

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

09 March 2009

Report of the Director of Planning Transport and Leisure

Part 1- Public

Matters For Decision

1 PARKING ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

Summary

The report provides an update of current work on the Parking Action Plan and focuses on the following:-

- **Adjusting the last zone in the Tonbridge Local Parking Plan**
- **Monitoring the Borough Green Parking Plan**
- **Supervising the parking review arising from the development of West Kent College**
- **The Snodland Local Parking Plan**
- **Progressing the general parking improvement Programme – Phase 4a**

The Board's decisions are sought for the Snodland Local Parking Plan and for recommended actions in response to the consultation stage of Phase 4a.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The current work on the Parking Action Plan is focused on the following schemes:

- Adjusting the details of the last Zone of the Tonbridge Local Parking Plan
- Monitoring the operation of the Borough Green Parking Plan for review in February 2010
- Reviewing parking on streets around West Kent College
- Finalising the details of the Snodland Local Parking Plan
- Considering responses to the initial round of consultation on the proposals for Phase 4a of the Parking Action Plan.

1.2 Tonbridge Local Parking Plan

1.2.1 The confirmation of the parking orders for the various parking zones in Tonbridge is substantially complete. The current position is summarised in **Annex 1**.

1.2.2 **Zone N** – The parking arrangements for Zone N were confirmed in September last year. However, as I reported at the previous meeting of the Board, some residents of Rose Street raised a number of parking related queries. Many of these were not strictly addressable as part of the Tonbridge Local Parking Plan. Some of the matters raised were not even ones that the Borough Council could deal with directly. Nevertheless, to the extent that it is practical and possible to do so, these are being followed up. The local parking layouts have been reassessed critically and, in consultation with the police, it has been possible to identify scope for removing some of the waiting restrictions to create another two bays in Priory Road. The order will be adjusted accordingly and the bays installed shortly thereafter.

1.2.3 **Zone G** - This is the last of the Zones to be reviewed and the amendments reported to the Board in December are scheduled for advertising as part of Phase 4a of the Parking Action Plan.

1.3 **Borough Green Parking Plan – Zone H**

1.3.1 Monitoring continues on roads in and around the scheme and this includes the Borough Council car park to assess whether any changes may be required to reflect changes in the pattern of usage. Positive responses have been received on the operation of the scheme with some suggestions for amendments for consideration at the end of the eighteen month experimental period.

1.4 **West Kent College**

1.4.1 The College has recently learned of the Learning and Skill Councils' moratorium on the development plans for this site so the programmed construction work is temporarily suspended. Nevertheless, the obligation contained in Condition 15 of the Planning Consent continues to apply and this requires surveys and an assessment of parking conditions on the roads around the College in accordance with the agreed method statement, which itself reflects the practice that the Borough Council has followed in analysing local parking issues. The developer will therefore be consulting local residents living in the specified nearby streets to collect information on local parking conditions and this will be carried out shortly through a parking questionnaire to each household.

1.5 **Snodland Parking Review**

1.5.1 Last autumn, the Borough Council carried out a major consultation and survey of parking in Snodland involving distribution of over 4,600 questionnaires to all the households and businesses in the town. All the responses to this consultation were compiled and analysed to create a working document containing a series of recommended responses. This in turn was used to produce a first draft of a Snodland Local Parking Plan. Both of these documents were considered in depth by the Snodland Parking Plan Member Steering Group. This is a group consisting of representatives from the Town Council, the Chamber of Commerce and local Borough and County Members.

- 1.5.2 The Group met in mid-January, suggested some adjustments to the documents and endorsed the documents, as amended, for the purposes of public consultation. The consultation took place through late January to mid-February. It drew remarkably few comments, perhaps suggesting a good degree of broad contentment among the local community with the broad thrust of the actions proposed in the draft Parking Plan. The feedback from this second stage of consultation has again been analysed in detail and recommendations produced in response to the comments received.
- 1.5.3 The Member Steering Group then met on 18 February to consider how the responses to the public consultation could best be addressed in the emerging Snodland Local Parking Plan. It suggested a number of minor changes to the text and these have been included in the analysis document and the post-consultation version of the Snodland Local Parking Plan. These documents are reproduced at **Annexes 2 and 3**. The changes introduced at each stage of the Plan's development can be identified in the bold italic text.
- 1.5.4 **Annex 3** represents the current definitive statement of the proposed Snodland Local Parking Plan as endorsed by the Member Steering Group and it is recommended to this Board for approval and implementation subject to one particular item in the Plan that it was not possible to finalise before the Agenda was prepared. This relates to the proposal to introduce one-way traffic movement in Bramley Road to aid parking management on this route. If this were to be introduced, it would represent a considerable change in current traffic movements in this part of Snodland and the Member Steering Group felt that additional consultation with the residents of Bramley Road and Recreation Close was required to alert them to this specific proposal in the Parking Plan. I will provide the Board with an update on the response from the residents at the meeting and the text of the Plan can be adjusted accordingly.
- 1.5.5 It is worth reminding the Board that there is yet another round of consultation in this project. This is the statutory notice period that applies generally when introducing traffic regulation orders. Should there be any unwithdrawn objections to the proposals, these will come back to the next meeting of the Board in June. Before then, if the Board is minded to approve the Plan, implementation will require drafting of Orders and site plans, statutory notices and associated works. This work will continue through the next three or four months with a view to installing the scheme through July and August.
- 1.6 Parking Action Plan – Phase 4a (Various Locations)**
- 1.6.1 These later phases of the phased general programme contain many requests for parking management and intervention at various locations across the Borough where the solutions are not straightforward or where there is no clear local consensus on what would be acceptable. With this in mind, the opportunity has been taken to introduce an additional informal consultation stage as part of the implementation of Phase 4a. This may have an impact on the pace of the

programme and there is no legal obligation in the procedures for making traffic orders to carry out such preliminary consultation prior to publicly advertising the proposals. However, it has proved to be a worthwhile exercise in helping refine the proposals and has helped identify solutions that residents on reflection have had second thoughts about.

- 1.6.2 The initial round of consultation for each site has been completed and a detailed assessment and analysis of each of the sites is contained in **Annex 4** together with a recommendation how they should be dealt with. That this additional stage has been worthwhile can be judged, for example, by the eventual proposals for Burham and Wateringbury. At each location, the consultation revealed local reservations about whether there really was a sufficiently serious and persistent problem or whether the circumstances prompting the original concerns still remained or whether local conditions had changed. This has resulted in proposals for far less intervention at those locations than suggested at the beginning of the consultation, although, if future difficulties are reported, this could justify future monitoring to assess whether a response is needed.

1.7 Programme

- 1.7.1 The immediate programme commitments involve carrying out the works in Phase 4a, subject to the approval of the Board to the recommended proposals, and implementing the actions in the Snodland Local Parking Plan.
- 1.7.2 The current programme provides for a local parking plan approach in East Malling followed by a review of the West Malling Local Parking Plan. Once these two areas have been completed, the further stages of the parking plan consist of work at Aylesford and a revisit to the earlier work at Hadlow that is currently in abeyance at the Parish Council's request.
- 1.7.3 On the operational side of parking management work is continuing also. The essential 'house-keeping' work on consolidating the Traffic Regulation Orders throughout the Borough is nearing completion for this year. In parallel with this, work is continuing in assessing the full implications of introducing the charges for dispensations approved by the Council some time ago. In the meantime, renewal letters will start to be sent out at the reminder stage for the resident permit charge increases approved last summer, taking the annual cost to £30 from the start of the next financial year.

1.8 Legal Implications

- 1.8.1 The legal implications are considered at the appropriate section in the main body of the report.

1.9 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.9.1 The cost of implementing the works on the Parking Action Plan described in this paper are to be met within the existing budgets.

1.10 Risk Assessment

- 1.10.1 There are two factors that merit consideration when considering implementing the Parking Action Plan. The first is whether the schemes have achieved the aim of promoting a well ordered parking environment and the second relates to the extent to which the support of the local community has continued throughout the experimental period.
- 1.10.2 To address the first of these, implementation by following an experimental Order process has provided a degree of flexibility within the scheme arrangements to enable the schemes to be adapted and refined in the light of how the scheme works in practice and also to reflect feedback from the local community.
- 1.10.3 The second factor has been addressed through a consistent and robust concentration on public consultation. There has generally been high community support for the details of each scheme and where that has not been the case those elements of each scheme have been subject to further consultation with local residents. This should provide the assurance that the Borough Council has the will and ability to adapt the Parking Plans in the light of comment and circumstances to ensure that it achieves a best balance of local parking needs. The review and confirmation of the schemes is crucial to ensure that we can correctly and effectively manage on street parking in these areas. The proposals are either introduced for safety reasons or to provide a more appropriate balance of parking needs.

1.11 Recommendations

- 1.11.1 That the Borough Councils Cabinet be recommended as follows;
- 1) Subject to consideration of the responses to the additional consultation for the proposal to introduce single way working in Bramley Road, the Snodland Local Parking Plan at Annex 3 **BE ENDORSED and IMPLEMENTED.**
 - 2) The Proposals for Phase 4a of the Parking Action Plan, as set out in Annex 4 **BE ENDORSED and IMPLEMENTED.**
 - 3) The programme of Local Parking Plan work as described in the report **BE ENDORSED.**

Background papers:

contact: Karole Reynolds

Nil

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning Transport and Leisure