KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the Highways Advisory Board held on Tuesday, 8 July 2008 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mr R F Manning (Chairman), Mr T J Birkett, Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Miss S J Carey, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr C G Findlay, Mr M J Harrison (substitute for Mrs P A V Stockell), Mr W A Hayton, Mr D A Hirst (substitute for Mr R A Marsh), Mr C J Law, Mr J I Muckle, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr A R Poole, Mr R Tolputt and Mr R Truelove.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:- Mr C Hart and Mrs E M Tweed.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Mee, Director, Kent Highway Services; Mr D Hall, Head of Transport and Development; Mrs C Bruce, Head of Network Management; Mr K Hills, Head of Community Operations; Mr D Cook, Technical Officer; Mr I Procter, Road Safety Manager; and the Head of Democratic Services (represented by Mrs K Mannering).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

Petitions

Mr D Hall formally reported receipt of two petitions relating to (a) the speed of buses in Kent Road, Cheriton; and (b) the speed of traffic passing through Leathercourt.

Both matters had been referred to the relevant Area Transport Team. The Kent Road issue would be reported to the next meeting of the Shepway JTB; and a small working group had been established.

1. Minutes

(Item 3)

(1) Further to paragraph 1(1)(b), Mr Hall informed the Board that as the proposed no waiting at any time parking restrictions on London Road, Sittingbourne would not be implemented, there was no need to submit a report to this meeting.

(2) RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Kent Highway Services – The Director's Update

(Item 4 – Oral report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The Director gave a verbal update on some of the key issues and developments in KHS, which included:-

(a) the completion of the re-organisation and structure – the new site at Ashford would be opening on 31 July 2008.

(b) potholes/street lighting/road condition

(c) Canterbury JTB Scrutiny report

(2) The Chairman informed the Board that a response from EDF had still not been received.

(3) During discussion the Board agreed that a written executive summary from the Director be submitted to future meetings.

Following a proposal by the Chairman, Members agreed to consider Item 13.

3. Magnolia Avenue, Cliftonville – Road Noise Complaint
Item 13 – Report by Head of Community Operations)
(Mr C Hart was present for this item)

(1) A resident of Magnolia Avenue, Cliftonville approached KHS last year concerning the road noise that he was experiencing in his bungalow. This resulted in a vibration investigation by KHS and a report to the Thanet Joint Transportation Board (JTB) on 11 June 2008. The motion that was adopted was that the matter of concrete roads be referred to the Highways Advisory Board. The draft minute of the JTB; the report to the JTB; a plan of the area of Cliftonville; and photographs indicating the condition of Magnolia Avenue were set out in the Appendices to the report.

(2) The condition of Magnolia Avenue was such that there were no hazards present. Concrete roads were generally built on areas of poor ground conditions and over time voids formed beneath them, this was quite normal. The resident complained that road noise and vibration was transmitted through these voids into his and other residents homes. Sound tests were carried out inside one of the properties and it was found not to be measurable as it was below the ambient noise level.

(3) Concrete roads were generally built in the 1950's and 60's and had performed extremely well considering that their design life was for 40 years. They were now emerging as a significant maintenance problem throughout Kent and were very expensive to repair once they had failed. As a result of this high cost they had a low priority for funding and only received funding when failure had occurred and action was necessary. This now needed to be addressed by a review of the policy on maintenance of concrete roads.

(4) As part of the 2008 annual survey of the roads in Kent, KHS had been asked to identify all concrete roads and determine their relative condition. This would enable a priority to be established so that funding could be allocated to the most urgent cases and a comparison made with the repair of blacktop roads.

(5) In addition KHS had been asked to identify suitable low cost, long term repair methods. It was suggested that funding be allocated so that pilots of the various methods were carried out to evaluate the methods for suitability and cost. Magnolia Avenue would have to take its turn once its priority had been established by the survey.

(6) The inspection and sound checks etc had not identified the need for any short term action at Magnolia Ave. KHS was progressing identification of all concrete roads and were determining their condition. The assessment would identify the position of Magnolia Ave. and whether any long term action had a priority or was necessary. This would be followed by a policy review on the maintenance of concrete roads.

(7) Mr A R Poole moved, Mr R Truelove seconded as an amendment:-

"That Magnolia Avenue be chosen for the pilot study."

Lost 4 for, 7 against

(8) The Board noted the report.

4. Mitigating Against the Impact of Operation Stack
(Item 5 – Report by Head of Network Management)
(Mrs E M Tweed was present for this item)

(1) Further to Minute 6 of 8 May 2008, whilst all agencies (Highways Agency, Interroute, Kent Fire & Rescue, Kent County Council, other local authorities etc.) worked together during Stack to minimise the effect of Stack, it was done so in support of Kent Police in their role as the lead agency. A number of concerns and suggestions had been put forward by the public, County Members and other stakeholders about the management of, and mitigation against, Stack, and these had been explored further with Kent Police and the Highways Agency.

(2) On 19 June, Kent Police led a de-brief focussed on the protracted Stack incident that took place during March. The purpose of the de-brief was to proactively learn from the lengthy deployment of Stack and to formally report the findings. This multi-agency event involved stakeholders including the Highways Agency, Interroute, Kent Fire & Rescue, Eurotunnel, Port of Dover, SE Coast Ambulance and KCC. Learning was centred around the use of intelligence, the command structure, silver control, Operation Stack phases and communication and citizen engagement. The report was awaited with interest.

(3) The protracted nature of Stack caused by the industrial action by SeaFrance officers in March, resulted in press, public and member interest – and a number of suggestions about how it might be better managed in the future. Managing Operation Stack was a complex operation; safety of HGV drivers, residents, the travelling public and police personnel was of prime importance, and Kent Police were mindful of the need to keep Kent moving whilst Operation Stack was deployed.

(i) **Holding back lorries elsewhere on the network** – preventing HGVs from entering Kent by holding them in France/Belgium or elsewhere in the UK.

This was a frequent suggestion aimed at sharing the problem and reducing the effect on Kent. It would require co-operation at a national level and centralised control from the Home Office of autonomous police authorities; it was logistically impossible (how did you stop lorries safely and where did you put them?); there were no existing powers that would enable this idea to be effected, nor was there any national appetite to change this. Even at the height of Operation Stack in March there was no possibility of civil contingencies being required – the problem just was not sufficiently severe.
Potential for future deployment: Virtually non-existent.

(ii) **Contraflow to keep the M20 open both ways between junctions 8 and 9.**
Since March, the Highways Agency had significantly invested in signs and cones to implement this option should it ever be required. The option was not without its difficulties – in short, the problems associated with vehicles travelling along the hard shoulder which was not constructed to the same standard as the main carriageway; the need to safely segregate vehicles which were travelling towards each other on the same side of the carriageway at speed with only cones and a buffer lane separating them; the ability to enforce a reduced speed limit.

Potential for the future: High.

(iii) **Improved signing at M20 junction 10.**
Local traffic joining the M20 at junction 10 (coastbound) to travel to junction 11 could be caught up in phase 1 of Operation Stack (when it was implemented) because there were no advance warnings.

The Highways Agency were considering a feasibility study looking at advance signing on KCC's network to approaches to all junctions on the M20. They were also looking at the potential to install quickly implemented gateways to on-slips on all motorway junctions as part of a national programme. KCC would no doubt be consulted as part of any proposals and would have to weigh up the benefits and dis-benefits to Kent's road networks.
Potential for future deployment: Medium.

(iv) **Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB)**
The QMB was currently being installed by the Highways agency between junctions 11 and 12.

The objectives were to avoid directing local traffic on to the A20 from the M20. However, members should be aware that Kent Police intended to take traffic off at junction 11 before returning it to the M20 to join the contraflow. The Highways Agency intended to monitor performance of the QMB to ensure that it met operational objectives.

Further feasibility would be required to evaluate whether the QMB could be expanded to junction 13 or towards junction 10, or both.
Potential for future deployment: High.

(v) **Central Reservation Gateways**
Members would no doubt be aware that the Highways Agency had installed gateways in the M20 central reservation between junctions 8 and 9. This was part of a national programme designed to manage incidents more effectively; gateways were being installed where there was more than 5km between junctions.
Potential for future deployment: High. Not designed with Stack in mind but high potential to manage Stack more effectively.

(vi) **Traffic Management at Junction 8**
The congestion at junction 8, caused as all vehicles left the M20 before HGVs were directed back down the M20 and car and local HGV traffic directed onto KCC's road network, was the most pressing network management issue. Traffic could queue back to junctions 7, 6 and sometimes back to junction 5. As well as the irritation factor, there were inherent safety issues.

On line sorting, keeping HGVs on the motorway and directing only cars and local traffic off at junction 8 ran counter-intuitive to practice as it meant swapping lorries into lane 3 and cars to lane 1.

This option could be linked with option 2 (contraflow) and KCC continued to work with Kent Police and the Highways Agency to find a longer-term solution.

Potential for future deployment: Low.

(vii) **Further Capacity**
Widening of the M20 between junctions 11 and 12 and/or 12 and 13 would increase capacity of existing phases. The Highways Agency was looking at this as a longer term option.

Potential for future deployment: Low

(viii) **Junction 10a**
The Highways Agency were currently consulting on a new junction to the east of junction 10. This might create further, as yet unquantified, options.

(4) Discussions continued between a number of agencies to manage Stack more effectively.

(5) The Board noted the report.

5. Quiet Resurfacing Prioritisation Methodology
(Item 6 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The report set out a methodology for prioritising the County Council's investment in quiet surfacing schemes and put forward a robust and transparent process for determining the priority of re-surfacing quiet surfacing schemes within Kent. The prioritisation methodology considered both the potential noise benefits associated with re-surfacing a given section of road, the impact that would have on local residents and the cost of undertaking the resurfacing scheme; thus providing an indication of the cost-benefit of each scheme.

(2) Road traffic noise was widely considered to be a genuine nuisance to those people who lived, worked and attended school or college in the vicinity of a culpable road(s). In the most prominent cases, constant or regular exposure to high levels of traffic noise could have a detrimental impact on the quality of life experienced by local people and could potentially result in a significant proportion of the population being bothered by it. Although KHS had no influence over vehicle tyre types or engine manufacturing, it could take steps to reduce vehicle type noise by specifying the type of road surface installed at a particular location and thereby seek to improve people's quality of life.

(3) Noise was measured in units called decibels (dB). As traffic noise fluctuated continually, it was necessary to define it in a manner that could be related to the subjective response of those experiencing it. Attitude surveys had indicated a relationship between the annoyance caused by traffic and the sound level exceeded for 10% of the time during an 18 hour period between 0600 and 0000 (midnight). Road traffic noise was generated as vehicles travelled along a road and was a major contributor to environmental noise exposure to premises, including residential properties, located nearby. The main sources of road traffic noise were:-

- Engine and Powertrain Noise; engine and vehicle exhaust noise tended to be the dominant source of noise when traffic was moving slowly, particularly when traffic comprised a large proportion of heavy goods vehicles.
- Tyre Rolling Noise: tyre noise was likely to be experienced when traffic was free flowing, especially at moderate to high speeds.

- Body Rattle Noise: this noise occurred when a vehicle, particularly a heavy goods vehicle, passed over a traffic hump, pothole or sunken trench in the carriageway; thus causing the vehicle body, and sometimes its goods, to rattle.
- Other Factors, these included; vehicle speed, volume of traffic, heavy goods vehicle composition, gradient of the road and surface type.

(4) The proposed methodology for predicting road traffic noise was taken from an existing approach provided by the Department for Transport's (DfT) Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN). The method was based on acquiring accurate traffic information relating to the traffic composition and vehicle speeds over a set period. Additional information was also collected and included; road gradient and surface type and could be acquired using the JCAM (carriageway condition survey) technology. The CRTN deemed that valid noise prediction levels could be made within 300m of a road; therefore this determined that properties within this distance of a targeted road would be included.

(5) The proposed methodology also provided an ability to measure the influence of the road surface on noise generation and allowed for a comparison of different surfaces and standard measurement conditions. The approach had been incorporated into the noise test provided by the Highways Authorities Product Approval System (HAPAS) and was currently used in the UK for the approval and certification of road surfacing products for use on public roads. Therefore, a comparison could be made for given road surface type against that for a standard Hot Rolled Asphalt (HRA) surface.

(6) Studies had shown that surfaces with a smaller aggregate size were quieter. This was as a result of the different vibrating frequency as the tyres passed over the surface. For example, a surface dressing with a 6mm aggregate had been shown to be approximately 2dB(A) quieter than one with a 10mm aggregate and approximately 2.5dB(A) quieter than one with 14 mm aggregate. It should be noted, however, that in some cases of surface dressing, by reducing the aggregate size, a loss of durability might occur. Modern TSCS (also know as Quiet Surfacing) could be significantly quieter than dense HRA and surface dressed surfacing of the past. The influence of a road surface on noise would also be determined by vehicle speed; generally speaking, the greater the vehicle speed, the greater the level of noise reduction.

(7) TSCS provided a surface that was safe under wet skidding conditions as water on the road could escape from beneath the tyre patch through interstices in the surface as well as the texture depth and type tread. There were no known incidences of higher rates of pedestrian crashes as a result of quieter surfacing being applied.

(8) The proposed methodology also sought to quantify the proportion of people "bothered" by road noise. The Highways Agency's Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) provided industry standard noise nuisance levels for human response to noise. It provided the percentage of people annoyed by road traffic noise, defined as 'bothered very much or quite a lot'. The relationship between nuisance and noise was based upon research undertaken by TRL. Using this relationship, the total number of people bothered by road traffic noise in a given scenario could be predicted.

(9) Information relating to the existing road surface could be acquired via the JCAM carriageway condition survey and integrated with the noise reduction level at the analysis stage in order to determine the scope of reducing road traffic noise. The key stages of the assessment methodology comprised:-

- Based upon the predicted noise level, noise nuisance levels for each receptor would be calculated using the tables contained within DMRB. For residential properties an average occupancy of 2.36 would be assumed. Where schools were present the approximate number of pupils would be confirmed.
- The total number of people bothered by noise would be calculated for the two scenarios and compared.
- The cost of resurfacing the road would be calculated and divided by the reduction in people bothered by road traffic noise for each scheme.
- All sites proposed for resurfacing were then ranked with those providing greatest noise benefits and lowest cost being preferable to those with least noise benefits and highest costs.
- The priority list would be presented to the Board on an annual basis for their recommendation to approve the programme of works.

(10) In order to rigorously test and calibrate the proposed methodology and the noise prediction model component, a brief Pilot Study was recommended. The study was planned for the Summer 2008 and would identify two suitable roads and seek to quantify potential noise reduction levels at each site and prioritise where investment should be made based on the reduction in people bothered and the cost-benefit at each scheme. If supported, the results of the survey would be presented to the Board.

(11) The Board supported:-

(a) the proposed methodology for prioritising quiet surfacing schemes; and
(b) a Pilot Study, which would run during the Summer 2008.

6. Traffic Regulation Order - Electronic Consultation
(Item 7 – Report by Head of Network Management)

(1) The report provided information on the proposed traffic regulation order electronic consultation process that would allow the public to view and comment on Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) via the website.

(2) KHS occasionally received complaints from County Members and the general public when traffic regulation orders were being implemented stating that they were not adequately consulted through the process. It was clear that another method of reaching a greater number of Members and residents throughout Kent would be helpful. Therefore KHS proposed to use the KCC web site to reach those, and potentially other people.

(3) All Local Highway Authorities must comply with statutory legislation when conveying information about TROs to the public. The legislation required LHAs to advertise the TROs in a newspaper in the area in which any road or other place to which the order related was situated. To ensure that KCC complied with the legislation, KHS used a countywide newspaper known as the Saturday Observer and the Kent on Sunday newspapers supplied by the KOSmedia Group to advertise TROs in Kent. The newspapers were free papers and relied upon the public to pick them up at supermarkets, garages, etc. KOSMedia Group printed and distributed approximately 160,000 newspapers in Kent that covered all parts of Kent.

(4) The population of Kent including Medway was over 1million people and approximately 80% of the population had Internet access. Therefore using the KCC web site as an additional means to advertise TROs would reach a greater number of residents of Kent provided it was avertedly sign posted.

(5) The TRO Notice would appear on the web site on the same day as the Notice appeared in the newspaper and would remain there for the full 21 day consultation period. There would be an opportunity for the public to make their observations or objections to the proposals by clicking in a box on the web page and typing in their reasons for either support or objection of the TRO. They would be advised of the date by which they must reply and if necessary what date their comments would be reported to the relevant Joint Transportation Board. This would reduce the amount of letters to and from officers.

(6) The pages that would appear on the web site would be a front cover (giving information and directions of how to proceed), a copy of the Notice of proposals, the proposed Order and a statement of about why the proposals were being advertised. When the observations and/or objections had been considered and after the Joint Transportation Board the same process would be used when making the Order.

(7) Promoting the TRO information in a variety of media such as the newspapers, which was a statutory obligation, and the website would capture a wider audience in Kent and would benefit those members of the public who often use technology to keep up to date with current affairs within Kent County Council.

(8) The Board supported the introduction of a TRO Electronic Consultation via the KCC website.

7. Kent Highway Services, Capital Works for 2008/09 Assessment, Strengthening and Structural Maintenance of Structures

(Item 8 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) The report advised Members of the schemes from which the programme of capital works on highway structures would be delivered in 2008/09. The capital allocation made for the Assessment, Strengthening and Structural Maintenance of highway structures in 2008/09 was £1.666 million. This was below the bid in the Local Transport Plan of £4.17million intended to work towards a regime of 'Good Asset Management' as recommended in the 'Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures' by 2011 and to meet the targets in the LTP for the Strengthening Index and Bridge Stock Condition Indicators.

(2) It was also less than the figure of £3.3 million identified in a report to the Director of KHS in August last year, prepared in response to concern about the potential for closure of weak bridges due to delays in the remedial programme. The sum was aimed at completing the strengthening programme by 2012 whilst hopefully maintaining the status quo on overall condition of the asset.

(3) A programme of works was being prepared to enable output to be managed both within the original allocation but also in anticipation of any improved funding should additional resources become available.

(4) A case had been made and bid submitted for a share of any additional funding which might become available later in the financial year with the aim of delivering as much as possible of the programme outlined in the report to the Director referenced above. To manage delivery within budget at whatever amount, the planned works had been scheduled at three levels as detailed below and were being prepared for staged implementation through the year.

(5) 'Unavoidable Works' comprised schemes which were:-

(a) already in progress
(b) essential safety works
(c) committed through the completion of advanced ecological works and/or approvals.
(d) where land agreements had agreed access times and terms which it would be detrimental to rearrange.

"Must do" works were those where there was real potential for risk now in failing to deal adequately and timely with the existing situation.

"Should do" works were those remaining schemes which were made up of the programme identified in paragraphs (2) and (4) above.

(6) The total budget needed to deliver the schemes was variously:-

(a) "Unavoidable" Works - £1,435
(b) "Must do" Works + (a) - £2,835
(c) "Should do" Works + (b) - £3,355

(7) Decisions on the implementation of schemes would be made at the time when/if additional monies became available but in any event in July, September and December. Schemes would none the less be fully prepared to take advantage of any situation or ultimately, for an April 09 start. All the schemes were listed in the Appendix to the report.

(8) Three review initiatives were underway which might produce further contingency opportunities in relation to works of maintenance and upgrade on structures:-

(a) Finalising the Capital Programme of Work for ensuring the requirements of the EU Tunnel Safety Directive (2004) and the Road Tunnel Safety Regulations 2007 were met in respect of Ramsgate Tunnel.
(b) A review to locate bridges of significant strategic importance to the highway network and identify what action was necessary to mitigate their potential non-availability. This was the subject of a report to the Alliance Board in April.
(c) Implementing the Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures which would focus more attention on improving maintenance regimes. This too was reported to the Alliance Board in April.

(9) The scheme preparation programme for 08/09 was being progressed to facilitate the ability to respond to any additional budget provision which might became available during the financial year.

(10) Taking advantage of such opportunities was essential to ensure delivery of a Structure Asset which was both fit for purpose and moved towards the recommendations for Good Asset Management detailed in the 'Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures' as they related to the KHS defined levels of service.

(11) The Board noted the report.

8. 20 mph Speed Limits Outside Schools

(Item 9 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) In November 2006, a report on the feasibility of introducing a Kent-wide policy of 20mph limits outside all Kent schools was considered by the Board. The report

recommended retention of the existing policy for 20mph limits and zones but did not propose an extension to all schools due to cost and practicality of enforcement without traffic calming. A further report on the issue had been requested by Members.

(2) The safety of children particularly in the vicinity of the school gate was of the highest importance. However, whenever introducing 20mph limits or zones, the County Council must address a number of issues:-

- Would the introduction of such a policy actually reduce child pedestrian casualties?
- What type of limit should be used and at what cost?
- Could an enforceable and acceptable countywide policy be introduced?

(3) The existing policy allowed the introduction of 20mph limits or zones at any location where such measures could be justified, primarily in crash savings terms. The policy also included other factors such as the socio-economic profile of an area along with the presence of local shops and schools, however, it did not provide a specific priority for roads outside schools.

(4) A study of three areas had been carried out, which covered a total of 154 schools. The study looked at crashes involving child pedestrians who were injured between the hours of 07:00 and 09:00 in the morning and 15:00 and 17:00 in the afternoon during the 3 years 2005 to 2007. Saturdays and Sundays were excluded, as was the month of August.

- The study revealed a total of 211 crashes (2 fatal, 18 serious, 191 slight). Of these 36 (0 fatal, 4 serious, 32 slight) or 17% were located 300m either side of the school gate.
- However, the study showed considerable variation between areas with the highest percentage of 31% and the lowest percentage of just 8%.
- All of the fatal crashes and 78% of the serious crashes occurred away from the school gate.
- In one area even if all 6 reported crashes had happened at different schools 57 out of the total of 63 schools had gone three years without an incident being reported by the Kent Police.

(5) A further study of all child pedestrian fatalities (up to and including 16 years old) during the last ten years showed that of a total of 29 fatalities none occurred within 300m of the school gate at the start or finish of the school day. The figures suggested that the introduction of a Kent-wide policy of 20mph limits and zones outside schools, as a crash reduction measure would be ineffective in reducing the majority of child pedestrian crashes.

(6) It was likely that the new crash reduction target beyond 2010 would feature further reductions in child pedestrian crashes particularly those involving fatal injuries. We would need to target our limited resources at those areas where crashes were being reported.

(7) Outside most schools, the congestion caused by parents picking up or dropping off children combined with large numbers of pedestrian and cyclists created a slowing of traffic at the very time that it was most needed. The crash figures indicated that despite the chaotic and dangerous appearance outside schools, crashes were more likely to happen away from the school where the speed of traffic was not constrained in this way.

(8) A vital policy issue was what type of 20mph limit should be adopted outside its 611 schools (not including independents), permanent, part time, part-time advisory or a combination of these. Permanent limits would see the limit operating all day every day. They would require the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and road signs. The estimated cost for each site would be approximately £7,150 which included signs, posts, implementation, design fees, safety checks and in street lit areas lighting of the signs as required in the Traffic Signs and General Regulations and Directions (TSGRD) EDF connection and the TRO. This equated to some £4.1m for all 611 schools. This cost estimate did not include traffic calming.

(9) Part-time limits also required a TRO and it was likely that special authorisation would be required. Such limits would require specialist signs that would operate on a timer system. Signs currently used in Scotland had a 20mph speed limit sign with flashing lights at the top and bottom of the sign. The signs were not currently included in TSRDG and would also require special authorisation. Timers would need to be reset annually to take account of any changes to the schools start and finish times and holidays. The estimated cost here would be some £9,400 per school, as well as the costs described above all signs would require an electricity supply. The estimated cost for all schools would be £5.7m. Further costs associated with the signs included a higher level of maintenance and for re-setting the timers.

(10) Part-time advisory limits were basically the same as the system described in paragraph (8) above, except that being advisory no TRO was required, so the cost would be about £8,100 per site or £5m.

(11) Most activity outside schools took place at the start and finish of the school day, so logically the limit should be consistent with those times. The limit would not be appropriate at weekends or during school holidays and the lower speed limit should be in place only at those times to be self-enforcing and understood by the motorist. It should be noted that when variable limits were monitored in trials outside schools very little reduction in speed was observed, unless speeds were already low, typically not above 24mph. Research for the Department of Transport on the effectiveness of 20mph limits stated “that where speed limits alone were introduced, reductions of only about 2mph in ‘before’ speeds are achieved. 20mph speed limits are, therefore, only suitable in areas where vehicle speeds are already low (the Department would suggest where mean vehicle speeds were 24mph or below), or where additional traffic calming measures are planned as part of the strategy”.

(12) The view of the Kent Police was that 20mph zones and limits should be self-enforcing. This meant that the majority of limits and zones outside Kent’s schools would require traffic calming features. Not only would this be restrictively expensive but with many schools on “A” and “B” class roads, such features, particularly road humps could not be used. In addition, traffic calming features would be permanent and this did not fit with the need to have the limits only in place when they were actually needed. Drivers were likely to resent having their speed physically reduced when the need for slower speed existed only at start and finish of school days. Members had also concluded previously that physical traffic calming measures should be seen only as a last resort to specific crash and speed problems.

(13) If a countywide policy were adopted then a priority rating system would need to be developed to see which schools should be done first. Crash data would play a part however the speed, levels of traffic and HGV flow might all need to be taken into account.

Such a process would require a very considerable amount of work and a number of years to implement. It was believed that we would be challenged as schools discovered how far down the list they were. Even if we progressed at 50 schools per year starting from next year 09/10 it would take approximately another 13 years to achieve.

(14) On the three key issues there appeared to be no case for implementing a countywide policy for the introduction of 20mph limits outside all Kent's schools. Crash savings would be minimal and unlikely to significantly contribute to any new crash reduction target. The cost was prohibitive, the speed limits would be unenforceable and the time frame to implement such a policy excessive.

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

(a) the County Council should not adopt a county-wide policy for the introduction of 20 mph limits or zones outside all Kent schools;

(b) the County Council should retain its existing policy of implementing 20 mph limits or zones at locations where there was a clear and justifiable need for the scheme; and

(c) the effects of advisory part-time limits in the county should be investigated further and a pilot involving 6 sites where this could be implemented should be developed. The potential costs and objectives of the scheme would be brought back to the Board towards the end of the financial year, seeking funding during 2009/10. If this proved effective then further schemes could be considered.

9. 2007 End of Year Crash and Casualty Numbers and Progress against National 2010 Casualty Targets

(Item 10 – Report by Head of Network Management)

(1) The crash records for 2007 for Kent were finalised in May. The totals were used in establishing best value performance indicators, government targets and establishing trends. In 2007, 91 people were killed on roads in Kent (excluding Medway), 632 received serious injuries and 5743 were slightly injured. There were 4779 crashes. Appendix 1 of the report showed crashes and casualties by severity for 2007.

(2) To help focus on achieving continuous improvement in road safety the Government had set a national target for reducing casualties by 2010. Compared with the 1994-98 average the target was:-

- A 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents (KSI) – KCC as part of PSA2 intended to achieve this target by the end of 2007
- A 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured.
- A 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres (MVKm). Kent did not have a traffic model appropriate for KCC roads. Therefore a simple 10% reduction in slight casualties had been used to set targets in Kent.

(3) Compared with the 2010 target KSI, casualties on Kent roads (including motorways and trunk roads) were within ½ % of the 2010 target and at target, rounded to the whole number it was the 40% target. Child KSI casualties had exceeded the 2010 target. Slight

casualties showed a reduction of 3.5 %. Appendix 3 of the report showed that on the roads for which KCC was responsible, the KSI 2010 targets had been exceeded.

(4) From Appendix 5 of the report it could be seen that the 47 child KSI casualties in 2005 appeared to have been an exceptionally low year. It demonstrated the variable nature of year on year totals as shown on the trend graph from 1994 for child KSI casualties, although the overall trend was downward.

(5) The 2007 total KSI casualties on Kent roads showed a 3.2 % reduction compared with 2005. KSI casualties on the roads for which KCC was responsible, however, had a 4.8% increase compared with 2006; despite this there was a 41.8% reduction compared with the 94-98 average on KCC roads. The overall trend might be flattening out or even increasing. The casualties on the Highway Agency's roads in 2007, however, showed a 27.1% decrease. The 2007 figure was consistent with the overall trend and 2006 might have been an abnormally high year for casualties on the HA roads.

(6) 2007 slight casualties on Kent roads had shown a less than 1 % reduction compared with 2006. Slight casualties on roads for which KCC were responsible had shown a 4.6 % increase although the 2007 figure compared with 2005 showed a 5.5% reduction, and, compared with the 1994-98 average there had been a 7.7% reduction. This reflected the volatile nature of slight casualties.

(7) Overall KCC's performance was good, as the 2010 KSI targets had been achieved. The trends in casualties showed a well established downward pattern albeit that it did now appear to be flattening out. The challenge over the next 3 years, 2008 to 2010, was to maintain and better the government's targets. It was vital that we continued to deliver programmes of work aimed at both improving the road infrastructure and road user behaviour. In addition to this, to achieve a down turn in the figures the casualty reduction links fostered with the Highway Agency, Police, Fire and Rescue and the other partners must be further developed into strongly focused measures aimed at influencing the road user across the County. The developed partnership working activities on the strategic network needed to be extended to the local network. It should however be noted that despite a co-ordinated approach to reducing casualties, those targets were outside the direct control of this highway authority, as the daily decisions of each and every road user of Kent would affect the outcome. This target could therefore still be missed in 2010 because of random fluctuation and circumstances outside the control of the highway authority

(8) The Board noted the report.

10. National Rail Station Travel Plan Pilot
(Item 11 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)

(1) A partnership led by Kent Highway Services had recently made a successful bid to participate in a National Rail Station Travel Plan Pilot. The Rail White Paper proposed that station travel plans be tested through a series of pilots, and ATOC was co-ordinating the pilot projects on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT). Ashford station was selected as one of 24 successful applications across England out of a total of 70 bids. Bids for Canterbury West and Folkestone Central/West were unfortunately not successful but it was hoped that lessons learnt from the pilot would enable best practice to be rolled out to these and other stations across the county.

(2) The report was to make members aware of the Ashford Station Travel Plan project which would develop good practice in improving integration and enhancing access to the station as well as reducing the impact of increased rail travel on the local road network. It was timely given forecast increased demand from the introduction of High Speed Rail Services from 2009. It also had the potential to complement short to medium term infrastructure improvements led by the HST Task Force and linked to Ashford's Future.

(3) The National Passenger Survey (NPS) showed that walking was the most popular means of accessing the station, with other public transport (underground, rail, bus/coach) also having a high share. Car travel accounted for 21% of passengers, while cycling had a marginal share at 1.7%. Station Travel Plans had the following potential benefits:-

- increased passenger numbers, particularly in the off-peak (surveys had shown, many people were deterred from travelling by rail because the station car park was full)

- more sustainable travel to the station would reduce emissions and benefit the environment

- passengers who switched modes or shared a car would save on car park fees and fuel

- reduced congestion around the station would reduce journey times for everyone

(4) Ashford Station was on the edge of Ashford town centre, about 600 metres walk from the south eastern corner, and a 5 minute walk from the McArthur Glen shopping centre. As the junction of several railway lines, it offered a frequent service to London via Tonbridge or Maidstone to the North, Canterbury, Margate and Ramsgate to the East, Folkestone and Dover to the South and Hastings through to Brighton to the West. There was a fair amount of rail-heading from a wide catchment area, including many rural villages. The station also provided an important geographic link between the town centre (to the north-east) and the Designer Outlet retail park (to the south) which had implications for public transport, walking and cycling provision.

(5) The introduction of Domestic Services on High Speed 1 (HS1) in December 2009 would reinforce the importance of Ashford station for domestic users, and it was expected that there would be growth for all modes of transport including rail-heading. The planned expansion of the town would increase the population from approximately 60,000 to 135,000 by 2029 and would also increase demand for services significantly.

(6) Southeastern had carried out forecast studies from now until 2014, during this period there was a predicted increase of 46% in footfall at Ashford Station. Footfall in 2006/2007 was 2,432,484, by 2010/2011 this was predicted to grow to 3,227,963 and by 2013/14 footfall was predicted to be 3,543,496, an extra 1,111,012 passengers a year.

(7) Forecast growth would put significant pressures on the infrastructure at the station. With this in mind and also taking into account passenger satisfaction surveys, Ashford Station had been included on the National Station Improvement Programme, (NSIP) and £1.2m was in the budget to improve facilities for customers on the station lease area. These longer term plans would look to enlarge the station building, improve customer waiting areas and customer information, as well as toilets, lighting etc. Southeastern and

Network Rail were working with both KCC and ABC to improve facilities at and around the station and to integrate the station with the town by providing improved bus facilities, an improved taxi waiting area and greater segregation from car traffic.

(8) To be included in the pilot programme, the Ashford Station partnership led by Kent Highway Services, in conjunction with Southeastern Trains and Ashford's Future had been asked to agree to the following:-

- Baseline data and monitoring to be carried out during the Autumn of 2008
- Commitment of financial and staff resources for the projects' duration
- Evaluation and production of regular reports to enable the dissemination of lessons learned and good best practice.

(9) In return for signing up to the conditions, pilot stations could expect to receive:-

- A financial contribution to the pilot (likely to be for research elements of the work)
- Support from other pilot sites and the Steering Group
- Positive publicity for their company / organisation

(10) A Kick Off Conference for the successful projects would be held on 23 July and following that the project was expecting to follow a timeline as set out in Appendix A of the report.

(11) The National Rail Station Travel Pilot provided an exciting opportunity for Kent to participate in a national initiative to promote sustainable travel to rail stations. The development of the Travel Plan and supporting initiatives would assist the sustainable expansion of commuter rail travel in Kent as a result of the new HS1 services. It was intended that best practice be rolled out to other stations in due course.

(12) The Board noted the report.

11. Smarter Choices – 2008 Progress Report

(Item 12 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)

(1) Smarter Choices was about improving sustainable travel options and encouraging people to use alternatives to the car to help tackle congestion and reduce pollution. Initiatives included travel planning with schools and businesses, improving public transport, marketing, car sharing, car clubs and tele/flexible working.

(2) Research had shown Smarter Choices contributed cost effectively to national and local priorities improving accessibility and social inclusion, encouraging regeneration, reducing pollution and carbon emissions and increasing levels of physical activity. For Kent the initiative was a key part of delivering statutory duties and policies in Travelling to School; Choosing Health, Every Child Matters, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and our Local Transport Plan (LTP2).

(3) The report provided an update on the initiatives reported to the Board on 1 May 2007 and sought continued member support for their implementation. With the recent substantial increases in fuel prices, the report was especially timely.

(4) The Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a duty on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport on the journey to school. Kent's

Sustainable Travel to School Strategy was duly published as a consultation draft on 31 August 2007 and was due to be published in its final form on 31 August 2008.

(5) Good progress was being made on the delivery of the Strategy and its development had led to improved joined-up working between directorates involved in co-ordinating travel to school, including KHS, CFHE and Commercial Services.

(6) As part of its Area Based Grant, Kent received £112,865 per annum (5 years from 2007/08) from Government to support the delivery of the strategy. Core work areas currently included:-

- An infrastructure audit, highlighting sustainable transport provision at all Kent schools
- A Sustrans Bike IT officer promoting cycling to schools in Ashford
- Partnership funding for the Kent and Medway Walking Bus Group Charity
- Improving web based travel information for schools, pupils and parents
- Additional project staff to support the promotion of sustainable travel to schools

(7) 2007/08 had been another very successful year for improving travel to school, with a further 87 schools developing travel plans. This brought the total to 413, and equated to approximately 68% of all Kent schools. We were on target to achieve 100% of Kent schools by 2010. School Travel Plans had now secured over £2.5 million of additional capital grants for Kent schools to spend on infrastructure in the school grounds.

(8) This year Government funding was being supplemented by funding through the Local Transport Plan with schools invited to bid for additional grants on the basis of their delivery against Travel Plan objectives and targets. Kent's School Travel Plan initiative was funded by Government through to March 2010 as part of its "Travelling to School Initiative" and from 2008/09 this funding would form part of the Kent Agreement 2 and contribute to delivering against National Indicator NI 198: "Children travelling to school – mode of transport usually used."

(9) All Kent schools were now required to complete information relating to mode-share on the journey to school as part of their annual census returns. Data from 2006/07 provided evidence of a 5% increase in walking to school at primary schools for the first time in several decades.

(10) As part of funding secured to support statutory duties in the Education and Inspections Act, a Bike IT officer had been appointed in a match funding arrangement with the sustainable engineering charity Sustrans. Bike IT officers worked with schools to encourage cycling through training, teaching basic cycle maintenance skills and projects to enthuse children about cycling. The emphasis was on safety, but there were plenty of fun activities to get the message across that cycling had both health and environmental benefits. Bike IT, had seen a ten-fold increase in cycling levels in participating schools in other UK towns and cities – bucking the trend in declining numbers of children cycling to school. Early indications were that similar results were starting to be achieved in Ashford. A bid had been made to Sustrans for a second officer covering schools in Kent Thameside.

(11) KCC's partnership with the Kent and Medway Walking Bus Group Charity (including Medway Council) continued to deliver outstanding results on walking to school. Kent had some 50 buses, the most walking buses of any local authority in the UK. A new risk

assessment procedure and the appointment of a part-time co-ordinator had helped to ensure that the buses, which relied on parent volunteers, continued to be properly managed and monitored. The partnership had also delivered two new Walk to School initiatives as part of the KM Green Footsteps Challenge, namely the Walking Bug and Walk on Wednesday (WOW). Over 140 schools across Kent and Medway had taken part in WOW and The Walking Bug during 2007/08. This had involved some 35,000 pupils and their parents. It was estimated that between October 2007 and May 2008, the schemes had taken over 110,000 school-run journeys off Kent roads.

(12) In 2006 Government announced a £15 million fund to provide grants of £1,000 to state funded infant/primary schools wishing to establish or expand a walking bus scheme. Grants were available for 3 years, subject to an annual review of progress. As a result over 131 schools were supported with successful applications, levering in a further £95,500 for Kent schools to spend on supporting walk to school activities. Approximately two thirds of the schools had met the obligations of their funding and retained funding for the second year of funding in 2008/09.

(13) National, regional and local planning policy required that assessment was made of the impact of new development on the highway network, that consideration was given to the accessibility by all transport modes and that Travel Plans were produced for developments that generated significant demand for travel.

(14) The number of Travel Plans secured through the planning process had increased substantially in recent years leading to a requirement for improved tracking, monitoring and enforcement. Unlike the preparation of a Transport Assessment, developing a Travel Plan was not a one off exercise which could be carried out to secure planning consent and then 'shelved'. Commitment was required on an ongoing basis to deliver against the targets within it. Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans had been developed and we were working with the Kent District Councils to improve practice and support the emerging Kent Regeneration Strategy.

(15) In January 2007 the Maidstone Car Club was launched in partnership with Streetcar, the largest operator of car clubs in the UK. The scheme currently operated with two VW Polo Blue Motions in designated bays outside Sessions House and utilised web-based and Smartcard technology to book and use the cars. The key objective was to provide County Hall employees and Members requiring adhoc use of cars during the working day, with an alternative to driving to work at congested peak times, thus helping to alleviate congestion and parking pressures at and around County Hall as well as for nearby residents and businesses.

(16) The scheme had been very successful as a pool car initiative for KCC employees and excellent feedback had been received concerning the quality and cleanliness of the vehicles and the reliability of the service. The scheme effectively now paid for itself, albeit with usage of the vehicles recharged to the relevant business unit.

(17) In recent months, the concept of the pay-as-you-go car had gradually gained credence among local residents and businesses, leading to a marked increase in use by nearby residents. A major promotional push in April 2008, culminated in the potential for a third car to be located centrally to support the Travel Plan for the new Maidstone Borough Council offices. Discussions were also taking place with other districts regarding the possible expansion of the scheme to other parts of the County.

(18) Kentcarshare was KCC's web-based journey matching facility, developed in partnership with Liftshare. It continued to be a flag-ship initiative for sustainable transport in Kent and had expanded rapidly since its launch in September 2005. Kentcarshare was a free, secure, internet-based service that was easy-to-use. The service allowed you to register your journeys, and find passengers or drivers to share regular or one-off journeys. With rising fuel prices, the potential cost savings of sharing a journey just once or twice a week were substantial, not to mention the benefits for rush hour congestion. To date, it was estimated that the scheme had saved over 1.5 million miles and 481 tonnes of CO2, the equivalent that would be absorbed by 160,000 trees.

(19) KHS were supporting a number of national and local events during the summer highlighting sustainable travel and transport and the wider 'green agenda'. These included:-

National Liftshare Day – 9 June

Promotion of Kentcarshare to all KCC employees and a competition to win tickets for the Hop Farm Music Festival.

National Green Transport Week – 16 - 22 June

The week involved the promotion of sustainable transport to all KCC employees as part of the development of a KCC wide travel plan. Communication via the Directorate Team Briefings encouraged managers and their teams to discuss ways to improve efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of their business travel. This included the publication of a manager's checklist and a number of green travel tips. Free breakfast vouchers for cyclists at a number of KCC offices were also very popular.

Maidstone Goes Green Week – 23 to 30 June

The development of an exciting new partnership between KCC, Maidstone Borough Council, The Maidstone Town Centre Management Group and Maidstone's three main shopping centres (The Mall, Fremlins Walk and Royal Star Arcade) led to opportunities to promote sustainable transport in the town under the umbrella of 'Maidstone Goes Green'. Free space was made available in all three of the shopping centres to promote KCC led 'green' initiatives and it was hoped that the activity would prelude a major event on 'In Town Without My Car Day' on 22 September. This was traditionally the culmination of European Mobility Week (13-21 September).

European Mobility Week – 16 to 21 September

Plans were currently being developed to build on 'Maidstone Goes Green', leading to activities promoting sustainable transport and travel, culminating in a fun family oriented event to celebrate 'In Town Without My Car Day' on 22 September.

(20) The success of Smarter Choices relied on developing partnerships with people and organisations across Kent. A fundamental principal of Smarter Choices was to develop and deliver highway schemes and services, which were aligned with people's travel needs. This could be achieved by continuing to engage with the public and other stakeholders to raise awareness and ownership, leading to the development of effective schemes that delivered real behavioural change.

(21) Smarter Choices gave Kent an opportunity to make good progress towards improving access, tackling congestion and delivering sustainable development as defined in the LTP2. The plan built on good practice and was achievable and cost effective.

(22) The Board noted the good progress being made and continued to support the delivery of the programme.

The Chairman agreed to take the following Item in addition to those on the agenda.

12. Proposed Prohibition of Driving Traffic Order – Mill Lane, Beltinge, Herne Bay
(Item 14 – Report by Head of Transport and Development)

(1) A paper presented to the Canterbury Joint Transportation Board (JTB) on 10 June 2008 was attached as an appendix to the report. The objector attended the JTB meeting and verbally withdrew his objection, provided that he would be granted an exemption to the traffic order. The JTB then resolved to recommend to the HAB that the traffic order should be made without an exemption for the objector, as recommended in the paper, and the Chairman of the JTB advised the objector that this would be another opportunity for his case to be heard.

(2) The traffic regulation order under consideration would prohibit driving along a short length of road at Mill Lane, Beltinge and was a planning requirement of an adjacent development. The objector owned land immediately to the west of Mill Lane and had a number of accesses onto Mill Lane, one of which would not be useable if the prohibition of driving order were to be made. The remaining accesses would be outside the length of road where the traffic order was proposed and would therefore continue to be accessible. If the landowner were to be given an exemption to the order, this would weaken the effect of the order and would allow driving in a length of road which was proposed to be used by pedestrians and cyclists only.

(3) The best arrangement for the area was for the Prohibition of Driving Order to be made in Mill Lane with no exemptions, apart from emergency vehicles. This would mean that the Order could be enforced with a robust bollard that only the emergency services could remove. An exemption for the landowner to drive along Mill Lane would compromise the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The local city and county members agreed with this view.

(4) At the request of the Chairman of the Canterbury JTB the paper was put before HAB for their decision. A copy of the objector's comments to the Cabinet Member was circulated at the meeting.

(5) The Board supported the JTB resolution.