

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

18 November 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

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

1 TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Summary

This report provides an update on some transportation issues affecting the Borough and the awards via the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

1.1 A21 Public Inquiry

- 1.1.1 The Government has now engaged Balfour Beatty to upgrade the 2.5 mile section of the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury in Kent from single to dual carriageway, adding a lane in each direction, upgrading junctions and improving the road layout.
- 1.1.2 Advance work on this £69.7m project is expected to start this autumn with the main construction starting in spring 2015.

1.2 Funding for Transport Schemes

- 1.2.1 In July 2014 awards made to each of the 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England were announced. The Tonbridge town centre regeneration scheme was awarded a share of the Government's Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) allocation of £2.37 million. It should be noted that receipt of the SLGF award of £2.37 million is subject to the scheme business case being accepted by the LEP. KCC will be leading the implementation of this project as Highway Authority but the Borough Council will of course maintain a strong input, continuing the partnership approach we have adopted for the scheme. As soon as a programme is formed further advice will be provided to Members.
- 1.2.2 In addition to this there are funding streams for West Kent available through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). This funding totalling £4.5m (but subject to additional match funding) is available for the West Kent Authorities of Tonbridge & Malling, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells together with Maidstone Borough Council (for the purpose of this award) between 2015 and 2021. Meetings are being held at a senior level between each authority and KCC to

coordinate how this money should be allocated to ensure we deliver some high-impact schemes with clear objectives.

- 1.2.3 TMBC are likely to be looking for funding to support improvements to the bus, car and pedestrian interface at some of our key railway stations. Southeastern is currently developing plans for some improvements to the facilities for buses, pedestrians and cyclists serving Snodland station together with additional parking. Although Southeastern have access to some funding streams a contribution from the LSTF would ensure we achieve prompt delivery of a quality scheme here which would support the “High Speed” service stopping at Snodland in the New Year. We are also looking to bring forward some proposals for improvements at Tonbridge station and possibly another station location depending on the final availability of funding and the deliverability of projects.
- 1.2.4 Junction 4 of the M20 is also the subject of an award from the Single Local Growth Fund. £2.19m has been allocated pending approval of the business case. With ‘match’ contribution of £2.25m the total amount expected for the scheme is £4.5m. The scheme will be progressed by the KCC Major Projects team with a start date programmed for March 2016.

1.3 Rail Issues

- 1.3.1 Tonbridge and Malling's **Manifesto for Improved Rail Services**, launched in April 2012 and refreshed this summer, highlights a number of key issues for our residents and businesses and sets out some expectations for change and improvements in rail services.
- 1.3.2 We were pleased to hear in September that the Department for Transport has included many of the service improvements we have been lobbying for in the direct-award contract award to Southeastern. These include, for example, new peak hour services through West Malling and Borough Green to Blackfriars from January 2015 and a High Speed service from Snodland to St Pancras in the morning and evening peaks.
- 1.3.3 There remains, however, a way to go for many of our train services and we will continue to work with Southeastern to seek further improvements to services that accord with our manifesto aims and the needs of our communities.
- 1.3.4 The updated manifesto, which is essentially a compendium of all the issues the Borough Council has previously produced, is reproduced at **Annex 1** and Members are asked to formally endorse this document.

1.4 West Malling station

- 1.4.1 This project is now substantially complete and will provide enhanced access for buses, taxis and those arriving by car.

1.4.2 Airports

1.4.3 At the time this agenda was prepared we were still awaiting the publication of the consultation documents from the Airports Commission, chaired by Sir Howard Davis, in respect of airport runway capacity. Members will recall that the Commission have been evaluating the three remaining options; two possible approaches at Heathrow an option for a second runway at Gatwick. Depending on the timing of the consultation further reports will be made to Members.

1.5 Legal Implications

1.5.1 None

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 None directly for the Borough Council

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 Not required.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.9 Policy Considerations

1.9.1 Community

1.10 Recommendations

1.10.1 The updated Rail Manifesto **BE ENDORSED**

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

Background papers:

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Nil

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