

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

23 September 2013

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

1 BOROUGH TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

This report provides an update on a range of current transportation issues affecting the Borough.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This paper provides an update on some of matters previously discussed and introduces some new ones relating to the Truckstop Feasibility Study, Route Based Strategies and the work being undertaken by the Airports Commission.

1.2 A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling Scheme

1.2.1 Shortly after the last meeting of this Board the Chancellor announced that £92 million of funding will be available from 2015 for the Tonbridge to Pembury A21 dualling scheme. Although we are still waiting a decision, if the Public Inquiry gives the scheme the final go ahead, everything should be ready and in place to proceed.

1.3 Tonbridge Transport Strategy

1.3.1 Following the report to the Board in June, KCC officers have commissioned Amey (their engineering consultant) to develop preliminary design drawings and estimated costs to enable Members to take a view on which schemes to prioritise with the funds currently available. I anticipate having a further Member briefing session this Autumn in advance of the next report to this Board in December.

1.4 Rail Issues

1.4.1 Autumn is a traditionally challenging time for the train operators as the combination of wet weather and leaf fall produces Teflon-like mulch on the tracks. This impacts on the train braking system and for safety reasons, obliges drivers to slow down, just as motorists need to reduce speed on icy roads.

1.4.2 For these reasons Southeastern extend journey times between September and December by an average of three minutes to ensure that line speed allows for

safe braking and minimises the risk over runs at stations. Given that line speeds have to be slightly reduced this helps to maintain punctuality and give passengers greater journey certainty. Once the leaf fall season is over, the trains revert to their usual timings in December.

1.5 Pinch Point Bids

1.5.1 Shortly after the completion of the A228 Bypass, the western overbridge at the M20 Junction 4 was widened from two lanes to four, whilst the eastern overbridge has remained as only two lanes. The existing capacity at the eastern overbridge will be unable to cope with the demand generated from planned and committed development. Although there are funding opportunities via new development Members will recall that KCC had made a bid to the Department for Transport (DfT)'s Local Pinch Point Fund Point for additional funding ensure this important scheme progressed without delay. Although we have recently been advised that this was unsuccessful other funding opportunities are still being look at.

1.6 Lower Thames Crossing

1.6.1 The consultation on options for a Lower Thames Crossing has now closed. I understand that an announcement is likely to be made later this year.

1.7 Truckstop Feasibility Study

1.7.1 KCC has appointed a consultant to develop a draft network of lorry parks along the main transport corridors. Your officers will be meeting with the consultant to ensure that adequate facilities are identified in appropriate locations to relieve the current pressures and the use of unauthorised locations.

1.8 Route Based Strategies

1.8.1 Later this month your officers will be attending a workshop held by the Highways Agency to help establish their priorities for future investment in the operation, maintenance and enhancement of the strategic road network in the South East.

1.8.2 The workshop follows an independent review into the management of England's motorways and trunk roads '[A Fresh Start for the Strategic Road Network](#)', which was published in November 2011. The review set out a series of recommendations to transform the approach to managing the strategic road network.

1.9 Airports Commission

1.9.1 Members are probably aware that the Department for Transport (DfT) has developed a draft Aviation Policy Framework which balances the economic benefits of aviation with its environmental and community impacts.

1.9.2 An independent Airports Commission has been set up and has started dialogue with key stakeholders on the subject of aviation capacity.

- 1.9.3 Should the Airports Commission interim report conclude that a significant increase in aviation capacity is needed the second phase of the Commission's work programme will make recommendations to improve the use of existing capacity and consider long-term options – including major infrastructure and any surface transport needs they may entail – and identify a list of credible options to reflect the assessment of need.
- 1.9.4 There will be an open consultation on these documents when the Borough Council will be able to provide its own thoughts on the proposals which may, of course, include for a an additional runway at Gatwick or a new airport in the Thames Estuary.
- 1.9.5 The Airport Commission's indicative timetable suggests the public consultation will take place in the summer of 2014.

1.10 Legal Implications

1.10.1 None

1.11 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.11.1 None directly for the Borough Council.

1.12 Risk Assessment

1.12.1 Not required.

Background papers:

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Nil

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