

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**14 June 2010**

**Report of the Director of Planning Transport and Leisure**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matter for Recommendation to Borough Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 A21 TONBRIDGE TO PEMBURY DUALLING SCHEME**

**Summary**

**The report provides an update on the A21 Dualling Scheme and focuses on the Public Inquiry that starts on 13 July 2010.**

**1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 At its meeting in February, the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board discussed the various Highways Act and Compulsory Purchase Orders that had been published for the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury dualling scheme.

1.1.2 It resolved that the Borough Council should write to Highways Agency during the notice period and formally record its support for the scheme. I did so in conjunction with the Chairman of the Advisory Board on 24 February and this was acknowledged shortly afterwards by the Highways Agency.

**1.2 Representations**

1.2.1 In recent weeks, the Highways Agency has announced that there will be a Public Inquiry to consider the various orders associated with the scheme together with consideration of three alternative proposals submitted to the Agency. The Inquiry will take place on 13 July.

1.2.2 Whether there will be a need for further submissions from either the Borough or County Councils is not yet obvious and much will depend on the detailed conduct of Inquiry. The Inspector will be holding a Pre-Inquiry Meeting on 2 June, shortly after this report was finalised, and this should make the process clearer.

1.2.3 In the meantime, we need to consider the implications of the alternative proposals. The Highways Agency has set a closing date of 3 June for any comments on these alternatives and this timing made it impossible to send a JTB endorsed submission. If any weight were to be accorded to these alternatives it could adversely affect progress on the approved scheme and I considered it important that a holding view was submitted that reflected the declared position of the

Borough and County Council. Consequently, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, I prepared the letter at **Annex 1** and submitted it to the Agency before the period for comment expired. Subject to any amendment that the Board might wish to make, I recommend that this be endorsed by the Board.

- 1.2.4 As I said above, the process is not yet clear and it may be that further comment or input is required during the course of the Inquiry. Should this happen, I am recommending that the Board invites me to do so, again in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to reflect a JTB view in support of the A21 dualling scheme going ahead on the approved line as soon as physically possible.

### **1.3 Legal Implications**

- 1.3.1 None applicable

### **1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.4.1 None applicable.

### **1.5 Risk Assessment**

- 1.5.1 Any weight accorded to the alternative proposals could adversely affect progress on the approved scheme.

### **1.6 Recommendations**

- 1.6.1 That the holding response submitted to the Highways Agency expressing concerns about the alternative proposals **BE ENDORSED**.
- 1.6.2 That the Director be invited to make such further submissions as might be required to the Inquiry Inspector, in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to reflect the Board's support for the scheme progressing on the approved line as soon as possible.

The Director of Planning Transport and Leisure confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Mike McCulloch

Nil

Steve Humphrey  
Director of Planning Transport & Leisure