

AGENDA

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD



Tuesday, 6th March, 2007, at 9.30 am
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Karen Mannering**

Telephone **(01622) 694367**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Substitutes
2. Minutes - 9 January 2007 (Pages 1 - 16)
3. Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes (Pages 17 - 20)
4. Progress Report on Major Capital Projects (Pages 21 - 28)
5. East Kent Access - Phase 1 (Pages 29 - 32)
6. A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass (Pages 33 - 34)
7. Fees & Charges for 2007/08 (Pages 35 - 42)
8. Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08 (Pages 43 - 48)
9. Transforming Kent Highway Services (Pages 49 - 50)
10. High Speed Dual Carriageway Maintenance Policy (Pages 51 - 52)
11. Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme (Pages 53 - 56)
12. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) - An Update (Pages 57 - 64)
13. Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2007/08 (Pages 65 - 68)
14. Quality bus service in Tunbridge Wells (Pages 69 - 74)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Monday, 26 February 2007

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the Highways Advisory Board held on Tuesday, 9 January 2007 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mr R F Manning (Chairman), Mr T J Birkett (substitute for Mr K Sansum), Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Miss 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, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr R Tolputt.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr A H T Bowles, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE and Mr M V Snelling.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Harrison-Mee, Director, Kent Highway Services; Mr D Hall, County Transportation Manager; Mr N Bateman, Divisional Manager – West Kent; Mrs C Bruce, Resources & Development Manager; Mr L Holliday, Network Operations Manager & Traffic Manager; Mr M Sammut, Senior Transportation Engineer; Mr M Smith, Transportation Manager – East Kent; and the Head of Democratic Services (represented by Mrs K Mannering).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes
(Item 2)

(1) Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, attended the meeting to explain to Members his reason for not agreeing to the Board's proposal set out in paragraph 6(18) – Provision of 20mph Zones Outside Schools in Kent. He informed the Board that he would be giving his approval to the original motion as follows:-

- (a) KCC should not have a specific policy of 20mph limits or zones outside all Kent schools;
- (b) specific problem areas outside schools be identified and assessed for the suitability for a 20mph zone; and
- (c) KCC lobby government for a change in the rules to allow for 20mph limits outside schools by virtue of flashing lights.

(2) RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2006 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Kent Highway Services – A 21st Century Service
(Item 3 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(Prior to consideration of the report Members received a presentation from Ian Newiss, Director of Operations, Jacobs)

(Following a question and answer session, the Chairman thanked Mr Newiss for a very informative presentation)

(1) On 4 December 2006 the final version of the Paper "Kent Highway Services – A 21st Century Service' was approved unanimously by Cabinet and fully endorsed by Paul Carter and Peter Gilroy. The paper described why it was desirable for Kent Highway Services to operate from two divisions rather than three. The optimisation of accommodation would free up capital funding to reinvest in the service, to fund new technology to drive efficiencies, reduce annual overhead costs and improve customer satisfaction. The paper gave more detail of a technology enabled service.

(2) All local authorities were being placed under increasing pressure, including financial scrutiny, to make the best use of available resources in delivering their services to the public. A well-managed highway network was a core component of the services and the highway asset was probably the most valuable asset that many local authorities maintained.

(3) KCC only knew in general terms the size and condition of the highway asset since the asset registers were prepared back in the 1980's and 1990's and very little updating had taken place since. At best KCC could only suggest investment levels necessary to maintain the asset and offset depreciation. There was an absence of co-ordinated forward works programmes that could save costs and minimise disruption to the travelling public. The asset records were held in disparate databases that relied on manual input. It was not currently possible to fully record inspection regimes and maintenance operations and therefore the Council was exposed to risks, including corporate manslaughter charges.

(4) There was a varying degree of sophistication with the use of technology across the KHS Alliance partners. Ringway and Jacobs maintained quality business management systems and had invested in document management. TSUK made use of innovative technology in intelligent traffic systems. In KCC the business procedures were not consistent, the technology was not integrated and therefore none of the systems talked to each other. Staff were deprived of the basic tools to deliver a 21st Century Service with a significant impact on efficiency.

(5) The vision was to create systems that all the Alliance wanted to use because they were easy to navigate, bring efficiencies and add value to the service. The systems would have the following attributes:-

- One shared Alliance system with single entry point to current, accurate information updated in real time
- A system that informed the public and others, managed expectations and improved the reputation of KHS
- A system that was valued by staff and supported them in delivering a high quality service, supported the culture and drove innovation, improvement and efficiency
- Delivery of measurable benefits through self auditing performance measurement
- Clear accountability for workflow, information, budget management and allowed us to meet all legislative obligations.

(6) Technology requirements could be split into two clearly defined work streams:-

(a) **Network Management tools** designed to give a single point data source that met the Alliance business needs:-

- It would be an integrated database containing all of the asset information, inspection and survey results, works programmes, and other records held globally against the road network. The data would

9 January 2007

be stored centrally with robust system architecture but which could be maintained by remote specialist teams.

- It would consist of a single set of core data that would instantaneously update all relevant datasets using wherever practical mobile technology, supporting all parts of the service from the Contact Centre to the Divisional and other Alliance offices.
- The core business processes would be standardised to ensure efficiencies but specialisms would also be available, such as Roadworks, Street Lighting, Arboriculture and Highways maintenance applications.
- There would be end to end work flow management. This would ensure that defects reported to the contact centre would automatically initiate a response by an inspector or maintenance team to minimise the report to fix times. Mobile technology would provide accurate feedback information.
- There would be links to inform the public where the works were planned and we would be able to co-ordinate the works with the utilities. The links would include real time information from the Kent Traffic Management Centre to help us plan the efficient operation of the highway network.
- The system would automatically raise works orders, capture actual costs and provide reports to Corporate Finance. It would also have the ability to provide personally tailored performance indicators to KHS users.

(b) **Business Management tools** would ensure that the day to day business could be operated effectively, efficiently and consistently with the minimum number of touch points in any delivery process. Required actions would be notified automatically and progress monitored and reported.

(7) The processes would ensure compliance with Alliance Contracts, Legal requirements, Health and Safety, Recruitment, Training and Employment policies. They would assist with Performance Management and Risk Assessment. New technology would allow knowledge and Best Practice to be disseminated across the Alliance and would include:-

- Policies Procedures and Guidance notes
- Corporate Information and branding
- Technical Indices
- Human Resource Information
- Document Management
- Communications and information cascades.

(8) An essential ingredient in raising overall performance levels would be the adoption, wherever appropriate, of common systems and standards across the Alliance. This would be achieved by designing the relevant elements of the systems to meet the nationally recognised standards in the fields of Quality, Environment and Health and Safety (i.e. ISO 9001,14001,18001). The procedures and processes of all parties would be built into an overarching system certified by an external accreditation body. A fully disciplined

approach to applying the systems would lead to more consistency, less waste, less duplication, better use of resources and overall cost savings. It would be the 'single source of truth' for all necessary management information to enable the Alliance Board to monitor and improve performance of the Alliance in managing the highway asset.

(9) KHS were confident that the benefits would be:-

- Faster response to, and resolution of, fault reports.
- 25% reduction in calls to the Contact Centre by increasing customer access to information and fault reporting through the KCC website and by cutting the number of repeat calls.
- A reduction in incidents which lead to insurance claims by between 5 and 10% through improved maintenance management.
- Streamlined processes enabled by technology from start to finish, integrating client, consultant and contractor leading to a 10 to 15% saving in staff time across the KHS Alliance.
- Reduction in administration through an integrated business and asset management system releasing staff time to focus on improving customer satisfaction.
- Increased staff motivation, better career prospects, greater job satisfaction and flexibility, and a workforce plan that was sustainable against the challenges of an ageing workforce and industry competition.

(10) KHS had been reviewing how it delivered all operational aspects and the conclusion to this work was due early in 2007. KHS must take the output from the review and implement it. But only with a significant investment in technology would KHS be able to deliver the service that stakeholders and the public wanted, and that staff were proud to provide.

(11) The Board noted the report.

3. Kent Highway Services – Our Response Times to Requests for Service *(Item 4 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)*

(1) The Kent Highway Services Contact Centre was launched in April 2005 and at the time handled 5,000 calls per month from the single 08458 247 800 telephone number. The Contact Centre now handled over 16,000 highway enquiries per month with around half of those resulting in service requests passed to the Divisional Offices for action.

(2) Since July 2006 and the start of the new contracts a new range of leaflets and around 180 KHS logo'd vehicles had raised the profile of the KHS brand along with the telephone number and email address.

(3) The next step to help improve public satisfaction was to provide better information on the response times that people who contacted KHS could expect from the highway service. This would help to manage expectations about how long a repair would take or a letter to be answered.

(4) A key part of the Transformation process was to drive efficiency and improve service delivery but within the context of a core set of published response times. A leaflet had now been produced that set out the response times and this would be formally launched in January 2007. A session was held with over 120 front facing staff in December to launch the standards and provide customer care training.

(5) A table which set out some examples of response times and levels of current performance was included in the report. Publication of the response times gave clear guidance to KHS staff on the level of service they needed to deliver. It also provided those who use the service with information to manage their expectations of the service they would receive. The Transformation process would be identifying different, improved and more efficient ways to deliver service to meet the response times. A report presenting the results of the performance indicators listed in the table and a range of other key results was reported to the Alliance Board each month.

(6) The Board:-

- (a) noted the progress being made in Kent Highway Services; and
- (b) supported the response times and would help promote these within the community.

4. Circular Roads 1/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits – Update

(Item 5 – Report by County Transportation Manager)

(Mr J Wilson, Chairman of East Farleigh Parish Council and TRAMP, was present for this item)

(1) Further to Minute 8 of 19 September 2006, the report set out early progress and indications of time scales. An internal working group had been established to set the agenda for meeting the Government's requirement to review speed limits on all A and B class roads by 2011. The group, which contained a mix of KHS staff, including Jacobs, would be undertaking a significant proportion of the work.

(2) A demonstration area had now been selected so that problems and pitfalls could be identified before the work was undertaken Countywide. This was an area south of Maidstone that included a number of A class roads around the periphery with several B class roads running through it. There were also a number of villages contained within the area. Speed checks would be undertaken and consideration would be given to the likely physical measures that might be required. There would be a significant amount of consultation and preparation of traffic orders to be undertaken. It was envisaged that Jacobs would be commissioned to undertake a good proportion of the work.

(3) An outline scheme with full estimates of cost would be reported to Members next year with the intention of funding speed limit changes and associated measures in the demonstration area in 2008/09. It should be noted that the scheme would only consider A and B class roads. The experience gained from the exercise would help to develop the full programme enabling all A and B class roads to be reviewed and the required changes implemented by the Government's deadline of 2011.

(4) The pilot study work was likely to cost in the region of £100,000 and would be funded from the Integrated Transport pot in 2007/08. The work should be completed by March 2008.

(5) Where a high crash record was identified on a C or unclassified road, it might be necessary to implement a lower speed limit with or without physical measures. This would be covered by a crash remedial scheme which could be included with A and B road schemes in the local transport plan budget or funded separately as appropriate following a detailed report on that site and its associated issues.

(6) The Board noted the early progress made on implementing local speed limits. Following a proposal by the Chairman, Members agreed to consider Items 9, 10 and 11 prior to Items 6, 7 and 8

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**5. A2 Pepperhill to Cobham Widening Scheme
A2/A282 Improvement Scheme and M25 J1b to 3 Widening
(Item 9 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)**

(1) Further to Minute 19 of 11 July 2006, the report gave an update on the progress of the works, the works programme and ongoing consultations between SKANSKA (the consortium delivering the project for the Highways Agency), and County and Gravesham Borough Council officers. Improvements to the A2/A282 junction were also underway and the report outlined the programme and discussions between the contractor Costains and County officers.

(2) Both the schemes started in September with off-line works, the A2 Pepperhill to Cobham scheme's being at Tollgate and Pepperhill. Downs Road was closed to the public and would remain closed for the duration of the works. The Tollgate Hotel, which was significantly affected by the widening works, was acquired by the Highways Agency and was being used as a site office and public information centre.

(3) The start of works ceremony for both schemes was on 10 November held at the former Tollgate Hotel, being carried out by Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Minister of State for Transport, who started the bored piling machine for the foundations of the new Tollgate bridge. The day was also the first of two of a public exhibition of both schemes at the former Tollgate Hotel.

(4) Regular liaison meetings had been set up for both schemes between the contractors and KHS, including fortnightly co-ordination meetings for the A2 Pepperhill to Cobham scheme, and for the A2/A282 scheme overview group meetings every 2 months; the group consisting of representatives from KCC, DBC, GBC and HA. The M25 Junction 1B to 3 improvement scheme was currently undergoing public consultation following an exhibition held over 7, 8, & 9 December.

A2 Pepperhill to Cobham Widening

(5) Details of imminent works, including lane closures, were given on the HA's web site www.highways.gov.uk/A2beancobhamphase2. The SKANSKA public relations officer was Gordon Hounslow who could be contacted on 07831 196325. The works programme was currently as follows:-

- (a) 15 January commence construction of additional vehicle crossovers, through central reservation, on A2. This would require traffic management measures with narrow lanes operating between Marling Cross and Thong lane for 8 months.
- (b) In May commence work around Pepperhill Junction, requiring traffic management measures lasting approximately 12 weeks.
- (c) Mid May closure of Marling Cross over bridge, followed by closure of Hever Court Road. Both closures being for up to 14 months, required to enable statutory undertakers' diversions and construction of the new bridge over A2, new roundabouts and link roads.
- (d) April 2008 commencement of 7 further phases of traffic management on the Pepperhill section to enable tying in of new road.
- (e) Dec 2008 traffic would be moved over to new road and start of landscaping of old road.

9 January 2007

- (f) Early Spring 2009 Completion of new road.
 - (g) Late 2009 complete landscaping of old road.
- (6) Main matters under discussion with SKANSKA:-
- (a) length of time of Marling Cross bridge closure;
 - (b) keeping Hever Court Road open;
 - (c) diversion routes for the above;
 - (d) roadworks co-ordination;
 - (e) detail design of the new junctions and connecting roads at Tollgate and Marling Cross which would be transferred to the County;
 - (f) old A2 - landscaping, footpaths/cyclepaths, equestrian routes and their bridges over new A2, and links to existing.
 - (g) permanent signing

A2/A282 Improvement

(7) The proposed completion date of the scheme was Spring 2008. Details of the works programme were unavailable at the time of writing of the report; they would be added following the public meeting on 14 December at their visitor and resource centre adjacent to Waller Park, Green Street Green Road, Darenth. However, details of imminent works, including lane closures, were given on the HA's web site www.highways.gov.uk/A2A282. The Costain Community Relations officer was Martin Griffiths and the 24 hour public helpline was 0845 603 6374.

(8) Discussions with the Highways Agency over the deferment of the A2 west to north free flow slip and the safety over the 'interim' scheme continued into October but KHS were unable to convince the HA to overturn their decision. KHS were continuing to work with Costains to minimise traffic congestion on Watling Street due to traffic avoiding the road works.

M25 Junction 1B to 3 Widening

(9) The scheme was one of several being progressed by the Highways Agency to widen all the 3 lane sections of the M25 to 4 lanes. The scheme between Junctions 1B (Princes Rd, Dartford) and 3 (M20 Swanley) would be carried out within the existing highway boundaries, with no widening of structures and utilising the hard shoulder at pinch points. It had a budget of £65.94 million.

(10) The extra benefits of the scheme would be low noise surfacing, an environmental barrier at the Hawley Road bridge to further reduce the noise and reduce the visual impact of the road and traffic, and new lighting to improve the safety of the road. The lighting would be of the latest technology with close cut off beams of light to minimise light pollution.

(11) The consultation period for the scheme ended on 14 February. Comments would be considered by the Highway Agency and taken into account as they deemed appropriate. The scheme and comments would then be considered by the Secretary of State. As the scheme was widening of the existing carriageways within existing highway limits no actual planning permission was required. Hence, subject to the Secretary of State's approval the scheme was proposed to start in August 2007 with completion in April 2009; a contract period of 20.5 months. This was a short construction period and the contractor Costains proposed to utilise appropriate overnight working to keep the contract period to a minimum.

(12) During construction the existing number of lanes would be kept open at peak times, which meant for most of the day, although they would be narrow lanes. There would be a 50 mph speed limit with an 'average speed specs speed camera system' as on the A2 scheme. There were no road closures proposed although overhead gantries would be manoeuvred into place overnight using rolling road blocks.

(13) The Board noted the report.

6. South Street, Deal –Approval to Undertake Public Consultation

(Item 10 – Report by East Kent Divisional Manager)

(Cllr N Collor, Chairman of Dover JTB, was present for this item)

(1) On 18 September 2006 a report was tabled to the Dover Joint Transportation Board (JTB) concerning a proposal to improve the South Street area, Deal to provide better and safer bus interchange facilities. The report recommended approval to a scheme drawing for consultation. The JTB did not support the recommendation and thus an improvement to South Street could not now be considered further.

(2) At a subsequent Highways Meeting of the Dover County Members on 24 October 2006, the opportunity was taken to better understand the reasoning behind the decision. After considering the discussion that took place at the JTB and in recognition that public consultation was still appropriate, the four local Members present gave their unanimous support to seeking approval to overturn the JTB decision.

(3) Over the last 3 years, there had been a protracted debate locally about plans to improve the South Street area to cater for the various competing needs, particularly buses. A number of options had been subject to public consultation previously and the latest proposals had been drawn up, taking into account all the comments from the previous consultations. It was considered that the new proposals provided the best practical balance between the various needs of South Street, and thus the original report to the JTB recommended approval to go to public consultation to share this openly with the public and all interested parties.

(4) Most of the JTB Members who commented on the proposal expressed some concern about various aspects of them, acknowledging the difficulty in satisfying all the competing needs, thus concluding that it would probably be better to "do nothing". One local District Member representing Deal felt that the scheme promoted a sensible arrangement to enable progress towards introduction and was openly disappointed at the lack of support in just seeking the public's view at this stage.

(5) It remained particularly important to improve interchange facilities here for the new "Diamond" buses that had been introduced earlier this year as a result of a successful 'Kickstart' bid. It would also demonstrate support for the proposed Quality Bus Partnership in Dover that was to be progressed following the approval of the Dover JTB at their most recent meeting on 13 November 2006.

(6) The opportunity to implement the scheme this financial year had now gone. The associated timescales with the progression of a consultation could now be slightly more relaxed in recognition of the concern that was expressed at the JTB. A bid for funding an improvement to South Street as an Integrated Transport Measure for implementation in 2007/8 was being made.

(7) The complex use of South Street and the current layout still gave significant cause for concern and the identified need to make improvements had not gone away. Despite the challenge of trying to find an ideal solution it was important that the position reached was shared openly with the local community and that their assistance was gained in a final

endeavour to develop and promote a scheme that on balance provided the improvement that County and District Members, the Town Council and the wider public all recognised the need for at the outset of consideration some three years ago. The new proposal attempted to balance up the various hopes, aspirations and concerns in a way that achieved the optimum scheme to enable progression. If this did not emerge now, then disappointingly the JTB recommendation could be duly enacted.

(8) Member approval was now sought to approaching the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste with a view to concluding the formal process to overturn the JTB recommendation and thus undertake a formal public consultation.

(9) The Board agreed **not** to support the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that a public consultation on the improvement scheme proposal for South Street be undertaken, contrary to the advisory recommendation of the Dover Joint Transportation Board.

7. A251 Safety Improvements – the Need for Appropriate Speed Limits *(Item 11 – Report by Mid Kent Transportation Manager)*

(1) As part of the safety improvements proposed for A251 between Ashford and Faversham, a study was undertaken, which showed that a reduction of the speed limit through the villages of North Street, Badlesmere and Sheldwich from 50 mph to 40 mph and the sections between from 60 mph to 50 mph could be achieved. This was based upon speed surveys, which established the 85th %ile speeds and the injury crash record.

(2) In line with the latest Government guidance on the setting of speed limits (1/2006), the existing speed limits on all 'A' and 'B' roads would be reviewed during the next 5 years to ensure that those posted limits were still appropriate and met with the criteria. If they failed to comply, they would be changed in accordance with the criteria. It was possible that some limits could be increased as well as reduced to comply with the requirements. The criteria for the latest guidance now used '**mean**' speeds rather than the 85th percentile in determining appropriate limits. In this particular case as the safety improvements for A251 were already in the Integrated Transport programme expectations had been raised that the scheme would happen and there was concern that to delay further, pending the full review of all A and B roads, would be unwelcomed by local residents, local members and the Parish Councils.

(3) Table 1 of the report set out the **mean** speeds that were recorded as part of the speed assessment. This showed that the latest criteria could be met and justified the implementation of a 40 mph speed limit through the Villages shown.

(4) A report outlining the need to set appropriate speed limits was presented to the July 2006 meeting of the Board and was approved. This was then the subject of a report to Swale JTB in September 2006. The proposal to reduce the speed limits through the A251 was the subject of a separate report to this meeting of the Swale JTB. It was explained that 30 mph limits through the above villages did not conform to the previous guidance (Government Guidance Note Circular 1/93), the latest guidance (circular 1/2006) or the resolution of HAB in respect of appropriate speed limits and that a 40 mph limit was the most appropriate. The Police concurred with this view. Members of Swale JTB recommended that a 30 mph speed limit through the above villages should be pursued.

(5) In setting any limit both the Police and the County Council were seeking limits that fostered compliance and as much self-enforcement as possible. This could only be achieved if the criteria were strictly applied and that the majority of drivers 'believe' in the posted limit and understood why it was there. Speed limits were likely to be at their most effective where it reflected the local environment.

(6) There was also a risk that by implementing an inappropriate limit, i.e. one that did not relate well to the 'natural' road environment, could encourage driver frustration, bunching, potential for shunts and overtaking manoeuvres which could serve to introduce a new safety problem and actually worsen the existing crash record rather than reduce it.

(7) Kent Police's Senior Forensic Collision Investigator believed that setting inappropriate speed limits might 'inadvertently encourage dangerous manoeuvres', because if a large number of motorists failed to comply with the reduced limit, then they were more likely to try and overtake those in the minority who did. There was a risk of encouraging that particular manoeuvre if the road in question did not suit a lower speed limit which could lead to serious head on collisions. Such a situation arose on the A228 (administered by Medway Council). Although a different class of road, a lower limit was introduced against the wishes of the Police and the safety record worsened, rather than improved, as a result of the manoeuvres described.

(8) The introduction of an inappropriate limit was likely to breed contempt, lack of compliance and lack of respect for the law and place undue pressure upon the Police. Once there was a realisation among the local community as to the ineffectiveness of the limit, pressure was likely to be placed upon the County Council to introduce traffic calming measures. This would have to take its place in the queue for funding and, alongside the necessary signing thus risks urbanisation of the countryside as well as increasing the financial burden upon the Authority, including the on-going maintenance costs.

(9) Speed limits had to be appropriate to the local environment, existing traffic speeds and crash record if they were to bring any benefit in terms of improved road safety. It was therefore paramount that we dealt with actual problems rather than the perception of a problem. The views of the Police were paramount in this regard.

(10) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that a 40 mph speed limit be introduced on the A251 through the villages of North Street, Badlesmere and Sheldwich with a 50 mph speed limit for the remainder of the road.

8. KHS Tour de France 2007

(Item 6 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(Consideration of this item was deferred at the November meeting. As a result paragraphs (15)-(18) below were an update on the original report)

(1) The report outlined the latest position on delivering the Grand Départ for Tour de France 2007. The Tour de France was the premier event in the world cycling calendar. It was the most popular annual spectator event in the sporting world. The race was organised by the Amaury Sports Organisation (ASO). However the location, route and facilities were provided by the host city.

(2) In August 2003 Transport for London (TfL) submitted a proposal on behalf of the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, to host the start of the Tour de France 2007 in London. The start, Grand Départ, included an opening ceremony, prologue time trial and Stage 1 of the Tour.

(3) TfL approached Kent County Council to facilitate Stage 1 of the Tour. A letter of understanding was signed on 3 August 2005 highlighting KCC's commitment to the Tour and briefly outlined the expected responsibilities and outputs. TfL signed contracts with the ASO on 9 February 2006 at a press launch held at the Excel Centre, London. Kent signed a contract with TfL on 6 April 2006 to be a key stakeholder and facilitate hosting Stage 1 of the Tour.

(4) The Tour was expected to generate approximately £16million for Kent's economy. However, this was considered to be a conservative estimate and was likely to be higher. In addition up to 3million spectators were expected to travel to Kent to enjoy the event.

(5) TfL's bid was to host the following:-

- Opening Ceremony – Trafalgar Square on the evening of Friday 6 July 2007. This ceremony presented the riders and their teams to the public.
- Prologue Time Trial – 7.9km course around central London during the daytime of Saturday 7 July 2007. This was a short individual time trial which established who would be wearing the leader's yellow jersey on Stage 1.
- Stage 1 – 209km race route through London's and Kent's roads during the daytime of Sunday 8 July 2007.

(6) KCC were required to provide the following:-

- Allow the use of the highway for the race riders and to provide a route that met with ASO approval.
- Provide traffic management of the route including publication of road closures and the provision of public information.
- Ensure planned works did not conflict with the event.
- Provide appropriate barriers, cones, and signage for technical and safety reasons for the race riders and spectators.
- Ensure the road surface was clean, free from damage and obstacles or obstructions. This might require repair work where necessary.
- Grant licences or permissions required for the event and supporting events.
- Carry out all post-event cleaning and restorative works.

(7) The cost of staging the Tour de France on the Kent Highway network was estimated at £400,000. This would be funded through sponsorship from, for example, Transport for London, District Councils and SEEDA.

(8) To ensure successful delivery of the event, KHS had developed a structure that sat within the overall KCC structure. TfL had contracted Innovision, Event Management Company, to deliver all aspects of the Tour in the Greater London area and ensure that partners outside of the area delivered the outputs they had been contracted to provide.

(9) KCC had identified the major risks by holding such a prestigious event in Kent. This could be seen in Appendix B – TdF Business Risks, of the report. Amanda Lumley was appointed in August 2006 as KCC's Tour de France Project Manager. Amanda was responsible for co-ordinating the event for KCC. Key priorities had been identified to create a cycling legacy for Kent which included:-

- Communication of the race and its route to key stakeholders ready for the major press launch on 26 October 2006 in Paris.
- Co-ordination of events for a promotional campaign running for 2007, 'Year of the Cycle'.

(10) KHS had been working with public transport partners to encourage spectators to travel by public transport wherever possible over the weekend of 6, 7 & 8 July 2007 and facilitate managing traffic volume and movement on the highway network. Ideas that had been discussed included combined ticketing, car share, park and ride etc.

(11) KHS had identified a route through the county that would require a minimum amount of work to ensure it met the ASO requirements for the road race. Stage One would start in central London and enter Kent at Dartford, proceeding through Gravesham, Medway, Maidstone, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford before reaching the Stage Finish in Canterbury. The ASO had inspected the route in mid October 2006 ready for the major press launch in Paris.

(12) Stakeholder meetings had been co-ordinated between KHS, Emergency Services, Emergency Planning Officers, Public Transport Operators, Medway Council, TfL, Districts and Borough Councils and KCC Officers. At the meetings timely distribution of information to stakeholders, businesses and residents had been highlighted as a key to ensuring the race had minimum impact to the day-to-day lives in Kent, management of people and traffic movement in a safe and effective manner.

(13) The success of the event represented an opportunity to show Kent as an international stage for World-class sporting events. The event would demonstrate on the world stage the ability of Kent to host complex international sporting events and demonstrate our capacity for hosting Olympic events and training camps.

(14) The Tour would also create a legacy to generate a long-term increase in interest and participation in cycling for sport and for recreation and transport.

(15) The Tour de France Stage 1 race would commence from Central London with the Publicity Caravan (235 vehicle procession) leading the race at a start time of 08:40. The race peleton (200 cyclists plus support vehicles) would start at the same place at 10:25. The race peleton officially started the stage 1 race from the official start line (Depart Reel) at Greenwich at 11:00 hours. The Publicity Caravan and race peleton would arrive in Canterbury at the finish line at approximately 17:00.

(16) KCC would be sending out a detailed press release which would show the race route and a detailed list of streets affected and contact details at KHS for additional information.

(17) The revised contract for TdF between TfL and KCC was in the process of being finalised in terms of the fine detail and it was anticipated that this would be signed off by the end of January 2007. The contract would build upon the existing contract that was signed back in April 2006. It would provide clarity on what was expected of KCC on the day of the event.

(18) With only six months of planning left KHS were getting into the final stages of organising the event. The final route assessment giving full details of road closure timings and resources required for staging the event would be completed by end of January 2007.

(19) The Board noted the report.

9. Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme *(Item 7 – 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) 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 was bound to grow and 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 performances for all contractors signed into the scheme and deal with them promptly to improve standards.

(5) The scheme would be a development and improvement from 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 to opt out 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 fought for 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 coming along the highway from any direction would understand exactly what was happening and what was expected of them,
- Give 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 passing 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 constructive 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 regalia, and the in-house resources to run the scheme. However there would be a minimal amount of set up staff time which would be recovered from the scheme.

(15) Enough site surveys were already being carried out to give meaningful results, with an existing collation system. Also 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. Should Medway decide not to join then the scheme would only need to be re-branded prior to the launch.

(16) The proposal was to launch a Considerate Contractor Scheme in Kent at the start of 2007. This should be a high profile launch with a media representation. 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.

10. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) – An Update *(Item 8 –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.

9 January 2007

- 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 EtoN noticing 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 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 Mid-late 2007 would also require investment in staff resources. Without this investment, KCC would fail in their Network Management Duties and might face the prospect of Intervention

9 January 2007

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/Borough 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.

07/exe/hab/010907/Minutes

Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes

A report by the Head of Major Projects to the Highways Advisory Board meeting on 6 March 2007.

Introduction

1. The County Council owns property in the Wrens Cross and Upper Stone Street corridor of Maidstone for potential highway improvements that have no foreseeable likelihood of being implemented. This Report proposes realising the asset and promoting deliverable alternative operational and environmental based improvements in Upper Stone Street and improvements to the Bridge gyratory system.

History

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.
3. The two routes to the north were more straightforward and were delivered. The route to the south has always been problematic because of the gradient away from the Town and the very compact and dense older commercial and residential development. It is 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 this southern leg of the three highway schemes Government policy had moved away from substantial urban road building.
4. Over the last 30 years a number of schemes have 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.
5. 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 has 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.

Discussion

6. Some seven years on, we are no further forward. Despite Maidstone Borough Council recently achieving Growth Point status there is still no likelihood of Government funding a highway improvement of Upper Stone Street. Government funds are 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

Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes

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.

7. The property being held is a major concern. In the last couple of years nine residential and two commercial properties have been demolished because they had become uninhabitable or incapable of beneficial occupation. Wrens Cross is a major concern and does not reflect well on the public sector. It is 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 has several fine buildings but many are in a very poor state and are regularly subject to vandalism and anti-social activity. Something needs to be done soon before all are incapable of being saved. The County Council also remains vulnerable to Blight acquisition requests.
8. The retention of property for aspirational future highway improvements is having an adverse effect on the area. The informal blight is actually lowering land values and deterring regeneration investment that is so essential for the area.

All Saints Link Road

9. The focus above has been on Upper Stone Street but Maidstone Borough Council are promoting the concept of an All Saints Link Road that would run from Bishops Way to Knightrider Street and then to Wrens Cross (see Fig. 1). 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 this 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.

Bridge Gyrotory

10. Although not directly related to the property discussion above, the operation of the Bridge gyrotory system is 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 gyrotory and across both bridges is causing difficulties. There is a proposal to relive this situation by creating a direct route for Bishops Way to Fairmeadow traffic by converting the Fairmeadow leg of the gyrotory scheme to two-way operation (see Fig. 2 and Drawing no. 16254/S/3 on display). This is an expensive (over £1m) scheme in part because of the need to move part of an electricity sub-station but it is likely to be deliverable in the short term, and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste has already indicated County Council support for this scheme.

Conclusion

11. The general conclusion is that the retention of property for aspirational highway schemes is unrealistic and ties up asset value. It is 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.

Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes

Proposed Way Forward

1. 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).
2. The County Council should support Maidstone Borough Council in its aspirations to achieve the All Saints Link Road and its efforts to secure funding.
3. 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 can cause an immediate problem to the free flow of traffic. The scope is 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 may be possible to service the commercial properties opposite centred on The Pilot public house.
4. The conversion of the Fairmeadow leg of the Bridge gyratory to two-way operation is 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.
5. 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 is well understood. These are difficult issues with no easy solutions but the County Council is committed to investigating what measures are practical and worthwhile and thereafter seeking to achieve their implementation.

Maidstone Borough Council & Local County Member

12. Discussions have been held with Maidstone Borough Council over recent months and there is an agreed understanding of the realities of the situation and the way forward outlined. Mr Alan Chell, the County Member for Maidstone South, has been consulted and any views received will be reported at the Board meeting.

Finance

13. There are no immediate financial implications. There will need to be consideration of the extent and timing of the capital receipts that will 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.

Property held in Maidstone for Highway Purposes

Recommendation

14. Subject to the view of this Board it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste that:

- i. the proposals outlined above under 'The Way Forward' are approved. This 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.
- ii. 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

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Background Documents: None

Progress Report on Major Capital Projects

A report by the Head of Major Projects to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007.

Introduction

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

Progress

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 is given in the Appendix to this Report. For brevity, only some of the background provided in previous reports is provided with the focus on activity in the last half-year
3. In the last six months, the key achievements and progress milestones have 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 this period have 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.

Progress Report on Major Capital Projects

Conclusion

5. Some of the issues referred to are live and an update will be given at the meeting where necessary.
-

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Scheme Contacts

Kent Thameside *Fastrack* Phase 1 Major Scheme – John Turner

Kent Thameside *Fastrack* Thames Way – John Turner

Kent Thameside *Fastrack*, Everards Link – John Turner

A228 Leybourne and West Malling Bypass – Geoff Cripps

M20 Junction 4 – John Farmer

East Kent Access Phase 1 – Geoff Cripps

East Kent Access – Geoff Cripps

A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link – John Turner

South East Maidstone Strategic Route – John Turner

Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road – John Farmer

Ashford Ring Road – John Farmer

Newtown Road Bridge, Ashford – John Farmer

Rushenden Link Road – Richard Shelton

Eurokent, Thanet – John Farmer

Kent Thameside Fastrack

Phase 1 Major Scheme

The Fastrack Route B operations between Gravesend and Dartford using the scheme continue to be a success with patronage continuing to rise although expected to level off soon. Latest figures for the week commencing 29 January are nearly 37,000 passengers per week.

The Phase 1 Major Schemes works element has been delivered in budget but the overall budget is under threat because some landowners are being successful in obtaining S17 Certificates from the Planning Authority that would have given the land taken for Fastrack development potential and hence increased value in a 'no scheme' world.

Kent Thameside Everards Link Phase 2

Phase 2 will provide a link from the bus interchange at Greenhithe Station through to Ingress Park and eventually Swanscombe Peninsula and will become part of the Fastrack riverside route. The scheme interfaces with S106 obligations by Crest Nicholson as developers of the Ingress Park site. The approved Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) funding is £5.24m.

Everards Link Phase 2 will be a bus-only route with buses every 10 minutes, on a route between Dartford and Gravesend.

Planning permission was formally granted in January 2007.

Two pieces of land are required. The main part of the works sits on land owned by F T Everard and Sons. The funding deadline demands that this land is acquired by agreement and discussions with the owner's agents are underway. A Licence has already been granted to allow extensive Japanese Knotweed to be cleared. The other piece of land, needed to construct the underpass at The Avenue, will be transferred by Crest Nicholson.

Access to the site to clear the Knotweed has revealed that the ground conditions are poorer than expected and in particular that previous use contamination that was understood from the Environment Agency to have been cleared is still present to some extent. Construction tenders are currently being assessed. Subject to the tenders being satisfactory, securing the land and completing the interface legal Agreement with Crest Nicholson, it is hoped that construction can commence in summer 2007.

Thames Way

The scheme will provide dedicated bus-only lanes adjacent to existing carriageway with priority through the junctions between A226 Overcliffe towards Ebbsfleet Station. The approved CIF funding is £8m.

SEEDA is in receipt of funding in connection with the HST4i initiative aimed at improving access to the European high speed train network. The County Council is a partner with SEEDA and has been allocated €3,000,000 of European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) which will provide further funding support towards the Fastrack public transport access improvements.

As well as satisfying the CIF time constraints, the ERDF funding suggests that the scheme should be completed in time for a new bus service to run between Gravesend and Dartford via the Ebbsfleet International and Domestic Station from its opening day, in November 2007.

A contract has recently been awarded to Fitzpatrick Contractors Ltd (who also did the Fastrack Phase 1 Major Scheme) and work is likely to commence in mid March.

A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass

The Bypass was opened on 18 October 2006 by the Leader of the County Council.

Final completion works have taken longer than hoped and there have been some teething problems with traffic while M20 Junction 4 was still under construction. Whilst traffic signal timings are being optimised in advance of the associated traffic calming works, further fine tuning will be required.

Procedures for the traffic calming works are taking longer to finalise than had been hoped. This in part was due to the Police response to the consultation prior to publication of Traffic Regulation Orders and wanting to keep Castle Way available as a diversion route if a problem occurred on the Bypass. This has now been resolved and the final proposals for the traffic calming and the Traffic Regulation Orders are being progressed. A Report and any objections to the TRO will be taken to the Tonbridge & Malling Joint Board meeting in March. Subject to a satisfactory outcome it is hoped that work on the traffic calming can start during April. The work will be undertaken by Ringway under the Alliance term contract.

The Station Link to West Malling Station opened on 25 November 2006 and is already proving popular for the permitted users of buses, taxis, cyclists and as a 'kiss & ride' facility. CCTV and interactive signs are being installed to try and minimise abuse of the connection and satisfy the planning obligation of not creating a rat run between West Malling and the Bypass.

The connection to the Station Access and associated user rights is operating under a 1 year Licence from Network Rail. Network Rail is being slow to translate this into a Permanent Easement. The matter is being taken up at the highest level within Network Rail and the Department of Transport. As a fall back position a separate Report to this Board will seek authority to use Compulsory Purchase powers.

When the traffic calming works are completed and use of the overall network has stabilised a programme of monitoring will be implemented to assess the effectiveness of the traffic management measures and the Bypass.

M20 Junction 4

The County Council is facilitating the improvements on behalf of the developers of Kings Hill Phase 2, Holborough and Leybourne Grange in fulfilment of their planning obligations to the Highways Agency. The works involve widening the western overbridge and improvement to all four slip roads.

The improvement works were substantially completed on 22 December when the widened bridge came fully into use and all traffic management was removed from both the M20 and A228.

Remaining works have been completed and in particular the traffic signals on the A228/Junction 4 gyratory were fully commissioned at the end of January.

East Kent Access – Phase 1

Full Acceptance of LTP funding was approved by DfT in July 2005 and construction of Phase 1C started in September, 2005.

All the complexity is at Stonar Cut where the scheme requires a replacement sluice, major Southern Water and other utility diversions and a new bridge to carry the new south bound carriageway.

The roadworks are largely completed and there have been significant milestone achievements at Stonar Cut. The replacement sluices gates have been completed, commissioned and handed over to the Environment Agency. The major diversion to Southern Water apparatus has been completed successfully within the specified 6 hour close down period to prevent loss of supply to Thanet. A cycle/footbridge has been lifted out of place to allow the construction of the road bridge which is now underway.

The scheme remains on programme for completion in Autumn 2007.

A separate Report to this Board explains the reasons for not proceeding with the High Occupancy Vehicle lane proposals which were part of the original scheme concept in 1999.

East Kent Access – Phase 2

Government indicated its intent in principle to fund the £64m cost when Programme Entry status was approved in July 2006.

Following Programme Entry and to give confidence in their intended funding, the Department of Transport require to be satisfied that appropriate project management, quality assurance, Gateway review, risk management and procurement strategies are in place. A submission was made and following an interrogation at an Inception Meeting in November, the Department of Transport gave a very positive response of satisfaction, stating that the information provided was the best they had seen from around 16 inception meetings thus far around the country.

The scheme formally achieved planning consent in September 2006 when the Secretary of State confirmed that the application would not be called in for a Planning Inquiry.

The statutory Orders were published in October. There are objections to the Orders which is inevitable for a major greenfield scheme of this extent and the Secretary of State has announced his intention to hold a Public Inquiry commencing on 17 April 2007.

Subject to a satisfactory outcome to the Public Inquiry and Government giving Full Acceptance to the funding the earliest start of construction would be during 2008/09. The first year of activity will be mainly archaeological investigation and environmental mitigation measures.

To progress the scheme during 2007/08 some £60,000 is needed from the Forward Design budget.

A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link

Although a priority in the County Council's Local Transport Plan the scheme was not accepted for funding in the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) for 2006-2011 and it is also not in the indicative list of schemes that might be funded in the remaining RFA years of 2009/10 – 2015/16. SEERA intends to seek further advice on schemes for possible funding from 2011/12 and the Strategy Team continue to put the best case forward.

No further work is being done on the scheme other than providing input required to support any further submission to SEERA.

South East Maidstone Strategic Route

As reported previously the Leeds & Langley Bypass is unlikely to be a candidate for funding in its present form and preliminary discussions have been held with Maidstone Borough Council on a more locally strategic route, informally known as South East Maidstone Strategic Route (SEMSR).

The scheme is flagged up in the LTP as a contender for construction in the LTP(3) period of 2011-2016.

Any further feasibility work at the moment is premature and requires the outcome from the Local Development Framework, the Core Strategy of which has just been published by Maidstone Borough Council for public consultation.

Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road

The scheme formally achieved planning consent in September when the Secretary of State confirmed that he would not call the application in and hold a Planning Inquiry.

Although the Sustainable Communities funding end date of March 2006 has passed, the Department of Communities and Local Government have agreed to continue funding the preparation costs during 2006/7 and 2007/08. They can make no guarantees that the residue of their element of the capital funding will still be available and a further bid for this funding will need to be made.

The statutory Orders were published in February 2007. There will be objections to the Orders which was expected because it was known that the private sector was strongly opposed to the route and the boating community was opposed to a fixed bridge crossing of Milton Creek.

The Secretary of State will certainly give instructions for a Public Inquiry that would probably be held in late Summer 2007. Although objections are expected, the formal objections will need to be properly considered and a view taken as to whether the objections can or should be mitigated in any way.

Subject to a satisfactory outcome to the Public Inquiry and Government giving Full Acceptance to the LTP funding stream of £29m and acceptance of a new bid for the residue of the £10.4m Sustainable Communities funding, the earliest start of construction would be during 2008/09.

Ashford Schemes

Ashford Ring Road Transformation

A comprehensive Report on the Ring Road scheme was submitted to the November meeting of the Board. The scheme is supported by £8.3m of Growth Area funding and some £3.0m of other public and private sector contributions.

The works to convert Station Road, Wellesley Road and North Street in the west and north west sector of the Ring Road to two-way operation commenced in January and are being undertaken by Ringway under the Alliance term contract.

Traffic management is essential to provide room for construction plant and safety for both drivers and the workforce and some disruption is unfortunately inevitable. There have been some initial problems when peak hour delays have been particularly long but action has been taken so that the situation was improved the following day. Any work within the town centre is bound to cause delays but every effort will be made to give as much notice of traffic management changes beforehand by signage, news to the local radio and notice in the local press. A monthly liaison forum has also been set up with representatives of the local community.

This first stage will be completed in June and once the Tour de France has passed through the main contract for the rest of the Ring Road including the innovative shared space concepts along Elwick Road and West Street including the Bank Street improvements, will be able to start.

Newtown Road Rail Bridge

The scheme is to replace the deck carrying the railway, lower the road and gain width so that increased headroom is available for a future high quality Smartlink bus service and to provide a better and less oppressive route for pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme has £3m Growth Area funding.

Considerable progress is being made with Network Rail who are leading on the bridge design and whose consultant's are expert on the innovative thin deck construction that is required. Track possessions have now been booked and construction is programmed to start in November 2007 until May 2008.

Rushenden Relief Road

The County Council is progressing this scheme on behalf of and at the request of SEEDA.

The scheme design has been developed and an Environmental Impact Assessment produced to support the planning application that was submitted in December.

The detailed design and contract documentation is being prepared and subject to receiving planning consent and SEEDA securing the land it is hoped that tenders will be invited during May.

This remains a challenging scheme in the sense of the interface with adjacent development and the involvement of Network Rail. The delayed and reduced funding offer of £9m from DCLG with approval to reallocate £3m of previous support to SEEDA has also imposed a restraint but a forthcoming meeting with DCLG will hopefully clarify and give some flexibility.

The County Council and SEEDA continue to work in partnership to deliver this important regeneration infrastructure scheme for Sheppey.

Eurokent Thanet

In partnership with Thanet District Council (TDC) and SEEDA, the County Council is looking to construct the access road at Eurokent business park to facilitate early job creation. Subject to funding being available and appropriate agreements being in place, the intention is that the County Council would fund the gap in the construction costs in return for an interest in some of the land held by Thanet District Council.

Detailed design is being progressed and Environment Studies produced to support the detailed planning application that was submitted to Thanet District Council in December.

The detailed design and contract documentation is being prepared and subject to receiving planning consent and funding arrangements being in place it is hoped that tenders will be invited during May.

Greenhithe Station

The upgrade of the Station was to be funded from the borrowing approvals given by Government in connection with the retention of tolls on the Dartford crossing.

Considerable progress was being made but Network Rail has been informed that the County Council is unable to proceed. This is because the Government's abolition of the capital adjustment in the general grant floor means that authorities, like the County Council, who are on the 'floor' will not obtain any additional revenue grant towards meeting the capital financing charges arising from Government supported borrowing approvals in 2006/07.

Greenhithe Station is a key transport node within Kent Thameside and much in need of improvement. However, for the upgrade to proceed it will either require Government to provide direct grant as was the expectation when Dartford toll funding was first mooted or for Network Rail to fund.

A2 Canterbury Slip Roads

The existing junctions do not cater for all movements causing a high degree of unnecessary congestion in Canterbury and around the ring road. The LTP2 identifies the future provision of the missing slip roads as a potential scheme for LTP3.

Outline design, traffic assessment and feasibility work is nearly completed and this will inform the future of the scheme and funding opportunities. It is possible that one of the slip roads at Wincheap could be funded from the Integrated Transport funding stream and the scheme is being designed on this basis. However, implementation will also require the approval of the Highways Agency to the principle of slip roads, resolution of the overall funding and the specifics of the Wincheap scheme.

Land Matters

Property and Land Held for Highway Purposes

Property is held for future highway schemes. Most of these were acquired many years ago and in the main are held at Tonbridge for the London Road – Hadlow Road Link and in Upper Stone Street in Maidstone for its potential widening. Some £5m of asset is held and its condition is of increasing concern. Many ad-hoc parcels of land and several properties are also held.

The need to retain this land is being robustly reassessed in support of the corporate initiative to realise capital receipts from tied up assets so that they can be better directed at services and more immediate and deliverable projects in support of T2010 objectives.

Land Compensation Act Part 1 Claims (LCAPart1)

The only current substantive activity is for South Thames-side Development Route – Stage 4 and settlement of claims is close to completion.

Claims continue to be handled in respect of S278 schemes where developers indemnify the County Council for any liability.

Land Acquisition

In the September Report to this Board I referred to the major claim by London & Continental Railways/Union Railways North against the County Council in connection with South Thames-side Development Route Stage 4. The claimant has elected to make reference to the Lands Tribunal where previously they had pursued it as an insurance claim and the effect is that it reverts to the County Council to defend the claim rather than the insurers and this has significant resource implications.

A Directions Hearing was held in January 2007 for the Tribunal to give Directions for the conduct of the Hearing itself which will be held sometime between September and December 2007.

The intent is for the Hearing to consider Preliminary Issues and this relates to whether the claimants had an interest in the land and if so the nature of that interest and if that interest was a compensatable interest and if so, the extent of that compensatable interest. The County Council is robustly defending this claim.

Other

A claim has also been made by a Developer that an obligation on the County Council to commence a junction improvement by 31 December 1994 was not fulfilled and that a contribution of £150,000 that with interest would now amount to approaching £500,000 should be returned. Why this claim should be made now some 12 years after the event and just within the Statute of Limitations period is uncertain. The claim is being robustly defended and will go to Court if the claimant does not withdraw following the evidence provided.

East Kent Access – Phase 1

A report by the Head of Major Projects to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007.

Introduction

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. This Report recommends that HOV lanes are not implemented. See Fig.1 for general location plan.
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.
3. These objectives are important but the practical aspects of introducing HOV lanes also need to be considered.
4. These issues were brought before this 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, this 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.
5. The DfT has 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 are benefits claimed and the Department would like to encourage more schemes, the fundamental problems of introducing HOV lanes on East Kent Access remain.

Location

6. The three HOV sites in the UK are essentially congested urban routes. East Kent Access Phase 1 is a rural route that by the nature of the improvements will not have capacity constraints on opening – car sharers and buses will therefore gain little advantage over normal traffic through use of a HOV lane.
7. Officers visited a site in Leeds, Yorkshire in 2005. This is a radial route with traffic predominantly heading straight for the city centre with little side traffic and traffic signals that allow HOV and normal traffic to proceed alternately at the end of the HOV section.
8. Phase 1B and 1C has 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 are 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 these sites and all the difficulties associated with slowing and conflicting movements. A HOV lane occupying the outside lane is less conventional, and would need DfT consultation because of the added signing and enforcement issues, and would have similar problems as traffic exits 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.

Safety

9. 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 is a tendency for traffic to align itself in convoy fashion depending on whether it will be going left or straight on.
10. HOV lanes operate at peak periods only and it can be envisaged that there may be confusion for drivers as to the legitimacy of being or not being in a HOV lane. They do not have to be peak only but the UK sites operate this way and would be totally unnecessary if operated in the non-peak periods – some 20 out of every 24 hours.

Signing and Road Markings

11. HOV arrangements will require extra signing and road markings at a time when efforts are being made to reduce overall road clutter.

Enforcement

12. With the HOV on the conventional nearside lane it may be difficult for drivers to avoid encroachment as they slow to turn into or exit accesses unless the HOV is terminated well in advance of the access or restarted well beyond.
13. Leeds have 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 suggests this is still the case. It will be many years before a reliable approved system is available.
14. Unlike bus lanes there are currently no enforcement powers for HOV lanes. In Leeds, they have a special arrangement with the Police and enforcement is limited to a few hours a month funded by the City Council. This is augmented by City Council staff who periodically note the details of violating vehicles who then receive warning letters in the names of both the Police and the City Council. Leeds has a violation rate of approximately 10%
15. Even such occasional enforcement is not practical in Kent where there are more pressing service delivery, financial, and resource priorities within both the Police and Kent Highway Services.

Local Community Views

16. 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

East Kent Access – Phase 1

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 is no reason to suggest that these views will be any different now.

Conclusion

17. The intention to include HOV lanes within the East Kent Access Phase 1 was and remains 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 does not lend itself to the introduction of HOV lanes. Congested urban radial routes into town centres with traffic signal control are the obvious candidates and there would probably be several other more appropriate locations in Kent to pilot this concept. In the two years since reporting to this Board, there have been no new schemes implemented in the UK and the recent Traffic Advisory Leaflet does not really advance our knowledge and the fundamental difficulties of enforcement remain.

Finance

18. East Kent Access Phase 1 is funded by Government through the Local Transport Plan. The Department of Transport has been advised of the issues above and that it is being recommended that HOV lanes are not implemented at the present time.

Recommendation

19. Subject to the views of this Board, it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that:
 - (i) Phase 1C together with Phase 1B should be operated as a conventional dual carriageway without High Occupancy Vehicle lanes;
 - ii) any consideration of introducing HOV lanes should be deferred until UK experience and further DfT guidance can offer a solution to the particular difficulties associated with introducing HOV lanes along East Kent Access Phase 1B & 1C and until robust remote monitoring and enforcement regimes are available.

Contact Officer: John Farmer (01622) 696881

Background Documents: None

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A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass

A report by the Head of Major Projects to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007

Introduction

1. As part of the recently completed A228 Leybourne and West Malling Bypass a new Link Road has been provided to West Malling Station. See Fig 1 attached. This required Network Rail's agreement to make the physical connection to their existing Station Access Road together with the granting of rights for this connection to be used by buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians. Full access for all traffic is not intended as the objective and planning requirement is 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.
3. The Licence was completed although it took about five months for what is a simple document. I am now trying to progress the Permanent Easement but Network Rail is putting up obstacles. While Network Rail responses imply continued agreement in principle, they say internal consultation process may raise objections and they can give no timetable for completing the Permanent Easement.
4. The delay is understood to be related primarily to a concern within South East Trains who lease 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 is required to serve existing pedestrians and those using both the bus and the kiss and ride facilities. It is required regardless of whether the private developer decides to progress the proposal for an additional car-park. Clearly that decision rests solely with the private developer and although both the County Council and the Borough Council support the provision of additional parking, whether or not this is provided is outside the control of the County Council.
5. Even if this was not the case, I consider it 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 will 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 need to be addressed to meet sustainability issues from the increasing demands of new development in the A228 corridor. Any additional parking for station users will reduce the current illegal over spill parking and will assist in reducing long distance commuting by car.
6. The Chief Executive of Network Rail is being lobbied by both the County Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council to give unequivocal confirmation that a Permanent Easement will be granted and that this will be progressed quickly to a defined completion date.

A228 Leybourne & West Malling Bypass

7. At the time of drafting this Report no reply has been received. While I still hope that Network Rail will give the assurances provided, experience does 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 I hope this does 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 does at least give measure of backstop time certainty provided of course that the Secretary of State was minded to confirm the Order.

Financial Aspects

8. The costs of promoting this one plot a Compulsory Purchase Order are not high and will be met from the current Bypass budget allocation.

Recommendation

9. Subject to the views of this Board, it is proposed to recommend 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 is 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.

Contact Officer: John Farmer (01622) 696881

Background Documents: None

Fees & Charges for 2007/08

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007

Introduction

1. This report seeks 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) provides the power for charging for discretionary services but also stipulates that local authorities may only cover their reasonable costs in providing such services.
2. The main source of income is from developers who are 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.
3. The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 [RASWA] and subsequent regulations determines charges for sample inspections, defects, licences, etc but the Road Safety team also provides a range of services, including cycle and minibus driver training for which a charge is made either to individuals or other departments and organisations.
4. Our fees have been set to reflect the actual cost of the service and in most cases, these are rounded up to the nearest £5.00 but an attempt has also been made to standardise charges for similar services. Some charges which are statutory and for which there is no local discretion have not have been included in the tables appended.
5. As part of the Transformation process, Kent Highway Services is 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 will be brought to the Highways Advisory Board if this is the case.
6. The proposed new fees and charges for 2007/08 are set out in the Appendices.

Highway Definition, Licences and Other Admin Services [Appendix 1]

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

Fees & Charges for 2007/08

8. 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 have elected to respond to the highway CON29 questions themselves using information supplied to them by KHS. These charges are due to be increased to reflect increased staff costs; it should be noted that the district councils make a 10% handling charge to the initiator of the search but KHS will seek payment of the amount shown in the table.
9. 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 is used to offset divisional costs in overseeing the safe positioning of these items on the highway including enforcement action where necessary. The current charge is £10 per 2 weeks but this charge has proved insufficient to cover the costs of checking proposed sites and administering the system. Most of these permits are only required for a few days and it is therefore recommended that the charge is increased to £15 per week. Making the permit valid for only one week will marginally increase admin costs but help to ensure that the skips, scaffolding, etc are placed on the highway for no longer than absolutely necessary. The permit is recharged via the skip companies so this rise will only equate to a small increase in the overall hire charge. There are no changes proposed for vehicle crossings as these are determined by RASWA regulations.

Developer Funded Highway Schemes [Appendix 1 & 2]

10. The main source of developer fees is 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 are also charges for supervision and fixed consultancy fees for advice to developers re alterations to the existing highway under S278 of the Act.
11. In addition commuted sums are sought wherever there is an ongoing maintenance cost relating directly to the new infrastructure [e.g. for maintaining new traffic signals or inspecting structures]. These charges are all under review, in particular whether the 8% fee is sufficient to cover all the KHS costs relating to new estate road schemes; meanwhile 3% cost of living increases are recommended for S278 and commuted sums and some minor modifications are recommended to the period over which inspection and maintenance costs are assessed. The commuted sums for certain specified other items have been adjusted to reflect current maintenance costs over a 10 year period.

Road Safety [Appendix 1]

12. Cyclist training is offered to Year 6 children through their primary school. Currently the Road Safety team provides cycle training for around 7,000 children per annum; approximately 43% of the total year group across the county.
13. 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 is proposed to increase this charge to £15 from September 2007 with the aim of restoring a break even situation within two years.

Fees & Charges for 2007/08

14. The Road Safety team provides minibus driver courses and reassessment [every 3 years] for KCC drivers and a small increase to the fee is proposed in line with wage cost increases. It is recommended that these fees are increased to £110 and £30 respectively.
15. Theatre in Education is a valuable activity that delivers key road safety messages to students in an innovative and exciting way. Annually the Road Safety team organises performances for year 12/13 students with a focus on driving issues including anti-drink drive and anti-drug drive. The team subsidises this for participating schools which allows greater coverage within the available budget. It is recommended that the proportion of the subsidy should remain at the current level.
16. The Road Safety team provides monitoring and training functions for the School Crossing Patrol service managed by Children, Families and Education Directorate. This is arranged through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The current level of SLA income covers existing costs and so the charge for this remains unchanged.
17. The National Driver Improvement Scheme (NDIS) and Speed Awareness course are administered by the Road Safety team as the service provider for Kent Police. These schemes must be totally self-financing; no excess income can be generated for KCC. Small fee increases are recommended to ensure that the costs of running the schemes can continue to be met without the need for a subsidy.

Conclusion

18. Subject to the views of the Board the proposed Fees & Charges for 2007/08 as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 will be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste for implementation with effect from 1 April 2007.

Accountable Officers: James Whitehorn [Resources & Development] - 01622 798369
Steve Horton [Road Safety] - 01622 221025

Background Documents: None

Fees & Charges for 2007/08 – Current and Proposed KHS Fees
Appendix 1

ITEM	CURRENT FEE FOR 2006/07	PROPOSED FEE FOR 2007/08	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER
Highway Definition – Response to written or tel. enquiry from the public, solicitors, developers, district or parish councils re the highway boundary	£30	£35	Matthew Sims
Supplying plan to solicitors including an extract from the Definitive Map	£30	£35	Matthew Sims
Land Charge Searches - CON 29			
Self-service by a district council	No charge	No charge	
Part 1 enquiry answered by KHS	£10	£12	Matthew Sims
Part 2 per additional answer by KHS	£5	£6	
[Note: additional 10% handling fee is charged by the district for Part 1 & 2]			
Land Charges – Personal Searches			
Up to 4 questions per site	£30	£35	Matthew Sims
Each additional question	£5	£5	
Approved Highway Schemes –			
Information supplied, eg Board report	£31	£35	Lloyd Holliday
Copy of complete Scheme Drawings per plan supplied	£31 [coloured] £25 [black & white]	£30	Lloyd Holliday
Copy of extract from Scheme Drawings per plan supplied [up to max A3]	£15	£20	Lloyd Holliday
Gazetteer: un-collated copy per district	£21	£25	
Gazetteer: collated copy per district	£29	£30	Lloyd Holliday
Photocopies of KHS documents or files for information: Staff time	£6.00 per 10 mins	£35 per hour	Caroline Bruce
Plus cost of photocopies	+10p per copy [minimum charge £5]	+ 10p per copy [minimum charge £10]	
Approved Strategies & Policies			
Printed copies of (cycling, walking, bus, maintenance plan, pavement design guide etc) for highway consultants	£21 each	£25 each	David Hall
	CURRENT FEE		ACCOUNTABLE

Fees & Charges for 2007/08 [Appendix 1 - continued]	FOR 2006/07	PROPOSED FEE FOR 2007/08	MANAGER
ITEM			
Highways Act S278 work. Admin charge for review of independent road safety audit [provided by the developer] for developer funded highway works.	£360	£375	Alan Ash
S278 fixed consultancy fee for advice to developer based on scheme value:			
£0 - £50,000	£0	£2,000	Alan Ash
£50,001 - £250,000	£3,800	£4,000	Alan Ash
£250,001 - £1,000,000	£8,300	£8,600	Alan Ash
S278 fee for project management, design checks & site inspections	Actual KHS costs	Actual costs incurred by KHS	Alan Ash
Tourism Signposting			
Application fee	£150	£155	David Hall
	+ Actual KHS costs	+ Actual costs incurred by KHS	
Crash database information supplied to highway consultants/businesses			
3 year history of crashes at a location:-	£80	£85	Ian Procter
5 year history of crashes at a location:-	£155	£160	
Note; there is no charge to members of the public/parish/district councils	(Excluding VAT)	(Excluding VAT)	
Traffic Count database information for private consultants/companies			
Manual count data	Individually assessed	Individually assessed	Mick Sutch
Automatic count data cost per week of information	Individually assessed	Individually assessed	Mick Sutch
[Note: there is no charge to members of the public/parish/district councils]			
Stopping Up Orders for Third Parties	Individually assessed	Actual costs incurred by KHS	John Farmer
Pavement Licence for refreshment facilities with tables & chairs on the highway. Advertising costs are extra.	£115 per annum + £21 if defect found	£115 per annum + £21 if defect found	Lloyd Holliday
Permit for Skip, Scaffolding, Hoarding or Materials stored on the highway	£10 per 2 weeks	£15 per week	Lloyd Holliday
Vehicle Crossing over the footway			
Inspection fee [set by RASWA regs]	£63	£63	Lloyd Holliday
Admin fee [set by RASWA regs]	£115	£115	

Fees & Charges for 2007/08 [Appendix 1 - continued] ITEM	CURRENT FEE FOR 2006/07	PROPOSED FEE FOR 2007/08	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER
Cycling Proficiency Training Charges in this case are set for academic rather than financial year	£10 [from Sept 06]	£10 until Aug 07 £15 from Sept 07	Ian Procter
National Driver Improvement Scheme Self-financing scheme provided for Kent Police	£175	£180	Ian Procter
Speed Awareness Course Self-financing scheme provided for Kent Police	£111	£115	Ian Procter
Minibus Driver Training Internal KCC charge per driver	£103	£110	Ian Procter
Minibus Driver Reassessment Internal KCC charge per driver	£27.50	£30	Ian Procter
School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Internal SLA with KCC Education for training and monitoring SCP	£22,040	£22,040	Ian Procter
Theatres in Education Charge to school for performance – approx £250 per performance	50% of cost	50% of cost	Ian Procter

ITEM		
	2006/07	2007/08
Structures	Cost of inspection, maintenance and commuted sum for eventual replacement in 120 years. Amount determined on a scheme specific basis.	Cost of inspection, maintenance and commuted sum for eventual replacement in 120 years. Amount determined on a scheme specific basis.
Soakaways (where smaller than structure definition)	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years.	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years
Basic commuted sum factored by 1.5 to 3.0 depending on type, complexity and location	Commuted sum of £4,500 per soakaway	Commuted sum of £4,600 per soakaway
Structural Soakaways	Additional commuted sum for replacement cost	Additional commuted sum for replacement cost
Traffic Signals	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years: £52,000 per traffic signal junction £26,000 per pelican crossing	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years: £54,000 per traffic signal junction £27,000 per pelican crossing
Other traffic/signage system equipment eg.illuminated signs, variable message signs, interactive speed signs, public transport real time inf. etc.	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years; amount determined on a scheme specific basis	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years; amount determined on a scheme specific basis
Landscaping	Costs of inspection and maintenance over 15 years; amount determined on a specific scheme basis	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 15 years; amount determined on a scheme specific basis
Street Lighting	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 25 years but only if non standard higher cost equipment is accepted and installed.	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 25 years but only if non standard higher cost equipment is accepted and installed.
Approved Consultants List	Standard charge of £250 to assess a consultant who wishes to be on the list	Standard charge of £260 to assess a consultant who wishes to be on the list
Approval, Audit and Inspection of consultants' projects during construction	Staff costs recharged to developers at hourly rates	Staff costs recharged to developers at hourly rates
Non-standard or enhanced surfacing & street furniture	Only seek commuted sums if non standard higher cost maintenance materials accepted and installed. Amount determined on a specific scheme basis	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 25 years for non standard higher cost materials; amount determined on a scheme specific basis
Other items: On Bus Transponder Unit Real time information Sign Junction Priority Receiver LED Variable Message Sign Prism Variable Message Sign CCTV Camera Automatic Rising Bollard	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 5 years: £7,500 per unit £11,500 per sign £4,500 per receiver £17,500 per sign £15,000 per sign £35,000 per camera £80,000 per bollard	Cost of inspection and maintenance over 10 years: £7,800 £11,800 £3,000 £18,100 £10,000 £23,000 £164,000

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Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 6th March 2007

Introduction

1. This report presents 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 below shows how the Highway Maintenance Budget has been derived taking the total Revenue and Capital budgets for Kent Highway Services as the starting point. It shows that the maintenance works budget has increased by £5.154m compared with 2006/07.

Table 1 – Total KHS Budget for 2007/08

	Revenue (£000s)	Capital (£000s)	Total (£000s)	Change from 2006/07 (£000s)
Total KHS Input Budgets [excl. 22,350 for new accommodation]	50,999	37,260	88,259	+6,913
Countywide Running Costs	13,761	3,187	16,948	-1,405
Remainder for Countywide Programmes and Maintenance	37,238	34,073	71,311	+8,318
Countywide Programmes including 2010 Targets	13,589	9,321	22,910	+3,164
Remainder for Highway Maintenance	23,649	24,752	48,401	+5,154

2. The countywide programmes in Table 1 include an additional sum of £1.505m for Targeted Highway Works. This has only very recently been allocated and it has been treated as a top-slice for the purposes of this report and has not yet been distributed to the relevant maintenance or improvements budget heads pending further consideration of detailed works proposals. However it is intended to use these 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 our 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

Framework for Budget Allocations

3. The "Highway Maintenance Budget Model" Report to Highways Advisory Board on 10 January 2006 described how the budget model has been developed for distributing the 2006/07 highways budget. The report recommended that:
 - Allocations for highway assets in 2006/07 are based on a relative assessment of their degree of depreciation
 - Allocations to the Divisions in 2006/07 are based upon an assessment of the size and condition of their networks.

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

Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

The Budget Process

4. The Budget Model follows a process that:

- Sets out the revenue and capital budgets available for highway maintenance,
- Separates out the budget necessary for both central and divisional Operational maintenance (works that include safety repairs and routine maintenance such as gully emptying)
- Determines the remaining budget available for Repairs (works that maintain the structural integrity of the network)
- Allocates the Repairs budget between the various highway assets and
- Finally allocates Operations and Repairs budgets to the Divisions.

Highway Maintenance Revenue and Capital Budgets

5. The gross highway revenue and capital budgets are set out in table 2 below:

Table 2 – Highway Maintenance Revenue & Capital Works Budgets for 2007/08

	Revenue (£000's)	Capital (£000's)	Total (£000's)	Change from 2006/07 (£000's)
Maintenance Budget	23,649	24,752	48,401	+5,154

Separating Out Operational Maintenance

6. The next stage in the budget process is 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 these budgets, an 8% allowance for contract inflation has been included to maintain the current minimum level of Operational maintenance. Separating out the budgets for Operational maintenance from the maintenance budget determines the budget available for Repairs. The Operational maintenance budgets and remaining budget available for Repairs are summarised in table 3 below:

Table 3 – Operational Maintenance & Repairs Budgets for 2007/08.

	Revenue (£000's)	Capital (£000's)	Total (£000's)	Change from 2006/07 (£000's)
Central Operational Maint. (includes structures and ITS)	9,372	2,300	11,672	+4,069
Divisional Operational Maintenance	10,833		10,833	+214
Total Operational Maintenance	20,205	2,300	22,505	+4,283
Total Budget for Maintenance (from Table 2)	23,649	24,752	48,401	+5,154
Remainder Available for Repairs	3,445	22,452	25,897	+872

7. Table 3 shows that, compared with 2006/07, the budget for Operations has 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 has increased by £872k compared with 2006/07. The Divisional Operational Maintenance Budget of £10.833m is distributed between the work activities and the Divisions as shown in Table 4:

Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

Table 4 – Divisional Operational Maintenance Budgets

Work Activity	West Kent (000s)	Mid Kent (000s)	East Kent (000s)	Totals (000s)
Routine Maintenance [NOMU] Gangs	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
Gully Emptying	525	667	690	1,882
Grass Cutting	540	540	570	1,650
Weed Treatment	97	113	140	350
Tree Inspection and Maintenance	268	206	277	751
Street Lighting	788	808	877	2,473
Illuminated Signs	218	223	286	727
Totals [excludes structures Operations top-sliced under 'Bridges']	3,436	3,557	3,840	10,833

Allocating the Repairs Budget to the Highway Asset Groups

8. The £25.897m Repairs budget consists 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 has 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 allocates 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, is shown in table 5:

Table 5 – Repairs Allocations for all Highway Assets

Asset	Percentage	2007/08 Allocation (£000's)	Change from 2006/07 (000's)
Carriageways	52.5%	12,613	-879
Footways & Cycleways	14.3%	3,435	-232
Drainage	7.4%	1,778	-120
Street Lights	10.6%	2,547	-174
Signs	1.2%	288	-17
Safety Fences	0.6%	144	-13
Road Markings & Studs	1.7%	408	-22
Divisional sub-totals	88.3%	<u>21,213</u>	-1,457
Structures	9.6%	2,307	+516
Intelligent Transport Systems	2.1%	505	-60
Total [excluding LED scheme]	100%	24,024	-1,001

Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

Allocating Budgets to the Divisions

9. The next step is to allocate money to the Divisions. The Budget model does this by assessing relative need of each Division taking a range of factors into account that represent the size and condition of their highway infrastructure. The overall Divisional allocations are shown in table 6:

Table 6 – Divisional Allocations for Maintenance

Budget Type	West Kent (£000's)	Mid Kent (£000's)	East Kent (£000's)	HQ (£000s)	Totals (£000's)
Operations	3,436	3,557	3,840	N/A	10,833
Repairs	6,627	7,574	7,012	N/A	21,213
Divisional sub-totals	10,063	11,131	10,852	N/A	<u>32,046</u>
Central Operational Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A	11,672	11,672
Intelligent Transport Systems (LED)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,873	1,873
Intelligent Transport Systems (Repairs)	N/A	N/A	N/A	505	505
Structures (Repairs)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,305	2,305
Totals	10,063	11,131	10,852	16,355	48,401

Summarising the Highway Maintenance Budget

10. A summary of the resulting financial allocation for maintenance is provided in table 7:

Table 7 – Summary of Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

Asset Group	Operations		Repairs		Totals
	Revenue (£000's)	Capital (£000s)	Revenue (£000's)	Capital (£000's)	(£000's)
Central Costs [see note below]	9,372	2,300	N/A	N/A	11,672
Carriageways [patching & resurfacing]	0	0	1,768	10,845	12,613
Footways [Includes weed spray]	350	0	480	2,955	3,785
Drainage [gullies and pipes]	1,882	0	0	1,778	3,660
Vegetation [grass cutting & trees]	2,401	0	N/A	N/A	2,401
Aids to Movement [lights, signs, fences, markings and LED]	3,199	0	743	5,023	8,965
Structures [but excl. Bridges Ops]	0	0	454	1,851	2,305
NOMU Gangs [all asset groups]	3,000	0	N/A	N/A	3,000
Totals for 2007/08	20,204	2,300	3,445	22,452	48,401
Totals for 2006/07	18,222	0	2,527	22,498	43,247

Highway Maintenance Budget for 2007/08

11. Unlike the current year when Ringway divisional overheads had to be funded from the works allocations, in 2007/08 the central costs for Operations includes £4.3m of Ringway fixed charges – of which £2.3m will be funded from capital. All the other Operations work is funded from Revenue and the unit rates for works items should prove significantly cheaper without this overhead element.
12. It can be seen that there is £23.6m funding from revenue and £24.8m from capital (as per Table 2 above). The grand totals are £22.5m for Operations [46.5%] and £25.9m for Repairs [53.5%]. Compared to the current year, there will be an extra £4.3m for Operations and £0.9m for Repairs in 2007/08.

Future Developments

13. The Budget Model will 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 respond to the demands on the highway asset. Contributions from the Alliance partners are sought in order to further develop the model for allocating budgets over the next ten years.

Conclusion

Subject to the views of this Board, it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that the Highway Maintenance budget is approved as set out in the report.

Accountable Officers: James Whitehorn - 01622 696117 & Barry Gould - 01622 694035

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Transforming Kent Highway Services

A report by the Transformation Programme Director to the Highways Advisory Board on 6th March 2007

Introduction

1. The presentation will update HAB on the current position / progress of the Highway Service in Kent and provide a vision for the future direction.

Changes to date

2. The last 2 years has 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 is to transform this service into a seamless, frontline operation.

3. The Presentation will cover:
 - 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

Conclusion

4. Details of the progress made will be covered in the presentation. The next 18 months will be vital part of the process to transform into a 21st Century Service.
 5. Highways Advisory Board is asked to provide their view and support the direction proposed.
-

Accountable Officer: Kim Hills: 01622 221095

Background Documents: None

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High Speed Dual Carriageway Maintenance Policy

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services to the Highways Advisory Board on 6th March 2007.

Introduction

1. Kent Highway Services maintains 80 kms (50 miles) of high speed dual carriageways across the county, appendix 2 shows the location of these roads. This report proposes a new policy which will enable a standard approach to maintenance and will allow road users to plan their journeys with advanced warning of disruption.

Existing Maintenance Policy

2. The adopted asset maintenance plan details how each part of the highway infrastructure should be maintained and to what frequency. In most cases, these roads are 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 have obligations for cleansing, under the Environmental Protection Act, and in most cases undertake vegetation work on our behalf.
4. The cost of undertaking work on these roads is higher than other roads, mainly due to health and safety considerations for the workforce leading to extensive traffic management (cones and signs etc).
5. Undertaking work in a reactive way can lead to financial inefficiencies and less control over planning work on all parts of the highway.

Proposed Policy

6. The proposed new policy is intended to ensure that routine maintenance is undertaken at set times throughout the year, using planned road or lane closures. This has two benefits, it allows maintenance activities of both KHS and the District Councils to be planned and therefore be cost effective and all-inclusive. It also allows KHS to advertise the work in advance so that the travelling public are informed of the potential for disruption.
7. Appendix 1 details the proposed policy for maintaining our high speed road network.

Conclusion

8. Subject to the views of this Board, it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste that approval is given to adopting the policy in appendix 1 as the method for maintaining our high speed road network.
-

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Background Documents: Appendix 1 – High Speed Dual Carriageway Maintenance Policy
Plan of High Speed Dual Carriageways in Kent – on display

High Speed Dual Carriageway Policy

Inspections

Safety Inspections

- All HSDC are subject to weekly driven inspections.
- Standard HSDC Inspection forms will be used to record defects.
- Defects are assessed to ascertain if they can be repaired at the next planned closure or need to be repaired more quickly.
- Street lighting will be inspected every 2 weeks with night time patrols.

Annual Inspections

- All HSDC will be subject to a joint inspection annually between the inspector, an engineer and a transportation engineer to assess any trends that may impact on road safety. Remediation works will then be planned and prioritised.

Planned Maintenance

- All HSDC will be subject to a 2 or 3 planned visits per year.
- The frequencies and time of year of the visits will be agreed locally and will be dependant on local conditions, volume of traffic and timing of District Council work.
- The dates will be set at the beginning of the financial year in liaison with the relevant District Council(s).
- The dates for road or lane closures will be advertised in the local media, Kent County Council media and District Council Media.
- Budgets for work on HSDC will be identified at the beginning of the financial year

The following planned maintenance will be carried out :-

Asset	Work	Frequency
Signs	Clean all signs Reset or replace	Every planned visit Every planned visit as necessary
Lines	Refresh junction markings Refresh longitudinal markings	Annually Every 3 years
Studs (cats eyes)	Replace missing or damaged	Every planned visit
Safety fencing	Fully Inspection	Annually
Drainage	Gully suck Gully grate/channel clean Pipe run survey	A minimum of annually but more or less frequently based on risk assessment Every planned visit Every 10 years
Vegetation	Weed kill Tree work Grass cutting – safety Grass cutting - amenity	Every planned visit Every planned visit as required Every visit Twice per year or as per district council contract
Street Lighting	Replace Lamps (bulbs) Replace other parts (eg photocells) Repair 'day-burners'	Every planned visit as required Every planned visit as required Every planned visit as required
Structures	Inspection Works	During planned visit as necessary During planned visit if practicle
Cleaning	Sweep central reserve Clean verges	Every visit Every visit

Reactive Maintenance

- If it is considered that specific defects cannot wait for a repair at the next scheduled closure, a repair will be instigated.
- All interested parties will be advised of any reactive lane or road closures to ensure that an other local ad-hoc maintenance is carried out.
- The Asset Maintenance plan states that street lights in the central reserve of high speed roads will be repaired only when 3 lights in succession are out of light or 10% in 1 Kilometre.

Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 6th March 2007

Introduction

1. Public perception of Highway Authorities' control over roadworks is generally predicated on a lack of influence around poor workmanship and traffic delays.
2. This report outlines 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 will encourage a higher standard of works and safety consistently across Kent's roads.

Background

3. The Corporation of London started up the original Considerate Contractor Scheme in 1987.
4. Considerate Contractor Schemes are now recognised by the construction industry. There is also a degree of public recognition and with the introduction of more schemes around the country, this will grow to become a national initiative.
5. Equally important is the approval and support being given by the Tidy Britain Group and the Health and Safety Executive. Both organisations realise that these schemes are a significant step towards furthering broader environmental, health and safety objectives.

The Philosophy

6. The aim of the scheme is to introduce a reward system for high performing contractors who consider 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 induces a spirit of pride and excellence in the workforce.
7. The scheme is also designed to flag up those contractors who are not performing adequately. This will give KCC a better opportunity to monitor the performance of all contractors signed into the scheme and deal with them promptly to improve standards.
8. The scheme will 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.
9. There will be willingness by Utilities and a contractor to be a member of this scheme, as non membership almost shows a "don't care attitude". The winning of a high achievement award can be displayed on company vehicles (sticker) and jealously guarded and contested the following year.

Kent and Medway Objectives

10. The Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme aims 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,

Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme

- Ensuring that anyone using the highway will understand exactly what is happening where works are in progress,
- Give constructive feedback and praise to develop continuous improvement.

How these will be measured

11. The scheme comprises of a Code of Good Practice, which includes the requirements of “Safety at Street Works and Road Works”, using four categories; Safe, Clean, Considerate and Co-operative. Sites are judged against a checklist that takes into account safety, cleanliness, considerate behaviours, co-operation and environmental considerations.
12. It is by following the code of practice that the standards of works will be raised, rates of progress maximised and the condition of the highway will be improved.

Public Participation

13. Members of the public observing works on the highway are invited to comment on the conditions of the site using the Kent Contact Centre. Callers will point out infringements of the Code, but are also encouraged to provide any appropriate feedback.

Staffing

14. The successful operation of this scheme relies upon sufficient site inspections being made. Senior representatives from each of the participating bodies as detailed below will 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
15. A working party will be set up to manage most aspects of the scheme. This includes site inspection, records, award recommendations, correspondence, outline responses, site counselling and co-ordinating public relations activities.

Site Inspections and Records

16. Accurate written site records are essential, as these provide the basis for Awards judgements. Also photographic evidence is essential, especially in the case of sites which fail to meet the correct standards and examples of exemplary practice for the awards ceremony and publicity.

The Awards

17. All sites are judged according to the standards set out in the Code of Good Practice. There are three categories of award:
 - **Gold Award** - Organisations which show a consistent and high degree of compliance with the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
 - **Considerate Contractor** - Organisations which regularly meet the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
 - **Individual Awards** - Companies or operatives that have excelled. This category could also be contractor and gang of the year if merited.

Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme

Judging

18. An adjudicating panel of representatives will be appointed. The panel will include independent members from outside the industry. The panel allocates awards on the basis of this evidence provided by the working party.

Managing the scheme

19. The scheme will be run as cost neutral. An annual joining fee will be charged to the contractor/utility companies. This is to cover the cost of the awards ceremony, the initial supply of information and the in-house resources to run the scheme. There will be a minimal amount of staff time which will be recovered from the scheme.
20. Sufficient site surveys are being undertaken to give meaningful results and there is an existing collation system. The Joint Utilities Group (JUG) representatives and Highways Authority & Utilities Committee (HAUC) representatives will also contribute towards the management of the scheme.
21. Medway Unitary Authority has historically had close links with KCC and discussions are taking place to finalise Medway's involvement with the scheme.

Public Launch

22. The proposal is to launch a Considerate Contractor Scheme in Kent in April of 2007. This will be a high profile launch with the media represented. KCC will benefit publicly for launching such a scheme and we stand to improve public perception of works on our highway and gain safer and cleaner streets as a result.

Accountable Officers:

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The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) – An Update

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 6th March 2007

Introduction

1. This report provides an update on the progress of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) which gained Royal Assent in 2004 and the accompanying Intervention Criteria which may 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. A summary of the key issues set out in the TMA are detailed below. A fuller summary can be seen in Appendix 1 to this report.

Summary of main report

2. The following list is a summary of the main report highlighting the key areas to be aware of:
 - The TMA requires 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 will be reviewed and reported upon every year in line with the reporting process for the LTP.
 - If an authority fails to perform its network management duty, then the Act provides for the Secretary of State and the DfT to intervene and appoint a “Traffic Director”.
 - Permit Schemes are designed to give LA’s further control over works on the highway.
 - Permit Schemes will be designed to run as ‘cost neutral’. Estimated figures indicate that income from a Permit Scheme may run to £2 million per annum
 - Non-refundable cost of managing KHS works through a Permit Scheme will be in the region of £850k per annum.
 - The DfT will give LA’s a six-month period to establish the permit process.
 - KCC do 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) will bring financial penalties to works promoters for incorrect information that adversely affects roadworks co-ordination.
 - The FPN’s will also be applied to local authority roadworks. These penalties will be recorded against performance indicators and will not be a financial restraint.
 - DfT has completed its consultations for the FPN scheme and has indicated that the regulations are expected to come into force during mid - late 2007.
 - The Act requires local authorities to commence the noticing of their own roadworks. This will increase notices by 40% to over 70,000 per annum.
 - Estimated that KHS will require 12 roadwork co-ordinators to manage these notices to ensure the scheme operates to its full potential.
 - It may be possible to improve the processing of notices by investing in technology such as hand held equipment for the Highway Inspectors.
 - DfT has indicated that guidelines for a FPN offence will not be issued and have indicated that legal procedures could be through Magistrates Courts.

Financial Implications

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

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) – An Update

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

Conclusions

5. Until the Regulations pertaining to Permit Schemes and Fixed Penalty Notices have been placed before Parliament, it is not possible to provide exact budget figures. However, from consultation documents released by the DfT and examination of our current procedures, it will be necessary to provide both budget and staff resources if KCC wish to run a Permit Scheme.
6. The introduction of FPN's which are likely to come into force in the Autumn of 2007 will require investment in staff resources. Without this investment, KCC will fail in its Network Management Duties and may face the prospect of Intervention procedures by the Secretary of State and the DfT. Although an income stream will become available to balance out these requirements it is likely that both the workload and the income will 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 can be carried out with regard to their Civil Enforcement operations. This will be essential to prevent KCC being affected with regard to the TMA 2004 and the associated Network Management Duties.
8. Members are 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.

Accountable Officers:

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The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA)

Background

1. The Traffic Management Act gained Royal Assent in July 2004 with the aim of ‘tackling congestion and reducing disruption’ on the road network. The Act contains 7 parts:
 - **Part 1 - Traffic Officers**
 - Part 1 empowers the Secretary of State for Transport, in his capacity as highway authority for Motorways and Trunk Roads to establish an uniformed on road traffic officer service to manage the traffic consequences of random incidents (such as crashes, obstructions, debris and breakdowns). They are also required to manage programmed highway events such as the passage of abnormal loads. The Act provides for the traffic officers to have the powers to stop and direct traffic and to place traffic signs to keep traffic moving.
 - **Part 2 - Network Management Duty by local traffic authorities**
 - Part 2 imposes a duty on all local authorities to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements for planning and carrying out the actions to be taken in performing the duty. If an authority fails to perform its network management duty, then the Act provides for the Department for Transport (DfT) to intervene and appoint a “Traffic Director” in relation to that authority.
 - **Part 3 - Permit Schemes**
 - Part 3 provides for the introduction of a permit scheme. A permit scheme would control specific works in the street in a particular area and would require a permit to be obtained for such works. This would apply to roadworks and streetworks.
 - **Part 4 - Streetworks**
 - Part 4 provides for the change to the regulatory regime for utility companies’ street works. The Act also provides for the increase in levels of fines of specific offences, and provides for highway authorities to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for certain offences.
 - **Part 5 – Highways and Roads**
 - Part 5 only applies to London. It includes the specific measures that alter the arrangements for traffic management in London. These include provisions for the Secretary of State to designate an initial network of strategic roads.
 - **Part 6 - Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions**
 - Part 6 includes powers providing a single framework to make regulations for the civil enforcement by local authorities of parking and waiting restrictions, bus lanes and some moving traffic offences (yellow box junctions and banned turns) including the use of camera evidence.
 - **Part 7 - Miscellaneous and General**
 - Part 7 contains general provisions, including those relating to Blue Badges, for the application of surplus income from parking places, and financial provisions for the establishment of traffic offices.
2. The TMA requires that the whole local authority, not just the highways department, be aware of and take account of the implications of the duty and that the Traffic Manager liaises and co-ordinates with every department within that local authority.

Progress to date

3. Part 1 - The Introduction of Highways Agency Traffic Officers (HATO's)

Part 1 of the Act has already come into force. The Highways Agency has introduced Traffic Officers across the country on the Motorway Network. They are employed to assist the traffic police and motorists with incidents on the Motorway Network. Traffic Officers have been active in the Southeast of England since August 2005.

4. Part 2 - The Network Management Duty

Part 2 of the Act came into force in January 2005. Under this part the Act requires all local traffic authorities to appoint a Traffic Manager. Kent County Council (KCC) has had a Traffic Manager in post since 2004. The current Traffic Manager is Lloyd Holliday.

5. KCC published its Network Management Plan 2006-11 in July 2006 as a guidance framework to the Network Management Duty. This plan compliments the Local Transport Plan 2006-11 and is appended under Annex 1. The Network Management Plan will be reviewed and reported upon every year in line with the reporting process for the LTP.

6. The formal consultation documents for the Intervention criteria, which give the DfT the powers to intervene in a failing authority, have also been returned with these powers expected to come into force early in 2007.

7. Part 3 - Permit Schemes

Permit Schemes are designed to give the local authority further control over all works on the highway. It is intended that local authorities will have powers to direct all roadworks and streetworks with regard to where, when and how they may be carried out, ensuring greater co-ordination and control.

8. The DfT are currently consulting widely on the operation of a Permit Scheme. This consultation is due for return to DfT by 26th February 2007. The DfT have now indicated that the making of these regulations are estimated for mid 2007 with the estimated date of the regulations coming into force late in 2007. KCC has indicated that they wish to run a Permit Scheme.

9. The Permit Scheme will be designed to run at 'cost neutral' so any income received from the utility companies balances the cost of running the scheme for their work but not for our own highway works. KHS must submit permits for their own works in the same manor as the utility works. This is a requirement of the DfT and will have to be included in a Permit Scheme application for approval by the DfT.

10. Although we will have to increase resources to operate the permit scheme during the first year of operations, monies received from the utility companies will be in the order of £2 million per annum. However as some 40% of modifiable works will be our own highway works the non-refundable cost of permitting these will be in the order of £850,000 per annum. This figure will comprise initial staff cost, training and software outlay most of which may be recovered during the first year of operation. However, it is stressed that these figures can only be estimated at the current time, as regulations will dictate new requirements and procedures, which is not possible to place budget figures upon until they are released.

11. A percentage of this estimated cost is the expenditure to 'set up' the scheme with reference to staff resource, software and other set up fees and therefore will not be recovered until the process is fully established. The DfT has indicated that they will give authorities a six-month period to establish the permit process in order that staff may be recruited and trained. This will follow a short lead in period which will allow the software companies time to develop and install the necessary software requirements.

12. It is estimated that in order to run a permit scheme in Kent, a further 30+ members of staff of varying disciplines will be required spread throughout the KHS offices.
13. It must be stressed that the above is only an estimate and that we will be able to justify to the DfT that our permit fees should be charged at the maximum allowable and that all works on all types of roads will require a permit.
14. However, we do have the option to improve the control over works on the highway by developing a more disciplined approach to works informed by EToN noticing system.
15. **Part 4 - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)**
The introduction of FPN's will bring about a system of financial penalties, which can be issued to roadworks and streetworks promoters for failures in their systems that prevent full co-ordination of works on the highway. The process will also be applied to local authority roadworks, although these penalties will be recorded against performance indicators and will not be a financial restraint. The resulting performance records are expected to be transparent, showing complete parity and made fully available to the general public and utilities alike.
16. The DfT has completed their consultations for the FPN scheme and has indicated that the regulations are expected to come into force during mid - late 2007.
17. Currently, the roadworks co-ordination units process approximately 50,000 works notices per annum. Due to limitations of existing staff resources, it is impossible for the existing teams to monitor every notice leading to an inefficient service that does not fully embrace the possible income stream. The TMA requires that local authorities commence the noticing of their own roadworks as soon as possible and therefore the amount of works notices processed by KCC will increase by approximately 40% to over 70,000 works notices per annum. It is estimated that KHS will require 12 full time roadworks co-ordinators (1 per district area) to manage, scrutinise and co-ordinate these notices in order that the necessary Fixed Penalties may be applied and that the scheme operates to its full potential for the issue and collection of these fines.
18. A conservative estimate shows that approximately 5% of notices issued may attract a FPN and that if the scheme is managed precisely, with the correct number of staff resources in place a possible annual income can be calculated at around £640,000. Allowances should be made for the fact that following the initial peak in the issue of penalties, these may decrease, as the promoters become more aware of their duties.
19. It may be possible to improve the processing of notices by investing in technology such as hand held equipment for the Highway Inspectors. The use of this equipment will ensure that the service is run economically and efficiently.
20. The DfT has indicated that guidelines in relation to what will constitute a FPN offence will not be issued and have indicated that legal procedures through Magistrates Courts will decide offences. Therefore, KCC may become involved in test cases, within this procedure. It is hoped that close liaison with other organisations such as Kent Highway Authority & Utilities Committee (KHAUC) and SouthEast Highway Authority & Utilities Committee (SEHAUC) will reduce the use of the legal progress.
21. **Part 5 - Traffic Management in London**
KCC does not participate in Part 5 of the Traffic Management Act
22. **Part 6 - Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contravention's**
The DfT closed the consultation period for this part of the TMA in September 2006 and it is expected that the regulations will come into force Mid 2007.

23. The proposed changes are allied with the Civil Bus lane and moving traffic enforcement which propose to hand responsibility for some moving offences to the Parking Attendants who will become Civil Enforcement Officers.
24. The decriminalisation agreement that currently operates within Kent gives the powers of enforcement and control of the on street parking to the individual District/Borough Authorities. The duties performed by the District/Borough Authorities and their officers will form part of the measurement and reporting procedures required under the TMA. Therefore it is essential that close liaison and communication links are fully maintained with the local authorities and that stringent monitoring procedures are put into place to ensure that the KCC does not get penalised by the DfT for any inefficiencies in performance by the District/Borough Councils.
25. The proposed changes to the current system currently operated within the District/Borough Councils in Kent under a decriminalisation agreement are summarised as follows:
- Authorities may be required to publish 'parking maps' for the general public, along with financial and statistical data.
 - Authorities may be required to regularly review their parking policies in consultation with stakeholders and publish this information for the general public.
 - Authorities may be required to introduce differential penalty charges dependent upon the location of the vehicle therefore issuing a more severe penalty for vehicles parked in areas where parking is permanently banned.
 - Civil Enforcement Officers may be given the discretion to decide when to issue a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).
 - PCN's may be issued by post - specifically those issued for moving offences, which may be captured by automated methods such as cameras.

26. **Part 7 - Miscellaneous Duties**

Part 7 of the TMA is currently under discussion through various working parties and dates for the Regulations to come into force are yet to be released.

Revised Timetable for Implementation of the Traffic Management Act 2004 Regulations.

27. The table below shows the timescale for implementation of the Traffic Management Act regulations.

Wave 1			
	Estimated date for full public consultation	Estimated date of laying regulations /making	Estimated date of regulations coming into force
Guidance on Intervention Criteria	July - September 2006	Late 2006	Early 2007
Notices, Directions and Restrictions		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Fixed Penalty Notices		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Section 74 Over Staying Charges		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Permits	October - December 2006	Mid 2007	Late 2007
Civil Parking Enforcement	July - September 2006	From Early 2007	Mid 2007
Civil Bus lane and moving traffic enforcement	Early-mid 2007	From Late 2007	Early 2008
Inspection of Blue Badges		Mid 2006	Mid-late 2006

Wave 2	
	Working Group commences
Inspections	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Training and Accreditation	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Diversionsary Works	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Records	<i>Late 2007 (TBC)</i>
Highways Act FPNs and Overstaying Charges	<i>Late 2007(TBC)</i>

Wave 3	
	Working Group commences
Resurfacing	TBA
Safety Code	TBA
Qualifications	TBA
Reinstatement Specification	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group

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Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2007/08

A report by the County Transportation Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007

Introduction

1. In December 2006 the County Council received its Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital settlement. Part of this 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 has been determined by the County Council and it was agreed that borrowing should be capped at the level at which the borrowing is supported by additional funds the County Council receives 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 is therefore **£7,239,000**, 23% less than for 06/07.
2. This report details how the IT schemes allocation is proposed to be spent on implementing Kent's Transportation and Safety Package Programme. A summary of these allocations together with County-wide schemes is shown in **Appendix 1**.

Priorities for Funding

3. Under the LTP2 Kent now receives 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 are 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 can 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 has been developed to deliver schemes which will result in a successful LTP.
4. The 2007/08 programme has been developed according to a Design Guide Model (DGM), previously titled BAM, which uses Kent's shared priority objectives to guide the development of schemes. These objective areas and the guide allocation of funds to meet them are: congestion (30%), public transport (25%), road safety (20%), accessibility (20%) and air quality (5%). The proportions have been set in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste. Future programmes are being developed through a scheme prioritisation and delivery monitoring methodology (PIPKIN). BAM and PIPKIN were reported to this Board on 11 July 2006 and were then approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste.

The 2007/08 Programme

5. Ultimately PIPKIN will enable a single prioritised programme of schemes to be developed. The 07/08 programme represents a transition towards this.
6. The Transportation and Safety Package Programme (TSP) is shown in detail in **Appendix 2**. Key elements are as follows:

Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2007/08

- Casualty Reduction Measures - **£1,030,640** is proposed to implement 28 schemes to reduce the severity and number of casualties on Kent's roads. Schemes are assessed against strict casualty reduction criteria and help the Council meet corporate manslaughter obligations. It is estimated that these measures will save some **33** KSIs per year. There are other schemes within the programme which include 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** is 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 is on course for 350 (55%) of its schools with Travel Plans by April 2007 to tackle school run congestion and promote health. The funding will 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 comprise dropped kerbs and have been identified in town centre audits through the Kent Disability Reference Panel. The funds will be used in the Swale area as part of a rolling programme across the county. These schemes help KCC meet nationally set performance indicators and ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.
 - Public Transport Information – **£75,000** to implement capital elements of the Kent Public Transport Information Strategy. This will 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 will 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 have increased bus patronage through a step change in service provision. Bus patronage has a direct impact on Kent's CPA rating and subsequent funding allocations.
7. All the schemes listed in this report will be reported to the appropriate Joint Transportation Boards and all schemes should be disclosed in local land charge searches.

Conclusions

8. A balanced transport system, with good quality travel options for all is essential to combat congestion and counter the negative impacts of traffic growth. The Transportation and Safety Package Programme is 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, will 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 is a high demand for TSP schemes locally. Kent has been commended for delivering these schemes, which have helped achieve increased usage of sustainable modes. Kent CPA rating has improved as a direct consequence of increasing bus patronage and better information.

Recommendations

10. Subject to the views of this Board it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment Transport and Waste that:
 - i) the Transportation and Safety Package Programme allocations shown in Appendix 1 are approved, and
 - ii) the schemes listed in Appendices 1 and 2 are implemented in 2007/08.

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Quality bus services in Tunbridge Wells

A report by the Mid Kent Divisional Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007

Introduction

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.
3. This was rejected and Members recommended that the original recommendation made at the April 2006 Joint Board be upheld.
4. It is important to mention that the existing section of bus lane between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road is 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 is, 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.
5. The decision will work against the spirit of the free travel pilot for 11-16 year olds due to be launched in June of this year.

Background

6. The County Council's Local Transport Plan clearly sets 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 these modes will widen choice for Kent residents and reduce social exclusion for those who do not have access to a car. KCC's policy is to work with partners to improve the reliability and quality of local bus services.
7. Better public transport is absolutely essential to tackling 3 of the 4 shared priorities – **accessibility, congestion and pollution**. The County Council's overarching objective for local bus services is 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 contributes to the County Council's CPA rating and has been a significant factor in the excellent rating of our Local Transport Plan delivery report.
8. Approximately 80% of bus services across Kent are provided on a commercial basis without financial support from the County Council, although the County Council spends over £7 million on supporting socially necessary services.

Quality bus services in Tunbridge Wells

9. In partnership with operators and local District Councils, Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP) have been developed across Kent in Ashford, Canterbury, Maidstone and Thanet. QBPs have provided a structured approach which has enabled all organisations to work together successfully towards the objective of increasing bus patronage and reliability. This has 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 has benefited from this approach has achieved a 20% increase in patronage during its first 12 months of operation.
10. The County Council will also explore opportunities to secure funding from wider sources such as the successful 'Kickstart' bids which have improved the quality and frequency of bus services in the Dover, Gravesend, Swale and Thanet areas. The Kent Bus System has been introduced through the QBPs and provides 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 is the County Council's policy, as set out in the Bus Strategy, that bus lanes should be provided wherever bus frequency totals 6 or more journeys per hour. These bus lanes meet this criteria. The attached letter from Arriva Southern Counties in Appendix 1 sets out this company's concerns.
11. The 5 Year Integrated Programme in Tunbridge Wells and across Kent includes 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 has also funded the purchase of low floor buses on supported services which has significantly improved the quality of the service and provided higher levels of accessibility.
12. Similar investment is planned over future years through the LTP which has been developed following discussions with operators and includes further improvements designed to assist the movement of buses on the highway. Investment in better vehicles and higher frequencies is planned by Arriva but this could be jeopardised by a removal of important bus priority facilities.
13. 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 include congestion, public transport, poor roads and parking problems. The Community Plan outlines key actions including promoting and improving sustainable transport modes, including public transport.
14. The proposal to remove the bus lanes as described is contrary to County Council Policy as follows;
 - the bus lanes in question have 6 or more buses per hour and fully meet the County Council's criteria
 - bus priority is essential if we are 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.

Quality bus services in Tunbridge Wells

Conclusion

15. It is recommended that Members overturn the recommendation of the January meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board and support the retention of the bus lanes at these locations for the reasons stated.

Contact Officer: David Bond 01622 798339

Appendix 1: letter from Malcolm Spalding, Commercial Manager, Arriva Southern Counties

Appendix 2: letter from Kevin Hawkins, Commercial Director, Arriva Southern Counties

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Mr D Bond
Divisional Transport Manager
Kent Highway Services
Mid Kent Divisional Office
Doubleday House
St Michaels Close
Aylesford
Kent
ME20 7BU

2nd November 2006

Dear David

BUS PRIORITY MEASURES: TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Further to our conversation I find it very concerning that the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transport Board are giving consideration to withdrawing the southbound bus priority measure on the A26 in St John's Road outside our depot, and the northbound bus priority measure leading up to the A26/Speldhurst Road junction.

Bus services in Tunbridge Wells are financially fragile as we, and other operators, struggle in the face of high car ownership and severe traffic congestion in parts of the network.

Bus priority measures are most effective when implemented on a corridor and much has been achieved on the A26 between Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge on what is an important transport corridor.

There are no other measures in Tunbridge Wells that attempt to assist public transport in providing a realistic alternative to the car. The current measures have, undoubtedly, improved the reliability of bus services although they are still affected on an unpredictable basis because the measures do not cover the whole length of the A26.

Most of the secondary level schools are on or very close to the A26 and these have a high flow of students travelling on buses. Ensuring these can be provided efficiently and reliably is instrumental in encouraging parents not to do the 'school run' thereby minimising peak period congestion on this very busy corridor. The planned trials of free student transport next year makes the current

measures even more important and, arguably, should create a desire to introduce further priorities to maximise the benefit.

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I sincerely hope the members will recognise that taking such a step is unnecessary and that a long term view of creating infrastructure that enables public transport to be perceived as a viable alternative to the car is what is needed.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Spalding
Commercial Manager