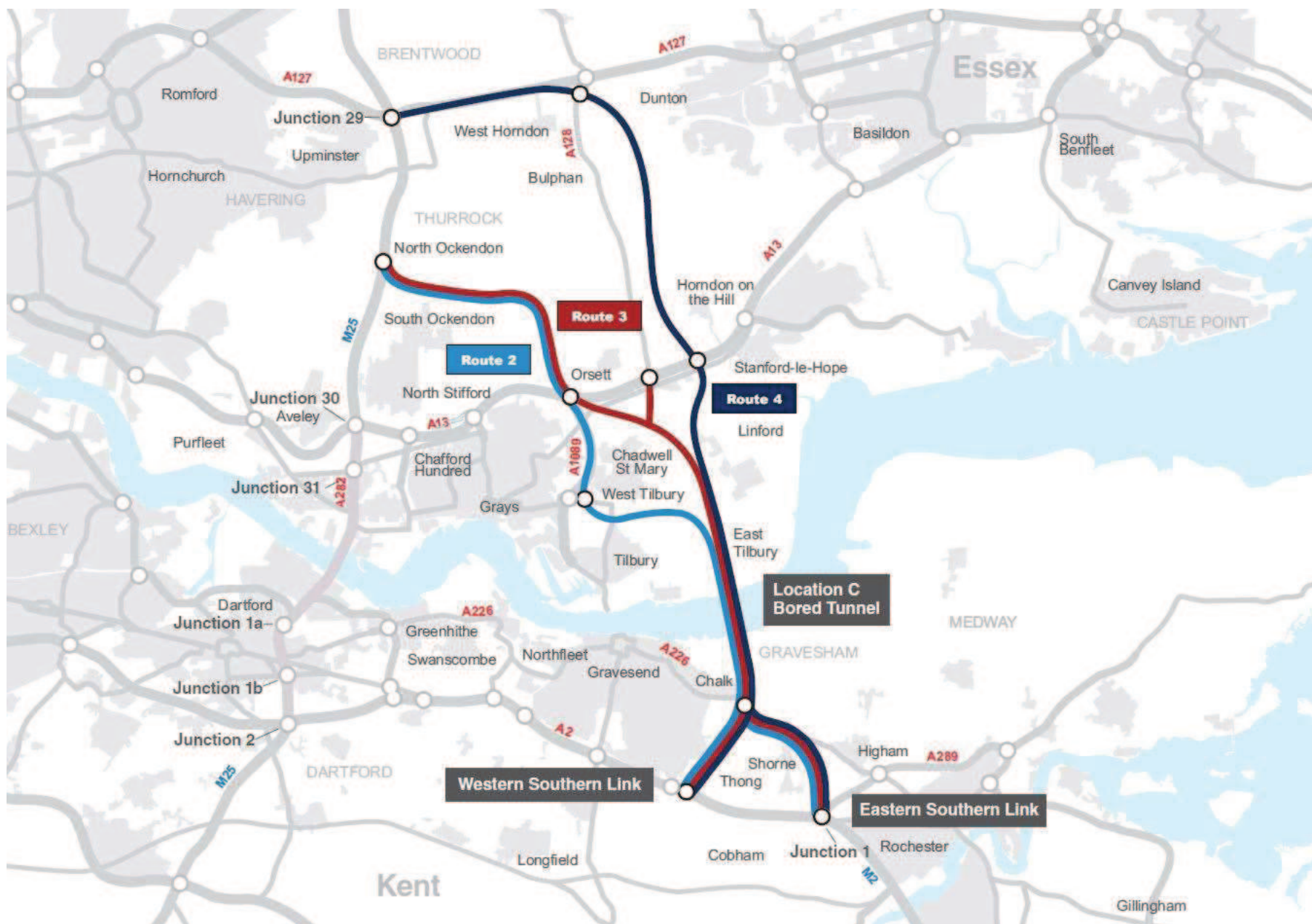
Highways England Creative job number S150529

*Calls to 0300 numbers cost no more than a national rate call to an 01 or 02 number and must count towards any inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls.

These rules apply to calls from any type of line including mobile, BT, other fixed line or payphone. Calls may be recorded or monitored.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this consultation in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Printed on paper from well-managed forest and other controlled sources.



Lower Thames Crossing Highways England Proposed Scheme



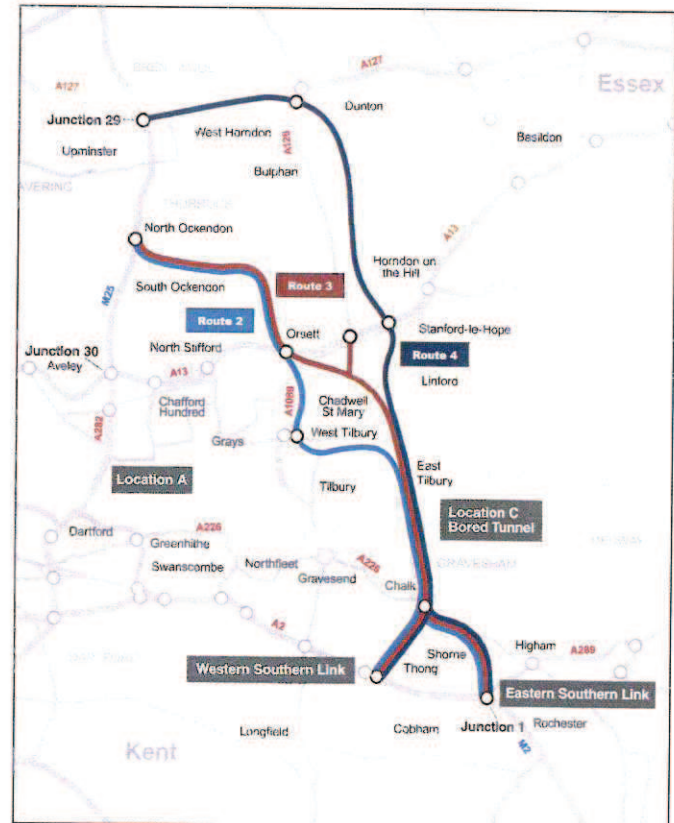
Lower Thames Crossing Consultation questionnaire

Highways England is consulting on proposals for a Lower Thames Crossing – a new road crossing of the River Thames connecting Kent and Essex.

A new crossing is needed to reduce congestion at the existing Dartford crossing and to provide free-flowing north-south capacity. Unlocking economic growth and supporting the development of new homes and jobs in the region is also a priority.

Following a series of studies and a public consultation in 2013, the Government commissioned Highways England to carry out a more detailed assessment of two location options. These are shown on the map, at the site of the current crossing, known as Location A, or a new crossing further east, known as Location C.

We have completed our assessment and are seeking your views on our proposals. Route options are shown on the map to the right.



Have your say

Please get involved and tell us your views before consultation closes on **24 March 2016**. We will review the responses and report our final recommendation to the Department for Transport. The Government is expected to decide on the location, route and type of crossing later this year.

Further information and how to respond

We recommend that you read our booklet *Lower Thames Crossing, Route Consultation 2016* before completing this questionnaire. We are also holding a series of events where our team will be available to answer your questions.

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk You can also complete this questionnaire online at our events.

Please tick the box(es) as appropriate and write your responses clearly in black ink within the appropriate sections. If your response is too large to fit into the boxes, please attach additional evidence. If you do so, please make it clear which questions you are answering and number any additional pages you send. Send your completed questionnaire free of charge to our address below:

Lower Thames Crossing Consultation, Freepost RTTH-GRYG-SCXZ, PO Box 1188, Harrow, HA1 9NU

We cannot accept responsibility for responses that are sent to any address other than the one stated above. Thank you for your participation.

About you

The following questions will help us to understand the range of people and organisations who have responded to this consultation and to identify local issues. The information you provide will not be used for any purpose other than assessing responses to this consultation and for other reasons explained in this questionnaire.

1. Name (optional)

2. Postcode

3. Email address or postal address

This is optional but providing your email or postal address will allow us to update you with any news on this consultation.

4. Are you responding on your own behalf or on behalf of an organisation or group?

- ☐ Providing my own response
- ☐ Providing a response on behalf of an organisation or group

Crossing location

5. Our proposal is a crossing at Location C, east of Gravesend and Tilbury.

For more information see pages 16 – 17 of our booklet

On balance, do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the location of a crossing, at Location C?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Tend to agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Tend to disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your response to question 5.

Routes north of the river

6. There are three route options north of the river in Essex – Routes 2, 3 and 4.

For more information see pages 19 – 22 of our booklet

Where do you think the route should be located north of the river?

- ☐ Route 2
- ☐ Route 3
- ☐ Route 4
- ☐ Another route
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your response to question 6.

7. Thinking about the three route options north of the river, on balance do you agree or disagree with our proposal for each of these?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Route 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Route 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Route 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Routes south of the river

8. There are two route options south of the river in Kent – the Western Southern Link and the Eastern Southern Link.

For more information see pages 20 – 22 of our booklet

Where do you think the route should be located south of the river?

- ☐ Western Southern Link
- ☐ Eastern Southern Link
- ☐ Another route
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your response to question 8.

9. Thinking about the two route options south of the river, on balance do you agree or disagree with our proposal for each of these?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Western Southern Link	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eastern Southern Link	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed scheme

10. Having evaluated the options, our proposed scheme is a new bored tunnel road crossing at Location C, following Route 3 north of the river and the Eastern Southern Link south of the river.

For more information see page 24 of our booklet

On balance, do you agree or disagree with our proposed scheme?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Tend to agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your response to question 10.

Additional junctions

11. We are proposing to create junctions with existing roads including the M2/A2, A226, A13 and M25. We would like to hear your views on whether you believe additional junctions would be beneficial.

We would welcome any comments you may have on our proposals for junctions.

Any other comments

We would welcome any other comments you may have on our proposals. (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Feedback on this consultation

13. How did you hear about this consultation? (Please select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Received a letter or a leaflet from Highways England | <input type="checkbox"/> TV or radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Received an email | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (e.g. Facebook or Twitter) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Received an email as a Dart Charge account holder | <input type="checkbox"/> Other online/website source(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters or other outdoor advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Word-of-mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers or magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Local authority |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other source (please specify) |

14. Do you have any feedback on this consultation – events, information provided, advertising, etc.?

More about you

15. If you represent an organisation please complete all questions in this section. If you are a member of the public please answer question 17 only.

Position in the organisation

Name of the group or organisation

Please use the space below to provide further detail about your role or organisation

16. What category of organisation or group are you representing?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Action group | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport, infrastructure or utility organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Statutory agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elected representative | <input type="checkbox"/> Other category of organisation or group (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment, heritage, amenity or community group | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

17. How often, if at all, do you use the Dartford Crossing, either by driving or being driven?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily | <input type="checkbox"/> Several times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> About once a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About once a fortnight | <input type="checkbox"/> About once a month | <input type="checkbox"/> About once every three months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About once every six months | <input type="checkbox"/> About once a year or less | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

Equality and Diversity

To help ensure that we are meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 we would be grateful if you could fill in the following diversity survey. Completing the survey is voluntary and is not a requirement for your response to be accepted. The survey will not be linked to the information you have provided in your response and we will not share the information with anyone else. We will use the survey results to provide a summary of the types of people and organisations who responded to this consultation. It will not identify individuals.

18. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say

19. Do you consider yourself as a person with a disability?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

20. Please describe your ethnic background

☐ Asian/Asian British ☐ White ☐ Black/Black British
☐ Chinese ☐ Mixed Ethnic background ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
☐ Other ethnic group ☐ Prefer not to say

21. Age ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25-45 ☐ 46-60 ☐ 61+ ☐ Prefer not to say

**If you need help accessing this or any other
Highways England information, please
call 0300 123 5000**

Website www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this consultation in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Highways England will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 (DPA) and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

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Agenda Item 16

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

8TH March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

DCLG Consultation on proposed changes to national planning policy

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sarah Anderton, Principal Planning Officer (Spatial Policy)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the response to the consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in Appendix I submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – national planning policies directly impact on local planning policies in the Local Plan and on neighbourhood plans and on the determination of planning applications which in turn influence the overall attractiveness of the borough.
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -national planning policies directly impact on local planning policies in the Local Plan and on neighbourhood plans and on the determination of planning applications which in turn influence economic decisions in the borough.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee	8 th March 2016

DCLG Consultation on proposed changes to national planning policy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a brief overview of the Government's consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. The response to the consultation submitted on behalf of the Council is included in Appendix A. The Committee is requested to note this response.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') published in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies. The Framework is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The content of Local Plans and neighbourhood plans must also accord with the Framework.
- 2.2 A consultation on proposed changes to the Framework was published by the Department for Communities & Local Government in December 2015. The main points of the changes being proposed are:
- a) Change to the planning definition of affordable housing so it could include products such as starter homes which enable access to owner occupation but which do not add the permanent stock of affordable housing
 - b) A change to require local planning authorities to require higher density residential development around commuter hubs. This would apply to both plan-making and determining planning applications.
 - c) Strengthening the national policy support for new settlements
 - d) Specifying that substantial weight should be given to the benefits of using brownfield land for housing
 - e) More strongly supporting housing development on small greenfield and brownfield sites (<10 dwellings) within settlement boundaries but excluding garden land. Sustainable small developments adjacent to settlement boundaries would also be supported.
 - f) Specify that Local Plan should include a specific policy which sets out the considerations for the development of small sites.
 - g) Require local planning authorities to take action to identify additional housing land if there is an undersupply in the number of homes delivered on allocated Local Plan sites over a 2 year period.
 - h) Ensure unviable or underused employment land and land used for retail or leisure or institutional uses is released for starter homes
 - i) Amend the exception site policy to make it clearer that planning applications for starter homes will only be rejected if there are overriding design, infrastructure and local environmental considerations that cannot be mitigated

- j) Allowing starter homes in unlet commercial units, for example in town centres, and allowing a greater proportion general and starter homes in mixed use commercial developments.
- k) Enable starter homes to be provided on rural exception sites
- l) Enable neighbourhood plans to allocate small scale sites in the Green Belt for starter homes.
- m) Enable starter homes to be developed on brownfield sites in the Green Belt provided this would not result in substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's constitution, a response to the consultation was prepared by officers and submitted by the deadline of Monday 22nd February 2016. The Chairmen of the Planning Committee and of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee had sight of the draft prior to its submission and amendments were made in response. The submitted response is enclosed as Appendix I.

4. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 4.1 The Government will confirm the changes to the Framework in due course; it has not given a specific date when this will happen. The consultation proposes a transitional period of 6 to 12 months for the change to the definition of affordable housing. With this exception, it can be expected that the changes will come into force immediately once they are confirmed.
- 4.2 The regular planning training sessions will be used to update Councillors on the confirmed changes .

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Framework sets out national planning policy which informs planning decisions in the borough which in turn impact on the borough's attractiveness as a place to live and work.	Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	None identified	Head of Planning & Development

Financial	None identified	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	None identified	Head of Planning & Development
Legal	None identified	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	None identified.	[Policy & Information Manager]
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The Framework's underpinning objective is for the planning system to deliver sustainable development.	Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	None identified.	Head of Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	None identified.	Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	None identified.	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	None identified.	Head of Planning & Development

6. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Response to the proposed changes to the Framework.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Consultation on proposed changes to national planning policy

Response submitted on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council

a) Affordable Housing

- Q1. *Do you have any comments or suggestions about the proposal to amend the definition of affordable housing in national planning policy to include a wider range of low cost home ownership options?*

There is no 'in principle' objection to widening the definition of affordable housing to include products which extend home ownership to meet a wider range of affordable needs. The practical implication of this, however, will be a reduction in the supply of those affordable tenures directed at those in greatest housing need, principally social rented housing. In addition to the reduced supply of social rented housing through s106 agreements through this change, the government is also committed to extending the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. In these circumstances, Registered Social Landlords may require additional resources or powers to compete directly in the housing market to boost the supply of social rented units.

The prospect that some affordable products would not retain affordability in perpetuity and/or not enable any subsidy to be recycled could further compound a depletion in the available stock for those in the most acute need.

Local authorities should retain the power to determine housing priorities, and the means of addressing them, based on local circumstances and needs.

- Q2. *Do you have any views on the implications of the proposed change to the definition of affordable housing on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010? What evidence do you have on this matter?*

No comment to make.

b) Increasing residential density around commuter hubs

- Q3. *Do you agree with the Government's definition of commuter hub? If not, what changes do you consider are required?*

Given that people can walk or cycle to or from any railway station, then the definition quoted means that every railway station across the country could become

‘a commuter hub’. This is not acceptable because of the potential implications that that would have for rural villages that have a railway station of which there is a significant number in Maidstone Borough. Whilst locations in settlements close to stations are highly likely to be sustainable, there may be specific considerations – such as heritage or townscape impacts – which mean that very high density development would not be appropriate in certain places. The changes to the NPPF should ensure that the actual characteristics of the site and its surroundings, and local planning policies, are also key factors in determining the appropriate site density. High density development should not be achieved at the expense of high standards of design or linked environmental improvements such as the provision/enhancement of green spaces.

It is also not relevant to refer, in para. 15 b), to “a place that has, or **could have** in the future, a frequent service.....” (with emphasis applied). A requirement for a higher degree of certainty about future service improvements should be incorporated in the policy wording.

Both the heading of this section of the Consultation document and the wording of para. 15 use the phrase “around commuter hubs”. The interpretation of ‘around’ is left undefined. Whilst local site circumstances should always be a key determinant, more specificity would help in the interpretation of this policy.

Q4. *Do you have any further suggestions for proposals to support higher density development around commuter hubs through the planning system?*

Higher densities should be limited in principle to urban locations and the NPPF should acknowledge that, even there, there may be other factors (e.g. impact upon the character of a conservation area) which act against very high densities. Particular care needs to be taken in rural villages so that the character of the village is maintained and account taken of neighbourhood plans which are being prepared for rural service centres in this Borough, as in many others throughout the country.

Q5. *Do you agree that the Government should not introduce a minimum level of residential densities in national policy for areas around commuter hubs? If not, why not?*

Yes. This should be a matter for local planning authorities to decide through the Local Plan process.

c) Supporting new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites, and delivery of housing agrees in Local Plans

- Q6. *Do you consider that national planning policy should provide greater policy support for new settlements in meeting development needs? If not, why not?*

New settlements can help to meet local development needs but they are unlikely to be a short-term solution due to the need to provide significant infrastructure in advance of delivery. Housing delivered through new settlements will not contribute to supply for a number of years and this may have major implications for plan making and delivery requirements.

Plans for new settlements should be part of the local plan making process, including neighbourhood plans, which are able to consider comprehensively all the issues involved in major development provision. It is considered that there is already sufficient national planning policy support for the proactive involvement of developers.

- Q7. *Do you consider that it would be beneficial to strengthen policy on development of brownfield land for housing? If not, why not and are there any unintended impacts that we should take into account?*

Local planning authorities already promote the development of brownfield sites through their Local Plans. There is a risk from the proposed approach that other non-residential uses will be squeezed out by the presumption for housing. The approach may make it more difficult to maintain a sufficient, on-going supply of employment premises and land in particular.

The Government should consider assistance in the implementation of brownfield development for example through assistance to remediation, fiscal or financial incentives to encourage landowners to bring forward brownfield sites for development.

- Q8. *Do you consider that it would be beneficial to strengthen policy on development of small sites for housing? If not, why not? How could the change impact on the calculation of the local planning authorities' five-year land supply?*

The proposed approach would apply a 'presumption in favour' of residential development of up to 10 dwellings on brownfield sites within and, potentially, at the edge of settlements. This implies a 'zoning' approach with the risk that proper

weight will not be afforded to local planning and site specific considerations in decision making.

There is already a clear support in the NPPF for the redevelopment of brownfield sites irrespective of their size and the proposed use, and local plans incorporate policies setting out how applications for housing developments within settlements are determined on unallocated sites whether greenfield or brownfield.

The approach to sites at the edge of settlements could conflict with the Local Plan process; such sites would normally be encompassed within settlement boundaries as part of the Local Plan process if they are suitable for redevelopment.

The approach could result in the underuse of land. It could encourage applications of 9 dwellings or below on sites which have the capacity for a higher number of dwellings. In this respect it would be better to also set a site area threshold.

Sites in the 5 year supply need to be specific and deliverable. On this basis, the proposed presumption would not be advantageous for the 5 year supply calculation although it would further substantiate a windfall allowance for later in the Plan period.

Q9. *Do you agree with the Government proposal to define a small site as a site of less than 10 units? If not, what other definition do you consider is appropriate, and why?*

No. As above it is more helpful to determine what constitutes a small site by also specifying the actual size of the site. In addition, 5 dwellings is more conventionally used as the threshold for a small site for housing monitoring purposes.

Q10. *Do you consider that national planning policy should set out that local planning authorities should put in place a specific positive local policy for assessing applications for development on small sites not allocated in the Local Plan?*

No. It is to be expected that plans would incorporate policies setting out how applications for housing developments would be determined on unallocated sites irrespective of their size (or the number of units proposed) and this should be adequate.

Q11. *We would welcome your views on how best to implement the housing delivery test, and in particular:*

- *What do you consider should be the baseline against which to monitor delivery of new housing?*
- *What should constitute significant under-delivery, and over what time period?*

- *What steps do you think should be taken in response to significant under-delivery?*
- *How do you see this approach working when the housing policies in the Local Plan are not up-to-date?*

Para. 196 of the NPPF confirms that “the planning system is plan-led” and any shortfall in the delivery of housing should be dealt with through the local plan process rather than adding further process requirements. The Local Plan process ensures full democratic and public engagement in the process of identifying sites.

Local planning authorities’ Monitoring Reports provide the basis for monitoring housing delivery against requirements over both the Plan period (the housing trajectory) and the 5 year supply calculation. The NPPF already provides a mechanism to overcome undersupply; if there is no 5 year land supply, housing land supply policies are over-ridden by the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In these circumstances, it is important that the development permitted directly helps to reduce the 5 year supply shortfall that has been identified. To this end, the NPPF could explicitly support the imposition of conditions on planning consents requiring the homes to be delivered within set timeframes.

Direct interventions with infrastructure providers, land-owners and developers to bring forward schemes are more likely to be effective than further performance management exercises. Identifying infrastructure and other constraints as part of the planning process would enable action to concentrate on the real issues affecting implementation which at present are frequently not addressed.

Q12. What would be the impact of a housing delivery test on development activity?

It is unlikely to affect development activity.

d) Supporting delivery of starter homes

Q13. What evidence would you suggest could be used to justify retention of land for commercial or similar use? Should there be a fixed time limit on land retention for commercial use?

The evidence prepared for the Local Plan should provide the appropriate basis. Employment land needs can change over the timeframe of the Local Plan and the NPPF requires flexibility to accommodate future employment needs and the Local Plan provides the best means for this to be done in a transparent plan-led way. In this way, a 3 year time limit risks the permanent loss of employment land which will

be required in the medium to longer term especially as such a time frame is also significantly shorter than a full economic cycle (say 5-7 years). It is recognised that Local Plans are the means to designate and protect the 'best' employment land but inevitably there is significant employment generation on smaller sites which could be under threat by these proposals. It is an essential role of the planning system to ensure that both housing and employment requirements are provided for. There is a risk that this proposal will deliver valuable homes in a way which is to the detriment of longer term economic growth.

Q14. Do you consider that the starter homes exception site policy should be extended to unviable or underused retail, leisure and non-residential institutional brownfield land?

See Q13 - the same concerns would apply.

Q15. Do you support the proposal to strengthen the starter homes exception site policy? If not, why not?

The text of the consultation states that additional clarity will be provided which is welcomed.

Q16. Should starter homes form a significant element of any housing component within mixed use developments and converted unlet commercial units?

Yes, in principle, but the same concerns about the provision of starter homes instead of other types of affordable housing apply (see Q1). The planning system should enable the full range of affordable housing needs to be addressed.

Q17. Should rural exception sites be used to deliver starter homes in rural areas? If so, should local planning authorities have the flexibility to require local connection tests?

Such sites are approved as an exception to normal policy based on a local needs assessment and the affordability benefits should be available for future generations. If starter homes are to be permitted on exceptions sites as part of a mix of affordable housing types justified through the needs assessment, a perpetuity condition should be applied. It is agreed that a local connection should also be a requirement.

Q18. Are there any other policy approaches to delivering starter homes in rural areas that you would support?

No comment to make

Q19. Should local communities have the opportunity to allocate sites for small scale starter home developments in their Green Belt through neighbourhood plans?

The impact of new housing on the openness of the Green Belt would be the same whether the new units were starter homes or another form of affordable tenure. If additional encouragement is to be given to local communities to allocate land for these purposes through an 'exception policy' approach, it should extend to include all type of affordable tenure and not solely starter homes so that communities could respond to their specific local needs as identified through a local needs survey.

Q20. Should planning policy be amended to allow redevelopment of brownfield sites for starter homes through a more flexible approach to assessing the impact on openness?

See response to Q19.

e) Transitional arrangements

Q21. We would welcome your views on our proposed transitional arrangements.

The proposed 6-12 months transitional period is short in view of the range of changes proposed and the implications for the Plan making process. The changes will particularly impact on Local Plans at an advanced stage of preparation.

f) General questions

Q22. What are your views on the assumptions and data sources set out in this document to estimate the impact of the proposed changes? Is there any other evidence which you think we need to consider?

No comment to make

Q23. Have you any other views on the implications of our proposed changes to national planning policy on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010? What evidence do you have on this matter?

No comment to make.

22nd February 2016

Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone House

King Street

Maidstone

ME15 6JQ

Agenda Item 17

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

08 March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Re-establishment of Maidstone Borough Transport User Group

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke: Principal Planning Officer Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That Councillors agree to re-establish the Maidstone Transport User Group.
2. That Councillors agree to the proposed role and membership of the Maidstone Transport User Group as outlined at paragraphs 4.6 and 4.8 of the report.
3. That Councillors agree to a review of the need for the group on an annual basis

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – A reliable public transport system is a key element in the drive to securing a successful local economy

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee	8 March 2016

Re-establishment of Maidstone Borough Transport User Group

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In 2014, the former Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, commenced a review of Transport in Maidstone Borough - alternatives to using a car. The review was completed in 2015 and the final report published in May 2015.
 - 1.2 The final report was presented to and considered by this Committee at its meeting held on 14th July 2015.
 - 1.3 One of the recommendations of the review report was that the Maidstone Borough Transport User Group be re-established.
 - 1.4 This report sets out how the group could be re-established and seeks to recommend those who would be eligible for membership of the re-formed group.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The previous Maidstone Borough Transport User Group was disbanded in 2011 following a review of a number of such groups by the then Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services as the group was coordinated by the community engagement team within the Council.
 - 2.2 Councillors are also advised that there were earlier calls for the group to be re-established, for example the former Regeneration & Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee in gathering evidence for their report 'Traffic Congestion in Maidstone Municipal Year 2011/2012,' heard calls for this to be done.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Two basic options are open to Councillors, the Maidstone Borough Transport User Group is either re-established or it is not re-established.
- 3.2 If the group is not re-established, an opportunity for direct contact between transport users and transport service providers would be lost, which in the case of rail services within the Borough, is important at this point of time in the build-up to the commencement of the process to award a new South Eastern Train Operating Franchise process later in the year. The opportunity would also be lost for greater cooperation across transport sectors in terms of for example timetable coordination between rail and bus services.

- 3.3 Re-establishment of the group would enable transport users to have direct contact with operators and for the representatives of the wider community within the Borough to make their views known through the group to these operators. It is anticipated that the group would allow discussion and potentially prompt resolution of any specific minor local issues relating to service provision across the public transport sector.
- 3.4 However, given the previous history of the group and the criticism associated with its role and purpose, if the group is re-established, its role needs to be clearly defined and it should be subject to periodic review to establish if it is still required.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is for the Maidstone Borough Transport User Group to be re-established.
- 4.2 As indicated above, the re-establishment of the group would enable the resumption of direct contact between service providers and service users.
- 4.3 The key to the re-establishment of the group is to ensure that it remains focussed. A previous criticism levelled at the group was that it had become little more than a talking-shop prior to its dissolution, in common with other similar groups around the County (many of which have also ceased to meet).
- 4.4 The group needs to take on a strategic role looking at the promotion of modal shift and public transport usage/provision as it affects the Borough as a whole, including integration of buses and trains from the point of view of both service providers and users.
- 4.5 It should not be focussed, for example, on why a specific train or bus was delayed. The service operators all have their own existing complaints procedures in place for such circumstances.
- 4.6 If the group is re-established it is recommended that it should meet when necessary, but no more than four times per annum. It is also recommended that the operation of the group is subject to an annual review to ensure that it continues to fulfil a strategic Borough-wide role.
- 4.7 It is considered that the first issue the group could consider is the forthcoming process relating to the award of a new Southeastern Train Operating Franchise.
- 4.8 As part of a desire to ensure the group remains focussed but also to provide a balance between community representation and service providers, the following membership is recommended.
- Three representatives from Parish Councils, one of which could be from the Maidstone Branch of KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) to represent the communities across the Borough;
 - A representative from any existing formally constituted commuter/public transport action groups;

- A representative from the Community Rail Partnership (Medway Valley Line);
- An MBC and KCC Councillor,
- A representative of South Eastern Trains (and/or any Train Operating Company that may be awarded the rail franchise in due course);
- A representative from the main bus operating companies in the Borough, and;
- MBC and KCC officer(s) as required.

In any of the publicity for the reformation of the group it would be appropriate to clearly set out the purpose of the group and the potential role of participants in the group in inviting nominations for membership.

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 If Councillors agree the recommendations in paragraphs 4.6 and 4.8 the next step will be to publicise the re-establishment of the group and to set a date for its inaugural meeting.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The promotion and delivery of a good public transport system will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Financial	No implications directly arising from this report	Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	No implications directly arising from this report	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Legal	No implications directly arising from this report	Kate Jardine Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	Promotion of increased use of public transport will take account of the needs of all	Anna Collier Policy & Information

	groups including those without access to a car.	Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	Promotion and increased use of public transport may encourage a reduction in the use of the private car	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development]
Human Rights Act	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development & Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development

7. REPORT APPENDICES

None

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

08 March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Scope and costs required to implement 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke: Principal Planning Officer Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That Councillors note this report and request officers to undertake/commission further work with the aim of more clearly identifying the potential extent and precise costs of 20mph scheme(s) that have been assessed against the adopted County Council policy, and that this be presented to a future meeting of this Committee
2. That Councillors agree in the first instance that the Maidstone Urban Area, the five Rural Service Centres and the five Larger Villages be considered as suitable potential scheme areas.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – Reducing vehicle speeds can have beneficial effect on health levels and road safety

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee	08 March 2016

Scope and costs required to implement 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Full Council considered the following motion at its meeting held on 9 December 2015

'This Council notes:

- Speed limits on Britain's residential roads are 60% higher than comparable European nations;
- More than half of all road accidents occur on roads with 30 mph limits;
- Reducing speed limits on residential roads has been found to lower the incidence of accidents and the number of fatalities and serious accidents that result from them;
- The significant contribution a 20 mph limit could make to improving Maidstone's air quality;
- New Department of Transport guidelines making it easier for local authorities to adopt a 20 mph default speed limit on residential roads; and
- The significant support shown for 20 mph limits in recent surveys of local residents.

This Council therefore resolves to:

Use all appropriate avenues to press the County Council to reconsider its existing policies on speed limits and to support a Borough-wide 20 mph speed limit on residential roads.'

1.2 Following debate of the motion at the meeting, Council resolved as follows;

'This Council notes:

- Speed limits on Britain's residential roads are 60% higher than comparable European nations;
- More than half of all road accidents occur on roads with 30 mph limits;
- Reducing speed limits on residential roads has been found to lower the incidence of accidents and the number of fatalities and serious accidents that result from them;
- The significant contribution a 20 mph limit could make to improving Maidstone's air quality;
- New Department of Transport guidelines making it easier for local authorities to adopt a 20 mph default speed limit on residential roads; and
- The significant support shown for 20 mph limits in recent surveys of local residents.

This Council therefore resolves to:

Request that the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee review all the available evidence; consider the implementation

of 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone; and refer the findings to the Cabinet Member at Kent County Council.'

- 1.3 The Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee met on 13 January 2016 and as part of the agenda considered the reference from Full Council in relation to 20mph speed limits and resolved as follows:

'That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee noted the reference from Council regarding a Motion for 20 mph speed limits and requested that officers present a report to the Committee at a later meeting showing the scope and costs required to implement 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone.'

- 1.4 This report therefore seeks to outline the scope of required work and potential costs to implement 20mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are a growing number of areas that are implementing or considering implementation of 20mph measures around the country. As a result of this, the Department for Transport (DfT) issued new Circular advice in 2013 (DfT Circular 01/2013: Setting Local Speed Limits.)¹ This provides guidance to be used by English traffic authorities for setting local speed limits on single and dual carriageway roads in both urban and rural areas.
- 2.2 Paragraph 12 of the Circular identifies that one of the key priorities for action is for traffic authorities to consider the introduction of more 20 mph limits and zones in residential areas to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.3 This is clarified in Section 6.1 which states that 20 mph limits and zones can be introduced on "residential streets in cities, towns and villages, particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support and the characteristics of the street are suitable".
- 2.4 However, the guidance goes on to note that "general compliance needs to be achievable without an excessive reliance on enforcement". It is very clear that there should be no expectation on the Police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activities.
- 2.5 There is a difference between 20 mph limits, typically covering individual or small numbers of streets and requiring signs only, and 20 mph zones, typically covering larger areas and requiring both signs and markings.
- 2.6 Originally, 20 mph zones required traffic calming such as road humps/chicanes, but the DfT relaxed this requirement in 2011 in order to

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/63975/circular-01-2013.pdf

reduce costs for traffic authorities, and to avoid the opposition which physical measures can attract (e.g. potential concerns regarding damage to vehicles and increased emergency services response times).

- 2.7 DfT Circular 01/2013 notes the clear evidence of the effect which reducing traffic speeds has on the number of collisions and casualties. There is a lower risk of fatal injury at lower speeds. Research shows that on urban roads with low average traffic speeds any 1 mph reduction in average speed can reduce the collision frequency by around 6%.
- 2.8 The campaign group '20's Plenty for Us'² is leading a national campaign for the introduction of a 20mph limit on all residential streets. It argues that more than half of road deaths and serious injuries occur on roads with 30 mph limits and that Britain has the highest percentage of pedestrian road fatalities in Europe at 22.5%.
- 2.9 The benefits of 20 mph schemes include quality of life and community benefits, and encouragement of healthier and more sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling. These active travel modes can make a very positive contribution to improving health and tackling obesity, improving accessibility and tackling congestion, and reducing carbon emissions with a consequent impact on air quality and improving the local environment.
- 2.10 To-date, some 55 communities in Scotland and England have introduced wide-area 20mph limits in residential areas. By far the majority of these areas are densely populated major urban areas and are predominantly administered by unitary authorities.
- 2.11 It is clear from the communities that have taken the decision to introduce wide-area 20mph limits that there are significant benefits in accident and casualty reduction, although actual evidence of significant levels of overall traffic speed reduction is less clear, given that in most cases schemes are only signed areas.
- 2.12 There are currently stretches of some 44 roads in the Borough that are subject to 20 mph limits including the recently added sections of Roseacre Lane/Yeoman Lane in Bearsted. (See Appendix 1 for the list). I am not aware of any specific monitoring that has been undertaken on these roads however.
- 2.13 Councillors should clearly be aware however, in relation to Maidstone, given that it is not the Highway Authority, the introduction of a 20mph scheme in any form would need to be undertaken in conjunction with and with the support of Kent County Council which is the Highway Authority.
- 2.14 Kent County Council adopted a revised policy on 20mph limits in October 2013 following consideration by the Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee on 3 October 2013.³ The relevant minute of the meeting

²<http://www.20splenty.org/>

³<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=26617>

and the updated policy are attached at respectively, appendices 2 and 3 to this report.

2.15 Kent County Council's policy approach can be summarised as follows:

- a) implement 20mph schemes where there was clear justification in terms of achieving casualty reduction as part of the on-going programme of Casualty Reduction Schemes;
 - b) identify locations for 20mph schemes which would assist with delivering targets set out in Kent's Joint Health Wellbeing Strategy; and
 - c) enable any schemes that could not be justified in terms of road safety or public health benefits but were locally important to be funded via the local County Councillors Member Highway Fund. All schemes must meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.
-

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 There are a number of options open to Councillors.

3.2 The first option is to do nothing. This would be however, appear to be contrary to the resolution of Full Council set out earlier in the report. In addition, to do nothing would also be in direct contrast to the growing evidence base that the introduction of such measures can have significant benefits for the community as a whole.

3.3 Option Two. A Borough-wide 20mph zone could be introduced on all roads except trunk roads, which are the responsibility of Highways England.

3.4 Option 3: A more limited and targeted approach linking the implementation of 20mph zones to residential areas (where there is support from the majority of residents) and/or areas of high pedestrian circulation such as Maidstone Town Centre (High Street/Middle Row are already 20mph) could also be taken.

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 If the imposition of a 20mph scheme is to be pursued within the Borough, Option 3 is the preferred option. This would enable a more focussed approach in specific areas where the greatest benefits could potentially accrue rather than a blanket Borough-wide 20mph zone.

4.2 Costings of such schemes are difficult to quantify and of course will vary depending on the location and complexity of schemes. Costings (albeit from 2013) are set out in paragraphs 11.3 to 11.5 of the attached KCC report at Appendix 3. For Councillors' ease of reference they are reproduced below:

11.3 The cost of any 20mph scheme will vary due to the location and objectives of the scheme. It is estimated that the typical capital cost of a 1km length of 20mph speed limit (signing only) is £1,400 and a 1km length of 20mph zone (including traffic calming) is £60,000. The capital cost is made up of the installation of the signs, posts and associated traffic calming measures. There are revenue costs associated with any scheme that will

need to be considered which include the Traffic Regulation Orders, design, consultation, engagement, marketing, monitoring, on-going maintenance of infrastructure and enforcement.

11.4 As every scheme is unique in terms of locality issues it is very difficult to give a robust cost estimate as to how much it would be to implement a blanket 20mph limit or zone across Kent. However, a crude estimate based on the costs quoted above and the assumption that they would only apply to unclassified urban roads, the capital costs of a blanket limit across Kent could be around £3.4m. For a blanket zone across Kent (with calming measures) the capital cost could be over £146m. Assuming a typical scheme design fee of 15%, the initial revenue costs could be £510k for a limit and £22m for a zone. No estimate has been made for the on-going maintenance or monitoring of any blanket scheme and the additional enforcement costs to Kent Police.

11.5 These figures are likely to be an overestimate and would probably be spread over a number of years, but they do give an indication of the approximate overall quantum of funding required if Members were minded to adopt a blanket 20mph policy. If the new policy was adopted costs would continue to be borne by existing CRM, MHF and general highways maintenance funding streams and from KCC's Public Health budget.

- 4.3 The key figures to draw out of the above are;
- Speed limit (signing only) £1400 per 1km
 - Speed Zone (including traffic calming measures) £60K per 1km
- The above indicative costings were based on information gathered from the website of the campaign group '20s Plenty for Us'⁴

The costings also do not include design fees, maintenance or monitoring or the costs of the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).

- 4.4 A signing only scheme for appropriate roads in the Borough is likely to be in the region of £1million or more.
- 4.5 It would be necessary to seek to provide justification for such a scheme in accordance with the County Council's adopted policy criteria for such schemes.
- 4.6 However, the evidence for the benefits of reduced traffic speeds in terms of improved road safety is clear. In response, the introduction of 20mph schemes covering residential and shopping areas has become increasingly widespread amongst English traffic authorities.
- 4.7 Implementation of 20mph schemes is not only justified in terms of improving road safety but also in terms of health, social and environmental benefits. This is clearly reflected in the revised KCC adopted policy.

⁴ <http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/index.htm>

- 4.8 The greatest impact in reducing traffic speeds is delivered by 20 mph zones featuring traffic calming, achieving a reduction in speeds of about 9mph on average⁵.
- 4.9 However, the majority of new schemes introduced are now signed only 20 mph limits. These are much cheaper to implement and can avoid the opposition which physical traffic calming measures can attract, but generally lead to much smaller reductions in traffic speeds (about 1 mph on average). Some reduction in the number of collisions and severity of casualties has nevertheless been recorded in recent case studies of 20 mph limits.
- 4.10 Given competing priorities, it is likely that the resources available for Police enforcement of any 20 mph schemes introduced in Maidstone would be limited. To be effective, such schemes would need to be generally self-enforcing. Twenty mph limits are therefore unsuited to streets where average traffic speeds are high (i.e. mean speeds above 24mph) and where pedestrian/cyclist movements are low (with little potential to increase). This does not of course mean that such measures cannot be introduced.
- 4.11 With regards to area wide schemes, Kent County Council is looking at a number of new ones to assist with public health targets but these are in design and no detailed costs are available as yet.
- 4.12 I am also aware that within Tunbridge Wells Borough there is a working group which is looking at the issue of 20mph limits and that County Council Officers have recommended that they should look to get funding to commission a report to look at more detailed/realistic costings for their Borough.
- 4.13 Given the current uncertainty regarding the extent and, in particular, costs involved in taking a 20mph scheme forward, Councillors may consider that further work on feasibility and funding should be undertaken to establish which areas might comply with the adopted Kent County Council policy to ensure there is a robust case for the implementation of a 20mph scheme before it is presented to the County Council.
- 4.14 I would recommend that Councillors agree that the Maidstone Urban Area, the five Rural Service Centres and the larger villages as initial and distinct projects, for which the required justification, detail and more realistic costings could be worked-up on a phased basis given that firstly settlements in the Borough are dispersed and secondly that resource constraints are likely to mean that any scheme would not be implemented in one go.
- 4.15 It is recommended therefore that
- 1: That Councillors note this report and request officers to undertake/commission further work with the aim of more clearly identifying the potential extent and precise costs of 20mph scheme(s) that have been assessed against the adopted County Council policy, and that this be presented to a future meeting of this Committee;

⁵ http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/UsefulReports/20mph_Steer_Davies_Gleave.pdf

- 2: That Councillors agree in the first instance that the Maidstone Urban Area, the five Rural Service Centres and the five Larger Villages be considered as suitable potential scheme areas.

5 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 If Councillors agree the recommendations, it will be necessary for further work to be undertaken/commissioned to identify more precisely the costs and achievability of implementing 20mph schemes that have been assessed in accordance with Kent County Council adopted policy on residential roads within, in the first instance, the areas of the Borough included in recommendation two.

6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The introduction of 20 mph scheme(s) within the Borough could result in positive health and road safety benefits keeping Maidstone an attractive place to live.	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	No specific implications arise	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Financial	The commissioning of any additional work from external consultants will have an impact on existing budgets requiring additional spend	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development and Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	Specialist consultants may be required to undertake the further study work	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Legal	No specific implications arise from the report.	Kate Jardine Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	A reduction in speed limits would benefit all sections of the community	Ann Collier Policy & Information

		Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	A reduction in speed limits would be likely to result in air quality benefits	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	A reduction in speed limits would be likely to result in improvements in road safety	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	Specialist consultant advice may be required. Any consultant(s) would be appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development and Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	N/A	Rob Jarman Head of Planning & Development

7 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: List of existing 20 mph roads in the Borough
- Appendix 2: Extract from the minutes of the Kent County Council Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee 03 October 2013.
- Appendix 3: Updated Policy for 20mph limits and zones on Kent County Council's roads.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1

Item No	Road Name	Parish	Road Name
1	DUNN STREET	BOXLEY	From Dunn
2	THE STREET	BOXLEY	From a poir
3	BOXLEY ROAD	BOXLEY	From a poir
4	HURSTWOOD ROAD	BREDHURST	From its jur
5	FIR TREE GROVE	BREDHURST	From its jur
6	THE STREET	BREDHURST	From its jur
7	CHAPEL LANE	BREDHURST	From its jur
8	DUNN STREET ROAD	BREDHURST	From Dunn
9	FORGE LANE	BREDHURST	From its jur
10	HUNTINGTON ROAD	COXHEATH	From its jur
11	CLINTON CLOSE	COXHEATH	From its jur
12	BURSTON ROAD	COXHEATH	From its jur
13	WAVERLEY CLOSE	COXHEATH	From its jur
14	CAPELL CLOSE	COXHEATH	From its jur
15	BLIND LANE	DETLING	From its jur
16	PERRY STREET	MAIDSTONE	From Arunc
17	PENENDEN STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
18	HOPE STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
19	FISHER STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
20	ARUNDEL STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
21	ALBERT STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
22	FLORENCE ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From Charl
23	DOUGLAS ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
24	CHARLES STREET	MAIDSTONE	From Florei
25	BOWER LANE	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
26	PERRYFIELD STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
27	RANDALL STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
28	SANDLING ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From the rc
29	SCOTT STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
30	HIGH STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
31	ALEXANDRA STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
32	VINTERS ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
33	LUSHINGTON ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
34	GRAVENEY ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
35	MILL STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
36	HUNTSMAN LANE	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
37	PUDDING LANE	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
38	PROSPECT PLACE	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
39	ARLOTT CLOSE	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
40	KING STREET	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
41	EDNA ROAD	MAIDSTONE	From its jur
42	POSTLEY ROAD	Maidstone	From its jur
43	LOWER STREET	Leeds	From a poir
44	Roseacre La/Yeoman La	Bearsted	

3

Street Road southwestwards for a distance of 569 metres
 at 327 metres south of its junction with Church Lane to a point 68 metres south of its junction with Pilgri
 at 177 metres south of its junction with Church Lane to a point 68 metres south of its junction with Pilgri
 action with The Street for its entire length
 action with Hurstwood Road for its entire length
 action with Chapel Lane northwards to a point 45 metres northeast of its junction with Kemsley Street R
 action with Forge Lane to its junction with Dunn Street Road
 Street to its junction with Chapel Lane
 action with Dunn Street Road northwestwards for a distance of 219 metres
 action with Westerhill Road to its junction with Culpepper Road
 action with Huntington Road for its entire length
 action with Amsbury Road to its junctions with Huntington Road
 action with Huntington Road for its entire length
 action with Huntington Road for its entire length
 action with Forge Lane for its entire length
 del Street to its junction with Albert Street
 action with Fisher Street northeastwards for a distance of 55 metres
 action with Alexandra Street to its junction with Sandling Road
 action with Hardy Street to its junction with Perryfield Street
 action with Peel Street to Chillington Street
 action with Sandling Road to its junction with Perryfield Street
 es Street to its junction with Prospect Place
 action with Charles Street to its junction with Bower Lane
 nce Road to its junction with Reginald Road
 action with Upper Fant Road for its entire length
 action with Sandling Road to its junction with Arundel Street
 action with Fisher Street to its junction with Scott Street
 oundabout at its junction with Staceys Street to its northwestern junction with Albert Street
 action with Hope Street to its junction with Perryfield Street
 action with Gabriels Hill to its junction with Bishops Way
 action with Lower Boxley Road to its junction with Randall Street
 action with Huntsman Lane to its junction with Sittingbourne Road
 action with Calder Road to its junction with Dickens Road
 action with Woolley Road for its entire length
 action with High Street southeastwards for a distance of 40 metres
 action with Ashford Road to its junction with Vinters Road
 action with High Street to its junction with Medway Street
 action with Bower Lane for its entire length
 action with Perry Street for its entire length
 action with Gabriels Hill to its junction with Wyke Manor Road
 action with Calder Road to its junction with Dickens Road
 action with the roundabout junction with Courtenay Road and Armstrong Road to its junction with A229
 at 155 metres west of its junction with Burberry Lane in a westerly direction to a point 20 metres northe

ims Way
ims Way

oad

Sheal's Crescent in a northerly direction.
east of its junction with Wykeham Grove.

13/00063 - 20mph Speed Limit Policy - Review

- [Meeting of Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee, Thursday, 3rd October, 2013 10.00 am \(Item 20.\)](#)
- [View the background to item 20.](#)

Minutes:

(1) Further to Minute 27 of 4 July 2012, the report presented national and local evidence on the benefits of 20mph schemes and recommended a new policy that the County would seek to implement 20mph schemes when there were clear road safety or public health benefits. Any locally supported schemes that could not be justified in those terms could still be implemented via the Member Highway Fund provided they were implemented as set out in Department for Transport Circular 01/2013.

(2) The policy would feed into the new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy which was being developed by Highways & Transportation to assist with meeting targets set out in Bold Steps for Kent and delivering the priorities set out in Growth Without Gridlock (GWG).

(3) In recent years the demand for the implementation of 20mph schemes had been increasing in response to both local and national campaigns. KCC had been implementing 20mph schemes in Kent and had 50 schemes covering over 800 roads. In addition, all new residential developments were designed to keep traffic at 20mph although they were not always signed as such to avoid unnecessary sign clutter. The County's current policy allowed the introduction of 20mph schemes at any location where such measures could be justified in crash savings terms or via the Member Highway Fund (MHF) providing they met implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.

(4) The DfT published new advice on the implementation of 20mph schemes in its circular 01/2013 in January 2013 which contained guidance on the setting of local speed limits. There were two distinctly different types of 20mph speed restrictions which were limits, which relied solely on signing, and zones which required traffic calming to reduce speeds. Highway Authorities had powers to introduce 20 mph speed limits that applied only at certain times of day. The variable limits might be particularly relevant where a school was located on a major through road that was not suitable for a full-time 20 mph zone or limit.

(5) The report included details and results of Primary School Speed Reduction Scheme Trials. Evidence showed that schemes which combined 20mph limits with traffic calming measures to reduce speeds had proved very successful in reducing casualties by around 40% to 60%. When only signing had been used the overall benefits were significantly less.

(6) The current safety record of the existing 20mph schemes in Kent which were a mix of both limits and zones showed that casualties recorded on 20mph roads in Kent as a proportion of all roads were 2% less than the national average.

(7) From 1 April 2013 Kent County Council became responsible for a number of Public Health functions. One of those was the Health Improvement for the population of Kent – especially for the most disadvantaged. There was evidence that 20mph schemes did encourage healthier transport modes such as walking and cycling as in Bristol, where preliminary results indicated increases in levels of walking and cycling of over 20%. An

increase in the implementation of 20mph schemes could assist in the outcome of reducing obesity in adults and children in Kent and improving the overall health of the population.

(8) Kent Police would not support 20mph speed limits unless the average speed of vehicles was 24mph or less, as research had shown that signed only 20mph limits where natural traffic calming was absent had little or no effect on traffic speeds and did not significantly reduce accidents. They would also not support the introduction of 20mph zones without sufficient traffic calming measures being in place and of appropriate design, that reduced the speed of most traffic to 20mph or less thereby making them self-enforcing.

(9) Currently 20mph schemes were funded either from the County's Casualty Reduction Programme or via the Members Highway Fund. The total Casualty Reduction Programme budget for 2013/14 for new schemes was £800k which goes to fund many different types of safety engineering measures across the county. The cost of any 20mph scheme would vary due to the location and objectives of the scheme. It was estimated that the typical capital cost of a 1km length of 20mph speed limit (signing only) was £1,400 and a 1km length of 20mph zone (including traffic calming) was £60,000. Revenue costs associated with any scheme would need to be considered including Traffic Regulation Orders, design, consultation, engagement, marketing, monitoring, on-going maintenance of infrastructure and enforcement.

(10) As with many highway issues there was no national prevailing view as to the policy a local Highway Authority should adopt regarding 20mph schemes. The issues were complex and there were many pros and cons to the various options. The evidence presented did give some clear indicators that the benefits of 20mph zones were much more effective than signed only limits, providing greater speed and casualty reductions. Experience in Kent had shown that once traffic calming had been installed it could become very unpopular. Whilst calls for the introduction of blanket 20mph schemes were heard, the costs involved in installing blanket 20mph across Kent were prohibitive and, given current financial restraints, the existing philosophy of introducing bespoke targeted road safety schemes was a more efficient way of achieving casualty reduction.

(11) The results of the trials conducted outside several primary schools in Maidstone showed that speeds outside the schools at picking up and dropping off times were already low and would meet with DfT criteria for a signed only 20mph limit.

(12) RESOLVED that a new policy on 20mph schemes be supported to:-

- a) implement 20mph schemes where there was clear justification in terms of achieving casualty reduction as part of the on-going programme of Casualty Reduction Schemes;
- b) identify locations for 20mph schemes which would assist with delivering targets set out in Kent's Joint Health Wellbeing Strategy; and

- c) enable any schemes that could not be justified in terms of road safety or public health benefits but were locally important to be funded via the local County Councillors Member Highway Fund. All schemes must meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.

From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member – Transport & Environment

John Burr, Director of Highways & Transportation

To: Environment, Highways & Waste Cabinet Committee – 3 October 2013

Decision No: 13/00063

Subject: Updated Policy for 20mph limits and zones on Kent County Council's roads

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: EHW Cabinet Committee, 4 July 2012

Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All electoral divisions

Summary: This report presents national and local evidence on the benefits of 20mph schemes and recommends a new policy that the County will seek to implement 20mph schemes when there are clear road safety or public health benefits. Any locally supported schemes that cannot be justified in these terms can still be implemented via the Member Highway Fund providing they are implemented as set out in Department for Transport Circular 01/2013.

Recommendation(s):

The Environment, Highways & Waste Cabinet Committee is asked to comment on a new policy on 20mph schemes which the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste is minded to introduce:

(i) implement 20mph schemes where there is clear justification in terms of achieving casualty reduction as part of the on-going programme of Casualty Reduction Schemes.

(ii) identify locations for 20mph schemes which would assist with delivering targets set out in Kent's Joint Health and Well Being Strategy.

(iii) enable any schemes that cannot be justified in terms of road safety or public health benefits but are locally important to be funded via the local County Councillors Member Highway Fund. All schemes must meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.

1. Introduction

1.1 At the 4th July 2012 meeting of this Committee an update was given on work Highways & Transportation were carrying out in developing a new policy on the implementation of 20mph schemes in Kent. This work included a trial of speed reduction measures outside schools in Maidstone which involved both formal and advisory 20mph schemes. The results of these trials were

intended to assist in the formulation of a new policy. At the meeting it was agreed that a new policy would be adopted once the trials had been evaluated. These trials have now been concluded and the results are contained within this report, along with other research and evidence.

- 1.2 As a result of this project Members are requested to agree an updated policy on the implementation of 20mph speed limits and zones. A new policy is required to respond to updated Government guidance on the setting of local speed limits which was issued in January 2013 and to campaigns both nationally and locally to introduce blanket 20mph in all residential areas.

2. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

- 2.1 This policy will feed in to the new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy which is being developed by Highways & Transportation to assist with meeting targets set out in Bold Steps for Kent and delivering the priorities set out in Growth Without Gridlock (GWG). Within GWG road safety is stated as a constant priority for central and local government. The recommendations made in this report will assist in meeting targets set out in Kent's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This decision relates to Kent's Local Transport Plan which is in the Council's Policy Framework.

3. Background

- 3.1 In recent years the demand for the implementation of 20mph schemes has been increasing in response to both local and national campaigns. A number of petitions have been submitted in recent years to Joint Transportation Boards requesting implementation of 20mph schemes. The Times newspaper has been running a national campaign encouraging local authorities to make 20mph the default speed limit in residential areas where there are no cycle lanes. This follows the tragic death of one of their reporters in a road traffic crash. A national campaign "20's Plenty Where People Live" actively promotes 20mph limits in residential and urban areas. In the 2011 British Social Attitudes Survey 73% of the public favoured 20mph limits in residential areas. A number of Highway Authorities have adopted policies introducing blanket 20mph limits in their town and cities.
- 3.2 KCC has been implementing 20mph schemes in Kent and has 50 schemes covering over 800 roads. In addition, all new residential developments are designed to keep traffic at 20mph although they are not always signed as such to avoid unnecessary sign clutter. The County's current policy allows the introduction of 20mph schemes at any location where such measures can be justified in crash savings terms or via the Member Highway Fund (MHF) providing they meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.
- 3.3 In both 2006 and 2008 the County Council considered proposals to introduce a Kent-wide policy of 20mph limits outside all schools. On both occasions the County Council agreed not to adopt a county-wide policy and retained its existing policy of implementing them at specific locations where there was a clear and justifiable need.
- 3.4 The DfT published new advice on the implementation of 20mph schemes in its circular 01/2013 in January 2013 which contains guidance on the setting of

local speed limits. There are two distinctly different types of 20mph speed restrictions which are *limits*, which rely solely on signing, and *zones* which require traffic calming to reduce speeds. Highway Authorities have powers to introduce 20 mph speed limits that apply only at certain times of day. These variable limits may be particularly relevant where a school is located on a major through road that is not suitable for a full-time 20 mph zone or limit.

3.5 The following is a summary of the Government's guidance on the implementation of 20mph schemes

- Successful 20mph limits and zones are generally self-enforcing.
- Self-enforcement can be achieved either, by the existing road conditions or using measures such as signing or traffic calming to attain mean speeds compliant with the speed limit.
- To achieve compliance there should be no expectation on the Police providing additional enforcement unless explicitly agreed.
- The full range of options should be considered before introducing 20mph schemes.
- Zones should not include roads where motor vehicle movement is the primary function.
- While the Government has reduced the traffic calming requirements in zones they must be self-enforcing and include at least one physical traffic calming feature such as a road hump or build out.
- 20mph limits are generally only recommended where existing mean speeds are already below 24mph.

4. Primary School Speed Reduction Scheme Trials

4.1 In response to a petition submitted to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board on the 28th July 2010 requesting the County Council implement blanket 20mph limits outside all schools and residential areas it was agreed to run a trial of low cost speed management schemes outside a number of Primary Schools in Maidstone. This trial, funded by local Members via their Highway Fund, included both formal and advisory 20mph schemes aiming to provide local evidence as to whether 20mph schemes near schools could provide cost effective road safety benefits. The proposed trial was limited to primary schools within 30mph speed limits. The following schemes were in operation by the end of October 2012:

- Broomfield Primary School - Experimental (up to 18 months) TRO 20mph at B2163 Leeds and (from George PH to just north of bend by the churchyard).

- Lenham Primary School - Advisory 20mph during school hours (using static signs and flashing lights) combined with a campaign to publicise this at Ham Lane, Lenham (Malt house Lane to Cherry Close).
- St. Francis Primary School - Advisory 20mph limit at school times using interactive VAS signs in Queens Road.
- Hunton Primary School - Minor signs and lines enhancements within current speed limit along West Lane.
- South Borough Primary School - Experimental (up to 18 months) 20mph TRO with four vehicle activated signs within existing 30mph limit at Postley Road, Maidstone.
- Allington Primary School - Control site included in pre and post evaluation at Hildenborough Crescent.

When the trial began it was agreed that the success criteria would be:

- change of perception of the perceived road safety danger to children on roads adjacent to schools as perceived by various groups to include Members, general road users, residents, and school users;
- change of perception of the perceived traffic speeds adjacent to schools as perceived by various groups to include Members, general road users, residents, and school users;
- influence a modal shift of journeys to schools;
- a manageable impact on traffic speed and Police enforcement requirements, and an
- increase in motorists' awareness to travel at appropriate speed outside schools.

5. Results of Primary School Speed Reduction Scheme Trials

- 5.1 Speeds outside the schools were surveyed prior to implementation, then after three and nine months. After three months the initial results were positive and in line with Government advice that 20mph limits without traffic calming generally reduce mean speeds by about 1mph.
- 5.2 After 9 months any benefits had mostly disappeared and perversely in most locations overall speeds had actually increased. The actual differences in speeds are very low and can be attributed to seasonal variation; both the 'before' and 3 month 'after' speeds were measured in the autumn and winter whereas 9 month 'after' speeds were measured in the summer when speeds tend to be slighter higher due to better weather. It should be noted that actual speeds during school peak periods (8am to 9am & 3pm to 4pm) are between 6% & 20% lower than the overall daily average. The mean speeds at the schools at peak periods varied between 21mph to 25mph, which would generally meet the DfT criteria for a signed only 20mph limit at school times.

- 5.3 Before and after questionnaires to capture the perception and opinion of respondents on the schemes were devised together with a local research company. A quantitative approach was adopted to the questionnaire design to allow easy codifying, although qualitative responses were received on some surveys and, where practical, these have been incorporated in the analysis.
- 5.4 The following groups were surveyed:
- a) Year 5 pupils in Feb 2012; latterly Year 6 in May 2013.
 - b) Parents, School Staff and Governors.
 - c) Local Residents – those in the immediate vicinity of the focus school.
- 5.5 The results are very mixed. In the majority of cases the perception is that safety has been improved, albeit very slightly from the *before* levels. These schools were originally identified to be part of the trials as the school or local community had raised concerns over the speed of the traffic. However the results of the perception surveys *before* and *after* tend to indicate that the main safety concerns are not with the speed of the traffic, but with parents parking and the congestion this causes which actually contributes to keeping overall speeds low at school times.
- 5.6 No conclusions can be made with respect to the personal injury crash records at the schools. In all but one of the schools (at Lenham there was one crash recorded at school times) in the three years prior to the implementation of the trials no personal injury crashes had occurred during school times. The County currently holds validated crash data up to the end of June 2013 and no crashes have been recorded since the schemes were implemented.

6. Evidence of the effect of 20mph schemes

- 6.1 Evidence shows that schemes which combine 20mph limits with traffic calming measures to reduce speeds have proved very successful in reducing casualties by around 40% to 60%. When only signing has been used the overall benefits are significantly less.
- 6.2 A report published by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents on the installation of 20mph schemes concluded “The evidence supports the effectiveness of 20mph zones as a way of preventing injuries on the road. There is currently less experience with 20mph limits although they have generally been positive at reducing traffic speeds. They do not reduce traffic speeds as much as zones.”
- 6.3 The DfT states there is clear evidence of the effect of reducing speeds on the reduction of collisions and casualties, as collision frequency is lower at lower speeds; and where collisions do occur, there is a lower risk of fatal injury at lower speeds. Research shows that on urban roads with low average traffic speeds a 1mph reduction in average speed can reduce the collision frequency by around 6%. 20mph limits without traffic calming generally reduce mean speeds by about 1mph. There is clear evidence confirming the greater chance of survival of pedestrians in collisions at lower speeds. Important benefits of 20mph schemes include quality of life and community

benefits, and encouragement of healthier and more sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling.

- 6.4 A review of the first 230 20mph zones in England, Wales and Scotland indicated that average speeds reduced by 9mph, annual crash frequency fell by 60%, reduction in child accidents was 70%, and there was a reduction in crashes involving cyclists of 20%. Traffic flow in the zones was reduced on average by 27%, but the flows on the surrounding roads increased by 12%. There was generally little measured crash migration to surrounding roads outside the zone.
- 6.5 The current safety record of the existing 20mph schemes in Kent which are a mix of both limits and zones shows that casualties recorded on 20mph roads in Kent as a proportion of all roads are 2% less than the national average.

7. Environmental Impact

- 7.1 There is no direct relationship between fuel economy and posted speed limits. The impact of 20mph schemes depends entirely on changing driver's actual behaviour and speed. Research suggests that lower speeds can actually increase emissions and at best there is unlikely to be any effect. What is clear is that free flowing traffic makes for the best conditions for the lower emissions and maximum fuel efficiency. 20mph schemes that encourage modal shift to walking and cycling and encourage slower, smoother, more considerate driving should result in a reduction in carbon emissions. Schemes that introduce physical traffic calming measures are likely to reduce fuel efficiency and increase emissions as they can encourage stop / start driving.
- 7.2 The Environment Act 1995 Part IV introduced new responsibilities for local authorities relating to air quality management. The approach authorities should follow is set out in the Nation Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) published in 1997 and updated in 2000. Road transport is a major source of pollutants, therefore the reduction of emissions from traffic through implementing traffic schemes plays an important role in meeting the objectives of the NAQS.

8. Public Health

- 8.1 From 1st April 2013 Kent County Council became responsible for a number of Public Health functions. One of these is the Health Improvement for the population of Kent – especially for the most disadvantaged. One of the areas identified in Kent's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy where Kent needs to do better and is performing worse than the national average is in obesity in adults. There is evidence that 20mph schemes do encourage healthier transport modes such as walking and cycling as in Bristol where preliminary results indicate increases in levels of walking and cycling of over 20%. An increase in the implementation of 20mph schemes could assist in the outcome of reducing obesity in adults and children in Kent and improving the overall health of the population.
- 8.2 The Department of Health asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce public health guidance on preventing unintentional injuries to those aged under 15 on the road. This guidance "NICE Public Health Guidance PH 31: Preventing unintentional road injuries among under-15" focuses on road design and modification. Recommendation

3 relates to measures to reduce speed and is targeted at Local highways authorities. In respect to 20mphs their recommendations were:-

- Introduce engineering measures to reduce speed in streets that are primarily residential or where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high. These measures could include;

speed reduction features (for example, traffic-calming measures on single streets, or 20 mph zones across wider areas);

changes to the speed limit with signing only (20 mph limits) where current average speeds are low enough, in line with Department for Transport guidelines.

- Implement city or town-wide 20 mph limits and zones on appropriate roads. Use factors such as traffic volume, speed and function to determine which roads are appropriate.

9. Legal implications

9.1 The 1988 Road Traffic Act (Section 39) puts a Statutory Duty on the local authority to undertake studies into road accidents, and to take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents. This duty is currently enacted as part of our Casualty Reduction Programme where Highways & Transportation analyse all crashes that have occurred in the last three years and implement measures targeted at those locations where the maximum reduction can be achieved for the lowest cost. The current 20mph policy clearly aligns with this duty as 20mph schemes are implemented at any location where such measures can be justified in terms of crash savings.

9.2 The Equality Act 2010 (Disability Discrimination Act) sets out clear principles for the way in which public services should meet the needs of their customers, including disabled people. Specifically there is a duty to ensure that all reasonable measures have been taken to understand and accommodate their requirements inclusively and fairly. Highways play a vital part of providing the opportunities for people to move around safely and independently ensuring schemes are delivered which improve accessibility for the elderly, vulnerable road users and disabled people.

9.3 In general to avoid liability it is incumbent on the County Council to make balanced decisions on the setting of speed limits taking into account such social issues as health and obesity, environmental issues as noise and air pollution and especially have regard to the needs of disabled people, elderly people and people of all genders.

10. The Views of Kent Police on 20mph Schemes

10.1 Kent Police will not support 20mph speed limits unless the average speed of vehicles is 24mph or less, as research has shown that signed only 20mph limits where natural traffic calming is absent have little or no effect on traffic speeds and did not significantly reduce accidents.

- 10.2 Kent Police will not support the introduction of 20mph zones without sufficient traffic calming measures being in place and of appropriate design, that reduce the speed of most traffic to 20mph or less thereby making them self-enforcing.
- 10.3 With regard to enforcing 20mph speed limits or zones, Kent Police policy is not to routinely enforce them as they should be self-enforcing by design. The Police will respond on an intelligence led basis if there is a particular high risk issue identified, such as a motorist who regularly drives at very high speed through the area, providing that the speed limit or zone has been implemented to the current guidance/legislation.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 Currently 20mph schemes are funded either from the County's Casualty Reduction Programme or via the Members Highway Fund. The total Casualty Reduction Programme budget for 2013/14 for new schemes was £800k which goes to fund many different types of safety engineering measures across the county. The CRM programme is assessed every year, based on the annual crash cluster site reviews and route studies, and funding is allocated to those schemes which are predicted to achieve the maximum casualty reduction for the lowest cost.
- 11.2 Members can already fund 20mph schemes via their Members Highway Fund providing they meet with current DfT criteria. The 2013/14 budget for the MHF is £2.2m of which each member gets £25k minus fees to spend on any highway improvement scheme they deem necessary. In the last few years members have funded eight 20mph schemes at a cost of £120k.
- 11.3 The cost of any 20mph scheme will vary due to the location and objectives of the scheme. It is estimated that the typical capital cost of a 1km length of 20mph speed limit (signing only) is £1,400 and a 1km length of 20mph zone (including traffic calming) is £60,000. The capital cost is made up of the installation of the signs, posts and associated traffic calming measures. There are revenue costs associated with any scheme that will need to be considered which include the Traffic Regulation Orders, design, consultation, engagement, marketing, monitoring, on-going maintenance of infrastructure and enforcement.
- 11.4 As every scheme is unique in terms of locality issues it is very difficult to give a robust cost estimate as to how much it would be to implement a blanket 20mph limit or zone across Kent. However, a crude estimate based on the costs quoted above and the assumption that they would only apply to unclassified urban roads, the capital costs of a blanket limit across Kent could be around £3.4m. For a blanket zone across Kent (with calming measures) the capital cost could be over £146m. Assuming a typical scheme design fee of 15%, the initial revenue costs could be £510k for a limit and £22m for a zone. No estimate has been made for the on-going maintenance or monitoring of any blanket scheme and the additional enforcement costs to Kent Police.
- 11.5 These figures are likely to be an overestimate and would probably be spread over a number of years, but they do give an indication of the approximate overall quantum of funding required if Members were minded to adopt a

blanket 20mph policy. If the new policy was adopted costs would continue to be borne by existing CRM, MHF and general highways maintenance funding streams and from KCC's Public Health budget.

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 As with many highway issues there is no national prevailing view as to the policy a local Highway Authority should adopt regarding 20mph schemes. The issues are complex and there are many pros and cons to the various options as discussed in this report.
- 12.2 The evidence presented does give some clear indicators that the benefits of 20mph zones are much more effective than signed only limits, providing greater speed and casualty reductions. This comes at a price in that they will generally require some physical traffic calming measures which will be more expensive than signed only limits, and they can create environmental problems such as increased emissions, vibrations and noise. Experience in Kent over the last few years has shown that once traffic calming has been installed it can become very unpopular. Whilst calls for the introduction of blanket 20mph schemes are heard, the costs involved in installing blanket 20mph across Kent are prohibitive and, given current financial restraints, the existing philosophy of introducing bespoke targeted road safety schemes is a more efficient way of achieving casualty reduction.
- 12.3 The results of the trials conducted outside several primary schools in Maidstone show that speeds outside these schools at picking up and dropping off times are already low and would meet with DfT criteria for a signed only 20mph limit. However it was shown the installation of a limit has very minimal impact on actual speeds which is compatible with DfT advice on limits. Perceptions of the people affected by the schemes have been generally positive, however, the benefits were very minimal and the surveys indicated that parking and congestion were actually their greatest road safety concern. The proposal of installing 20mph limits outside all schools in Kent has been debated by the County Council in 2006 & 2008 where it was concluded on both occasions to continue implementing 20 mph schemes at locations where there was a clear and justifiable need for the scheme. Since these debates there is no clear national or local evidence which suggests a change in policy would be beneficial to Kent.
- 12.4 The County Council does receive criticism concerning its road safety intervention criteria which is based on targeting areas where there are already existing raised levels of personal injury crashes. As part of the new Road Casualty Reduction Strategy currently under development a new model is being investigated that would take into account risk factors, as opposed to simple crash statistics. This potentially will lead to road safety schemes being promoted where minimal or even no crashes have occurred and could include 20mph schemes. This Strategy will be reported to the December meeting of this Committee.
- 12.5 The benefits of 20mph schemes can also help with tackling public health issues such as obesity and asthma by encouraging more walking and cycling. They can also help people move around more safely and independently improving accessibility for the elderly, vulnerable road users and disabled people. With Kent County Council now responsible for the Health

Improvement of its population a greater use of 20mph schemes for this purpose alone should be promoted.

- 12.6 The DfT give clear guidance as to how 20mph schemes should be implemented and requirements for signing, lining and associated traffic calming measures in circular 01/2013. Kent Police, who are responsible for the enforcement of speed limits and a statutory consultee when implementing speed limits, clearly support this guidance, as do NICE. As part of this policy it is not recommended that Kent deviates from this national guidance when agreeing how a 20mph scheme should be implemented. In a recent High Court case it was ruled that a local Highway Authority did not have a lawful justification for departing from the relevant national guidance with respect to the use of tactile paving and based on this ruling there is no justification for Kent not adopting 01/2013 when implementing 20mph speed limits.
- 12.7 Taking in to account all the evidence gained from current local and national experiences there is insufficient evidence to recommend KCC adopts a blanket policy for the implementation of 20mph schemes. It is proposed that the County Council continues with its policy of implementing 20mph schemes where there is clear justification in terms of achieving casualty reduction as part of the on-going programme of Casualty Reduction Schemes. However, in addition it is now proposed to identify where 20mph schemes can be implemented that would encourage more walking and cycling notwithstanding the casualty record. This will assist with delivering targets set out in Kent's Joint Health and Well Being Strategy.
- 12.8 Any scheme that cannot be justified in terms of its road safety or public health benefits but is locally important can still be funded via the local County Councillors Member Highway Fund, providing they meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.

13. Recommendation(s)

The Environment, Highways & Waste Cabinet Committee is asked to comment on a new policy on 20mph schemes which the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste is minded to introduce:

- (i) implement 20mph schemes where there is clear justification in terms of achieving casualty reduction as part of the on-going programme of Casualty Reduction Schemes.
- (ii) identify locations for 20mph schemes which would assist with delivering targets set out in Kent's Joint Health and Well Being Strategy.
- (iii) enable any schemes that cannot be justified in terms of road safety or public health benefits but are locally important to be funded via the local County Councillors Member Highway Fund. All schemes must meet implementation criteria as set out in DfT Circular 01/2013.

14. Background Documents

DfT Circular 01/2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits>

RoSPA Road Safety Information 20mph Zones and Speed Limits April 2012

<http://www.rospace.com/roadsafety/adviceandinformation/highway/20-mph-zones.aspx>

Speed Survey Results of School Speed Reduction Trials

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42617/B1BG1part1SpeedSurveyResults.xlsx.pdf>

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42618/B1BG1part2SpeedSurveyResults.docx.pdf>

Perception Survey Results of School Speed Reduction Trials

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42619/B1BG2PerceptionSurveyResults.doc.pdf>

Summary of Evidence of the Effects of 20mph Schemes

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42620/B1BG3SummaryofEvidence.docx.pdf>

Kent 20mph Crash Stats 2010 to 2012

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42621/B1BG420mphCrashStats.xlsx.pdf>

Equality Impact Assessment

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s42622/B1BG5EIAScreeningGrid.docx.pdf>

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