

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of A meeting of the Highways Advisory Board held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 6 March 2007.

PRESENT: Mr R F Manning (Chairman), Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Ms S J Carey, Mr D S Daley, Mr C G Findlay, Mr W A Hayton, Mr C J Law, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J I Muckle, Mr R J E Parker, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr A R Poole, Mr K Sansum, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr R Tolputt

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs T Dean and Mrs E M Tweed

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Hall (Head of Transport & Development), Mr J Farmer (Regeneration & Projects Manager), Mr L Holliday (Network Performance Manager) Mr M Sims, Divisional Manager – East Kent, Mr R White, Head of Major Projects and Mr J Whitehorn (Special Projects & Income Coordinator)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes - 9 January 2007
(Item. 2)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2007 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes
(Item. 3 - Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) The County Council owned property in the Wrens Cross and Upper Stone Street corridor of Maidstone for potential highway improvements that had no foreseeable likelihood of being implemented. The report proposed realising the asset and promoting deliverable alternative operational and environmental based improvements in Upper Stone Street and improvements to the Bridge gyratory system.

(2) The original 1980's strategy for Maidstone was improvement to the A229 and A249 routes to the north of the Town and the A229 Upper Stone Street/Sheal's Crescent route to the south. The two routes to the north were more straightforward and were delivered. The route to the south had always been problematic because of the gradient away from the Town and the very compact and dense older commercial and residential development. It was also complicated by the east to west crossing movement of traffic along Wat Tyler Way and Knightrider Street. By the time consideration was being given to the southern leg of the three highway schemes Government policy had moved away from substantial urban road building.

(3) Over the last 30 years a number of schemes had been proposed involving a repeating cycle of activity, raised expectation, going dormant through inability to deliver and then being revisited. All schemes involved a new road that would have cut a swathe through the area creating massive blight during which the County Council was obliged to acquire a large number of properties.

(4) In 1999 the impracticality of this was recognised and the concept of a major scheme was abandoned and much of the property disposed off. However, the sense of something needing to be done led to the approval of a scheme for a contra-flow bus and lorry lane down Upper Stone Street and along Knightrider Street although this had not been implemented. There was still an underlying and understandable feeling that a more substantial albeit undefined improvement of Upper Stone Street should not be prejudiced and this led to the retention of property along the corridor.

(5) Some seven years on, we were no further forward. Despite Maidstone Borough Council recently achieving Growth Point status there was still no likelihood of Government funding a highway improvement of Upper Stone Street. Government funds were limited, and the perceived ideal of a dual carriageway, would not score well on the policy criteria used by SEERA when prioritising schemes on a regional basis for Government. In simple terms, a dual carriageway improvement of Upper Stone Street would be expensive and in effect just replicate the existing arrangement of two lanes into the town (Sheal's Crescent) and two lanes out (Upper Stone Street). Clearly some benefits would be achieved, particularly relief to Sheal's Crescent but the problem would largely be moved further along to the Armstrong Road/Park Way junction.

(6) The property being held was a major concern. In the last couple of years nine residential and two commercial properties had been demolished because they had become uninhabitable or incapable of beneficial occupation. Wrens Cross was a major concern and did not reflect well on the public sector. It was a Grade 2 Listed Building and was the site of the Kent County Constabulary from 1860 shortly after it was formed in 1857. The site had several fine buildings but many were in a very poor state and were regularly subject to vandalism and anti-social activity. Something needed to be done soon before all were incapable of being saved. The County Council also remained vulnerable to Blight acquisition requests.

(7) The retention of property for aspirational future highway improvements was having an adverse effect on the area. The informal blight was actually lowering land values and deterring regeneration investment that was so essential for the area.

(8) The focus above had been on Upper Stone Street but Maidstone Borough Council were promoting the concept of an All Saints Link Road that would run from Bishops Way to Knightrider Street and then to Wrens Cross. It would not deliver traffic capacity benefits but would have considerable regeneration and environmental benefits. It would allow the historic Carriage Museum to become integral with the Bishops Palace and riverside area. It would allow a comprehensive development of the block of land between Knightrider Street and Palace Avenue and integrate it with the town centre and lessen the severance caused by traffic on Palace Avenue particularly at Gabriel's Hill.

(9) Although not directly related to the property discussion above, the operation of the Bridge gyratory system was under consideration. The recent residential and commercial developments along St Peter's Street and the need for Bishops Way traffic heading north to Fairmeadow to go around the gyratory and across both bridges was causing difficulties. There was a proposal to relieve the situation by creating a direct route for Bishops Way to Fairmeadow traffic by converting the Fairmeadow leg of the gyratory scheme to two-way operation. This was an expensive (over £1m) scheme in part because of the need to move part of an electricity sub-station but it was likely to be deliverable in the short term, and the

Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste had already indicated County Council support for the scheme.

(10) The general conclusion was that the retention of property for aspirational highway schemes was unrealistic and tied up asset value. It was contributing to informal blight of south Maidstone and holding back inward investment. The focus should move to more pragmatic, affordable and deliverable highway and environmental improvements.

Proposed Way Forward

- (11) (a) The approved scheme for the contra-flow bus and lorry lane scheme from Sheal's Crescent down Loose Road/Upper Stone Street and along Knightrider Street should be abandoned (Drawing No's 100311/1A; /2A; /3A & /4).
- (b) The County Council should support Maidstone Borough Council in its aspirations to achieve the All Saints Link Road and its efforts to secure funding.
- (c) All property held for highway purposes along Upper Stone Street/Loose Road and in the Wrens Cross/Knightrider Street area should be declared surplus and made available for disposal by Corporate Property subject to:-
- Retaining land or having a claw back option on land required by Maidstone Borough Council for the All Saints Link Road.
 - Retaining land or having a claw back option that would allow some practical operational and safety improvements to be achieved. An illegally parked vehicle or one delivering to premises on Upper Stone Street could cause an immediate problem to the free flow of traffic. The scope was limited but it should be possible between George Street and Campbell Road and possibly a little way towards Tovil Road to locally shift the road over to create a service lay-by. This in turn would give more width to the footway and protection to pedestrians with other environmental improvements if possible. Subject to detailed design and estimates, funding could come from a proportion of the property disposal capital receipts. In the longer term with the disposal of Wrens Cross linked to a possible comprehensive development of the area up to Foster Street a similar arrangement might be possible to service the commercial properties opposite centred on The Pilot public house.
- (d) The conversion of the Fairmeadow leg of the Bridge gyratory to two-way operation was progressed. Subject to detailed design and estimates, funding could come from the Integrated Transport pot for 2007/08 and 2008/09 with top-up from the property disposal capital receipts.
- (e) The environmental and safety concerns of residents and the community regarding the speed and noise of traffic coming down Loose Road and turning into Sheal's Crescent and of traffic turning right into Loose Road from Tovil Road was well understood. These were difficult issues with no easy solutions but the County Council

was committed to investigating what measures were practical and worthwhile and thereafter seeking to achieve their implementation.

(12) Discussions had been held with Maidstone Borough Council over recent months and there was an agreed understanding of the realities of the situation and the way forward outlined. Mr Alan Chell, the County Member for Maidstone South, had been consulted.

(13) There were no immediate financial implications. There would need to be consideration of the extent and timing of the capital receipts that would flow and an equitable balance agreed with Maidstone Borough Council between the support to the improvements referred to above and support to the wider community service objectives of the County Council.

(14) The Board supported the proposals for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that:-

- (a) the proposals outlined above under "The Way Forward" be approved, and to include the formal abandonment of the proposals for the contra-flow bus and lorry lane between Sheal's Crescent and Knightrider Street shown on Drawing No's 100311/1A;/2A;/3A & /4; and
- (b) the outline proposals for the improvement of the Fairmeadow arm of the Bridge gyratory shown on Drawing No.16254/S/3 be approved for development control and Land Charge disclosures.

3. Progress Report on Major Capital Projects

(Item. 4 - Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) From 1 April 2007, the Major Transport Projects Team activity would come under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste and as a consequence would rejoin Kent Highways Services. The benefits of being within Regeneration and Economy since 2004 would be maintained by continued co-operative working and early conceptual feasibility work would continue to be carried out within that Division. It was an appropriate time to update the Board on progress of the major transport and highway schemes following the last report in September 2006.

(2) A progress or status report on Fastrack Phase 1 Major Scheme, Fastrack Thames Way, Fastrack Everards Link Phase 2, A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass, M20 Junction 4, East Kent Access Phase 1, East Kent Access Phase 2, Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road, Rushenden Link Road, Ashford Ring Road, Newtown Road Bridge, Ashford, A2 Canterbury Slips, Greenhithe Station, South East Maidstone Strategic Route, A228 Colts Hill Bypass and Land matters was given in the Appendix to the report.

(3) In the last six months, the key achievements and progress milestones had been:-

- the opening of the A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass.
- the completion of the M20 junction 4 improvements.
- the publication of the statutory Orders for East Kent Access Phase 2.
- the publication of the statutory Orders for Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road.

- planning permission for Fastrack Everards Link Phase 2.
- contract award for Fastrack Thames Way.
- planning application submitted for Rushenden Relief Road.
- commencement of Ashford Ring Road transformation to two-way operation.

(4) The key problems in the period had been:-

- the delay in commencing the traffic calming associated with the opening of the A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass traffic calming.
- getting Network Rail to agree a Permanent Easement for the Station Access Link to West Malling Station
- the slippage in publishing the statutory Orders for Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road.
- the need to defer the upgrade of Greenhithe Station because of the pressure on the capital budget.
- the difficulty generally of progressing DCLG funded growth area infrastructure projects against the funding deadline of 31 March 2008.

(5) The Head of Major Projects wished to place on record his thanks and appreciation to the Major Transport Projects Team for their outstanding work. He wished them all well in Kent Highway Services.

(6) The Board noted the report.

4. East Kent Access - Phase 1

(Item. 5 - Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) The original concept and scheme justification for East Kent Access – Phase 1 in 1999 included High Occupancy Vehicle lanes (HOV). When Phases 1A & 1B were opened it was decided to defer a decision on implementation until Phase 1C was nearing completion. The report recommended that HOV lanes were not implemented.

(2) The intention to have HOV lanes was, in part, to complement the initiative by Pfizer to introduce a Green Travel Plan for its staff that would encourage car sharing. Government policy was also increasingly focused on integrated transport solutions and less inclined to support conventional highway improvement schemes. There was also a desire to encourage modal shift and car sharing so that extra capacity was not just lost to normal traffic growth. These objectives were important but the practical aspects of introducing HOV lanes also needed to be considered.

(3) These issues were brought before the Board in September 2004 when Phase 1B between the Stour Viaduct and the Ramsgate Road roundabout was approaching completion and there was a very strong objection to the Traffic Regulation Orders that had been published. In January 2005, the Board accepted the recommendation not to proceed with HOV lanes on Phase 1B on what was a relatively short length and to reconsider when Phase 1C was more advanced. This was also in the hope that experience elsewhere and further Department of Transport (DfT) advice would give a stronger steer.

(4) The DfT had recently published Traffic Advisory Leaflet 3/06 – High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes, commenting on the experience of two of the three sites in the UK. While there were benefits claimed and the Department would like to encourage more schemes, the fundamental problems of introducing HOV lanes on East Kent Access remained.

(5) The three HOV sites in the UK were essentially congested urban routes. East Kent Access Phase 1 was a rural route that by the nature of the improvements would not have capacity constraints on opening – car sharers and buses would therefore gain little advantage over normal traffic through use of a HOV lane.

(6) Officers visited a site in Leeds, Yorkshire in 2005. This was a radial route with traffic predominantly heading straight for the city centre with little side traffic and traffic signals that allowed HOV and normal traffic to proceed alternately at the end of the HOV section.

(7) Phase 1B and 1C had three roundabouts, two serving Pfizer and Sandwich and one serving the old Richborough power station site and Richborough port site. A HOV lane occupying the conventional near side lane would need to stop short of roundabouts to accept merging conventional traffic wanting to turn left. Along the length of Phase 1C there were ten entrances serving a house, active commercial sites or potential development sites. A HOV lane occupying the conventional near side lane would be penetrated by the need for normal traffic and lorries to access the sites and all the difficulties associated with slowing and conflicting movements. A HOV lane occupying the outside lane was less conventional, and would need DfT consultation because of the added signing and enforcement issues, and would have similar problems as traffic exited the HOV lane to get to the nearside to access their site destinations. There would also be issues of users needing to move out of the HOV to bus stops and car sharers exiting accesses needing to move across to the HOV lane.

(8) Following on from the layout aspects above, a HOV would require far more crossing and merging movements and this must have safety implications. With a conventional dual carriageway operating in peak periods there was a tendency for traffic to align itself in convoy fashion depending on whether it would be going left or straight on.

(9) HOV lanes operated at peak periods only and it could be envisaged that there might be confusion for drivers as to the legitimacy of being or not being in a HOV lane. They did not have to be peak only but the UK sites operated this way and would be totally unnecessary if operated in the non-peak periods – some 20 out of every 24 hours.

(10) HOV arrangements would require extra signing and road markings at a time when efforts were being made to reduce overall road clutter.

(11) With the HOV on the conventional nearside lane it might be difficult for drivers to avoid encroachment as they slowed to turn into or exit accesses unless the HOV was terminated well in advance of the access or restarted well beyond. Leeds had trialled infra-red enforcement cameras and Officers saw a demonstration in Leeds in 2005 but there were problems in accurately identifying the number of occupants and the DfT Advisory Leaflet suggested this was still the case. It would be many years before a reliable approved system was available.

(12) Unlike bus lanes there were currently no enforcement powers for HOV lanes. In Leeds, they had a special arrangement with the Police and enforcement was limited to a few hours a month funded by the City Council. This was augmented by City Council staff who periodically noted the details of violating vehicles who then

received warning letters in the names of both the Police and the City Council. Leeds had a violation rate of approximately 10%. Even such occasional enforcement was not practical in Kent where there were more pressing service delivery, financial, and resource priorities within both the Police and Kent Highway Services.

(13) When experimental Traffic Regulation Orders were published in 2004 for implementing the HOV lanes on Phase 1B there was a very strong reaction from individuals and the local community. The views were that public money had been used to create road space that would then be denied to a significant proportion of drivers who were unable to car share. It was felt that they would cause congestion and that traffic switching lanes on the approach to the roundabouts would raise safety concerns and that use could not be enforced. There was no reason to suggest that the views would be any different now.

(14) The intention to include HOV lanes within the East Kent Access Phase 1 was and remained a laudable objective as a way of supporting Green Travel Plans, encouraging car sharing and modal shift, and tempering unrestrained future traffic growth. However, for all the reasons given above, East Kent Access Phase 1 did not lend itself to the introduction of HOV lanes. Congested urban radial routes into town centres with traffic signal control were the obvious candidates and there would probably be several other more appropriate locations in Kent to pilot the concept. In the two years since reporting to the Board, there had been no new schemes implemented in the UK and the recent Traffic Advisory Leaflet did not really advance knowledge and the fundamental difficulties of enforcement remained.

(15) East Kent Access Phase 1 was funded by Government through the Local Transport Plan. The Department of Transport had been advised of the issues above and that it was being recommended that HOV lanes were not implemented at the present time.

(16) The Board supported the proposals for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that:-

- (a) Phase 1C together with Phase 1B be operated as a conventional dual carriageway without High Occupancy Vehicle lanes; and
- (b) any consideration of introducing HOV lanes be deferred until UK experience and further DfT guidance could offer a solution to the particular difficulties associated with introducing HOV lanes along East Kent Access Phase 1B and 1C and until robust remote monitoring and enforcement regimes were available.

5. A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass *(Item. 6 - Report by Head of Major Projects)*

(1) As part of the recently completed A228 Leybourne and West Malling Bypass a new Link Road had been provided to West Malling Station. This required Network Rail's agreement to make the physical connection to their existing Station Access Road together with the granting of rights for the connection to be used by buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians. Full access for all traffic was not intended as the objective and planning requirement was to avoid opening up a rat-run to and from West Malling and Network Rail themselves would not want increased use of its private Station Access Road.

(2) Following a letter from the then Cabinet Member to Network Rail in early 2005 some progress was made. A two-stage approach was offered by Network

Rail with the initial granting of a 1 year Licence to get over the immediate time constraints, to be followed by the granting of the Permanent Easement. The Licence was completed although it took about five months for what was a simple document. The Head of Major Projects was trying to progress the Permanent Easement but Network Rail was putting up obstacles. While Network Rail responses implied continued agreement in principle, they said internal consultation processes might raise objections and they could give no timetable for completing the Permanent Easement.

(3) The delay was understood to be related primarily to a concern within South East Trains who leased the Station land from Network Rail that a proposed private car park, served off the new Link Road, might affect revenue from the existing Network Rail Station car park. However, the issue of a proposed additional car park should not be a material consideration. The permanent easement was required to serve existing pedestrians and those using both the bus and kiss and ride facilities. It was required regardless of whether the private developer decided to progress the proposal for an additional car park. Clearly that decision rested solely with the private developer and although both the County Council and the Borough Council supported the provision of additional parking, whether or not this was provided was outside the control of the County Council.

(4) Even if this was not the case, it was considered inappropriate of Network Rail to take the narrow short term commercial view at the expense of the wider strategic objective that all transport providers should be working in partnership to achieve. The new Link Road would provide improved accessibility to the Station, reduce the adverse impact of station traffic in West Malling, encourage increased use of the train network, and encourage modal shift, all of which needed to be addressed to meet sustainability issues from the increasing demands of new development in the A228 corridor. Any additional parking for station users would reduce the current illegal over spill parking and would assist in reducing long distance commuting by car.

(5) The Chief Executive of Network Rail was being lobbied by both the County Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council to give unequivocal confirmation that a Permanent Easement would be granted and that this would be progressed quickly to a defined completion date. At the time of drafting the Report no reply had been received. It was hoped that Network Rail would give the assurances provided, experience did not give confidence and it would be prudent to prepare and have the authority to publish a Compulsory Purchase Order to secure the required user rights. Whilst it was hoped that this did not become necessary, because it could take up to 18 months if Network Rail submitted a formal objection and there was a public inquiry, it did at least give a measure of backstop time certainty, provided of course that the Secretary of State was minded to confirm the Order.

(6) The costs of promoting the one plot Compulsory Purchase Order were not high and would be met from the current Bypass budget allocation.

(7) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that in respect of the Network Rail land shown on Drawing No. 0559/020/003 authority be given to arrange for the making and submission for confirmation of all necessary Orders for the compulsory acquisition of land and the rights necessary to secure the permanent connection of the Station Link with the existing Station Access Road and the permanent rights of access for buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians.

6. Fees & Charges for 2007/08
(Item. 7 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The report sought approval of revised fees and charges for 2007/08 in respect of a wide range of services provided by Kent Highway Services. The Local Government Act 2003 (Section 93) provided the power for charging for discretionary services but also stipulated that local authorities might only cover their reasonable costs in providing such services.

(2) The main source of income was from developers who were required to pay S38 or S278 fees relating to supervision of new estate road construction and in some cases commuted sums for future maintenance of new highway infrastructure. The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 [RASWA] and subsequent regulations determined charges for sample inspections, defects, licences, etc but the Road Safety team also provided a range of services, including cycle and minibus driver training for which a charge was made either to individuals or other departments and organisations.

(3) Fees had been set to reflect the actual cost of the service and in most cases, were rounded up to the nearest £5.00 but an attempt had also been made to standardise charges for similar services. Some charges which were statutory and for which there was no local discretion had not been included in the tables appended to the report.

(4) As part of the Transformation process, Kent Highway Services was continuing to examine options for delivering some services on line, eg paying for skip permits. This would enable differential charges to be considered, distinguishing between electronic and paper transactions. A further report would be brought to the Highways Advisory Board if this was the case.

(5) The proposed new fees and charges for 2007/08 were set out in the Appendices to the report.

Highway Definition, Licences and Other Admin Services

(6) There had been problems with interpreting the correct charges for highway definition work; at present different charges applied depending on whether plans were supplied and by whom. The current minimum charge was £30 plus £22 for showing a boundary on the enquirer's plan or £30 if KHS provided a plan with a boundary shown. Some district and parish councils had claimed they should be exempt. This was specialised work which often required research into legal documents held in archive files. Inevitably the amount of work on each case varied but it was impractical to calculate the exact cost per enquiry so there needed to be a standard fee. It was recommended that for 2007/08 all highway definition enquiries were charged at £35 plus a further £35 if KHS was asked to supply an A4 plan from the GIS system showing the boundary; the lower charge for showing a boundary on the enquirer's plan would be dropped. It was also recommended that in future the charge should equally apply to district and parish councils.

(7) Income from land searches was previously received by district councils, where this function was undertaken by the former highway units. Charging by the Highway Authority was agreed with district councils and introduced in April 2006. In practice most district land charges teams had elected to respond to the highway CON29 questions themselves using information supplied to them by KHS. The charges were due to be increased to reflect increased staff costs; it should be

noted that the district councils made a 10% handling charge to the initiator of the search but KHS would seek payment of the amount shown.

(8) Skip, scaffolding and hoarding licence fees [introduced in 2002/03] cover the administration costs in the issuing of licences for placing of skips, scaffolding and hoardings on the highway. The income generated was used to offset divisional costs in overseeing the safe positioning of the items on the highway including enforcement action where necessary. The current charge was £10 per 2 weeks but this charge had proved insufficient to cover the costs of checking proposed sites and administering the system. Most of the permits were only required for a few days and it was therefore recommended that the charge was increased to £15 per week. Making the permit valid for only one week would marginally increase admin costs but helped to ensure that the skips, scaffolding, etc were placed on the highway for no longer than absolutely necessary. The permit was recharged via the skip companies so the rise would only equate to a small increase in the overall hire charge. There were no changes proposed for vehicle crossings as these were determined by RASWA regulations.

Developer Funded Highway Schemes

(9) The main source of developer fees was the standard charge of 8% of the estimated works value for the supervision of new estate road construction under S38 of the Highways Act 1980. There were also charges for supervision and fixed consultancy fees for advice to developers re alterations to the existing highway under S278 of the Act.

(10) In addition commuted sums were sought wherever there was an ongoing maintenance cost relating directly to the new infrastructure [e.g. for maintaining new traffic signals or inspecting structures]. The charges were all under review, in particular whether the 8% fee was sufficient to cover all the KHS costs relating to new estate road schemes; meanwhile 3% cost of living increases were recommended for S278 and commuted sums and some minor modifications were recommended to the period over which inspection and maintenance costs were assessed. The commuted sums for certain specified other items had been adjusted to reflect current maintenance costs over a 10 year period.

Road Safety

(11) Cyclist training was offered to Year 6 children through their primary school. Currently the Road Safety team provided cycle training for around 7,000 children per annum; approximately 43% of the total year group across the county. In March 2005 Members chose to remove the charge made for cyclist training so that it was provided free of charge for one year from September 2005. This resulted in a loss of the £70,000 income that had previously been used to offset the £150,000 annual cost of running the training scheme. However Members subsequently approved the re-introduction of the cyclist training fee at £10 per child and it was proposed to increase the charge to £15 from September 2007 with the aim of restoring a break even situation within two years.

(12) The Road Safety team provided minibus driver courses and reassessment [every 3 years] for KCC drivers and a small increase to the fee was proposed in line with wage cost increases. It was recommended that the fees were increased to £110 and £30 respectively.

(13) Theatre in Education was a valuable activity that delivered key road safety messages to students in an innovative and exciting way. Annually the Road Safety team organised performances for year 12/13 students with a focus on driving issues including anti-drink drive and anti-drug drive. The team subsidised this for

participating schools which allowed greater coverage within the available budget. It was recommended that the proportion of the subsidy should remain at the current level.

(14) The Road Safety team provided monitoring and training functions for the School Crossing Patrol service managed by Children, Families and Education Directorate. This was arranged through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The current level of SLA income covered existing costs and so the charge for this remained unchanged.

(15) The National Driver Improvement Scheme (NDIS) and Speed Awareness course were administered by the Road Safety team as the service provider for Kent Police. The schemes must be totally self-financing; no excess income could be generated for KCC. Small fee increases were recommended to ensure that the costs of running the schemes could continue to be met without the need for a subsidy.

(16) In order to overcome potential Freedom of Information Act concerns Members agreed to drop the proposed hourly rate for photocopying but retain the unit rate and a minimum £10 charge. Members also noted that the proposed increased charges for the National Driver Improvement Scheme and the Speed Awareness course would have to be endorsed by the relevant partner organisations as they were both ring fenced self-funding schemes.

(17) Mr J I Muckle moved, Mr R J E Parker seconded as an amendment:-

“That the charge for cycling proficiency training remain at £10.”

Lost 4 for, 7 against

(18) Subject to paragraph (16) above, the Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that the proposed Fees and Charges for 2007/08 as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report be implemented.

7. Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

(Item. 8 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The report presented the Highways maintenance budget for 2007/08 (Revenue and Capital) following approval of budgets by the Cabinet on 8 February 2007 and ratification at the County Council meeting on 22 February 2007. Table 1 of the report showed how the Highway Maintenance Budget had been derived taking the total Revenue and Capital budgets for Kent Highway Services as the starting point. It showed that the maintenance works budget had increased by £5.154m compared with 2006/07.

(2) The countywide programmes in Table 1 of the report included an additional sum of £1.505m for Targeted Highway Works. This had only very recently been allocated and it had been treated as a top-slice for the purposes of the report and had not yet been distributed to the relevant maintenance or improvements budget heads pending further consideration of detailed works proposals. However it was intended to use the additional resources broadly as follows:-

- £500k on a new programme to improve road signs and markings across the county

- £500k on additional maintenance work to street lights
- £300k to offset a proportion of expected increase in tender prices for supported bus contracts
- £200k for structures to enable more work to be undertaken on road bridges in the county.

(3) The “Highway Maintenance Budget Model” report to the Board on 10 January 2006 described how the budget model had been developed for distributing the 2006/07 highways budget. The report recommended that:-

- Allocations for highway assets in 2006/07 were based on a relative assessment of their degree of depreciation
- Allocations to the Divisions in 2006/07 were based upon an assessment of the size and condition of their networks.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste subsequently approved the recommendations on 18 January 2006. The budget model had been updated with the most recent condition and network data and had been used to develop the maintenance budget for 2007/08.

(4) The Budget Model followed a process that:-

- Set out the revenue and capital budgets available for highway maintenance,
- Separated out the budget necessary for both central and divisional Operational maintenance (works that included safety repairs and routine maintenance such as gully emptying)
- Determined the remaining budget available for Repairs (works that maintained the structural integrity of the network)
- Allocated the Repairs budget between the various highway assets and
- Finally allocated Operations and Repairs budgets to the Divisions.

(5) The gross highway revenue and capital budgets were set out in Table 2 of the report. The next stage in the budget process was to determine and separate out both the central and divisional Operational maintenance budgets from the remainder of the budget available for highway maintenance. In calculating the budgets, an 8% allowance for contract inflation had been included to maintain the current minimum level of Operational maintenance. Separating out the budgets for Operational maintenance from the maintenance budget determined the budget available for Repairs. The Operational maintenance budgets and remaining budget available for Repairs were summarised in Table 3 of the report.

(6) Table 3 showed that, compared with 2006/07, the budget for Operations had risen by £4.283m owing to an increase of £2.7m for street light energy and an 8% allowance for contract inflation including maintaining the current minimum level of Operational maintenance. The Repairs budget had increased by £872k compared with 2006/07. The Divisional Operational Maintenance Budget of £10.833m was

distributed between the work activities and the Divisions as shown in Table 4 of the report.

(7) The £25.897m Repairs budget consisted of £3.445m of Revenue and £22.452m of Capital funding. As mentioned previously, the HAB report of 10 January 2006 recommended that the Repairs budget be allocated to the various asset groups depending on the relative need of those assets. The relative need had been determined by evaluating the degree of depreciation of each of the assets and calculating the annual budgets necessary to address that depreciation. The budget model allocated the Repairs budget depending on those relative annual needs. The resultant distribution of the remaining Repairs budget across asset groups, after deducting £1,873 for the LED traffic signal conversion and monitoring scheme, was shown in Table 5 of the report.

(8) The next step was to allocate money to the Divisions. The Budget model did this by assessing relative need of each Division taking a range of factors into account that represented the size and condition of their highway infrastructure. The overall Divisional allocations were shown in Table 6 of the report. A summary of the resulting financial allocation for maintenance was provided in Table 7 of the report.

(9) Unlike the current year when Ringway divisional overheads had to be funded from the works allocations, in 2007/08 the central costs for Operations included £4.3m of Ringway fixed charges – of which £2.3m would be funded from capital. All the other Operations work was funded from Revenue and the unit rates for works items should prove significantly cheaper without this overhead element.

(10) It could be seen that there was £23.6m funding from revenue and £24.8m from capital. The grand totals were £22.5m for Operations [46.5%] and £25.9m for Repairs [53.5%]. Compared to the current year, there would be an extra £4.3m for Operations and £0.9m for Repairs in 2007/08.

(11) The Budget Model would continue to be developed both as a result of improved asset management practice and through monitoring the actual expenditure during the year as the Divisions responded to the demands on the highway asset. Contributions from the Alliance partners were sought in order to further develop the model for allocating budgets over the next ten years.

(12) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that the Highway Maintenance budget be approved as set out in the report.

Following a proposal by the Chairman, Members agreed to consider Item 14 following Item 8.

8. Quality bus service in Tunbridge Wells *(Item. 14 - Report by Mid Kent Divisional Manager)*

(Cllr P Davies, Chairman of Tunbridge Wells JTB, was present for this item)

(1) At the April 2006 meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board, Members recommended the removal of two lengths of bus lane; in St John's Road (A26) on the northbound approach to the traffic signals at Speldhurst Road and southbound on St John's Road (A26) between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road.

(2) A report was presented to the January 2007 Joint Board by the Mid Kent Divisional Manager entitled, 'The need to assist the provision of quality bus services in Tunbridge Wells'. This recommended the need to maintain all existing lengths of bus lane, including the sections near Speldhurst Road and between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road, as described above, and provide further lengths of bus lane as part of a raft of measures to improve the quality of local bus services. This was rejected and Members recommended that the original recommendation made at the April 2006 Joint Board be upheld.

(3) It was important to mention that the existing section of bus lane between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road was shortly to become part of a much longer length of bus lane, to provide a continuous length between Grosvenor Road and Queens Road. This scheme was, in the main, developer funded and was reported to, and approved by Members at the April 2006 meeting of the Joint Board as part of the 2007/08 Integrated Transport scheme programme. The decision would work against the spirit of the free travel pilot for 11-16 year olds due to be launched in June of this year.

(4) The County Council's Local Transport Plan clearly set out the need to reduce the number of journeys by car and to increase the proportion made by walking, cycling and public transport. Improving all the modes would widen choice for Kent residents and reduce social exclusion for those who did not have access to a car. KCC's policy was to work with partners to improve the reliability and quality of local bus services.

(5) Better public transport was absolutely essential to tackling 3 of the 4 shared priorities – **accessibility, congestion and pollution**. The County Council's overarching objective for local bus services was to increase patronage levels through encouraging modal shift, through a programme of investment and partnership working with operators and others, to improve the quality and reliability of bus services. Increased bus patronage contributed to the County Council's CPA rating and had been a significant factor in the excellent rating of the Local Transport Plan delivery report. Approximately 80% of bus services across Kent were provided on a commercial basis without financial support from the County Council, although the County Council spent over £7 million on supporting socially necessary services.

(6) In partnership with operators and local District Councils, Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP) had been developed across Kent in Ashford, Canterbury, Maidstone and Thanet. QBPs had provided a structured approach which had enabled all organisations to work together successfully towards the objective of increasing bus patronage and reliability. This had resulted in significant investment in Real Time Information, bus priority measures, improved bus stop facilities and enabled operators to fund new vehicles with improved accessibility, eg, the Stagecoach 'Thanet Loop' service which had benefited from this approach had achieved a 20% increase in patronage during its first 12 months of operation.

(7) The County Council would also explore opportunities to secure funding from wider sources such as the successful 'Kickstart' bids which had improved the quality and frequency of bus services in the Dover, Gravesend, Swale and Thanet areas. The Kent Bus System had been introduced through the QBPs and provided priority for buses at traffic signals, Real Time Passenger Information displays for passengers and the facility for operators to monitor the performance of their services more effectively to improve reliability. It was the County Council's policy, as set out in the Bus Strategy, that bus lanes should be provided wherever bus frequency totalled 6 or more journeys per hour. The bus lanes met this criteria. A

letter from Arriva Southern Counties which set out the company's concerns was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(8) The 5 Year Integrated Programme in Tunbridge Wells and across Kent included a number of schemes to support bus services through additional bus lanes, new shelters and revised infra-structure for low floor vehicles. In recent years KCC had also funded the purchase of low floor buses on supported services which had significantly improved the quality of the service and provided higher levels of accessibility.

(9) Similar investment was planned over future years through the LTP which had been developed following discussions with operators and included further improvements designed to assist the movement of buses on the highway. Investment in better vehicles and higher frequencies was planned by Arriva but this could be jeopardised by a removal of important bus priority facilities.

(10) Alongside the Transport Strategy, the Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan (adopted in 2004), following an extensive consultation exercise, showed that the transport issues of greatest concern to residents included congestion, public transport, poor roads and parking problems. The Community Plan outlined key actions including promoting and improving sustainable transport modes, including public transport.

(11) The proposal to remove the bus lanes as described was contrary to County Council Policy as follows:-

- the bus lanes in question had 6 or more buses per hour and fully met the County Council's criteria
- bus priority was essential if we were to make buses more reliable and therefore more attractive and so encourage increased usage and reduce congestion
- their removal would also result in increased operating costs as operators would have to provide additional vehicles in order to maintain the same level of service, resulting in poorer quality, older vehicles and declining revenue
- contrary to the objectives of 'Towards 2010', particularly in terms of free travel for young people up to the age of 16. Indeed poor bus service punctuality could adversely impact upon the forthcoming pilot scheme in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

(12) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that the recommendation of the January meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board be overturned, and the retention of the bus lanes at the locations for the reasons stated, be supported.

Carried 7 for, 4 against

9. Transforming Kent Highway Services

(Item. 9 - Report by Transformation Programme Director)

(1) The presentation by Kim Hills, Transformation Programme Director and Barbara Moody, Network Operations Manager – East Kent, updated HAB on the

current position / progress of the Highway Service in Kent and provided a vision for the future direction.

(2) The last 2 years had seen a number of progressive changes:-

- The transfer of functions and staff from 12 districts creating three new Divisions.
- Mobilisation of a new Alliance contract creating a partnership of four organisations (KCC, Ringway, Jacobs and TSUK) branded together as Kent Highway Services.

The next stage was to transform the service into a seamless, frontline operation.

(3) The presentation covered:-

Current service delivery

The journey so far

Initial Price Waterhouse Cooper findings

An asset management business

Fundamental Business Transformation

Report to fix project

Challenges ahead

The next steps and milestones

(4) Details of the progress made were covered in the presentation. The next 18 months would be a vital part of the process to transform into a 21st Century Service.

(5) Following a question and answer session, the Chairman thanked Kim Hills and Barbara Moody for a very informative presentation.

(6) The Board supported the direction proposed.

10. High Speed Dual Carriageway Maintenance Policy *(Item. 10 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)*

(1) Kent Highway Services maintained 80 kms (50 miles) of high speed dual carriageways across the county, Appendix 2 of the report showed the location of the roads. The report proposed a new policy which would enable a standard approach to maintenance and would allow road users to plan their journeys with advanced warning of disruption.

(2) The adopted asset maintenance plan detailed how each part of the highway infrastructure should be maintained and to what frequency. In most cases, the roads were maintained using a reactive, needs based approach mainly due to the differing maintenance needs of the highway.

(3) In addition to the obligations of KHS to undertake maintenance of the highway network, the District Councils also had obligations for cleansing, under the Environmental Protection Act, and in most cases undertook vegetation work on our behalf.

(4) The cost of undertaking work on the roads was higher than other roads, mainly due to health and safety considerations for the workforce leading to extensive traffic management (cones and signs etc). Undertaking work in a

reactive way could lead to financial inefficiencies and less control over planning work on all parts of the highway.

(5) The proposed new policy was intended to ensure that routine maintenance was undertaken at set times throughout the year, using planned road or lane closures. This had two benefits, it allowed maintenance activities of both KHS and the District Councils to be planned and therefore be cost effective and all-inclusive. It also allowed KHS to advertise the work in advance so that the travelling public were informed of the potential for disruption.

(6) Appendix 1 of the report detailed the proposed policy for maintaining the high speed road network.

(7) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste that approval be given to adopting the policy set out in Appendix 1 of the report, as the method for maintaining the high speed road network.

11. Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme *(Item. 11 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)*

(1) Public perception of Highway Authorities' control over roadworks was generally predicated on a lack of influence around poor workmanship and traffic delays. The report outlined the latest on the proposal to introduce a Considerate Contractor Scheme into Kent and for the approval to proceed with launching such a scheme which would encourage a higher standard of works and safety consistently across Kent's roads.

(2) The Corporation of London started up the original Considerate Contractor Scheme in 1987. Considerate Contractor Schemes were now recognised by the construction industry. There was also a degree of public recognition and with the introduction of more schemes around the country, this would grow to become a national initiative.

(3) Equally important was the approval and support being given by the Tidy Britain Group and the Health and Safety Executive. Both organisations realised that the schemes were a significant step towards furthering broader environmental, health and safety objectives.

(4) The aim of the scheme was to introduce a reward system for high performing contractors who considered all highway users during the works. Through offering coveted Awards based on the condition of the interface between construction sites and the public, the Scheme induced a spirit of pride and excellence in the workforce. The scheme was also designed to flag up those contractors who were not performing adequately. This would give KCC a better opportunity to monitor the performance for all contractors signed into the scheme and deal with them promptly to improve standards.

(5) The scheme would be a development and improvement upon the current Highways Authority & Utilities Committee (HAUC) Joint Site Safety surveys and the Kent Highway Services (KHS) Divisional site safety checks. There would probably be willingness by Utilities and a contractor to be a member of the scheme, as non membership almost showed a "don't care attitude". The winning of a high achievement award could be displayed on company vehicles (sticker) and jealously guarded and contested the following year.

(6) The Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme aimed to encourage all contractors working on the highway to carry out their operations in a safe, consistent and considerate manner by:-

- Fostering a joint initiative to demonstrate the spirit of co-operation,
- Improving Standards,
- Ensuring that anyone using the highway would understand exactly what was happening and where works were in progress,
- Giving constructive feedback and praise to develop continuous improvement.

(7) The scheme comprised of a Code of Good Practice, which included the requirements of “Safety at Street Works and Road Works”, using four categories; Safe, Clean, Considerate and Co-operative. Sites were judged against a checklist that took into account safety, cleanliness, considerate behaviours, co-operation and environmental considerations. It was by following the code of practice that the standards of works would be raised, rates of progress maximised and the condition of the highway would be improved.

(8) Members of the public observing works on the highway were invited to comment on the conditions of the site using the Kent Contact Centre. Callers would point out infringements of the Code, but were also encouraged to provide any appropriate feedback.

(9) The successful operation of the scheme relied upon sufficient site inspections being made. Senior representatives from each of the participating bodies as detailed below would undertake inspections:-

- Site safety surveys (HAUC) – 84 sites inspected per year
- JUG (4 reps from SU's) - 48 sites inspected per year
- Kent & Medway Divisional Offices - 150 sites inspected per year
- Ringway and Jacobs - 48 sites inspected per year

(10) A working party would be set up to manage most aspects of the scheme. This included site inspection, records, award recommendations, correspondence, outline responses, site counselling and co-ordinating public relations activities.

(11) Accurate written site records were essential, as they provided the basis for Awards judgements. Also photographic evidence was essential, especially in the case of sites which failed to meet the correct standards and examples of exemplary practice for the awards ceremony and publicity.

(12) All sites were judged according to the standards set out in the Code of Good Practice. There were three categories of award:-

- **Gold Award** - Organisations which showed a consistent and high degree of compliance with the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
- **Considerate Contractor** - Organisations which regularly met the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
- **Individual Awards** - Companies or operatives that had excelled. This category could also be contractor and gang of the year if merited.

(13) An adjudicating panel of representatives would be appointed. The panel would include independent members from outside the industry. The panel allocated awards on the basis of the evidence provided by the working party.

(14) The scheme would be run as cost neutral. An annual joining fee would be charged to the contractor/utility companies. This was to cover the cost of the awards ceremony, the initial supply of information, and the in-house resources to run the scheme. There would be a minimal amount of staff time which would be recovered from the scheme.

(15) Sufficient site surveys were being undertaken to give meaningful results, and there was an existing collation system. The Joint Utilities Group (JUG) representatives and Highways Authority & Utilities Committee (HAUC) representatives would also contribute towards the management of the scheme. Medway Unitary Authority had historically had close links with KCC and discussions were taking place to finalise Medway's involvement with the scheme.

(16) The proposal was to launch a Considerate Contractor Scheme in Kent in April of 2007. This would be a high profile launch with the media represented. KCC would benefit publicly for launching such a scheme and stood to improve public perception of works on the highway and gain safer and cleaner streets as a result.

(17) The Board noted the report.

12. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) - An Update

(Item. 12 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The report provided an update on the progress of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) which gained Royal Assent in 2004 and the accompanying Intervention Criteria which might be used by the Secretary of State and the Department for Transport should a local authority be seen to be failing in its duties under the TMA.

(2) The following list was a summary of the main report highlighting the key areas to be aware of:-

- The TMA required that the whole local authority, not just the highways department, to be aware of and take account of the implications of the duty.
- The Network Management Plan would be reviewed and reported upon every year in line with the reporting process for the LTP.
- If an authority failed to perform its network management duty, then the Act provided for the Secretary of State and the DfT to intervene and appoint a "Traffic Director".
- Permit Schemes were designed to give LA's further control over works on the highway.
- Permit Schemes would be designed to run as 'cost neutral'. Estimated figures indicated that income from a Permit Scheme might run to £2 million per annum.
- Non-refundable cost of managing KHS works through a Permit Scheme would be in the region of £850k per annum.
- The DfT would give LA's a six-month period to establish the permit process.

- KCC did have an option of concentrating on Electronic transfer of Notices (EtoN) to improve works co-ordination rather than adopting a Permit Scheme.
- The introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) would bring financial penalties to works promoters for incorrect information that adversely affected roadworks co-ordination.
- The FPN's would also be applied to local authority roadworks. The penalties would be recorded against performance indicators and would not be a financial restraint.
- DfT had completed its consultations for the FPN scheme and had indicated that the regulations were expected to come into force during mid - late 2007.
- The Act required local authorities to commence the noticing of their own roadworks. This would increase notices by 40% to over 70,000 per annum.
- Estimated that KHS would require 12 roadwork co-ordinators to manage the notices to ensure the scheme operated to its full potential.
- It might be possible to improve the processing of notices by investing in technology such as hand held equipment for the Highway Inspectors.
- DfT had indicated that guidelines for a FPN offence would not be issued and had indicated that legal procedures could be through Magistrates Courts.

(3) It was estimated that 5% of notices might attract an FPN. With effective management, an annual income of £640,000 could be achieved.

(4) The current Medium Term Business Plan for the Directorate did not reflect any specific budgetary implications arising from the legislation due to the present uncertainty on how the Government would direct the implementation of its financial aspects. However, the cost of a Permit Scheme for Kent, estimated at £2.83m, would be self-funding. It might be necessary, however, to “pump prime” start-up costs which would be recoverable once the scheme was operational.

(5) Until the Regulations pertaining to Permit Schemes and Fixed Penalty Notices had been placed before Parliament, it was not possible to provide exact budget figures. However, from consultation documents released by the DfT and examination of current procedures, it would be necessary to provide both budget and staff resources if KCC wished to run a Permit Scheme.

(6) The introduction of FPN's which were likely to come into force in the Autumn of 2007 would require investment in staff resources. Without this investment, KCC would fail in its Network Management Duties and might face the prospect of Intervention procedures by the Secretary of State and the DfT. Although an income stream would become available to balance out the requirements it was likely that both the workload and the income would be higher within the first year of operation.

(7) Monitoring systems and procedures along with close communication and liaison links must be established with the local District Authorities in order that close supervision could be carried out with regard to their Civil Enforcement operations.

This would be essential to prevent KCC being affected with regard to the TMA 2004 and the associated Network Management Duties.

(8) Members were asked to consider the preliminary conclusions and offer their views in order to prepare for the release of the regulations relating to the TMA and the associated Network Management Duties.

(9) The Board noted the report.

13. Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2007/08

(Item. 13 - Report by County Transportation Manager)

(1) In December 2006 the County Council received its Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital settlement. Part of the settlement was an allocation of £11,693,000 of borrowing approvals and grant to implement Integrated Transport (IT) schemes in 2007/08. The Council's budget had been determined by the County Council and it was agreed that borrowing should be capped at the level at which the borrowing was supported by additional funds the County Council received from Government and the additional £1,000,000 of borrowing approvals related to the Dartford Crossing would not be taken up. The total IT allocation for 07/08 was therefore **£7,239,000**, 23% less than for 06/07.

(2) The report detailed how the IT schemes allocation was proposed to be spent on implementing Kent's Transportation and Safety Package Programme. A summary of the allocations together with County-wide schemes was shown in Appendix 1 of the report.

(3) Under the LTP2 Kent now received its allocation based on the Government's formulaic approach to allocating Integrated Transport Block Capital comprising: congestion, public transport usage, road casualty statistics, accessibility and air quality. These were based around delivering shared priorities agreed between the Government and the Local Government Association (LGA). Depending on Kent's ability to deliver schemes to meet LTP objectives funding in future years could be increased or reduced by up to 25%, should it be decided to take up the full allocation. Accordingly, and to maximise inward investment, a more rigorous procedure had been developed to deliver schemes which would result in a successful LTP.

(4) The 2007/08 programme had been developed according to a Design Guide Model (DGM), previously titled BAM, which used Kent's shared priority objectives to guide the development of schemes. The objective areas and the guide allocation of funds to meet them were: congestion (30%), public transport (25%), road safety (20%), accessibility (20%) and air quality (5%). The proportions had been set in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste. Future programmes were being developed through a scheme prioritisation and delivery monitoring methodology (PIPKIN). BAM and PIPKIN were reported to the Board on 11 July 2006 and were then approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste.

(5) Ultimately PIPKIN would enable a single prioritised programme of schemes to be developed. The 07/08 programme represented a transition towards this.

(6) The Transportation and Safety Package Programme (TSP) was shown in detail in Appendix 2 of the report. Key elements were as follows:-

- Casualty Reduction Measures - **£1,030,640** was proposed to implement 28 schemes to reduce the severity and number of

casualties on Kent's roads. Schemes were assessed against strict casualty reduction criteria and helped the Council meet corporate manslaughter obligations. It was estimated that the measures would save some **33** KSIs per year. There were other schemes within the programme which included a road safety benefit, such as signing and traffic calming.

- Kent Traffic Management Centre (TMC) - **£500,000** to extend the congestion monitoring and management capabilities of the TMC, improve co-ordination with the Highways Agency and develop the public facing Kent Traffic and Travel web site. A further **£500,000** was proposed to install number plate recognition cameras on key routes into Maidstone to calculate up to the minute journey times and give route guidance information to drivers on roadside variable message signs.
- Smarter Choices/ Safer Routes to School – **£152,500** to implement elements of the Kent Smarter Choices initiative linked to delivering improved pedestrian and cycle routes to school. Kent was on course for 350 (55%) of its schools with Travel Plans by April 2007 to tackle school run congestion and promote health. The funding would facilitate safer routes to support exemplar School Travel Plans.
- Interactive Speed Signs - **£50,000** to erect 10 signs to promote compliance with speed limits at key points on the network.
- Pedestrian Crossings to be DDA compliant – **£100,000** split 50:50 for upgrading controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings in Kent. The uncontrolled crossings generally comprised dropped kerbs and had been identified in town centre audits through the Kent Disability Reference Panel. The funds would be used in the Swale area as part of a rolling programme across the county. The schemes helped KCC meet nationally set performance indicators and ensured compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Public Transport Information – **£75,000** to implement capital elements of the Kent Public Transport Information Strategy. This would deliver upgraded stops and improved roadside information for 3 public transport corridors/ interchanges comprising Tonbridge to Tunbridge Wells in line with significant investment planned by Arriva at principal bus/rail interchanges and in Dover, Shepway and Canterbury complimenting Stagecoach's new investment. The Public Transport Information Strategy would help to improve bus user satisfaction in line with national performance indicators.
- Quality Bus Partnership Infrastructure – **£600,000** contribution to emerging partnerships in Ashford and Dover and to successful partnerships including Thanet and Canterbury, which had increased bus patronage through a step change in service provision. Bus patronage had a direct impact on Kent's CPA rating and subsequent funding allocations.

(7) All the schemes listed in the report would be reported to the appropriate Joint Transportation Boards and all schemes should be disclosed in local land charge searches.

(8) A balanced transport system, with good quality travel options for all was essential to combat congestion and counter the negative impacts of traffic growth. The Transportation and Safety Package Programme was central to delivering outcomes set out in the Vision for Kent, *Towards 2010* and the Local Transport Plan. Implementation of the programme, even at the reduced level of funding, would help KHS tackle congestion, increase bus patronage, improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists as well as mitigating the impacts of traffic through traffic calming and speed management schemes.

(9) As well as contributing towards KCC objectives, there was a high demand for TSP schemes locally. Kent had been commended for delivering the schemes, which had helped achieve increased usage of sustainable modes. Kent CPA rating had improved as a direct consequence of increasing bus patronage and better information.

(10) The Board supported the proposals for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that:-

- (a) the Transportation and Safety Package Programme allocations shown in Appendix 1 of the report be approved; and
- (b) the schemes listed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report be implemented in 2007/08.