
By: Interim Director of Kent Highway Services
To: Highways Advisory Board – 3 March 2009
Subject: Director's Update
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides a brief up-date for Members on the progress being made in developing an effective and efficient Highway Service.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members have requested a written update to each meeting of this Board. This report in particular covers the excellent response to a colder than average winter. Other key areas covered in this report include white lining, Parish Portal, Permits and Kent Traffic Officers.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Permit Scheme for Kent

This subject is covered in detail elsewhere on this agenda. However, I am pleased to report excellent progress with a likely introduction of a permit scheme in 2009 (subject to approval by the Secretary of State). This is a national first and reflects the excellent background undertaken by the Network Management team over a two year period. This progress reflects the County Council's strategic aims to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion across Kent.

2.2 Winter Service

Kent Highways Services was very pro-active in responding to the snow and ice emergency which gripped Kent and the UK during December, January and February. 50 salting runs were completed between October and January which would normally cover the whole winter period. In comparison, during 2007-08, only 30 runs were necessary. Kent was early to react to the emergency ensuring that adequate stocks of salt were maintained in the face of a national shortage. It is worth noting that some serious flooding issues were effectively managed after the snow emergency in February.

2.3 White Lining

White lining will be treated as a major priority in the first three months of 09/10 and all towns in Kent will receive a re-refresh of lines up to one km out of the town centre. A re-refresh of lines will also be undertaken where there is a high incidence of crashes. The opportunity will be taken to invite districts to request re-lining in relation to their parking responsibilities.

2.4 Kent Traffic Officers

I am pleased to report good progress on the establishment of Kent Traffic Officers (KTOs) who will be another key weapon in the fight against traffic congestion. Kent Police approved the County Council's draft accreditation application on 23 December 2008. Publicity on this issue commenced on 15 February. A number of training sessions have been undertaken through Kent Police, particularly relating to the use of Police Powers.

2.5 Parish Portals

The Parish Portal is a key part of Kent Highway Services' transformation initiative and is designed to offer a full range of highways services online. "**My Kent Highways Online**" will provide the public, parish representatives, and County Members with a number of 'online services' to make access to highways services more convenient. Workshop-style seminars with parishes and county members took place on 20 and 27 February.

2.6 Staff Morale and Performance

I am also pleased to report growing positive staff morale which is reflected in improving standards of customer and Member care, evidenced by the comments I receive from staff on a regular basis and my improved performance.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Kent Highway Services is making positive progress both in its drive to become a more effective operational unit but also in terms of wider policy objectives such as congestion busting.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Members note the good progress being made.

Background Documents: None

Author Contact Details

Caroline Bruce, Interim Director of KHS.

✉ caroline.bruce@kent.gov.uk

☎ 01622 694192