

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of A meeting of the Highways Advisory Board held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 13 November 2007.

PRESENT: Mr R F Manning (Chairman), Mr T J Birkett, Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Ms S J Carey, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr C G Findlay, Mr W A Hayton (Vice-Chairman), Mr R A Marsh, Mr J I Muckle, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr A R Poole, Mrs P A V Stockell, Mr R Tolputt and Mr R Truelove

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Mee (Director - Kent Highway Services), Mr D Hall (Head of Transport & Development) and Mr D Joyner (Sustainable Transport Manager), Mr M Sammut, Senior Transportation Engineer and Mr J Turner, Principal Regeneration and Projects Officer

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman informed the Board that he had recently attended the UK Bus Awards and, on behalf of Kent County Council, had accepted the Halcrow Transport Authority of the Year Award. The Council also won two other awards: the Alexander Dennis Award for innovation; and the Colin Buchanan Award for infrastructure jointly with Arriva Southern Counties for the Fastrack Bus Rapid Transit scheme in Dartford and Gravesend.

The Chairman and various Members congratulated all the officers involved.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Borough Green and Platt Bypass
(Item. 11)

(Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

The Chairman informed Members that KCC's and CELCON's lawyers were negotiating the final details of an agreement that would allow CELCON and KCC to withdraw the costs applications they had made against each other. The urgent decision taken by the Leader on 9 November 2007 had provided KCC's lawyers with authority to negotiate with CELCON and to enter into this agreement. It was expected that the negotiations would conclude very shortly.

As a result, the report circulated with the agenda would not be taken.

2. Minutes - 18 September 2007
(Item. 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2007 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

3. Kent Highway Services - The Director's Update
(Item. 5 - Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

Mr J R Bullock declared a personal interest in this Item as Chairman of the Lamberhurst British Legion.

(1) This was the first formal Director's Update report and it was proposed to provide one to each Highways Advisory Board from now on.

Governance and Decision making in Kent Highway Services

(2) The Director was aware that whereas ultimate Governance decisions were made at Cabinet, Highways Advisory Board enabled Board Members and officers to exchange views and formulate recommendations that passed to the portfolio holder via the minutes and the Board Chairman. The new Alliance structure of KHS enabled a broad range of disciplines to be presented to HAB covering from consultation and planning to delivery. The Alliance team was also available to attend JTB meetings.

Joint Transportation Boards – KHS believed that Joint Transportation Boards enabled local issues to be debated with officers at a local level and amongst others things help identify, prioritise and endorse schemes that were either capital investment in changes/improvements to the network and validated by PIPKIN or maintenance of the existing asset as identified by the asset management model. There was more work to be done to shape the interaction with JTB's as the changes to KHS and the wider E&R directorate took shape. A PIPKIN conference was being planned for the New Year to discuss with Members and Parish/Town Councils their role in representing the community voice for any ideas to improve/change the road layout or transport provision for the county.

Alliance Board – when the new highway contracts were let to Ringway, Jacobs and TSUK all parties, including KCC, realised that for partnering to achieve its full potential a common culture had to be developed and driven to give a strategic direction to improve administrative efficiency and better value delivery. The Alliance Board was chaired by Keith Ferrin (Cabinet Member Environment, Highways and Waste) and included Adam Wilkinson (Managing Director of Environment and Regeneration Directorate), Geoff Harrison-Mee (Director Kent Highway Services), Scott Wardrop (Managing Director Ringway Group), Mike Higgins (Group Vice President Jacobs) and Richard Bevins (UK Director TSUK). The Board issued delivery directives to the Alliance Executive. The terms of reference for the Alliance Board were attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Board currently met on a monthly basis, and this would probably move to every two months from April 2008.

Alliance Executive – made up of the senior managers from Ringway, Jacobs, TSUK and KCC this management team was chaired by Geoff Harrison-Mee and included Roger Manning, lead Member for Highways. Their role was to drive the outcomes, performance and management of Kent Highway Services and their terms of reference was also set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The Executive currently met every two weeks, and this would probably move to monthly from April 2008.

The proposed new shape of Kent Highway Services

(3) The Transformation process started a little over a year ago following the Director's appointment and in response to some significant business challenges. These included the desire to maximise the value of work being done 'on the ground' and therefore the need to drive efficiency throughout the Alliance organisations, being able to respond to customers more speedily and in a consistent way, and delivering high quality service.

(4) The proposed organisational structure was published for consultation with staff on 31 May 2007, with an interim report on 10 August, and formal consultation ended on 31 August. Since the end of the consultation period, the new Managing Director for Environment & Regeneration, Adam Wilkinson, had joined KCC and had, quite rightly, been reviewing the KHS structure to ensure that it would meet his aspirations for the Directorate.

(5) The proposal for the new KHS structure would see staff working within one of seven service groups detailed below. Each service group would be led by a head of service, who would have full accountability and control for their area of business. Appointments had been made to four of the heads of service:-

- Community Operations – **Kim Hills**
- Technical Services - **Norman Bateman**
- Network Management - TBA
- Countywide Improvements - TBA
- Transport and Development – **David Hall**
- Business, Performance and Communication – **Caroline Bruce**
- Finance - TBA

(6) A description of the purpose of each of the seven service groups was as follows:-

Community Operations	This service group would be the public face of KHS and would be structured by district boundaries. Staff in Community Operations would be responsible for inspecting and maintaining roads and pavement, but they would also be the focus for regular contact with parish councils and locally-accountable bodies such as the Joint Transportation Boards. The four community liaison teams would also ensure that the service provided to the public, Members, Boroughs, Parishes and other key stakeholders was consistent across the County and met the high standards in customer care that were set.
Technical Services	This service group would manage the street light, drainage, structures, trees & soft landscaping and signs & lines assets. It would operate countywide in teams focusing on one asset type. In a radically new way of delivering the service, there would be a strong Alliance approach with Ringway managing drainage and Jacobs the trees and soft landscaping asset.
Network Management	This service group would be responsible for the safe movement of the public on the road networks, proactively managing congestion and improving journey-time reliability. This included exploiting the benefits of innovative traffic systems and influencing the behaviour of the travelling public to improve Road Safety. The Traffic Management Act would provide new opportunities to manage congestion and the structure anticipated the initial resource requirements needed to

	support the Act which KCC would be piloting along with two other local authorities.
Countywide Improvements	This service group would provide a disciplined and programmed approach to schemes and major projects. Schemes would include major road maintenance enhancements i.e. strengthening and resurfacing as well as transport enhancement schemes such as traffic calming and junction improvements
Transport and Development	This service group brought together the development planning and transport functions into multi-disciplinary teams built around district boundaries. The group would work closely with District Councils to develop Local Development Frameworks and the transport implications arising from them. The group would also lead on sustainable transport options and work closely with bus operators.
Business, Performance and Communication	This service group provided specialist business, performance and internal/external communications expertise and support to the whole of KHS
Finance	This service would provide and manage finance support to the whole of KHS

(7) The programme was for staff to be fully aligned to the new structure and budgets by 1 April 2008.

Managing service delivery

(8) Whilst the organisational changes took place it was essential that KHS did not 'drop the ball' and continued to deliver services to the people of Kent. The Alliance Board, Executive and Members received a monthly key performance indicator report that set out the high level success measures for Kent Highway Services. These 30 indicators were designed to measure the wide range of services delivered by KHS and gave an overall picture both in terms of 'management indicators' but also, equally important, indicators that saw the service through the eyes of those receiving it.

(9) The investment in new IT systems would enable KHS to efficiently produce a detailed view of the service at a level below the strategic indicators reported to the Board, so that staff who delivered the service could react to performance and make improvements to delivery.

(10) In the meantime we were able to use existing systems to their best possible advantage and could now report on a regular basis information on the type and nature of the service requests received from the public, the number that had been closed and the number that still remained outstanding.

(11) A 'safety net' report had been developed that identified all service requests that had not yet been closed after 28 days. There were currently almost 1500 service requests outstanding after 28 days and we were focussing effort to remove these. However with up to 20,000 calls to the contact centre each month about highways and over 6,000 service requests each month staff were working hard to keep pace with the increased awareness of the 08458 247 800 number and the calls that this generated. The aim would be to reduce the 'safety net' report to 21 days and ultimately 14 days.

(12) Some examples of the contact centre data used to drive service improvement was set out below. It should be borne in mind that this was a record of the service requests made by the public and further faults were recorded through regular inspections. The new IT system investment would enable us to report and monitor these in a consistent way across the County.

Type of fault	Number of service requests made in October	Number of service requests closed during October*	Total number of service requests outstanding and requiring action as at end of October
Blocked gullies	291	503	132
Streetlights	1962	2060	321
Trees	424	410	611
Pavements	543	643	229
Roads	645	783	286
Traffic lights (permanent)	117	131	47
Traffic Investigation Requests	143	150	115

* more service requests completed in a month than received meant KHS was dealing with the backlog of old calls

Progress on Innovations in Kent Highway Services

(13) The Director proposed to update each Highways Advisory Board on the latest innovations in service delivery. Current examples were listed in the following table:-

Innovation	Description and Commentary
Jet Patcher	Currently up to four specialist vehicles were being used to undertake a £1 million programme of repairs. The jet patcher machines used high pressure jets to clean potholes before filling them with asphalt but this was only suitable for rural roads. The vehicles could repair significantly more potholes and broken road edges than traditional methods. Whilst this process was used elsewhere in the UK we needed to evaluate the outcomes before planning further investment in this technology.
LED traffic signal replacement	Kent is the first local authority to change all of its 640 sets of traffic signals to low energy light emitting diodes (LED's). This initiative would save more than £2 million over the next six years. Work had started, with 38 completed out of a programme of 626 across the County and all were due to be completed by Spring next year.
LED streetlight pilot	Kent was piloting a site in Coxheath with LED streetlights. This was emerging technology that was likely to be at least 18 months away but KHS was keen to work with manufacturers to establish if this was an option to further reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs. A full business case would be developed before a decision was made to invest in this technology.
Kent Freedom Pass	The pilot scheme in Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge had been a big hit with 11-16 year olds and we had recently past the 4,500 milestone. Once the pilot had been fully evaluated a

	decision would be made to expand the scheme further.
Kent on Sunday page	We continued to develop the content for this page as a way to raise the profile of KHS and inform the public of the good things that we were doing.

Extra money for highways

(14) KHS had been allocated over £14.0 million of additional funding above the base budget for 2007/08. This was a combination of revenue, capital, grant support through the Local Transport Plan settlement and money to support T2010 footways initiative.

(15) It was important that this extra budget was spent on activities that supported the core business plan of KHS and responded to the changing needs of the customers. Appendix 2 of the report showed the wide range of activities that the extra money had been allocated to, and the progress being made on the initiatives.

Ashford Ring Road Update

(16) The Ashford Ring Road project continued following the initial conversion to 2 way operation in July. Two contracts had recently been awarded to Jackson Civil Engineering – one for the public realm improvements of Bank Street and the other for the public realm improvements of the Elwick Road section of the ring road together with the conventional highway improvement of Beaver Road/Victoria Way junction.

(17) The ring road works remained very challenging as we sought to fit the scheme to match the funding available. The need to manage the conversion to 2 way with minimum inconvenience and the iterative design process for this innovative shared space scheme had contributed to the need to reduce the extent of the public realm works at this time. There had also been land issues to be resolved with SEEDA and working with the Borough Council and ING to ensure the successful opening of County Square in March 2008.

Responding to the un-expected

(18) In addition to responding to the normal day to day activity the Alliance had successfully handled a number of un-expected events this year. This included the Folkestone earthquake and a large number of flash flooding and high event events across the County.

Road Closures for Remembrance Day

(19) The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste had approved the principle that Kent Highways Services would contribute to the costs of arranging the traffic regulation orders for Remembrance Day. This would ensure that KHS did not 'profit' from the administrative costs necessary to set up and publicise the traffic regulation orders.

(20) The Board:-

- (a) recommended to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that, in future, all costs of arranging the traffic regulation orders for Remembrance Day, be met by Kent Highway Services;
- (b) noted the report on the positive progress being made to improve service delivery; and
- (c) gave its support to staff through the period of significant change that lay ahead.

Following a proposal by the Chairman, Members agreed to consider Items 9 and 10.

4. Proposed Traffic Management Measures, Ruins Barn Road, Tunstall
(Item. 9 - Report by Mid Kent Transportation Manager)

(Councillor J Wright, Chairman of Swale JTB, was present for this item)

(1) A petition signed by 76 residents of Ruins Barn Road was submitted by the Ward Member for Woodstock requesting that traffic calming measures and crossing points be introduced on Ruins Barn Road. Ruins Barn Road, shown in the Appendix to the report, was unclassified and was primarily a rural road, with development only in part, on one side, running from Tunstall towards Woodstock. The road was subject to a 30 mph speed limit along the developed area and was derestricted south of the built up area.

(2) A report was presented to the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB) in March 2007 which recommended that no further action was taken and that the petitioners' representative was notified accordingly. Members of the JTB recommended that an interactive speed sign be erected in Ruins Barn Road and that other safety measures be considered along the whole length of the road.

(3) In circumstances where there was a clear conflict of outcomes between officer recommendations and the JTB resolution, the issue was referred to the Highways Advisory Board for consideration.

(4) A comprehensive investigation was carried out and involved a speed/volume survey along the 30 mph section of road and visual assessment of the highway environment and analysis of the personal injury crash record. The speed data recorded was summarised as follows:-

Day	No of vehicles		Mean speed		85%tile Speed	
	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound
Monday	1657	1670	30.4	30.1	35.1	35.3
Tuesday	1669	1691	30.4	29.2	35.3	34.4
Wednesday	1703	1735	30.3	29.9	35.6	35.3
Thursday	1642	1672	30.6	29.8	35.8	35.1
Friday	1597	1662	30.6	29.9	35.6	35.3
Saturday	540	594	30.6	30.4	36.7	35.8
Sunday	586	641	30.4	30.5	35.8	35.8

(5) Examination of the injury crash data revealed that there were two slight injury crashes

in the three-year period up to 30 September 2006. Both incidents involved the loss of control of vehicles travelling towards Sittingbourne and one was alcohol related. It was not possible to establish any pattern which connected both incidents and therefore no mitigating intervention was advised.

(6) The current criteria governing the introduction of safety cameras was that they must only be used as a crash reduction measure and not as a speed reduction device. Under the current criteria, there would need to be a minimum of 3 crashes resulting in serious injury or fatality within one kilometre for a site to qualify for consideration. Each year the County Council's crash database was examined to establish locations where there were high incidents of personal injury crashes. The locations were then looked at in detail and assessed for possible crash reduction measures and inclusion in the following year's Integrated Transport bid.

(7) Where conventional safety measures were either deemed inappropriate or likely to be ineffective, interactive speed signs could be considered, but they were also subject to specific criteria and should only be used where there was evidence of excessive speed and/or injury crash problems.

(8) A more general issue of concern to the residents of Ruins Barn Road was the planned expansion of the Kent Science Park and the impact any additional traffic would have on Ruins Barn Road. This concern was a separate matter that would be fully examined under the planning process.

(9) Speed reducing measures should only be introduced if the circumstances justified their introduction and had to be appropriate to the local conditions, 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.

(10) Based on the evidence collected and examined and the current criteria governing the introduction of a speed camera and/or interactive speed signs, it was not possible to justify such intervention or justify the introduction of any other type of speed reduction measure along the speed restricted section of Ruins Barn Road.

(11) Mr R Truelove moved, Mr T J Birkett seconded as an amendment:-

“That an interactive speed sign be erected in Ruins Barn Road.”

Lost 3 for, 5 against

(12) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, that no further action be taken and that the petitioners' representative be notified accordingly.

5. Proposed Traffic Management Scheme, Richmond Street/Marine Parade, Sheerness

(Item. 10 - Report by Mid Kent Transportation Manager)

(1) Richmond Street was identified as a crash remedial scheme in the 2006/7 Local Transport Plan bid. A total of four isolated child pedestrian crashes were identified in the study area consisting of Richmond Street, Coronation Road, Alma Street, James Street, Jefferson Road, Unity Street, St Helens Road, Wellesley Road and Nursery Close. The initial suggestion was to introduce a 20 mph zone within the area to be enforced by speed humps, build outs and chicanes.

(2) However, very few of the properties within the area had off-street parking facilities and residents therefore, parked their vehicles on-street. The introduction of physical traffic calming measures would have reduced the available on-street parking. Furthermore, the measures might not sit harmoniously with the recently published school travel plans for the two local schools, Richmond First and Cheyne, and might not fully address the school travel issues identified within the plans.

(3) Marine Parade was also a crash remedial scheme in the 2006/7 Local Transport Plan bid. At the time of submitting the bid, the three-year record showed a total fourteen crashes, eight of which occurred during wet weather conditions. A traffic management scheme was devised to reduce and maintain lower traffic speeds, regulate parking with marked parking bays, prevent footway parking and provide a safer facility for pedestrians at the footpath entrance to the Cheyne School from Marine Parade.

(4) The scheme was the subject of a public consultation exercise and the community response was for further consideration to be given to improving the existing lay-by parking facilities and the introduction of conventional speed humps instead of chicanes. This was currently the subject of an investigation to establish the cost and viability of the scheme. However, an analysis of the latest three-year injury crash record indicated that the numbers of crashes were declining, with a reduction from twelve to eight crashes with only one incident occurring during wet weather conditions. Marine Parade had also been resurfaced recently, which should also have a beneficial impact.

(5) A report was presented to the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB) in March 2007 which recommended that the highway issues in Marine Parade and Richmond Street, Sheerness, because of their adjacent proximity, be combined into one project and explore options to link the resulting scheme proposals to the travel plans of local schools. The rationale behind the approach was to create a more comprehensive solution to meet the different travel needs of the residential and school communities.

(6) Members of the JTB recommended that the schemes be progressed separately. In circumstances where there was a clear conflict of outcomes between officer recommendations and the JTB resolution the issue was referred to the Highways Advisory Board for consideration.

(7) This holistic approach to the combined issues would aid better understanding of the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and help to develop a scheme that would improve the quality of life of the residents. The investigative work could be done during this financial year with a view to including it in the next round of the PIPKIN assessment in April 2008, which, if successful, could be included in the 2009/10 programme.

(8) Subject to a report back to the Board prior to any action being taken, the Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste that the two schemes be combined so that options could be explored to link the resulting new scheme with the travel plans of the two schools.

6. Improving Public Satisfaction

(Item. 6 - Report by the Partnerships and Major Projects Director, TSUK, Member of the Kent Highway Services Alliance Executive)

(1) Paul Burgess, the TSUK Partnerships and Major Projects Director had overseen the activities associated with the strategic KHS objective 'Improving Public Satisfaction' on behalf of the KHS Alliance Executive. A presentation was made to the Highways Advisory Board on the subject. In addition a summary statement was attached to the report setting out the achievements in this critical area against the agreed programme.

(2) The KHS Alliance Board adopted seven strategic objectives when the project was originally launched. One of the objectives was to 'Improve Public Satisfaction'. The presentation looked at:-

- Why improving public satisfaction was important to KHS
- The scope and range of KHS interactions with the public
- Complaints and compliments
- KHS structured interactions and the programme
- What the 'public' in all its forms were telling us
- The new KHS structure and how this dealt with 'improving public satisfaction'
- Key strategic issues for consideration.

(3) Following a question and answer session, Mr Burgess was thanked for his informative presentation.

7. Parking Management in Kent - 2006/07 Annual Report

(Item. 7 - Report by County Transportation Manager)

(1) The Kent district councils were responsible for the practical application of parking policy within a framework set by the County Council. The report set out the principles of the parking framework and provided a summary of data for 2006/07 and an update on progress last reported to the Board on 19 September 2006. Important new work areas had included reviews of parking stock and provision of additional spaces, a pilot to control footway parking and investigations into a clamping/ removals trial. In August 2007 Government published guidance for the introduction of new parking enforcement legislation under the provisions of the Traffic Management Act (TMA). The report outlined the implications as well as opportunities for Kent authorities in terms of working more closely together on best practice, providing improved customer facing services and using the provisions in the legislation to help tackle congestion.

(2) A balanced integrated transport system, with good quality travel options for all was essential to counter the negative impacts of traffic growth. Effective

management of parking was central to the effort to deliver the outcomes set out in the Vision for Kent (Keeping Kent Moving) and Towards 2010. Towards 2010 also had a target to remove unnecessary yellow lines and provide additional parking spaces. The objectives, and measures to achieve them, were detailed in the second Local Transport Plan. Broadly this comprised the implementation of Local Parking Plans and the promotion of best practice across the County through the Kent Parking Group.

(3) The best way of developing effective local parking systems and integrating them with transport and planning objectives was through a Local Parking Plan. Parking Plans had been developed or were under review for Ashford, Canterbury, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Dover, Thanet and Shepway.

(4) In August the Department for Transport published a consultation document "Parking Policy and Enforcement: Operational Guidance to Local Authorities." The guidance set out proposed changes to the current Decriminalised Parking system to bring parking management in line with the objectives of the TMA. The new system would be called Civil Parking Enforcement and would include enforcement of additional parking and some moving offences by camera as well as a new banded penalty charge rate.

(5) The Kent Parking Group (KPG) included the 12 district councils, Kent County Council and Medway. The group had links to other parking authorities, enabling the sharing of best practice outside of Kent and was represented at the National Parking Adjudication Service (NPAS). KHS was also represented on a South East Authorities forum on parking.

(6) The KPG sought to promote best practice by sharing benchmarking data, to work together on training and support systems, to collaborate on procurement and act as a lobbying focus on issues of common concern. The group successfully co-ordinated the introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement in Kent. More recently the KPG had been instrumental in helping to set up a South East group of the British Parking Association. This was assisting the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement including joint working with the private sector and should help to improve efficiency in the longer term.

(7) Good enforcement was essential for the effective implementation of parking policies. All 12 Kent district councils had delegated powers to run enforcement systems and issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). PCNs were currently charged at £60. This was discounted by 50% if payment was made within 14 days.

(8) A wide range of benchmarking data was collected and analysed through the KPG to determine the effectiveness of the parking service and develop best practice. A summary table with the headline operational data was shown at Appendix 1 of the report whilst Appendix 2 of the report detailed on-street income reported to KHS.

(9) In 2006/07 there were 226,334 PCNs issued in Kent, a slight increase of 1% on 2005/06. The percentage of tickets waived following representation or rejected at appeal was 17%, in 2005/06 it was 16%. Overall there was a net deficit in on-street parking of £298,076. This figure was income from charging and enforcement compared to the cost of operating the service. In 2005/06 the net deficit was

£80,838. The figures did not include off-street car parks, which were the responsibility of the district councils.

(10) The provision of public managed parking spaces across the county tended to change fairly dramatically over time reflecting the dynamic nature of local parking systems. The data for total managed parking spaces in Appendix 1 illustrated this. The causes could range from new development on public car parks reducing the overall managed stock to the introduction of residents parking schemes increasing the overall managed stock. Over the past six years the overall trend had been for a small increase of some 1.0% per annum.

(11) Comparisons of the Kent authorities in the past had highlighted some wide variations beneath the headline data. The variations were due to differences in local policies including observation times and expired tickets waiver policies, Parking Attendant (PA) training, the effectiveness of signs, lines and associated Traffic Regulation Orders. The KPG members had worked to resolve the issues and determine a best way, indeed the Group's Waivers Policy on Enforcement and Cancellation of PCNs had been commended nationally (NPAS annual report - June 2007) and the Kent authorities praised for their openness in publishing it.

(12) The success of parking enforcement depended on the quality of the staff delivering the service and good training was a key part of this. The majority of PAs and administration staff had undertaken training courses during 2006/07. Courses had included NVQ enforcement training, break away techniques, job shadowing and disability awareness training linked to inspection of Blue Badges co-ordinated by KHS.

(13) Local parking teams had continued to review provision to ensure parking schemes remained effective, contributed to sustainable transport objectives and catered for additional demand. Reviews had included Sevenoaks, Canterbury, Ashford, Swale and Maidstone. In Maidstone reviews of residents parking schemes had been completed following public consultation in the north and south zones of the town. Some 30 additional bays had been introduced where yellow lines had been removed. Parking on single yellow lines was now permitted on Saturdays in around 60 streets.

(14) Kent had been supporting the expansion and enhancement of Park & Ride schemes as part of efforts to tackle congestion. Schemes were under review for Tunbridge Wells. Planning was in hand for a new site at Park Farm to the south of Maidstone in 2008/09 and a further site to the north, potentially linking with the successful 101 bus service to Medway. Canterbury was considering a fourth site to the north west of the city.

(15) Following an earlier report to HAB, Canterbury Council had introduced parking enforcement on footways at 5 locations across the district. This was a trial scheme which ended in March 2008 at which time a decision would be taken on whether to extend enforcement to other areas subject to resources and a local consensus.

(16) A scheme for clamping/ removal of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) as well as persistent evaders was currently under investigation. Subject to a robust business case being developed this might lead to a pilot for Ashford, especially covering Ashford Business Park where foreign HGVs had been parking in contravention of

an overnight lorry ban, and potentially several other east Kent districts. It was understood that a scheme had the support of Kent Police as well as local people although there were concerns over potentially high set up costs and whether the issue might simply move elsewhere.

(17) A review of the Kent guidance for introducing Disabled Parking Bays was underway with district officers and disabled users to take into account the Disability Discrimination Act and new Disability Equality Duty.

(18) Government had recently published, for consultation, Parking Policy and Enforcement: Operational Guidance to Local Authorities. A key part of the TMA, this set out proposed changes to the parking enforcement system and was due to come into force on 31 March 2008. The main elements were:-

- The new system would be called Civil Parking Enforcement and Parking Attendants would become Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) and Special Parking Areas and Permitted Parking Areas would be called Civil Enforcement Areas.
- It was recommended that all CEOs hold a nationally accredited qualification such as a level 2 certificate in parking offered by City & Guilds.
- It would be possible to enforce additional parking offences in Special Enforcement Areas including parking adjacent to a dropped kerb which had been lowered to assist pedestrians, cyclists or vehicles crossing or joining the carriageway and double parking (+ 0.5m from kerb to wing mirror).
- Differential parking penalties were proposed. These could be set depending upon the seriousness of the contravention, for example a higher rate could be applied to parking on a yellow line placed for safety reasons and a lower rate for parking in a council car park without displaying a valid ticket. Two Bands were proposed: Band 1 which had a higher level of £60 and a lower level of £40, and Band 2 which had a higher level of £70 and a lower level of £50. As currently, the charges were discounted by 50% if paid within 14 days. The draft guidance allowed local authorities to select which Band to choose.
- It would be possible to issue a PCN via the post where a vehicle had been driven away and through camera enforcement of moving offences including one way streets, banned right turns and blocking yellow box junction (in addition to enforcement of bus lanes which was already permitted) and where patrols on foot were not viable.
- There was a clear expectation that Local Authorities would have undertaken a reasonable level of publicity to explain the new regulations as well as publishing parking policies in an annual report.

(19) There were several important areas of concern over the implications of changing to Civil Parking Enforcement. Cost was a significant issue. IT, paperwork and uniform markings would all need to be amended. Both old and new IT/paperwork systems would have to operate in parallel after 31 March until PCNs issued prior to this date had been resolved. Some additional signing might be required which had cost and sign clutter implications. Given the set up costs and

new lower level of penalty charges, all Kent Districts were likely to need to adopt the higher Band 2 level of charges in order to cover costs. The Kent authorities had a good record of training parking officers. Additional training based on the TMA was already in place, but it was not yet known whether the Kent NVQ training was sufficient. The legality of enforcing double parking and dropped kerbs in the absence of an approved sign as well as there being sufficient evidence to issue a PCN to a driver who had left the scene was being questioned. Timing was a big issue. There was little time left to prepare for the introduction of CPE and it was not anticipated that the DfT guidance would be finalised until 2008. The concerns would be included in a joint Kent Parking Group response to Government, as well as through the British Parking Association.

(20) Once CPE was in place on 31 March 2008 and was seen to be functioning effectively and existing schemes had been fully publicised and legal issues resolved, consideration would be given to taking up camera enforcement of additional moving and parking offences as appropriate at congestion hotspots in conjunction with wider duties under the Traffic Management Act.

(21) Effective parking management must be part of a balanced strategy which included land use, transport and environmental policies. The development of Local Parking Plans had been disappointing, but good progress had been made in the Kent Parking Group with promoting best practice, a common training framework, ensuring fairness and consistency in the issuing of PCNs as well as ensuring that parking enforcement was open and transparent through the publication of data and policies. The introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement under the Traffic Management Act was a significant element of new work and the Kent authorities were working closely together to ensure its successful introduction and to meet wider policy objectives within the County. Progress with these would be the subject of future reports to members.

(22) The Board noted the report.

8. Satellite Navigation Devices

(Item. 8 - Report by County Transportation Manager)

(1) A Satellite Navigation device was becoming the 'must have' accessory of today's motorists. Despite their many strengths there were concerns regarding their accuracy and the tendency of drivers to blindly follow the computer's instructions regardless of the suitability of that route. Sat-Navs had been criticised for sending an unsuspecting driver down unsuitable roads including farm tracks, narrow lanes and closed roads. Reported incidents whereby a rural village had been wrecked by an invasion of heavy traffic and lorries, because drivers had been given this as a through-route by their Sat-Nav, was on the increase. Occasionally lorries had become wedged in narrow lanes as a result of being guided there by a Sat-Nav.

(2) Over recent years residents in postcard villages of Kent had experienced the problems with these devices at first hand when lorry drivers had followed the wrong directions on their Sat-Nav systems. The villagers of Mereworth, near Maidstone were in the spotlight this summer when a foreign lorry driver found himself being directed down increasingly narrow roads until his 40ft vehicle became wedged between houses along Beech Road in the village.

(3) The Department of Transport (DfT) was fully aware of the issues surrounding inappropriate routing of Sat-Nav devices and were committed to introducing improvements to the systems. Back in January 2007 the DfT produced a consultation on the review of In-Vehicle Information Systems (IVIS) Legislation for which the consultation received responses from a variety of sources. A key element of the IVIS questionnaire was the type of legislation that would be appropriate for regulating the Sat-Nav devices. The information had been used to create a database and the information was being analysed by the DfT. It was expected that a paper would be presented to the Transport Minister later this year.

(4) The Sat-Nav Guidance Issues were being looked into by a Network Management Board sub-group set up by the National Traffic Managers Forum that were reviewing some of the traffic management issues that had arisen as a result of inappropriate routing guidance from Sat-Nav systems. The work by the sub-group was focussed initially on understanding the processes that were required to keep base map data and the associated road characteristics up to date. The sub-group currently comprised of the Highways Agency, Transport for London, Ordnance Survey, and various local highway authorities.

(5) Access to and updating the Road Routing Information (RRI) was one of the main underlying issues behind poor guidance from Sat-Nav systems. In summary, the data, which was primarily the responsibility of Local Highway Authorities, had to be collated from many sources and was collected in diverse ways by the map and Sat-Nav system suppliers. Data ownership issues further complicated a difficult technical issue. The RRI had a comprehensive restriction and advisory route information facility that included mini roundabouts, width restrictions, weight restrictions, bridge heights, traffic calming, vehicle restrictions, one-way roads, and vehicle type access restrictions.

(6) The sub-group had been looking at the option of establishing a single, shared Clearing House repository for RRI, to be updated by the Highways Agency and Local Highway Authorities and accessed by the map and Sat-Nav suppliers. This model had been used in Japan to address similar issues. Some of the data under discussion was already being introduced into Ordnance Survey's main Integrated Transport Network (ITN) product and this had highlighted both the technical and commercial issues associated with establishing a Clearing House. While these were not considered insurmountable, it had been recognised that the Clearing House option would need strong central policy from the DfT.

(7) An alternative approach for guidance systems would be a "Preferred Route" option as this was based on developing a set of network routes that were suitable for specific types of vehicle. Guidance systems would then use the Preferred Routes as the basis for route selection. This approach removed the need for guidance systems to reference micro-level RRI (for example bridge heights and width restrictions) in journey planning and thus avoided the associated accuracy and update issues. It would, however, introduce a different set of liability issues for the owners and maintainers of the Preferred Route.

(8) Freight Routes, which could be provided as a mapping overlay, would be used as a key identifier of the Preferred Route option. Other sets of Preferred Routes identified at this stage included:-

- By vehicle type (including powered wheelers and cycles)

- Diversion routes, to be activated when a major route was blocked
- Seasonal variations

(9) Systems providers (e.g. TomTom) had led the development of business requirements for navigation, based on some reasonable assumptions of the consumer need. What was now being discussed was putting some business requirements from the network management point of view into that process. If network management issues were to drive the developments then there would be a need for guidance and specification from the DfT to the supplier market.

(10) The proposed next steps for the sub-group was to:-

- Obtain feedback from the National Traffic Managers Forum on the need for network management issues to play a greater role in driving the development of navigation devices;
- Review the two options identified (Clearing House and Preferred Route) in more detail and, in particular, involve one or more of the guidance systems providers;
- Present the results to the DfT for a discussion of the overall policy issues identified;
- Review the findings from the IVIS consultation and consider how legislation might be developed.

(11) Ordnance Survey (OS) was one of the leading mapping providers to the Sat-Nav industry. OS had started discussions with Local Highway Authorities, Highways Agency, freight associations and other stakeholders to create a master freight map of Great Britain. So far OS had support from several local highway authorities, the Freight Transport Association and the DfT's Freight Best Practice Programme.

(12) Some of the Road Routing Information comprehensive restriction and advisory route information data (such as width restrictions, weight restrictions, bridge heights) was being introduced into Ordnance Survey's main MasterMap Integrated Transport Network (ITN) Layer product. The OS MasterMap ITN Layer was used as the base road network for many Sat-Nav devices.

(13) The Freight Best Practice programme was funded by the DfT to promote operational efficiency within freight operations in England. A key area that was being investigated was the use of Sat-Nav systems for more freight operations. This programme had already highlighted the positive and negative findings of using Sat-Nav and had made some recommendations to the DfT that further enhancements to the route data within the devices was essential for the devices to be 'freight friendly'.

(14) The Freight Transport Association (FTA) was already in talks with the suppliers to produce satellite navigation systems that were more compatible with freight operations. The FTA was inviting the mapping and telematics industry to remedy the situation before any more goodwill was lost to the public. The FTA had provided the Sat-Nav industry with a list of data items that its members say were necessary additions to a Sat-Nav system, which included recommended lorry routes and HGV restrictions.

(15) The Vale of Glamorgan Council in Wales had begun trialling a new road sign, which was designed to stop lorry drivers with Sat-Nav devices from getting

stuck on unsuitable country roads. The signs, which picture a lorry and a satellite with a red line through them, had been erected near St Hilary in the Vale of Glamorgan. The signs would be in place for 12 months and if successful, could be used at other locations in Wales. KCC could see the benefit of trialling a new sign informing large vehicles (HGV's) to ignore their Satnav system when approaching unsuitable roads, however a number of drivers continued to use routes clearly signed as unsuitable for HGV's. Should the trialled sign prove to be a success, then KCC might consider introducing a similar sign onto its highway network.

(16) The concerns with the Sat-Nav guidance issues were already being looked at and addressed by a variety of groups and organisations throughout the country. Notwithstanding this KCC must be committed to improving the developments of the satellite navigation systems to provide up-to-date and reliable information that addressed the increasing problems with the devices. Whilst KCC could not do anything alone to improve the current problems associated with these in-vehicle devices, some appropriate action could be taken, as follows:-

- Lobby the Transport Minister and the DfT on the introduction of legislation to improve the technology and information exchange with the developers and suppliers of the devices.
- Task the Kent Transport Board with setting about developing an action plan towards solving the current Sat-Nav problems. This Board would invite representatives from KCC, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association, Ordnance Survey, DfT, Sat-Nav Systems providers and the Royal Institute of Navigation to look at the Sat-Nav issues.
- Provide Sat-Nav developers with a list of recommended lorry routes across the county and a list of roads that were unsuitable for HGV's or large vehicles.
- Ensure that Sat-Nav providers were maintaining an accurate and up-to-date map feature on their systems.
- Await the outcome of the trial of a new Sat-Nav roadside sign in Wales. Should the trial prove to be a success, then KCC might consider introducing similar signs onto its highway network.
- Work with the Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association to encourage hauliers to purchase Sat-Navs that set the instructions for route selection.
- Produce an up-to-date version of a map-based leaflet showing recommended lorry routes across the county with an aim to make up for shortcomings in 'Sat-Nav' systems.

(17) *The Board noted the progress made to date and the recommended actions to be taken by KCC.*