

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held in the on Tuesday, 29 June 2021.

PRESENT: Mr S Holden (Chairman), Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr C Beart, Mr T Bond, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr N J Collor, Mr D Crow-Brown, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor, Mr B H Lewis, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mr D Watkins and Mr H Rayner

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment), Mr D Brazier (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Ms S Hamilton

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Jones (Interim Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Director of Growth and Communities) and Mr M Dentten (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 3)

1. Mr Collor declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 12, he cited his involvement in the Dover Fastrack project as a Dover District Councillor.

2. Election of Vice-Chair

(Item 4)

1. The chairman proposed and Mr Collor seconded that Mr Love be elected vice-chairman of the committee.
2. Ms Dawkins proposed and Mr Baldock seconded that Mr Lewis be elected vice-chairman of the committee.
3. Members voted on the election of vice-chairman.
4. It was agreed by majority vote that Mr Love be elected vice-chairman of the committee.

RESOLVED that Mr Love be elected vice-chairman of the committee.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March and 27 May 2021

(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2021 and 27 May 2021 were a correct record and that they be signed by the chairman.

4. Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

1. Miss Carey gave a verbal update. She paid tribute to Mr Hills for his work as Cabinet Member for Environment between 14 May and 18 June 2021. Members were reminded that briefings on KCC's environment and waste operations were circulated two weeks before each committee meeting. Miss Carey confirmed that KCC's Environment division had won a national award from the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) for delivering clean growth as part of their efforts on Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE), which involved providing local businesses with sustainability advice and support. Members were invited to take part in the Kent Environment Strategy cross-party member working group.
2. Mr Brazier gave a verbal update. He confirmed that high level highway maintenance contract discussion had begun; that half of the annual Pothole Blitz programme had been completed, with the remainder to be finished by the end of summer; and that a bid was submitted on 18 June 2021 to the Levelling Up Fund – Round 1, for a new rail cross over at Dollands Moor, Folkestone. Members were informed that as part of the government's 'Bus Back Better' national bus strategy, Kent Public Transport and Communications had been in contact with bus operators to understand their key priorities, also forming a stakeholder focus group. Mr Brazier noted that a third tranche of the Active Travel Fund was expected and that bids had been received in anticipation.
3. Mr Lewis invited Mr Brazier to visit Margate to observe the county's only vehicle-free school street as well as local 20mph zones. Mr Brazier accepted the invitation and informed the committee that a second vehicle-free school street was in development in Tunbridge Wells.
4. Ms Dawkins encouraged active travel schemes which involved cycling and asked that the 'Top 10 asks for Canterbury' local travel document be considered when deciding on schemes in her division. She agreed to forward the document to Mr Brazier for his information.

RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

5. Performance Dashboard

(Item 6)

Rachel Kennard (Chief Analyst) and David Beaver (Head of Waste and Business Services) were in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Kennard provided a verbal overview of the performance dashboard. She confirmed that it covered the last quarter of the 2020-21 financial year and reflected a positive position with 13 of 18 key performance indicators rated green and none rated red. Newly proposed indicators and planned changes to existing indicators were detailed, with the justification for the changes given.
2. Mr Bond asked why 7 2021-22 targets detailed in Appendix 2 of the report were below their 2020-21 target levels. Mr Jones confirmed that targets had

been reconsidered following an analysis of the operating environment and reassured members that a review of targets would be undertaken following the pandemic.

3. Mr Chittenden asked in reference to indicator EPE14 (Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate), why staff working from home had not significantly reduced estate emissions. Miss Carey emphasised that not all KCC employees were office based, including before the pandemic, and reassured the committee that emissions from the KCC estate were in decline.
4. Mr Lewis asked in reference to indicator WM04 (Percentage of customers satisfied with Household Waste and Recycling Centres), whether future surveys could include non-service users. Miss Carey confirmed that a mystery shopper approach had been adopted to ensure that the views of non-service users were received.
5. Ms Dawkins asked whether there would be a public consultation if the Household Waste and Recycling Centre online booking system was made permanent. Miss Carey confirmed that there would be a public consultation before a final decision was made.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. Risk Register Annual Update

(Item 7)

Jody Catterall (Risk Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Catterall introduced the report that set out the strategic risks relating to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee and paid particular attention to the two risks that featured on the Corporate Risk Register for which the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport was the designated owner.
2. Addressing governance Ms Catterall reminded members that the Governance and Audit Committee analysed the Corporate Risk Register in its entirety.

RESOLVED that the risks presented in the report be noted.

7. 21/00046 - A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme

(Item 8)

Lee Burchill (Major Capital Programme Manager) and Victoria Soames (Project Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier outlined the scope and importance of the proposed scheme. He emphasised the role the improvements would have in improving transit on the M20 and A2, given the future impact of the lower Thames crossing on Kent's highway network and the resulting need to increase capacity.
2. Mr Burchill added that the scheme formed part of a larger Department for Transport led initiative (Large Local Majors Fund) and was being promoted to receive central government funding as a result. Regarding the Cabinet

Member decision, Mr Burchill confirmed that the proposed decision covered the scheme scope, but that further updates would be provided to the committee at appropriate times to ensure that they are kept up to date with scheme progress and direction.

3. Mr Baldock noted that the proposed scheme was within a sensitive landscape and asked for reassurance that archaeological sites would not be damaged. Mr Burchill confirmed that planning and stakeholder engagement would seek to mitigate the scheme's impact on the local environment.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to give approval to:

- a) the feasibility design options for A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme to be developed and further explored to establish a preferred option which best meets the objectives for the scheme;
- b) progress the preferred option through the next stages of development and delivery including any ancillary works such as drainage and environmental mitigation;
- c) submit a planning application/development consent order for the scheme, following completion of the outline design process and public consultation;
- d) take all steps necessary to obtain and implement all Statutory Orders and approvals or consents required for the schemes;
- e) all acts required to acquire the land and rights for the carrying out and completion of the A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme, including by means of a compulsory purchase order;
- f) enter into Agreements to allow the County Council to design and deliver a scheme on Highways England and Network Rail (High Speed 1) infrastructure;
- g) enter into Large Local Majors funding, developer funding and other such funding Agreements subject to the approval of the Corporate Director for Finance;
- h) enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery of the scheme, subject to the approval of Strategic Commissioning; and
- i) the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport, under the Officer Scheme of Delegations, to take further or other decisions as may be appropriate to deliver the A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme in accordance with these recommendations.

8. 21/00045 - Vision Zero - The Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2021-2026 (Item 9)

Tim Read (Head of Transportation) and Rory McMullan (Casualty Reduction Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr McMullan gave a verbal overview of the Vision Zero road safety strategy. It was noted that zero road deaths by 2050 was the primary goal and that safe systems methodology would be used. Safe roads, speed, vehicles and post collision response were set out as key focuses. The importance of community engagement was highlighted, it was stated that consultation had indicated overall public support for the strategy. Amendments made to the strategy

following consultation were set out and included interim targets and simplified language.

2. Highlighting vehicle safety, Mr Love asked for the justification behind the correlation between road safety and low emission vehicles, set out in the strategy. Mr McMullan recognised that whilst there was no strict correlation between road safety and lower emission vehicles, newer, lower emission vehicles were equipped with a greater selection of safety features than older vehicles.
3. Mr Chittenden asked when average speed cameras would be rolled out across Kent and whether local partners had been consulted on the strategy. Mr McMullan confirmed that an average speed camera pilot had been planned for later in the 2021-22 financial year. He reassured members that Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service had attended stakeholder meetings and endorsed the strategy.
4. Members highlighted the use of bicycles and private e-scooters on pavements as key safety concerns and recognised the role enforcement played in increasing road safety.
5. Following a question from Mr Bond, Mr McMullan confirmed that casualties were divided into three categories: slight, serious and fatal.
6. Mr Watkins welcomed the incorporation of interim targets into the strategy and reflected on the role technology played in reducing road fatalities. He cited the use of black boxes in cars as an example.
7. Ms Parfitt-Reid asked how it would be ensured that police enforcement was carried out to the greatest possible extent in line with the road safety strategy. Mr Jones reassured members that on the issue of transport enforcement, he had been in communication with central government and local partners to extend enforcement powers and maximise capabilities.
8. Members raised their concerns regarding the naming of the strategy, Vision Zero. It was noted that a greater distinction was needed to prevent confusion between Vision Zero and (Carbon) Net Zero and that the proposed name presented an unrealistic target which would lead to criticism even in the event of an increase in road safety. Mr McMullan informed the committee that Vision Zero constituted a multi-national road traffic safety initiative and that the branding of the strategy was not Kent specific.
9. The committee recommended that an alternate name for the strategy be considered.
10. Mr Love abstained to endorse the proposed Cabinet Member decision.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to adopt Vision Zero – The Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2021 – 2026 for subsequent development of delivery plans and pilots.

9. Decision taken between meetings - 21/00043 - Statutory Notice for Enhanced Partnership for Buses
(Item 10)

Phil Lightowler (Head of Public Transport) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier detailed the grounds upon which he took the Statutory Notice for Enhanced Partnership for Buses decision on 14 June 2021. He noted that the decision to form a partnership was a prerequisite for future funding and acknowledged that the deadline set by the Department for Transport had prevented the decision from being delayed.
2. Mr Lightowler gave an overview of the decision timeline and recognised that the Enhanced Partnership for Buses strategy was launched by the Department for Transport on 15 March 2021, during the County Council's pre-election period. He confirmed that 30 June 2021 was the deadline set by the Department and noted that operators had been consulted and agreed overwhelmingly to join Kent's enhanced partnership.
3. Mr Dendor asked to what extent bus operators had signed up to the enhanced partnership. Mr Lightowler confirmed that at the time of the meeting 40 operators, including all major operators, had agreed to the first stage of the partnership.

RESOLVED that the decision be noted.

10. 21/00048 - A228/B2017 and B2017/B2160/Mascalls Court Road, Paddock Wood Junction Improvements
(Item 11)

John Farmer (Project Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier gave a verbal summary of the proposed decision. He asserted that the junction improvements were required in Paddock Wood to expand road capacity, necessitated by an impending increase in local housing.
2. The chairman invited Ms Hamilton as the local member to make a comment. Ms Hamilton noted that the matter was of local importance and welcomed the committee's consideration. She added that there had been local interest for commemorating a German plane which crashed on the project's site during the second world war.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to grant:

- a) Approval to progress the proposed junction improvements as indicatively shown on drawings SK26 Rev P4; and SK49 Rev A and SK50 Rev B through surveys, design, and construction;

- b) approval for the proposed junction improvements shown on drawings SK26 Rev P4; and SK49 Rev A and SK50 Rev B to be used for Land Charge disclosures and development control;
- c) approval to take a transfer of land for the improvements from an adjacent housing development under a S106 planning obligation and acquire other land and rights as necessary;
- d) approval to progress all statutory approvals and consents required for the schemes including detailed planning consent, drainage and environmental consents and securing temporary use of land for a construction site compound;
- e) approval to enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery of the schemes subject to any internal approval process required to the proposed procurement strategy; and
- f) approval for any further decisions required to allow the schemes to proceed through to delivery to be taken by the Interim/Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member.

11. 21/00047 - Dover Fastrack - Compulsory Purchase Order
(Item 12)

John Farmer (Project Manager) and Barry Stiff (Project Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier provided a verbal overview of the proposed decision and accompanying report. He reassured the committee that compulsory purchase would only be used as a last resort and that there remained scope for an agreement between KCC and the current landowner on the sale of the plot.
2. When asked by the chairman, Mr Jones confirmed that no residential property would be subject to the Compulsory Purchase Order.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to:

- a) Approve all acts required to carry out and complete the Dover Fastrack scheme;
- b) approve all acts required to acquire the land and rights for the carrying out and completion of the Dover Fastrack scheme, including by means of a compulsory purchase order;
- c) approve the delegation to the Interim/Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member, any further or other decisions as may be appropriate to deliver the Dover Fastrack scheme;
- d) approve the delegation to the Interim/Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member, any further or other decisions as may be appropriate to deliver the Dover Fastrack scheme; and
- e) confirm that other decisions in Record of Decision 19/00053 remain extant.

12. Bath Street, Gravesend - Fastrack Infrastructure Scheme

(Item 13)

Lee Burchill (Major Capital Programme Manager) and Abigail Roscoe (Assistant Project Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier gave a verbal summary of the proposed decision and noted the improvement of Fastrack journey times from the Northfleet Embankment East, Clifton Slipways and Charter developments as the scheme's key aim. He reminded members that no KCC funding would be used to deliver the scheme.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to accept the capital grant from Ebbsfleet Development Company and to take the Bath Street scheme through the stages of development and delivery and specifically for:

- a) Formal ratification of funding agreement with EDC following the approval of the Corporate Director of Finance, Corporate & Strategic Services;
- b) approval to undertake the detailed design and surveys for the Bath Street Scheme;
- c) approval to progress all statutory approvals or consents required for the scheme, including any transfer of land and rights;
- d) approval to carry out any additional consultation required for the scheme;
- e) approval to enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery and future maintenance of the scheme subject to a review of the procurement strategy by the Capital Officer Group; and
- f) approval for any further decisions required to allow the scheme to proceed through to delivery to be taken by the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member.

13. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Update

(Item 14)

Helen Shulver (Interim Head of Countryside and Community Development), Steve Baggs (Energy Programmes Manager) and Jonathan White (Projects and Operations Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey gave a verbal update. She delivered an overview of the decarbonisation scheme's funding and affirmed a pledge to deliver on project commitments following central government funding. It was highlighted that since 2010 KCC had reduced its carbon footprint by 56%.
2. Ms Shulver provided a scheme-by-scheme verbal overview. It was confirmed that planned schemes would further reduce KCC's carbon footprint by more than 46%, with West End Solar Park the largest single project.
3. Mr Watkins recognised the positive impact of the decarbonisation scheme on schools in his division and asked for details of forthcoming projects. Mr Baggs agreed to provide the committee with an overview of future projects which were open to consideration.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

14. Kent area pathways to Net Zero 2050

(Item 15)

Lucy Breeze (Kent Environment Strategy Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey introduced the report which presented the key findings of the Kent and Medway Emissions Analysis and Pathways to Net Zero 2050 report that had been produced by Anthesis. She reminded the committee that KCC had targeted carbon neutrality on its estate by 2030 and that it had a key role to play in achieving overall carbon neutrality in the county by 2050. It was stressed that the report reflected recommendations from Anthesis rather than commitments from KCC.
2. Ms Breeze provided further detail on the report's scope and purpose. She recognised the scale of change required for the county to achieve carbon net zero by 2050 and gave a breakdown of the county's carbon outputs. Recognition was given to the role technology would play in decarbonisation; it was noted that future technology costs had not been addressed in the report as they remained unknown.
3. Following a question from Ms Dawkins on whether multiple forms of sustainable energy production including wave power had been investigated, Miss Carey confirmed that analysis had been undertaken.
4. Mr Collor sought reassurance that flooding prevention and the impact of trees on infrastructure would be considered when planting. Miss Carey gave a commitment to continue a 'right tree, right place' approach which factored in the local environment.
5. In response to a question from Mr Crow-Brown concerning tree loss at Thanet Parkway Railway Station, Miss Carey committed to contact Network Rail and share relevant information on tree planting at the site with members.
6. Ms Dawkins asked whether there were any schemes to help low-income households switch to renewable heating sources. Ms Breeze confirmed that a grant to support fuel poor households was available.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

15. 21/00028 - Adoption of Highways Asset Management Plan 2021/22 to 2025/26

(Item 16)

Andrew Loosemore (Head of Highways Asset Management) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier summarised the proposed decision, noted the scope of the asset management plan and confirmed the rationale behind a single policy that sets out KCC's approach to highways asset management to 2025-26.

2. Mr Loosemore provided a detailed overview of the plan. He stated that asset management plans had been developed since 2016 following Department for Transport bloc maintenance grant incentives and recognised the link between multi-year planning and value for money. It was noted that whilst funding from the Department for Transport had been static over the previous five years, there had been a 20% grant reduction in 2021-22. The renewal of street trees was highlighted as a continued initiative. Mr Jones added that the plan informed KCC's ability to make positive interventions using quality planning and intelligence.
3. Mr Baldock drew the maintenance of concrete roads to the attention of members and asked whether central government had been lobbied to increase highways investment in Kent. Mr Jones confirmed that the maintenance of concrete roads had been taken into account and that KCC cooperated with Highways England on the issue.
4. Mr Dendor highlighted the maintenance of roadside drains and pavements as areas which required continued focus. Mr Loosemore reassured members that a risk-based approach was taken when cleaning problematic drains.
5. Mr Baldock abstained to endorse the proposed Cabinet Member decision.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to adopt and publish a single Highways Asset Management Plan document that sets out our approach to highways asset management over the next five years.

16. Work Programme

(Item 17)

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2021/22 be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items: -

- A26 cycle route
- Thanet coast wastewater release

POST MEETING NOTE: A presentation on the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy Consultations was circulated to members following the meeting.