

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

20 September 2010

Report of the Director of Kent Highway Services

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

1 INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

Summary

1.1 Progress update on highway improvement schemes in the current year's programme, Member Highway Fund Schemes and also the carriageway and footway resurfacing programme. The outline process for developing the third Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16 including contents of emerging programme and an update on the Scheme Prioritisation System, including reference to the Speed Limit Review programme and a recent letter on Road Safety Partnerships from ACPO.

1.2 Highway Improvement Schemes 2010-11

1.2.1 On June 29 2010, as a result of the national savings in spending that the Government recently announced, KCC published details of those schemes it expected to be affected by a £4.1 million reduction in this year's integrated transport budget.

1.2.2 These savings were confirmed at the meeting of Cabinet on 12 July 2010 and several schemes within Tonbridge & Malling that were to have been built in 2010-11 have been affected.

- The conversion of a zebra crossing to a puffin crossing in New Hythe Lane, Larkfield has had the budget allocation reduced by 50% to £25,000. However, the local County Member, Mrs Dean, has offered to fund the balance from the Member Highway Fund allocation for Malling Central. As such, the scheme will go ahead, as planned, early in 2011
- The £173K allocated to improving existing cycle routes in Tonbridge, Aylesford and Larkfield has been withdrawn
- Bus priority measures on the A20 corridor - £50,000 for forward design of a programme to be substantially funded from committed development obligations in the Medway Gap area.

- A £5,000 provision for a speed management scheme in Winterfield Lane/Clare Lane, East Malling.

1.2.3 The schemes that were selected for withdrawal of funding were based on the degree to which their objectives meet four criteria: whether a scheme improves road safety; reduces congestion; is already underway; or has generated significant external funding that would otherwise be lost.

1.2.4 The schemes cut from the programme in Tonbridge and Malling appear to eminently meet these criteria and this prompted the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to write to the County Cabinet before its 12 July meeting to make the case for at least some of the cut schemes to be reversed. In the event, the approach reproduced at **Annex 1** was unfortunately unsuccessful.

1.2.5 An element of the funding programme has remained intact and this is the Member Highway Fund. The current approved position on this Funding programme is as follows:

Member	Scheme description	Estimate	Current Status
Sarah Hohler – Malling North	Contribution to the resurfacing of a PROW Green Lane, Trottiscliffe	£3,500	Work to be carried out by PROW team, awaiting programme date
Sarah Hohler – Malling North	Install a village gateway feature including priority working signage, hatching on the carriageway and a granite set over run area Bull Road, Birling	£22,550	Detailed design being carried out, awaiting programming.
Peter Homewood – Malling Rural North East	Repaint railings alongside the ford. Clean approaches and bottom of ford. Clear overhanging vegetation. The Stream, Ditton	£2,415	Original work requested completed. Further work may be done but consultation taking place with the Environment Agency.

1.2.6 Modifications to Junction 4 of the M20 and to the traffic calming of Castle Way are reported elsewhere on this agenda.

1.3 Local Transport Plan 3

1.3.1 The Local Transport Plan process is the mechanism for funding and delivering local transport improvements. As part of this process, local transport authorities are required to have a Local Transport Plan (known as LTP3) in place by 1 April 2011 which should consist of a Strategy (challenges, vision, objectives, policies

etc) and an Implementation Plan (measures and actions to achieve the LTP3 objectives).

- 1.3.2 In March 2006, the KCC Transport Policy Team submitted the “Local Transport Plan for Kent 2006-11” to the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Government Office for the South East (GoSE). Essentially, LTP2 is a bidding document to central government showing how KCC will deliver local transport objectives for the five year period based on the funding levels expected from government. It outlines KCC’s policies for transport and shows how they deliver against national transport objectives, with progress being assessed through a range of indicators and targets.
- 1.3.3 Recent guidance from the DfT proposes major changes for LTP3. It is a statutory requirement to have an LTP3 in place on 1 April 2011, which should consist of a separate “strategy” and “implementation plan”, but it is up to the local authority to determine the timescales for each, and these can differ for each document. The guidance states that the overall quality of LTP will be taken into account by DfT in decisions on challenge funding or for major projects but clearly states that the new freedoms and flexibilities "places responsibility firmly on individual authorities to consider how to use the Local Transport Planning framework in the way which works best for them".
- 1.3.4 The Guidance also confirms that the government does not intend to link any national performance funding to the quality or delivery of new LTPs. The Government has put in place three year local government settlements and ten year regional funding indicative allocations, and capital funding for both block allocations and major schemes is now subject to Regional Funding Advice. We are awaiting further information on this, which will follow the conclusion of the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
- 1.3.5 Since LTPs only cover a short time period, it is Government’s expectation that they are informed by a longer-term transport strategy. The County Council recently launched its vision for a 21st Century Kent, outlining how it will meet the challenges to support housing and economic growth, employment and the skills needed for this century. Supporting this is the ability for the people of Kent to access jobs, services and opportunities and in response, an Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) titled “Growth Without Gridlock” has been written.
- 1.3.6 This strategy outlines a longer term vision for Kent’s transport network and explains how it will meet the demands of housing and economic growth, an ageing population while at the same time reducing our emissions to combat climate change. The Strategy outlines a network that gives greater choice and encourages travel by means other than the private car. Each of the transport modes and their issues and challenges are described with a range of proposals which are then applied to the different areas of the County. The key proposals in the ITS are an integrated bus network, maximising the benefits of high speed rail,

key infrastructure and promoting flexible working which reduces the need to travel during the peak.

- 1.3.7 The future highway improvement schemes reported to this Board in June (minute JTB 10/017 refers) have been included in the draft LTP3 as part of the implementation plan for the Tonbridge & Malling Borough. Details of the future of the Scheme Prioritisation System will also be contained within the LTP3.
- 1.3.8 The draft Local Transport Plan 3 is expected out to consultation later this month with a consultation deadline likely to be the end of the year to allow for the final LTP3 to be adopted by the end of March 2011.

1.4 Speed Limit Review

- 1.4.1 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has announced reductions to Road Safety funding for 2010 / 11 as part of the wider local government contribution to reducing the level of grant funding.
- 1.4.2 The decision has been taken by the County Council to mirror the reduction within individual grant lines, Road Safety capital grant and Road Safety revenue grant. It is been agreed to cease work on the Speed Limit Review on the grounds that there is neither revenue nor capital funding available to implement the study recommendations. The Secretary of State has recently indicated that future years' Road Safety grant is likely to be reduced, this means that the current speed limit review is suspended until such a time financial resources are restored – refer to **Annex 2**.
- 1.4.3 A letter has been sent out to all Districts and Parish Councils informing them of the current situation. A further update will be reported to this Board once the full implication of the suspension of the review is known.

1.5 Road Safety Partnerships from ACPO

- 1.5.1 ACPO (the Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales & Northern Ireland) have recently written an open letter **Annex 3** and **Annex 4** to all local authority Chief Executives in response to recent media speculation that the Government is 'axing' speed camera enforcement.
- 1.5.2 The key messages contained in the letter are to reiterate that road safety partnerships have achieved significant success in reducing road casualties and there is clear evidence that cameras work however, due to cuts in grant funding from the Government the future sustainability of the system is at risk. ACPO are calling for decisive action and Government intervention to prevent the demise of the current system.

1.6 Legal Implications

- 1.6.1 None at this stage.

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.7.1 As reported.

1.8 Risk Assessment

1.8.1 Not applicable.

1.9 Policy Considerations

1.9.1 Community.

Background papers:

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Nil

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