

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2016

MINUTES of the Joint Transportation Board held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS on Monday, 15 February 2016

PRESENT: **Borough Councillors** Bulman (Vice-Chairman), Backhouse, Scott, Stanyer and Woodward
 County Councillors King (Chairman), Hoare, Holden and Scholes
 Parish Councillor Mackonochie

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Cobbold, Hamilton, Lewis-Grey, McDermott, Moore and Munn

OFFICERS: Nick Baldwin (Senior Traffic Engineer), Rosemarie Bennett (Parking Manager), Earl Bourner (District Manager for Tunbridge Wells), Chris Hatcher (Senior Project Engineer), Vicki Hubert (Strategic Transport and Development Planner), Sue Kinsella (Street Lighting Manager), Hilary Smith (Economic Development Manager), Bartholomew Wren (Economic Development Officer) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

TB29/15 Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Neve and County Councillors Davies and Oakford.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

TB30/15 There were no disclosable pecuniary or other significant interests declared at the meeting.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

TB31/15 Councillor Moore had registered to speak on minute item TB33/15 (Tracker Item 10), TB38/15 and TB42/15.
 Councillor Lewis-Grey had registered to speak on minute item TB37/15.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING DATED 19 OCTOBER 2015

TB32/15 Members reviewed the minutes. There were no amendments proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting dated 19 October 2015 be approved as a correct record.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS TRACKER AS AT 05 FEBRUARY 2016

TB33/15 The Board considered the Tunbridge Wells Tracker as at 5 February 2016. Comments were made in respect of the Tracker Items as follows:

Tracker Item 1 – Crescent Road central crossing refuge:

Councillor Backhouse asked when the works were going to start. Earl Bourner, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, Kent County Council, agreed to take back the question for the relevant officer. Councillor Bulman added that he had received a large number of enquiries regarding this item so some

urgency was required. County Councillor King requested that Members be written to with details of timescales.

Tracker Item 2 – St. John’s Road:

Vicki Hubert, Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent County Council, advised Members that Section 106 money originally secured for this project would be put towards the A26 design work being undertaken by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Tracker Item 3 – Longfield Road and North Farm:

Mr Bourner updated Members noting that all structural works were complete and the final task of seeding was due to take place in February 2016.

Tracker Item 4 – Borough Transportation Strategy:

Mr Peter Perry had registered to speak on behalf of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Mr Perry welcomed the A26/A264 Route study but noted that it did not refer to the Pembury Road/Calverley Park Gardens/Kingswood Road junction which was a major contributor to congestion on Pembury Road. It was suggested that both ends of Calverley Park Gardens should be included in the study. The Town Forum would like the study to be the basis of a debate at the next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board prior to the Borough Transportation Strategy being considered by the Cabinet Committee of Kent County Council. The route study had shown that traffic into town, rather than through the town, was the chief concern so whilst a bypass was unnecessary; relief was needed at Pembury Road, A26 and at Carrs Corner, particularly from HGVs. The latest figures showed that a further 13,000 homes would be needed, such a large increase would require significant infrastructure investment. A radical rethink was required to include all forms of sustainable transport modes. The Town Forum’s Transport Working Group included enthusiastic and informed members who would welcome the opportunity to be involved in developing plans.

Ms Hubert advised Members that the need for further study had been identified particularly around Carrs Corner and Calverley Park Gardens. Initial work would be undertaken this financial year with further studies as funding became available in the next financial year. The results of the three studies would hopefully form the basis of a Strategy that could deal with the issues highlighted by the speaker. County Councillor King asked that an update be given at the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board following the consideration of the Strategy by the Cabinet Committee of Kent County Council.

Councillor Scott supported the comments of the Town Forum and added that it was important that future planning include all forms of transport and not just cars, particularly the new technology that was likely over the next 10-20 years.

County Councillor Holden advised members that through his Members’ Grant he was funding a traffic survey at Hawkhurst traffic lights which were a major source of congestion and asked that progress be recorded in the Tracker. Members agreed.

Tracker Item 5 – Grass verges on King George V Hill:

County Councillor Hoare commented that the work had been completed

unsatisfactorily, a view which was supported by Councillor Backhouse who added that the standard of the asphalt was poor and some of the paving was loose or standing proud. County Councillor King asked that officers undertake an appraisal to be reported at the next meeting.

Tracker Item 6 – Street Lighting Review and Tracker Item 7 – Street Lighting LED:

Mr Bourner advised members that the relevant officers were due to attend and asked that the item be deferred until later in the meeting.

Tracker Item 8 – Grosvenor Bridge Repairs:

Mr Bourner advised that the start of works was delayed until April or May. County Councillor King asked that if works had not commenced by the time of the next meeting then an explanation should be given.

Tracker Item 9 – Pedestrian crossing in Major York's Road and Langton Road:

Mr Bourner had nothing to add to the written update but advised Members that he would take back a request for timescales.

Tracker Item 10 – Carrs Corner:

Mr Peter Perry had registered to speak on behalf of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Mr Perry welcomed the new tree on the roundabout but noted that weeds were already growing around it and called for details of a maintenance plan. He highlighted that at a previous meeting of the Joint Transportation Board it had been agreed to update the signage and road lining around the junction but implementation was still outstanding and works should be expedited. The Town Forum strongly advocated the need for significant improvements to access and safety on all arms of the junction including the introduction of 20mph speed limits. Furthermore, the Town Forum asked to be involved in the planning and design of any works.

Councillor Tracy Moore, Borough Councillor for Park Ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore distributed photographs to members which highlighted damaged road infrastructure around the Calverley Park Gardens junction with Carrs Corner. In addition to the focus on pedestrianisation of the town centre there also needed to be attention on the pedestrian routes into town. The speeds and oversized HGVs using Calverley Park Gardens and Carrs Corner created a significant hazard. Reducing speed and a fundamental redesign of Carrs Corner was essential. Some mapping programmes incorrectly identified Calverley Park Gardens as the A264 so some sat-navs were directing inappropriate traffic along the road and it was the responsibility of Kent County Council to correct this error.

County Councillor Holden commented on damage caused by HGVs in rural areas and would like to see a strategic review of HGVs which appeared to have outgrown the existing infrastructure, measures could include weight and size restrictions. The balance between economies of scale and quality of life was askew and needed to be redressed. Some European countries protect their standard of living by imposing restrictions on when and where large lorries can go and a similar attitude should be adopted in the UK. County Councillor King asked that a report be brought to a future meeting of the Joint

Transportation Board, no later than the October meeting, considering the proposals outlined by County Councillor Holden. Members agreed.

Councillor Bulman commented that the issues at Carrs Corner had been discussed for a long time, a final resolution with timescales was needed and quickly.

Tracker Item 11 – A26 London Road junction Yew Tree Road, Southborough:

Mr Bourner advised members that the project had been split into two with upgrades to the traffic signals and footways at the Yew Tree Road junction ongoing overnight and nearing completion. Phase two would look at the junction of Pembury Road and Halls Hole Road and was covered in detail later in the agenda. County Councillor King asked that once works at Yew Tree Road were complete officers undertake an analysis and report to the next Joint Transportation Board meeting on the effectiveness of the improvements. Councillor Scott added that an analysis of vehicles using the access road alongside the traffic lights to jump the queue should be included.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the comments made during the debate, the Tunbridge Wells Tracker be noted.

LOCAL GROWTH FUND FUNDING ALLOCATION

TB34/15 Vicki Hubert, Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent County Council, introduced the report and advised that funding was left over from the A26/Yew Tree Road scheme. It was important to retain this funding in Tunbridge Wells so the A26/A264 route study recently completed had been used to identify suitable improvement sites, the forerunner being the Pembury Road/Halls Hole Road junction. Kent County Council would be presenting proposals to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership for a decision and would keep the Joint Transportation Board informed.

In response to a question from County Councillor Hoare, Ms Hubert clarified that the proposal was for a roundabout to replace the traffic lights at the junction. The results of the route studies had facilitated a small scale transport model which suggested that the proposed scheme would be effective. The cost of the studies had been met from the scheme funding, the exact amount was not known.

County Councillor Hoare asked what was involved with the land surveying as the cost seems high compared to the construction costs. Ms Hubert advised that there were significant land level differences and stairs through the site which would require diverting.

Councillor Bulman commented that this was an urgent issue and that the implications for Cornford Lane should be taken into account so that a complete solution could be achieved at this junction.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

DRAFT BOROUGH CYCLING STRATEGY 2016-2020

TB35/15 Bartholomew Wren, Economic Development Officer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:

- The Strategy had been prepared following a six-week period of public consultation which concluded in November 2015.
- Feedback received indicated a strong level of support with a lack of infrastructure and road safety concerns identified as the main barriers to cycling.
- Significant support was received for 20mph speed limits in appropriate areas to support safer cycling.
- A full consultation feedback report was included at appendix M to the report.
- Whilst there had been no feedback which would require a fundamental change to the Strategy, several routes had been amended in response to specific comments.
- Alongside the Strategy several infrastructure projects were being progressed, including: design work for infrastructure improvements to the A26 and 21st Century Way; A21 non-motorised users route and connections to Tunbridge Wells Hospital; and increased cycle parking at Tunbridge Wells and High Brooms Stations.
- The Strategy should be considered as a starting point for promoting cycling in the borough and having a strategy put partners in a stronger position when seeking funding.

Mr Paul Mason had registered to speak on behalf of the Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group.

Mr Mason highlighted that there had been a continual degradation of public spaces and a reduction to the quality of life by ever increasing traffic. The Cycling Strategy was a solution. The issues at hand were not the details of particular routes but broader issues of vision, choice and finances. The vision was simple and that was to bequeath a borough that was free of congestion and pollution and that was safe and vibrant. The current Transport Strategy was primarily concerned with motor vehicles or walking, cycling provided additional choice. Numerous polls had delivered overwhelming support for a huge increase in cycling infrastructure and evidence showed that where safe cycling was available it was used. 60 per cent of all journeys in Britain were less than five miles and 90 per cent of traffic in Tunbridge Wells was internal. The choice of cycling was currently being denied. Without such a Strategy it would be impossible to tap into sources of funding. The duelling of the A21 was costing £70million, for the same amount 150 miles of safe, segregated, high quality cycling infrastructure could be made.

Councillor Backhouse commented that the 21st Century Way had been made possible through Section 106 contributions and so having a Strategy would make it much easier to obtain further such money in future. Through the Planning process it should become expected that people wishing to develop in the town should contribute to cycling schemes.

Councillor Scott added his support for the Strategy and warned of the scale of the task. A big swing towards cycling would be needed to have an impact and so some measure of success should be part of the outcomes from the Strategy.

County Councillor Holden welcomed the report and added that routes between rural areas should also be included.

County Councillor Hoare also supported the Strategy but felt that it should go further. He highlighted comments made by Skinners School whereby they support cycling but felt it was impractical given the safety concerns on St. John's Road. This was a widely held view and overcoming it would require more radical proposals.

Parish Councillor Mackonochie echoed the comments of County Councillor Holden and added that cycling infrastructure should be referenced in the proposed report on HGV access as rural cycle-ways should be away from the main lorry routes.

Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, commented that the A26 route was a top priority and initial design work was underway facilitated by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The safety concerns were acknowledge and the best possible solution would be sought.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the Board supports the Final Draft Cycling Strategy for adoption by the Cabinet of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

UPDATE ON 20MPH WORKING GROUP

- TB36/15 Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- Since the request at the October meeting of the Joint Transportation Board work had progressed on introducing 20mph speed limits in the borough.
 - Other authorities who had introduced such zones had been contacted, including Lancashire County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council.
 - Key local stakeholders had been identified.
 - A working group had been established and the first meeting was held in January 2016 to further explore the issues with a second meeting due in March. It was agreed that a detailed business case would be prepared for the April meeting of the Joint Transportation Board.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

PARKING STRATEGY 2016-2026

- TB37/15 Rosemarie Bennett, Parking Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- A draft Strategy was consulted on in 2015 and was based on the knowledge that many parking related issued required a more holistic, long term approach.

- Four key objectives had been identified which were explained in section 4 of the Strategy.
- Most of the consultation feedback came from resident permit holders whose main complaint was summarised as having to pay for a permit to allow everyone else to park for free while they have the search of space. While some were calling for resident only parking at all times, a majority would be satisfied with resident only parking at key times of the day so spaces were free for residents when needed and provided short stay parking during the day.
- The Strategy also sought to align restrictions within zones to eliminate confusion and reduce unnecessary traffic circulation.
- Other concerns raised were footway parking and general congestions. The Strategy proposed a number of measures, some of which would need to be delivered in partnership with Kent County Council.
- All the actions proposed by the Strategy were summarised and cross-referenced against the objectives in the Implementation Programme at the end of the Strategy. Most actions would need separate consultation with any objections being reviewed by the Joint Transportation Board.
- Any recommendations from the Joint Transportation Board to be made at this meeting would be included in the report for adoption by the Cabinet of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council at its meeting in April 2016.

Councillor Scott noted that the Strategy sought to 'meet' the current and future parking needs, however, there should be an attempt to influence future parking requirements by including Parking into the wider Transport Strategy. The increasing rate of vehicle ownership was unsustainable and there needed to be a greater increase in the number of people using alternative modes of transport.

Councillor Alex Lewis-Grey, Borough Councillor for Culverden Ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Lewis-Grey warmly welcomed the Strategy and supported Councillor Scott's comments. He was pleased that the anecdotal evidence received by councillors on a regular basis was backed up by the data in the report. In reference to the map of parking zones in the town centre, attention was drawn to the gap between zones B and C which generated a significant number of complaints, particularly from Park Road, and it was asked that this be considered when the zones were expanded. Expediency in making changes was called for as the long timescales for approving traffic regulation orders was often not understood by residents. Councillor Lewis-Grey called for the Strategy to include an analysis of enforcement of both parking and speed, perhaps as part of the congestion and traffic flow section, and a greater utilisation of residents permits in multi-story car parks rather than residents having to buy the more expensive season tickets. The creative use of parking restrictions and other traffic calming measures was suggested as a means of reducing speeds.

Mrs Bennett agreed to consider the proposal to allow residents' permits in car parks and to relook at a parking consultation in Park Road. In terms of influencing parking needs it had been suggested that the number of permits available per household could be restricted to suggest to those who do not

need more than one car to consider reducing the number of vehicles. Other measures would need to be considered in partnership with other strategies.

Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, commented that the Transport Strategy and Cycling Strategy sought to promote various alternatives to car travel which should reduce the need for parking. The development of the new Local Plan would also consider the needs of a growing population.

County Councillor Scholes welcomed the report noting its comprehensiveness and commented that it took a long time when implementing parking measures. Each change required a separate traffic regulation order which involved consultation and a lengthy process.

Councillor Backhouse agreed with the need to influence parking needs and commented that in Planning terms any new development had to provide suitable parking. However, much of the housing in Tunbridge Wells was Victorian and Edwardian terrace which were designed without consideration for vehicles. People moving into the area must have reasonable expectations when purchasing such a house.

County Councillor Holden commented that he hoped there would not be an attempt to control the number of vehicles a household may have.

Councillor Bulman was disappointed to note that a more user friendly form of parking charging was not being considered for the Royal Victoria Place and that take-up of Pay-by-Phone was not proving popular. He asked why Pay-on-Exit was not being considered. Furthermore, charging for on-street parking was not supported as it only served to raise revenue and not control parking.

Mrs Bennett advised that the Cabinet had approved a barrier-less Pay-on-Exit system for the Royal Victoria Place Car Park which was the same system in use at Great Hall Car Park. Barriers were not suitable for Royal Victoria Place as queuing already occurred and barriers would exacerbate the problem further. Councillor Bulman commented that the proportion of people using Pay-on-Exit at Great Hall Car Park was quite low and asked how that system was expected to cope with the greater number of people wanting Pay-on-Exit at Royal Victoria Place Car Park. He also did not accept that the use of barriers would cause the problems suggested. Mrs Bennett advised that the Car Park had been independently surveyed and did not meet the requirements for a barrier system. The Pay-on-Exit system at Great Hall Car Park accounted for 30 per cent of transactions and was increasing. A further 30 per cent of transactions were using Pay-by-Phone. People using Pay-on-Exit tend to park for longer meaning that the car park was usually at full capacity so there was not much scope to increase Pay-on-Exit further. Royal Victoria Place Car Park had a far greater capacity to cope with higher volumes and it was expected therefore that the proportion of people using Pay-on-Exit there would be higher. Councillor Bulman was dissatisfied with the dismissal of a barrier system which had been supported by a number of retailers.

County Councillor Scholes suggested that the Board could endorse the Strategy but with the caveat that the Cabinet review the use of barriers. County Councillor Holden agreed and strongly supported the use of Pay-on-Exit.

County Councillor King, brought the discussion to a conclusion and summarised the options. There being a consensus, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the Board endorse the Parking Strategy 2016-2026 subject to the reservations expressed by Councillor Bulman and supported by the Board being taken into consideration by the Cabinet.

PARKING CONSULTATION IN HAWKENBURY

- TB38/15 Nick Baldwin, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- The report followed an informal consultation undertaken in the Hawkenbury area related to parking issues since the occupation of the old Land Registry building by AXA PPP.
 - The intention was to take on comments received and consider potential changes to alleviate some of the worst problems.
 - The report summarised the feedback received by the survey and recommended that it form the basis of more specific proposals for a further informal consultation ahead of a statutory consultation.
 - The Board were asked to endorse this course of action.

Councillor Tracy Moore, Borough Councillor for Park Ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore noted that the results of the survey was consistent with her own findings from when she had conducted a residents' survey shortly before being elected. The number of responses clearly demonstrated the level of concern, particularly with the prospect of an enlarged AXA PPP. The view expressed in paragraph 15 of the report which explained that residents had no more legal right than any other road users to park on a public highway was not a view held by residents nor elected representatives and the staff of one employer should not be allowed to affect residents ability to park near their homes. Although the results of the consultation were inconclusive, members were urged to support the recommendation to progress this matter.

Councillor Bulman agreed that this was a key matter for the residents of Hawkenbury, it had recently been reported that parking was often not only inconsiderate but sometimes dangerous. This issue had been a problem for a long time and it was expected to be exacerbated by the forthcoming enlargement of AXA PPP. Urgency was called for.

County Councillor Scholes supported the comments of the previous speakers and added that parking had been a constant problem even with the Land Registry before AXA PPP. It was a regular source of complaints and urgent action was needed.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the proposed course of action as set out in the report be endorsed.

TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER PROCESS

- TB39/15 Nick Baldwin, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- The report had been prepared with the intention of clarifying the various roles within the Traffic Regulation Order approval process.
 - The potential for confusion existed where there was a difference of opinion and a matter was referred to Kent County Council as highways authority for final decision. Members of the public may incorrectly believe that a decision had been made by the Joint Transportation Board. Therefore, it was proposed to make a slight change so that objectors were advised of the full process prior to the matter being reviewed by the Board.

County Councillor Scholes commented that elected members should not be excluded from the process. Mr Baldwin confirmed that it was not the intention to remove members from the process. Currently if objections were made to a Traffic Regulation Order the matter would come before the Joint Transportation Board and the objectors would be advised of the outcome. There was often the perception that the matter was final. The proposed change meant that officers would take a view and feedback to objectors who would be advised that the Joint Transportation Board would be consulted. If there was a difference of opinion between the Board and officers then the matter would be referred to Kent County Council for a final decision. County Councillor Scholes commented that this meant officers of Kent Highways would make a decision and reiterated that this prevented members from being involved in the final decision. Members often had relevant experience or local knowledge and there was no opportunity for Members to express those views should they feel strongly on the matter.

County Councillor King proposed that in the event of a difference of opinion the matter should be referred to the Kent County Council Cabinet Committee. County Council Scholes added that it was important for members of the Joint Transportation Board to be aware if a differing course of action was being proposed by the officers.

Councillor Stanyer supported the position outlined by County Councillor Scholes and noted his dissatisfaction that the view of the Joint Transportation Board had been overruled by officers. He had referred to the Council's Constitution and in all cases there was a strong principle of Member's making decisions. County Councillor Scholes noted that the Joint Transportation Board only had an advisory capacity. County Councillor King acknowledged the fact but commented that the matter should be referred to either the Cabinet of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council or the Kent County Council Cabinet Committee. County Councillor Scholes advised that as the highways authority the matter should reside with Kent County Council.

County Councillor Holden supported the principle that the final decision should involve Members. County Councillor Scholes added that there needed to be some mechanism whereby Members could appeal if it was still felt strongly after further professional advice. County Councillor Holden noted that the Kent County Council Cabinet Committee was itself not a decision making body therefore any recommendations would ultimately pass to the Cabinet Member, a process that was already in use on other matters.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, brought the discussion to a conclusion and summarised the debate. There being a consensus, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the Board requests in the event of the Joint Transportation Board taking a different view to the officer's recommendation in the matter of a Traffic Regulation Order, it be referred to the Kent County Council Cabinet Committee for recommendation to the Cabinet Member.

WAITING RESTRICTIONS ON NORFOLK ROAD

TB40/15 Nick Baldwin, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, explained that this item had been the impetus for the previous item and that it had been expected that the Kent County Council Parking Manager would be present to explain the process. He introduced the report which included the following comments:

- At the site visit to Norfolk Road it had been explained to all present that where the officer's decision was disputed the matter would be referred to the Cabinet Member at Kent County Council.
- The Parking Manager had found that the restrictions as marked were appropriate for highway safety purposes.
- Should Members strongly be opposed to the outcome then the matter would be referred to the Cabinet Member who would also be made aware of the resolution of the previous item.

County Council Scholes commented that the owner of the property in question had since sold the house advertising an additional parking space. County Councillor King noted the debate on the previous item and sought Members' agreement that the matter be referred. County Councillor Scholes added that if the Kent Parking Manager had been in attendance and could explain the reasons for the decision it would allow Members to make a judgement. Councillor Scott commented that there had been no explanation as to why this scheme was now considered to be safe when previously it had not been.

County Councillor King advised that the Kent Parking Manager would be invited to attend a future meeting and asked Members whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted subject to further discussion.

SAFE AND SENSIBLE STREET LIGHTING UPDATE

TB41/15 Sue Kinsella, Street Lighting Manager, Kent County Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:

- The report provided an update on phase one of the safe and sensible street lighting project which was primarily concerned with the trial switch-off sights.
- Of the original nine trial sites, seven had progressed with one site being excluded from the trial and one site being converted to part-night switch-off.
- The trial sites were switched-off in June 2014 and the number of incidents and enquiries monitored.

- There had been a number of enquiries in respect of London Road, Southborough and subsequently these lights were switched back on.

Each of the trial sites as detailed in the report were then reviewed. No comments from Members contrary to the Officer's recommendations were received.

County Councillor Scholes noted that Langton Road, Speldhurst had been identified as suitable for part-night operation and asked whether this included a stretch of road where there had been a particularly bad accident and a number of smaller incidents. Chris Hatcher, Senior Project Engineer, Kent County Council, confirmed that it did not. County Councillor Scholes added that there were regular problems with badgers and deer in that area so he was concerned about a reduction in lighting. Mr Hatcher advised that an update on the LED Project deferred from earlier in the meeting would address some concerns as it was expected that part-night operation would end.

Mr Hatcher provided an update on the LED Street Lighting project deferred from Tracker Item 7 which included the following comments:

- In 2014/15 Kent County Council obtained funding to convert all street lights to LED which would be connected to a central management system so that they can be controlled remotely.
- A contract was awarded in December 2015 for the installation and maintenance of all 120,000 street lights owned by Kent County Council.
- Works were due to commence in March 2016 with residential roads, minor roads and those with part-night lighting being converted first, due to complete May 2017. Main traffic routes and town centres would follow.
- The use of part-night lighting was subject to a consultation which had completed and a report presented to the Cabinet Committee for consideration. That meeting, held on 12 March 2016, resolved that once a road had been converted to LED it would be set to 'optimal lighting' and part-night operation would end.
- Optimal lighting would be determined on a case-by-case basis with low traffic roads likely to be dimmed whereas high traffic roads could be run on full power.
- Tunbridge Wells would be in the third tranche of works, expected to start in the Autumn of 2016.

Councillor Backhouse commented that eight roads in Sherwood were subject to part-night lighting and there had been a spate of crime. He asked whether he could now advise residents that full-time lighting would be returned. Mr Hatcher confirmed that it would.

County Councillor Holden asked what consideration had been given to the colour of the light. Ms Kinsella advised that advice had been sought and various impact assessments conducted after which a neutral white had been selected. There would be a marked difference between the old sodium yellow lights which dispersed the light more widely. The new lights would direct the light to the ground, there would be less light intrusion and would aid colour recognition. A warm-white light had been chosen rather than the harsher blue-white lights. County Councillor Holden asked whether this would result in less light pollution. Ms Kinsella confirmed that it would.

Councillor Backhouse advised Members that an LED light was in operation and could be viewed on Thornfield Gardens in Tunbridge Wells. It appeared to be welcomed by the residents.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the comments in respect of each trial switch-off site be noted.

HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

TB42/15 Councillor Tracy Moore, Borough Councillor for Park Ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore was disappointed to note that the construction of a build-out on Bayhall Road at the entrance to Dunorlan Park had been completed as she had intended to propose an alternative. A build-out at the current location was poorly sited, would not help safety and would do little to reduce speed on the road. A zebra crossing at the main entrance to the park closest to St. Peter's Church would be more suitable to provide better access to the park, increase safety and reduce speed on Bayhall Road.

Earl Bourner, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, Kent County Council, agreed to take the matter to other officers for full comment. County Councillor Scholes commented that funds may be available through his member's grant. County Councillor King asked that he, County Councillor Scholes and Councillor Moore receive a full response by email.

Councillor Bulman commented that there were several items he would have liked to have seen in the Highway Works Programme for 2015/16 but accepted their omission on the understanding that they would form part of the programme for 2016/17. He sought reassurance that west Kent received its fair share of resources. There were a number of roads which were in urgent need of repair.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES FOR TUNBRIDGE WELLS

TB43/15 Councillor David Scott introduced the report which included the following comments:

- The objective of the report was to include the concept of driverless vehicles in all of the transportation planning of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council.
- It had been reported in the LA Times that driverless vehicles were expected to enter the mainstream within four to five years. Similarly, The Economist had reported that driverless vehicles were expected to be as transformative to modern life as the mobile phone.

- There were many examples whereby driverless vehicles were already on the streets and several trials were underway in the United Kingdom.
- There was a good example in use in the Netherlands where there was a driverless vehicle route between Wageningen and Ede, two towns not dissimilar to Royal Tunbridge Wells and Pembury.
- The detailed report demonstrated the amount of work that had been done and it was hoped that it would raise awareness of the type of technology that was available.
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council was already leading the way in thinking about driverless vehicles when considering plans for the central spine of the town, initially to run alongside other forms of public transport.
- Members were asked to endorse the principles outlined in the recommendations of the report.

County Councillor Holden identified a recent press report which stated that driverless vehicles were in use in Bristol, Greenwich, South East London, Coventry and Milton Keynes. He asked what the experience had been. Councillor Scott noted that these were a variety of trials underway to test different uses of the vehicles. The report which had been prepared for Tunbridge Wells identified three potential uses where they could be on pedestrianised areas, on roads or on designated pathways. The trial in Milton Keynes was looking at use of driverless vehicles on a pedestrian route from the station to main shopping area, approximately the distance from Royal Victoria Place to the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells. In Greenwich the trial was as an alternative mass-transit system in the New Town but they were looking to expand it. Oxford trials were at a very early stage. Each trial was at a different stage of development. Councillor Scott added that the Borough Council was in discussion with Catapult to get their advice on potential uses on the system in Tunbridge Wells.

Councillor Woodward supported the recommendation and noted that to not consider such technology would be blinkered. This provided a good opportunity to make effective use of resources, improve the environment and be a draw for visitors.

County Councillor King commented that people would be remiss to not take heed of increasing congestion and potential solutions and noted that recommendations three and four called upon the relevant authorities to consider these proposals. County Councillor Scholes warned against not setting specific actions to ensure progress. There needed to be a follow-up report outlining what had happened to progress this matter.

The Chairman, County Councillor King, summarised the options. There being a consensus, Members were asked whether the resolutions were agreed.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Board endorse the following recommendations to decision makers:
 - A. To note and include the possibility of self-driving technology within the planning of all changes to roads, pedestrian ways and transportation infrastructure - as a key requirement for the future;

- B. To include the assessment of the need for improvements to all forms of movement of people, goods and vehicles as part of the fundamental infrastructure of the town. This should also be included in Planning Strategy documents currently being considered and/or developed;
 - C. To recommend to Kent County Council that full consideration of new technology be given to help solve transportation problems, particularly in relation to dealing with the severe congestion issues of Tunbridge Wells;
 - D. To recommend to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council that it leads a project, in the first instance, to fully consider a transportation strategy for the central spine of Tunbridge Wells. This study to include the use of self-driving technology. Thereafter TWBC should consider the possible use of new technology elsewhere in the town and surrounding areas;
2. That the Board requests the respective officers apprise their authorities and provide a progress report for the October meeting of the Joint Transportation Board outlining progress made and actions taken; and
 3. That the Board requests the Kent County Council Cabinet Member be briefed on the above recommendations and a meeting arranged between him, the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and Councillor Scott to be held prior to the October meeting of the Joint Transportation Board.

TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

TB44/15 The Board considered items for future meetings and comments were made in respect of the proposals as follows:

Devolution of Highway Responsibilities to Parishes:

County Councillor Holden advised Members of a recent discussion with highways officers during which it was noted that some aspects of local highways responsibility, such as salt bins and informal passing places on country lanes, could be devolved to Parishes who had the required local knowledge. There should be consideration of what aspects could be devolved and the implications of doing so.

Parish Councillor Mackonochie agreed and noted that cooperation had worked well in the past particularly in the case of salt and sand which had been supplied to Parish Councils for use as necessary. It had been suggested that a fund could be put aside for Parishes as they would know local priorities.

Councillor Backhouse supported the suggestion and commented that devolution was much discussed currently and there could be some movement of highway responsibilities down the chain in future.

Transportation Implications of Changes to the Town Centre:

Councillor Scott noted that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council was proposing changes to the central spine of the Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre and there should be consideration of the transportation implications.

Use of Traffic Lights:

Councillor Bulman reminded members that a previously agreed report into the perceived over-use of traffic lights was still outstanding.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

TB45/15 The next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board would be held on Monday 18 April 2016 commencing at 6pm.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm.