

## **ENVIRONMENT, HIGHWAYS AND WASTE POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 16 July 2009.

PRESENT: Mr C Hibberd (Chairman), Mr J Cubitt, Mr D S Daley (Substitute for Mr M Robertson), Mr M J Harrison, Mr S Manion, Mr M J Northey (Substitute for Mrs E M Tweed), Mr R A Pascoe, Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute for Mr J R Bullock, MBE) and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M J Angell, Mr D L Brazier and Mr N J D Chard

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs C Bruce (Interim Director Kent Highway Services), Mr N Caddick (Policy and Performance Manager), Miss F Clayton (Communications Manager, Kent Downs Area - AONB), Ms L Day (Kent Parking Manager), Ms D Exall (Head of Strategic Policy - CED), Mr J Farmer (Regeneration & Projects Manager), Mr D Hall (Head of Transport & Development), Mr R Hallett (Directorate Finance Manager), Mr I Procter (Road Safety Manager), Mr N Sarrafan (County Transport & Development Manager), Ms S Shattock (Environment Strategy Project Manager), Mrs C Valentine (Community Delivery Manager) and Mrs K Mannering (Democratic Services Officer - CED)

### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

#### **1. Election of Vice- Chairman**

*(Item A3)*

RESOLVED that Mr M Robertson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

#### **2. Minutes - (a) Highways Advisory Board - 5 May 2009 (b) Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview Committee - 25 June 2009**

*(Item A4)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the Highways Advisory Board held on 5 May 2009 and the Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview Committee held on 25 June 2009, are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **3. Constitution**

*(Item A5)*

(1) The Chairman informed Members that a review of the Overview and Scrutiny function would be carried out and presented at the end of the year.

(2) Following concerns from various Members the Chairman gave an assurance that the review would include the future of JTBS.

#### **4. Cabinet Member's Update**

*(Item B1)*

(1) Mr Chard gave a verbal report on the following issues:-

- Concentrating on the basics and getting the routine maintenance done quickly
- The permit scheme
- Member highways fund
- Delivering the substantial capital programme
- Regulate the use of A Boards, street furniture and scaffolding/skips
- Kent Waste Partnership – improved two tier working
- Operation Stack – Government need to fund the lorry park
- Rail – High Speed 1 line – better connectivity. KCC were considering a financial contribution to improve the Maidstone to Cannon Street service which did not benefit from HS1.

(2) RESOLVED that the update be noted.

#### **5. Outturn Business Plan and Budget Report 2008/09**

*(Item B2 – Report by Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways and Waste; and Executive Director, Environment, Highways and Waste)*

(1) Mr Hallett informed Members that in January the former Environment & Regeneration Policy Overview Committee received a report on the half-yearly update of business plans. He presented a summarised full-year picture for each of the service units and an overview of the directorate as a whole.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

#### **6. Kent Highway Services - Performance Management Report**

*(Item B3 – Report by Interim Director, KHS)*

(1) The report provided details of current levels of performance in Kent Highway Services. The highway service in Kent was delivered through a private and public sector Alliance comprising KCC, Ringway, Jacobs and Telent. The Alliance had developed a set of performance indicators that covered the wide and varied service it delivered, and were presented in a performance paper, set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The officer paper was currently published to POC Members each month.

(2) In light of the change to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste a review would take place on how performance was reported to Members and details would be provided at the next Committee meeting.

(3) Members were invited to review the Performance Report and comment on the indicators used to track progress of the highway service and make any suggestions, amendments or recommendations they felt appropriate on the current indicators or to help shape the review outline in paragraph (2) above.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **7. Highway Adoptions - Cold Case Project**

*(Item B4 – Report by Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways and Waste)*

(1) The report provided Members with an update on the progress of the Highway Adoption Cold Case Project. 138 of the original 175 cases had now been adopted which represented good progress.

(2) A Committee report in November 2008 described the backlog in the adoption of newly constructed streets under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. The report set out how most of the cases had now been resolved and the roads adopted.

(3) A significant number of Section 38 Agreements dating back over many years remained unadopted across the County. The outstanding schemes had been called “Cold Cases”. Phase 1 of the project had concentrated on 175 schemes that started before 2002. The project was initiated in Spring 2008 with the aim of dealing with these schemes by the end of March 2009. Phase 2 would deal with all outstanding schemes between 2002 and 2005.

(4) In order to deal with agreements more expeditiously in future, the following modifications were proposed to KCC’s Standard Model Section 38 Agreement:

- Remove the requirement to transfer the freehold of land under which the highway existed. This requirement was essentially seen as a way of ensuring better control over junction visibility splay areas, however recent advice from Government included in the “Manual for Streets” meant there was less emphasis on the need to provide large amounts of visibility areas. A comparison with other authorities showed that Kent acted unilaterally in the requirement to transfer the freehold of the land. Given that there were few problems associated with not having the freehold, it was recommended that the requirement should be removed to expedite the adoption process.
- Increasing Officer authority to exercise discretion with regard to use of the performance bond, and allowing recovery of all costs involved, including legal fees.

(5) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to approve the proposed changes to the Section 38 Model Agreement outlined in paragraph (4) above.

## **8. A summary of plans to review the Kent Partnership's Environment Strategy**

*(Item B5 – Report by Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways and Waste; Cabinet Member, Regeneration and Supporting Independence; and Director of Environment and Waste)*

(1) The Kent Environment Strategy was first produced in 2003 and a review process had begun. This was an opportunity to produce a focussed document which enabled the Kent Partnership and its stakeholders to concentrate on a small number of priorities to achieve real change for Kent. The report summarised the review timetable and the key themes which would shape the new Strategy.

(2) The three challenging and overarching themes - *Combating the climate change challenge*; *Valuing our natural and living environments*; and *Living within our environmental limits* - could act as the basis by which everyone working in Kent could test and verify the contribution their organisation was making to the achievement of a sustainable county.

(3) Members were requested to comment on, and approve, the plans to review the Environment Strategy; and inform the future direction of the Strategy.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **9. Data Quality Audit 2007/08**

(Item B6 – Report by Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways and Waste)

(1) The report provided an opportunity for members to consider and discuss data quality issues following the publication of the 2007/2008 Data Quality Audit.

(2) Data quality was an area where there had been an increasing national focus in the recent past. This reflected the recognition that having accurate, up-to date data, together with a good appreciation of what the data did, and did not, revealed what was vitally important in the provision of public services. As recently as March 2009 the Audit Commission published a report saying 'recent work has shown that the quality of data in the NHS is often not what it needs to be to meet the demands now being placed upon it' (*Figures you can trust, A briefing on data quality in the NHS, Audit Commission, March 2009*), and while the report referred specifically to the NHS, data quality is an issue that was relevant to all public services.

(3) Following a request from Mr Pascoe, Mr Caddick undertook to provide Members with further information relating to the data quality training provided commensurate with the Members' role in data quality.

(4) During debate Members agreed to:-

- (i) identify any areas where they had particular concerns about data quality or required more information; and
- (ii) identify any training needs they felt they had.

(5) RESOLVED that the recommendations made in the Data Quality Action Plan be noted.

## **10. Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life**

(Item B7 – Report by Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mike Angell, Older People's Champion)

(1) Mr Angell, KCC Older People's Champion, set out the background to Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life – *'Living Later Life to the Full'*. Members were requested to identify the strategic actions to be taken to deliver the aspirations.

(2) Members were invited to comment on and endorse Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life; and give their views on strategic actions to be taken to deliver the aspirations set out within the Framework.

(3) RESOLVED that the report and comments made by Members be noted.

*Following a proposal by the Chairman, Members agreed to consider Item B8.*

#### **11. Winter Service 2008/09 - End of Season Review**

*(Item B8 – Report by Head of Community Operations)*

(1) On 5 September 2008 the former Highways Advisory Board supported the Winter Service Policy Statement and Plan for 2008/9 and these were used as the basis for all winter service operations. Mrs Valentine presented a report which gave information relating to the winter of 2008/09; set out details of the KHS response and learning points; and gave recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness in the future. A further report detailing the weather reports and seeking approval for the policy and plan for 2009/10 would be presented to the POC later in the year.

(2) RESOLVED that the following be noted:-

- the proactive response to the recent winter conditions;
- proposals to increase use of pre-wet salt and associated savings;
- proposals to tender for the weather forecast service;
- actions for improvements to future winter service.

#### **12. Proposed Prohibition of Driving Traffic Order - Mill Lane, Beltinge, Herne Bay**

*(Item B9 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) At its meeting on 8 July 2008 the former Highways Advisory Board considered an objection to a proposal to make a traffic regulation order to prohibit driving in Mill Lane, Beltinge, Herne Bay. The Board agreed that the traffic order should be made as advertised, but following a complaint from an objector, the decision was taken that the traffic order should be re-advertised so that his objection could be reconsidered by the POC.

(2) It was now proposed that Mill Lane should be closed to traffic at a nominal point 3.0 metres north of the northern footway of Talmead Road, and that the closure should be effected by bollards. This would also meet all of the objections that had been received.

(3) The following options were available:-

- (a) make the traffic regulation order as advertised. This would remove vehicular access to most of the length of Mill Lane;
- (b) make the traffic regulation order over the short length of Mill Road south of Talmead Road. This would permit access to the length of Mill Lane north of Talmead Road and would meet the objections of the respondents, but would not meet the terms of the development brief; and

- (c) abandon the traffic order. This would allow residents of Talmead Road to gain access to the development via Mill Lane and would increase traffic at the junction with Margate Road.

(4) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to agree that Mill Lane be closed to vehicular traffic from its southern most extremity to a point 3.0 metres north of the northern kerb line of Talmead Road.

### **13. Safety Camera Partnership**

*(Item B10 – Report by Head of Network Management)*

(1) The report detailed the Annual Report of the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership. It included the wider value of the partnership in relation to publicity, education and market research.

(2) The Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership (K&MSCP) was launched in 2002. The partnership operated across the Kent Police area covering both Kent and Medway and its sole purpose was to reduce road crash casualties. The annual report was circulated to each Partner organisation setting out progress to date and challenges for the future.

(3) RESOLVED that the annual report of the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership, and the success of KCC's Road Safety activities and the Partnership, be acknowledged.

### **14. Circular Roads 1/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits – Update**

*(Item B11 – Report by Head of Network Management)*

(1) The report updated Members on the progress of the on-going county wide Speed Limit Review of "A" and "B" class roads. The report also set out the way ahead and sought approval to continue with the previously agreed programme. The speed limit review had provided the council with an opportunity to provide a consistent standard of speed limit across the County Council's "A" and "B" road network.

(2) Work on the project effectively began in August 2006 with the publication of the governments document "Circular Roads 1/2006 " which gave guidance to highway authorities into the setting of speed limits and sought to provide a consistent national standard for speed limits across the country. Government also set a target that highway authorities should review the speed limits on their "A" and "B" roads to ensure that they complied with the guidance set out in the circular and implement those changes by 2011 without providing any extra funding.

(3) After an analysis to establish crash rates on our "A" and "B" road network it was concluded that the review should start with a demonstration area. This would be followed by a programme of work to be conducted in three phases and would be completed in 2012/13, subject to funding availability. Members agreed funding of over £220,000 for the implementation of the demonstration area in January this year and work was now underway. Phase 1 which leads on from the demonstration area had been reviewed and was currently out for consultation and the review of Phase 2 was underway.

(4) RESOLVED that the planned county wide Speed Limit Review continue through to completion.

## **15. Casualty Reduction Progress Against National 2010 Casualty Targets**

*(Item B12 – Report by Head of Network Management)*

(1) The report informed Members of the end of year reported injury road traffic collision figures and the successful progress against the Government's 2010 casualty reduction targets.

(2) The achievement of the 2010 government targets two years early reflected the long term influence on casualty reduction to date by the performance of KCC and its partner organisations. However, in the main it was the decisions and chosen behaviour of Kent's road users that determined crash levels and their severity. Hence the scope for further improvements would be affected by random fluctuations and circumstances outside the control of the highway authority. Therefore to counter this it was vital to continue to deliver programmes of work aimed at both improving road user behaviour and the highway infrastructure. Focused and stronger casualty reduction links with the Highway Agency, Police, Fire and Rescue and the other partners were proving to be beneficial in delivering effective campaign and enforcement initiatives. If in the remaining months to 2010 the initiatives were continued and enhanced KHS remained confident that the achieved targets could be maintained and even exceeded.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **16. Gravesend Transport Quarter**

*(Item B13 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) The report informed Members of the current proposals for the Gravesend Transport Quarter; gave details of the current public consultation taking place on the Masterplan; and sought support for the Masterplan, in particular, approval in principle to the alterations to the highway network including the Rathmore Road Link.

(2) The main elements of the Transport Quarter of Gravesend Town Centre were the railway station and the bus stops in Garrick Street and Clive Road. The area had been long overdue for improvement and consequently a working group was set up in 2007 to masterplan a new Transport Interchange and enhancements to the main entry to the town centre.

(3) The current masterplan was presented to Gravesham Borough Council on 1 June this year, and gave a background to the project, masterplan drawing and programme of consultation.

(4) Gravesham Borough Council had secured a grant of up to £8m from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to pump prime the project, with the money needing to be spent by 31 March 2011. The overall project was currently estimated to cost over £50m.

(5) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to support the Masterplan; and in particular, approve, in principle, the alterations to the highway network including the Rathmore Road Link.

## **17. Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes: A Design Handbook**

*(Item B14 – Report by Kent Downs AONB Director)*

(1) The statutory Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan, adopted by Kent County Council and relevant Districts and Boroughs, identified the design and maintenance of highways in the AONB as a key issue for action. Sign clutter, creeping urbanisation and traffic speeds and volume were identified as key issues. The agreed action was to produce a Design Handbook for the streets and lanes of the AONB.

(2) The Kent Downs AONB Unit, working with Kent County Council highway officers, recruited and appointed highways consultants, Halcrow, to produce a Design Handbook for the AONB. The report sought endorsement of the revised document by the Policy Overview Committee and adoption of the principles within it as policy for the future management of rural streets and lanes within the Kent Downs. The principles within the document were applicable to all rural parts of Kent.

(3) The aim of the Design Handbook was to encourage a more appropriate approach to the design of existing and new highways (streetscapes) in the Kent Downs AONB. The Handbook was intended to reverse the trend towards generality and restore the distinctive quality and character of the highways or streetscapes in the Kent Downs but would be subject to appropriate legislation and guidance.

(4) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to approve the Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes: A Design Handbook for adoption.

## **18. A256 Tilmanstone and Eythorne - Proposed Gap Closures**

*(Item B15 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) The results of preliminary consultations on the proposed experimental gap closures were reported to the Dover Joint Transportation Board (JTB) on 25 June 2009, with a recommendation that an Experimental Traffic Order be made, with consultation on the Order during the first six months of the experiment.

(2) The Dover JTB rejected the Officer recommendations and resolved that Officers be asked to look again at all possible options and report back to a future meeting of the Board giving the reasons why they were unacceptable. The JTB also resolved that, in the interim, temporary 'SLOW' signs should be erected.

(3) As the decision reversed the Dover JTB's original decision to support the closures in principle, it had been referred to this Committee.

(4) The proposed gap closures on the A256 at Tilmanstone and Eythorne were supported by the Police and the Coroner on safety grounds. In response to concerns raised by Stagecoach about the effect on bus route 88, it was proposed that the Tilmanstone gap would be 'no right turn except for buses and emergency vehicles'. Four Parish Councils and 19 members of the public had objected to the proposed experimental closures. The County Council's primary objective was road safety, and therefore the gaps should be closed. Implementing the closures on an experimental

basis would enable the effects to be monitored before any decisions on permanent closures were made.

(5) RESOLVED that prior to any decision being made the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste visit the site with officers and the Local County Member.

#### **19. Select Committees - update**

*(Item C1 – Report by Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)*

(1) The Committee received a report which set out the process for identifying a future Select Committee topic review work programme. Members were encouraged to put forward suggestions for potential topic reviews.

(2) RESOLVED that Members submit any suggestions for Select Committee topic reviews by email to the Democratic Services Officer for this Committee.

#### **20. The Management of Vehicle Obstructions to Private Access (White Access to Highlight Markings on the Public Highway (Dog Bone Markings))**

*(Item D1 – Report by Head of Network Management)*

(1) The Head of Network Management presented a report which sought support from the Committee for Kent Highways Services to introduce a new policy on how the Council carried out the management of vehicle obstructions to private accesses and, in particular, the process of approving white access highlight markings on the highway.

(2) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to approve that:-

- (a) the management of the introduction and maintenance of white access highlight line markings on the public highway to prevent obstructive parking be carried out in the 12 district areas by Kent County Council;
- (b) an applicant be asked to meet certain criteria, as outlined in the policy attached to the report, in order to qualify for a white line, and that a charge of £115 administration, and then an additional charge of £150 for the placing and maintenance of the lines, be made for the service; and
- (c) the Chairman agree that a further report be provided to cover other matters of detail raised by Members.

#### **21. Beechwood Avenue, Deal - proposed cycle route**

*(Item D2 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) The report related to the proposal for the construction of a length of 2.5 metre wide shared cycleway/footway along Beechwood Avenue in Deal. The cycleway formed part of the Dover District Council Cycling Plan which was approved by Dover JTB in Autumn 2008 and provided an important link between two existing cycles routes, one in Victoria Park and the other in Albert Road.

(2) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to approve:-

- (a) the construction of the proposed footway/cycleway in Beechwood Avenue, Deal, in order to ensure that an effective cycle network was developed in Deal; and
- (b) the TRO in order to implement the proposed waiting restrictions and formalise the location of on-street parking facilities in Beechwood Avenue, and to create 5 additional parking spaces in Mill Road.

## **22. A258 London Road, Sholden – Proposed Walking and Cycling Improvements**

*(Item D3 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) The report related to the proposal for the construction of a length of 2.5 metre wide shared cycleway/footway along London Road, Sholden between Mongeham Road and Sholden New Road. The cycleway formed part of the Dover District Cycling Plan which was approved by Dover JTB in Autumn 2008 and provided an important link between two existing cycle routes, one along Church Lane and the other which continued to follow the A258 to Fowlmead Country Park. The proposal included the provision of a controlled toucan crossing immediately outside Sholden Primary School which gave the added benefit of providing a safer route to school and to encourage pupils to use more sustainable ways of travelling to and from school. External funding from Sustrans would be lost if the scheme was not supported.

(2) RESOLVED that the progression of the scheme as detailed in drawing no. B0744100/DOV/EK/001/08 be supported.

## **23. Smartcard Project**

*(Item D4 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) The Kent County Council (KCC) ITSO Concessionary Smartcard Scheme had been commissioned in order to develop the potential of public transport Smartcards across the county and, concurrently, to improve the coverage and quality of Real Time Information in Kent. ITSO was a national standard for smartcards using in public transport.

(2) Considerable progress had been made on the project in recent months, and it was anticipated that the County's first 'live' Smartcards, covering the English National Concessionary Travel Pass and the Kent Freedom Pass, would be accepted on buses in Thanet from September this year. The KCC Concessionary Smartcard Scheme had three distinct components: the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, Kent Freedom Pass and Real Time Information, which would be rolled out in stages as the scheme developed.

(3) The total capital budget allocated for the project in 2009/10 was £1m allocated through the Transport & Safety Package Programme (TSP). The KCC ITSO Concessionary Smartcard scheme offered significant benefits to passengers, bus operators and Kent's local authorities, including faster journey times, more effective delivery and administration of concessionary travel schemes and enhanced information on patronage, network performance and the identification of incidents and

congestion. The project was on course to implement a trial of ITSO Smartcard technology involving ENCTS and Kent Freedom Pass in Thanet from September this year and full countywide roll out of the scheme was expected within 18 months.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

#### **24. Minibus Application Procedure**

*(Item D5 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)*

(1) During the recent past there had been several expressions of interest from parish councils and community groups in the provision of minibuses. In all these cases there had been a presumption on the part of the applicant that Kent County Council would provide funding for the whole of the capital cost and for part of the revenue cost.

(2) In order to ensure a fair and equitable allocation of the limited resources available, a Minibus Application Procedure had been prepared which set out a clear application process, and established defined criteria, which would need to be met in order for a minibus application to be favourably considered.

(3) The total funding requirement, comprising both revenue and capital, would be £100,000pa. This would ensure appropriate provision for up to four applications for minibus funding each year, and for on-going support for existing community transport schemes.

(4) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste be recommended to approve:-

- (a) the process for minibus funding as set out in the Minibus Application Procedure; and
- (b) funding of £100,000pa for minibus funding and for on-going support of existing community transport schemes.

#### **25. A28/A2 On-Slip Roads, Canterbury**

*(Item D6 – Report by Head of Countryside Improvements)*

(1) The Head of Countywide Improvements presented a report on progress with the scheme proposal for provision of a new slip road onto the A2 Trunk Road from the A28 at Wincheap, Canterbury; summarised the feedback received from public consultation; and sought approval to the revised plan for the scheme as a basis for publishing statutory orders.

(2) Improvement to the three A2 junctions close to Canterbury was part of a package of sustainable transport measures that were set out in the Canterbury Transport Action Plan (approved by Kent County Council in 2004 following extensive local consultation with the public and stakeholders), and supported by the Local Transport Plan for Kent 2006-11.

(3) Advance scheme costs were met from the County Council's Regeneration Fund and the Major Schemes Forward Design allocation. Further scheme preparation costs were being met from the LTP allocation for Integrated Transport schemes. The

outline scheme estimate in 2006 was quoted as £1.2m. The current scheme estimate based on the detailed design was £1.308m and funding had been provisionally allocated from the Integrated Transport Schemes programme.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the content of the report and the results from the public consultation be noted: and
- (b) the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste be recommended to approve:-
  - (i) revised drawing numbered B0927100-PA-003;
  - (ii) rescinding drawing numbered 13782/21 Rev A;
  - (iii) the making and submission for confirmation all necessary orders and schemes under the Highways Act 1980 to enable the scheme shown on drawing no. B0927100-PA-003 to be constructed; and
  - (iv) entering into a Section 6 Agreement, under the Highways Act 1980, with the Highways Agency.