

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MONDAY, 20 JULY 2015

MINUTES of the Joint Transportation Board held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS on Monday, 20 July 2015

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

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors McDermott, Moore, Munn, Rankin and Tompsett

OFFICERS: Nick Baldwin (Senior Traffic Engineer), Hilary Smith (Economic Development Manager), Bartholomew Wren (Economic Development Officer), David Candlin (Head of Economic Development), Steven Noad (Traffic Engineer, Kent Highways & Transportation), Earl Bournier (District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, Kent Highways & Transportation), Vicki Hubert (Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent Highways & Transportation), Carol Valentine (Highway Manager (West), Kent Highways & Transportation) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

TB1/15 The Chairman, County Councillor King, had advised that his arrival would be delayed. The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, was in the chair.

APOLOGIES

TB2/15 Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Davies, Holden and Scholes.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

TB3/15 There were no declarations of interest.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

TB4/15 Councillor Tracy Moore had registered to speak on minute TB6/15, TB7/15, TB8/15, TB9/15, TB10/15 and TB11/15. Councillor Bill Hills had registered to speak on minute TB8/15. Councillor Graham Munn had registered to speak on minute TB8/15. Councillor Catherine Rankin had registered to speak on minute TB11/15.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING DATED 20 APRIL 2015

TB5/15 There were no amendments proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting dated 20 April 2015 be approved as a correct record.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS TRACKER

TB6/15 The Board considered the Tunbridge Wells Tracker as at 20 July 2015. The following comments were made in respect of the Tracker Items as follows:

Tracker Item 1 – Crescent Road crossing: Steven Noad, Traffic Engineer, Kent County Council, advised the Board that further to the site visit there had been a round of Local Transport Plan bids where funding had been secured to progress to design stage on the proposed traffic refuge. Further progress reports would be made through the Tracker.

Tracker Item 3 – Longfield Road and North Farm: Councillor Backhouse noted the positive feedback received from local residents regarding reduced congestion on Longfield Road and asked whether there was an expected completion date for the works. Mr Noad confirmed that the current estimated completion date was Autumn 2015. Councillor Neve added his satisfaction that the traffic appeared to be running much more smoothly as a result of the removal of the traffic lights.

Tracker Item 5 – King George V Hill verges: Country Councillor Hoare noted satisfaction that works were progressing. Councillor Neve added his pleasure that the work was finally being done and noted the incorrect spelling of Neve in the update column.

Tracker Item 7 – Grosvenor Bridge repairs: County Councillor Hoare referenced recent news paper reports of estimated delays of up to four months upon closure of the Grosvenor Bridge for repairs and asked what was being done to minimise disruption, suggested actions could include double shifts, Saturday working and possible night working if quiet. Earl Bournier, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, Kent County Council, advised that available responses were likely to be limited by the unique circumstances and that the four month period was the worst case scenario. Concerns would be fed back to Tony Ambrose in the Structural Team and a full response returned to Members by email.

Councillor Backhouse added that whilst newspaper headlines about disruption might be inconvenient, the consequences of the bridge collapsing would be terrible. The Planning Committee had visited the site and the need for repairs was evident. Councillor Bulman agreed that repairs were undoubtedly needed and that all effort should be made to reduce the impact of the work.

Tracker Item 8 – Major York's Road and Langton Road crossings: Mr Noad updated the Board to confirm that funding from the Local Transport Plan had been approved for feasibility studies into pedestrian crossings on Major York's Road and on Langton Road near St. Paul's Church. Mr Noad added that proposals for widening the access to the proposed crossing on Langton Road to allow for a traffic refuge was being re-looked at following tentative agreement from Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons Conservators.

Mr John Barber had registered to speak on behalf of the Friends of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons.

Mr Barber confirmed that he was grateful that the situation with regards to the funding for the crossings had been clarified and was pleased that both had

been successful. Mr Barber added that the crossing at Major York's Road was part of National Cycle Route 18 and asked that a toucan crossing be considered to demonstrate support for sustainable transport and the objectives of the Borough Transportation and Cycling Strategies currently under consideration. Mr Barber asked that both crossings be considered as a single project and suggested that negotiations with the Commons Conservators to release land for the Langton Road crossing might be more fruitful if both crossings were part of the same package.

Mr Noad thanked Mr Barber for his helpful comments and advised that initially the feasibility studies would need to be treated as separate projects but that Mr Barber's comment in respect of negotiations with the Commons Conservators was noted. Mr Noad suggested that early indications for a crossing on Major York's Road would suggest a zebra crossing as most likely but that the feasibility study would determine what options were available and financially possible. Updates would be provided at future meetings of the Joint Transportation Board.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Board requests an update from Tony Ambrose, Kent County Council, by email on what is being done to reduce disruption during works on Grosvenor Bridge.
2. That the Tunbridge Wells Tracker be noted.

REPORTS OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS

TB7/15 Mr Roy Thompson had registered to speak on behalf of Grove Bowling Club.

Mr Thompson reminded members that at a previous meeting the Board had agreed a proposal for a 13 metre no waiting restriction on the north-west side of Norfolk Road from the junction with Grove Hill Gardens and recommended to Kent County Council that it should be implemented accordingly. Kent County Council accepted the recommendation and on 19 September 2014 published the order for the restriction to be put in place. Subsequently only 7 metres of restrictions were installed. Mr Thompson advised that Grove Bowling Club had been actively pursuing said restrictions for over two years but were not informed or consulted on the reduction. In correspondence with Nick Baldwin, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Grove Bowling Club was informed that representations had been received from the householder at 31 Norfolk Road who did not wish the yellow lines to be extended across their driveway and the Council was empowered to make minor changes to parking orders. Mr Thompson considered that a reduction of 47 per cent was not minor and that the householder at 31 Norfolk Road had been allowed to effectively create a private parking space on the road. The reduction in the parking restrictions allowed the continued obstruction of access to the Bowling Club; the alleviation of which had been part of the original purpose of the restrictions. Mr Thompson made the further point that he saw little benefit in the democratic process if decisions can be significantly amended by individual officers, such behaviour undermined the principles of democracy and produced an unsatisfactory outcome.

Mr Baldwin advised the Board that the original proposal sought to extend the restriction on Norfolk Road to ensure access was maintained to the driveway, as a courtesy to the householder, as was routinely done where a driveway is close to an existing restriction. The householder subsequently advised that they did not want the extension. The complaint from Grove Bowling Club was regarding cars parked in such a way as they extend onto Grove Hill Gardens and not about parking further along Norfolk Road. The yellow lines as provided prevented parking on the junction and both the Borough and County Council were satisfied that the markings were appropriate for the circumstances. The purpose of including the restrictions in Norfolk Road in the report for this meeting was to ensure the defined length matched the situation on the ground.

Members reviewed diagrams showing the position of markings on Norfolk Road. Councillor Neve asked why double yellow lines were used when single white lines were more usual where there was a dropped kerb. Mr Baldwin confirmed that advisory lines were available and could be retrofitted where appropriate, however, where new yellow lines were being installed they were often extended across driveways to ensure access is kept clear. Mr Baldwin offered further explanation of the diagrams to show the situation before the new yellow lines were installed in which access to the driveway had been moved resulting in cars parking beyond the access point and extending into Grove Hill Gardens causing an obstruction. Mr Baldwin reiterated that the purpose of the restrictions was to prevent parking on the junction of Norfolk Road and Grove Hill Gardens which was achieved with the present markings.

County Councillor Hoare noted that Mr Thompson's current complaint revolves around the fact that an order was not implemented as agreed and asked why. Mr Baldwin advised that such orders are often adjusted to deal with situations on site. The lines, as painted, extended beyond the point necessary for road safety purposes and the Council was satisfied that the markings were appropriate, the lines were simply not extended further across the driveway in accordance with the householder's wishes.

Councillor Bulman sought to clarify that an objection to the restrictions had been raised by the householder and there had been an amendment in response to that objection. Mr Baldwin confirmed that this was the case and acknowledged that the objection had been received as part of a wider consultation but had not been specifically associated with the particular circumstances. Had the objection been realised earlier in the process the original order would not have extended across the driveway in the first place. This new order sought to rectify the situation.

County Councillor Oakford noted that he understood that yellow lines were often objected to where they cross driveways and commented that the impact on the Grove Bowling Club was not apparent.

At the Vice-Chairman's discretion Mr Thompson responded to explain that vehicles exiting the Bowling Club car park intending to turn along Norfolk Road find a tight turn obstructed by vehicles parked along the east side of Norfolk Road. Mr Thompson added that during the consultation prior to the original order, restrictions had been proposed for both sides of Norfolk Road and the Bowling Club had agreed not to object to dropping the restrictions on the east side in return for assurances that restrictions would extend for 13 metres on the west side.

Councillor Neve commented that the householder would have paid a significant amount and obtained due permission to drop the kerb to maintain access to their property and was therefore entitled to object to the yellow lines across their driveway. Mr Baldwin confirmed that should someone park their vehicle on a single white line no enforcement action could be taken except where an obstruction had occurred which would be a Police matter. Yellow lines would mean the Council could enforce restrictions and was intended to simplify the situation; but unfortunately changing the markings in response to the householder's legitimate request had unintentionally complicated the matter.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, drew the debate to a conclusion and summarised the options. Councillor Stanyer commented that there were clearly issues with the decision which warranted further consideration and proposed that the recommendations be agreed with the exception of Norfolk Road to allow a review. A separate report to be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board.

Councillor Tracy Moore, a Borough Member for Park ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore commented that while canvassing for election she had passed concerns relating to cars parked on the blind corner of Ferndale around the junction with Rossdale to the relevant County Councillor which had ultimately resulted in the proposed double yellow lines. Since being elected and the publication of the Traffic Regulation Order many more comments had been received opposed to the restrictions. While it was still thought that double yellow lines were appropriate there were concerns of unintended consequences, specifically that removing the parked cars might actually speed up traffic on the blind bend. Councillor Moore felt that safety was of paramount importance and recommended to the Joint Transportation Board that if parking restrictions on Ferndale were agreed there should also be traffic calming measures. Councillor Moore added that having attended the public meeting at Skinners' School recently, a 20mph speed limit should be considered for the whole of Ferndale, not just the areas around the school, as many children attending St. James' School walk the length of Ferndale. Double yellow lines, a 20mph speed limit and traffic calming measures would ensure safety on a busy residential road which was a very fast rat-run.

Mr Baldwin advised that the proposal had arisen as a result of several complaints but since the publication of the consultation only one comment had been received in support of the proposal which also stated reservations and there had been four strong objections. Mr Baldwin reported that during the consultation he had inspected the site and observed only light parking which contributed to doubt over the necessity and extent of the proposed restrictions. The restrictions were longer than originally intended due to difficulties locating the end points where cars would inevitably park. Mr Baldwin suggested deferring a decision on Ferndale pending a review.

Councillor Neve suggested a much shorter yellow line located right on the corner could allow cars to pass safely on the blind corner but not encourage cars to speed past by removing all the parking. An example on St James' Park was noted where a two metre double yellow line had been successful.

Councillor Backhouse was pleased to note that the previous hesitation to deviating from the traditional 30mph or 50mph limits appeared to be

weakening, possibly in light of the Twenty's Plenty campaign. Ferndale, as an entirely residential area with lots of children, would be ideal for a 20mph zone throughout. Councillor Backhouse supported deferring a decision on Ferndale if the review would be conducted considering a 20mph zone.

Councillor Bulman asked what the legal implications of a 20mph zone would be. Steven Noad, Traffic Engineer, Kent County Council, confirmed that there was greater flexibility in considering 20mph zones but warned that implementation was expensive and funding was lacking. A Traffic Order would be required but just changing a few signs to show 20mph would have a very limited effect on the behaviour of drivers. The usual traffic calming measures such as speed humps were less favoured now as they cause problems for emergency vehicles and conscientious drivers whereas they can be negated by inconsiderate drivers who would continue to be inconsiderate.

County Councillor Oakford made the point that where parking is removed it usually had the effect of speeding up the traffic as there were less natural obstacles. Councillor Neve suggested that the residents of Ferndale, Rosedale and Humboldt Court be given the options, spelling out the pros and cons of a) retaining the parking, b) installing double yellow lines and c) installing short yellow lines on just the corners. By including the residents the Council would be seen as proactive rather than reactionary, similar to what had been done on King George V Hill.

Councillor Scott commented that attitudes to 20mph were changing but would take time. Campaigns around safety belts and drink-driving took effort to start and time to take effect but have largely been proven successful in changing behaviour. If the Council made the change to 20mph then behaviours would change in time with only light enforcement. Councillor Bulman suggested that some people would always exceed the speed limit but if the limit was 20mph they were more likely to be going slower than if the limit was 30mph. Councillor Woodward questioned whether there was an underlying priority guiding decisions of this nature. If not then that priority should be safety and any decision should be around making things safer. Councillor Bulman noted that he hoped that safety was always the highest priority but that any decision would be a balance, any action in one area could unintentionally affect another. By making parking more difficult it was hoped that it made the area safer, but if that was not the case then a different decision should be made.

Mr Baldwin commented briefly on each of the proposed restrictions in the report and noted generally favourable responses. None of the proposals had received the five objections required to trigger any formal action by the Joint Transportation Board.

County Councillor Oakford commented, in respect of Birchwood Avenue/Bounds Oak Way/London Road proposal, that much of the problem appeared to be caused by cars parking around a commuter bus stop at the end of the road on Mondays to Fridays. Could it be considered that the restrictions only apply on weekdays; freeing up the spaces for residents and visitors at weekends. Mr Baldwin commented that the proposal had been made based on a number of complaints about both the parking for the commuter coach and the care home on London Road. Staff and visitors to the care home presumably used the spaces at weekends but this hadn't been specifically tested during the consultation. Mr Baldwin warned that the site in question had been subject to a recent crash and a number of complaints, deferring the matter would delay the order by at least three months. The

Board agreed with a suggestion that County Councillor Oakford and Mr Baldwin review the situation on the road at the weekend and make an appropriate order to their mutual satisfaction which could be agreed outside the meeting.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, summarised the amendments that had been discussed during the debate and asked whether Members supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Board requests a review of restrictions on a) Norfolk Road and b) Ferndale/Rossdale and a report on the final decision for the meeting in October 2015.
2. That the Board requests a review of parking conditions on Birchwood Avenue/Bounds Oak Way/London Road at the weekend and for Nick Baldwin, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in consultation with County Councillor Oakford to issue an appropriate order.
3. That the proposed waiting restrictions as outlined in the report, with the above exceptions, be supported.

REPORTS OF KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

BOROUGH TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TB8/15 Mr Howard Mackenzie had registered to speak on behalf of Friends of Cornford Lane.

Mr Mackenzie reminded Members that at a previous meeting the Joint Transportation Board was advised that no further work was to be undertaken on Cornford Lane pending the Transport Strategy which was under consultation at the time. Now that the Transport Strategy had arrived Mr Mackenzie was pleased to note that problems on Cornford Road were recognised within the document but disappointed that there was no remedial action likely within the foreseeable future. Had the original plan been carried out, as per the majority of those consulted had indicated, a trial closure of Cornford Road would be half-way through by now and everyone would be much further along in seeing whether the scheme was viable. The cost would have been negligible compared to the cost of the accidents, personal injuries, emergency services responses and degradation of the road surface which had accrued in the intervening time. Mr Mackenzie suggested that the cost of a trial need not be excessive and noted the success of reduced congestion on North Farm as a result of simply using cones. While appreciative of the recognition, the Friends of Cornford Lane could not abide the long timescales proposed in formulating a plan and asked that the matter be kept open and separate to consideration of the Transport Strategy.

Mr Mackenzie asked that a letter previously submitted to Members of the Joint Transportation Board, but so far unanswered, be answered and a further copy of that letter would be provided.

Vicky Hubert, Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent County Council, advised the Board that she had met with members of the Friends of Cornford Lane to discuss the issues. Traffic surveys on Pembury Road which formed part of the overall scheme to reduce congestion in the town were underway. Results, including any impacts on Cornford Lane, would be considered within the next few months.

County Councillor Hoare noted that many of his constituents in Tunbridge Wells East used Cornford Lane for essential local travel and he therefore opposed closure of the lane.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Mr Mackenzie clarified that the Friends of Cornford Lane would like to know how the option to do nothing can be justified considering that Cornford Lane was a designated single track lane being used as a relief road for a major A-Road. Furthermore, that a letter which had been submitted last year be responded to. Mr Mackenzie noted that the Friends of Cornford Lane had been patient in chasing the letter and progress on Cornford Lane since the matter was put in abeyance pending the Borough Transport Strategy but now they were not confident that the Strategy would address the problems in an acceptable timescale. Ms Hubert reiterated that Pembury Road was being looked at and any impacts on Cornford Lane would be considered.

Councillor Bulman summarised to confirm that the strength of opinion and a number of on-site visits had clearly identified a problem but that a mutually agreeable resolution was not so clear. Councillor Bulman stated that he hoped the Friends of Cornford Lane would at least get some confidence that the problem would be addressed in a relatively shorter time frame than might have been expected.

Mr Adrian Berendt had registered to speak on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group and the Twenty's Plenty campaign.

Mr Berendt noted that he was also speaking on behalf of the 180 people who had attended the public meeting at Skinners' School the previous week and who had supported the Borough Transport Strategy and Borough Cycling Strategy. Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group felt that the Cycling Strategy was the only way to achieve the Council's objectives on congestion, parking, sustainable travel and road safety. Given the demographics and relative compactness of the borough, Tunbridge Wells could become a beacon, transforming the town from one of the worst performers in terms of utility cycling into one of the best. The public meeting had wide support for a network of high quality, segregated cycle lanes and a default 20mph speed limit. Mr Berendt was relieved that many of the suggestions of the cycling lobby had been included within the strategy documents but warned of the disappointment that would result if the plans were not to come to fruition. Examples of poor cycling infrastructure were given on Pembury Road, St. John's, North Farm and the non-motorised route of the A21 .

Mr Berendt advised that the public meeting had supported five 'quick wins' and commended them to the Board as follows:

1. That 20mph be the default speed limit on residential roads throughout the Borough;
2. To implement a high quality cycle route along the A26;
3. To complete the 21st Century Way cycle link;
4. To finish the Pembury Road cycle path into town; and

5. To learn from best practice in implementation to include trial closures and infrastructure.

Concern was noted that if trans-borough cycle paths were not to link up with each other and pedestrian access in the centre of town, the traffic reduction on arterial roads would be limited. Secondly, that the existing policy of 20mph zones only around schools was outdated as only 20 per cent of child road accidents occurred en route to and from school. Finally, that the Strategy would be enhanced by the inclusion of specific measurable targets. Overall, the Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group supported both Strategies and believed that they enjoyed widespread public support.

Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, confirmed that the public realm area around Fiveways in the town centre already had 20mph restrictions and it was desired that the public realm be extended. Any extension would also include the link up cycle routes with pedestrian areas of the town centre. Mrs Smith noted that the Implementation Plan included some milestones and that the Council was in discussion with partners to provide the necessary resources to monitor progress regularly.

Councillor Scott gave his support to the comments made by Mr Berendt and stated that he hoped the Strategy would be instrumental in improving safety and reducing speed.

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

Mr Perry welcomed the inclusion of a relief road for Tunbridge Wells in the strategy, albeit not in the immediate future. Anomalies in the population statistics were questioned, the draft strategy had showed estimated population in 2026 as 110,000 which had increased to 129,000 in the final document. Mr Perry noted the traffic flow studies currently underway on A26 St. John's/London Road, A264 Pembury Road and at Carrs Corner and advised that the booming population needed to be taken into account. Tinkering with a few road junctions was unlikely to have a significant enough effect on congestion and so a relief road should be a priority now rather than left for the future. The Town Forum believed that chronic congestion was threatening the economic prosperity of the town therefore 'congestion busting' should be the core of any strategy. Park and Ride schemes were mentioned in the strategy but an alternative needed to be found to the bus based systems which have been rejected as impractical. Mr Perry suggested that innovative solutions could be found by utilising the frequent train services to the town, either from Tonbridge or High Brooms stations or mini-buses based at the new Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Pembury. In concluding Mr Perry offered the Town Forum Transport Group as a resource willing and able to assist in improving transport in Tunbridge Wells.

Ms Hubert advised the Board that the Strategy made references to innovative transport solutions, relief road and improvements to the alternatives to the car. The studies that were underway coupled with the investigation that would be coming in the next year when the Local Plan is reviewed would result in some practical proposals that would be brought back to the Board.

Councillor Scott noted that he supported the Transport Strategy but that various aspects regarding safety and innovative solutions needed to be emphasised.

Councillor Neve commented that he supported the Transport Strategy but felt that it lacked clearly identified tasks which could be checked off as progress was made. Goals for the short, medium and long terms would be helpful in demonstrating progress to the average resident who may not be inclined to read the full document. Specific actions such as the Cornford Lane issue should be short term over the next five years, other issues could be medium term or five to ten years, long term issues over more than ten years. This would give people clear expectations of the timescales and avoid issues being kicked into the long grass.

Mrs Smith advised that the Implementation Plan which formed part of the Strategy gave an indication of short, medium and long term goals and suggested that regular reporting would assist in understanding those goals.

Councillor Stanyer was supportive of the strategy but warned of a lack of resources which appeared to be as a result of Tunbridge Wells only receiving a tiny proportion of the available infrastructure funding. This was compounded by no funding at all from the Growth without Gridlock budget which would normally be expected to make up 45 per cent of the budget. Ms Hubert commented that the Strategy would enhance the Council's ability to bid for funding when the opportunity arose.

Councillor Bulman suggested that West Kent received less funding as it was perceived as affluent and therefore had less of a need. Mrs Smith reassured the Board that officers were aware of the perception of imbalance and that officers were working to ensure fund holders were aware that as an area of growth, infrastructure investment in West Kent would be needed if growth was to continue. Councillor Backhouse added that the Leader of the Council had been disappointed when funding was allocated to East Kent despite him being told that the Tunbridge Wells bid had been well founded and supported.

County Councillor Hoare suggested that Brighton Mainline Two should be higher on the agenda as a project which enjoyed the support of the Government and could be beneficial to the area. County Councillor Hoare added that funding allocation was constrained by the current arrangements with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership whereby a significant source of funding was distributed throughout Kent, East Sussex and Essex. Plans were underway to form a new Partnership for Kent and Medway which will give Kent County Council a far greater ability to allocate funding. Stephen Noad, Traffic Engineer, Kent County Council, commented that works on Pembury Road had been supported by funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership but that the size of the current Partnership meant that funding decisions were made covering a unwieldy area. If plans for a new Partnership for Kent and Medway were to come to fruition Kent would have greater say. Mr Noad added that he often hears complaints from East Kent and a lack of resources was a common experience.

Councillor Scott noted that congestion was the top concern and that the Transport Strategy had much to be commended. A number of amendments designed to strengthen the Council's resolve in terms of tackling congestion and considering sustainable transport into the future had been distributed beforehand and were proposed and summarised as follows:

- New and innovative transport modes should play a part of the strategy into the future.

- Safety should be explicitly stated as the number one priority and a proactive concern rather than responsive.
- There needed to be specific measurements on congestion and accidents which are monitored at least annually.

Councillor Tracy Moore, a Borough Member for Park ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore noted that while she felt the Strategy document was imperfect it was very much better than not having a strategy. It was felt that the Strategy did not go far enough in tackling congestion which included encouraging growth, enabling accessibility, managing air quality and reducing accidents. A number of recommendations were made which included the following suggestions:

- Should be bolder.
- A bypass for Royal Tunbridge Wells should be high on the agenda.
- Main arterial roads should be red-routes.
- Where there was to be more pedestrianisation in the town centre there needed to be more parking on the edges of town to facilitate park-and-walk.
- Highest quality and segregated cycle routes are essential, particularly to encourage school children to use them.
- Needed traffic data to inform decisions and act as a comparison for the future.

Ms Hubert confirmed that traffic surveys were underway to understand the specific circumstances in Tunbridge Wells which would inform proposals to improve capacity and congestion but that the statistics were not yet available.

Councillor Graham Munn, a Borough Member for Southborough and High Brooms ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Munn reminded Members that transport infrastructure had developed in Kent over a significant length of time and was not designed to cope with motorised transport. Until recently homes were local to jobs. Councillor Munn suggested that the Kent Test used to determine the placing of children in schools was contributing to children needing to travel greater distances to school. Removing the Kent Test and challenging some of the other factors in school choice would enable children to attend more local schools where the need to travel by vehicle would be far less. While it was appreciated that some of the issues over choice are considered sacred by some it was inevitable that such issues would need to be addressed at some point. It was recommended that authorities take a holistic, bold and long term approach to transport issues.

Councillor Woodward commented that he felt the Strategy lacked precision in terms of the objectives and some of the statistics quoted. Some statistics appeared to show a significant jump in traffic and accident incidents but gave only a vague indication of trend or longer term changes. Several examples were picked out to demonstrate. The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, suggested Members limit their comments to points of clarification, to enable them to make a decision on whether to support the document, rather than a general critique.

Bartholomew Wren, Economic Development Officer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, noted that some of the accident statistics within the report which appeared to show significant movement were as a result of peaks due to severe weather events rather than a significantly worsening general situation.

County Councillor Hoare noted the importance of developer contributions to infrastructure funding and commented that it was essential that all due contributions should be collected. Councillor Bulman agreed that Section 106 money was important and noted that the public were consulted over how such money was spent. He hoped that while local amenities and open spaces tended to be supported, the public could increasingly consider transportation as a high priority. Mrs Smith advised that officers worked closely to ensure Section 106 money went to appropriate schemes.

Councillor Scott asked whether innovative alternatives to the park and ride scheme, which could include driverless vehicles, had been considered and whether suggestions for a bus exchange on Grosvenor Road were included. Ms Hubert advised that Kent County Council had been in discussion with Councillor Scott regarding innovative transport solutions. While the costs were believed to be prohibitively expensive it had been agreed to consider a detailed report from Councillor Scott. Mrs Smith commented that bus routing would be looked at as part of phase two of the public realm improvements and that the wording of the relevant section of the report could make this more clear. Councillor Scott added that there were other parts of the country that were investigating innovative solutions which are also under the same financial restraints. In the medium to long term, innovative transport solutions were considerably cheaper than traditional solutions and the sooner innovative solutions are implemented the cheaper and more effective they would be.

Councillor Neve reiterated his desire for a simplified check list style list of objectives, to include basic timescale targets and costings that would clearly demonstrate to the average resident the intentions and proactive approach of the Council. Councillor Bulman noted that many of the projects included in the report were aspirational and dependant on funding which was outside the control of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Mrs Smith confirmed that some projects were subject to bidding for funding and so it would be difficult to say at this stage what would and would not go ahead. Mrs Smith added that the table in the implementation plan could be made simpler. Ms Hubert noted the survey work that was already underway and suggested that by the end of the year there would be a clearer idea of which schemes were more likely to go forward for bidding for funding. The strategy document would form the starting point for identifying those schemes and regular updates would be provided.

Mr Wren commented in relation to County Councillor Hoare's earlier comments on Brighton Mainline Two to confirm that the Uckfield Line Working Group had been established to coordinate District Councils and East Sussex County Council ahead of the feasibility study to commence later this year.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman brought the debate to a close and asked Members whether Councillor Scott's amendments were supported and subject to those amendments whether the recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Board recommends the following amendments:
 - a. Addition before paragraph 1.6 of the Strategy – “To substantially improved congestion and relieve its impact on the economic, health and general well-being of all residents and visitors to the Borough it is recognised that bold and radical solutions must be found and implemented. During the course of this strategy alternatives, including new technology developments, will be considered for early implementation to achieve the vision set out above.”
 - b. Addition after paragraph 1.6 of the Strategy – “Safety of our residents, visitors and other travellers is considered paramount. We also recognise that pro-active action must be taken rather than purely responsive to accidents. Safety is therefore recognised as the number one objective of this strategy.
 - c. Addition after paragraph 1.8 of the Strategy – “Base line statistics of congestion and accidents will be determined and monitored at least annually to determine the success or otherwise of this Strategy and action taken to ensure its success.”
2. Noting the above recommended amendments, the Board supports the Transport Strategy on the basis that further work is undertaken to identify the costs of schemes and potential funding sources for them, through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

DRAFT BOROUGH CYCLING STRATEGY

TB9/15

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

- The Draft Cycling Strategy had been prepared in partnership with Kent County Council with feedback and support from Tunbridge Wells Cycling Forum.
- The Cycling Strategy although separate from the Transport Strategy was an important tool in the delivery of the Transport Strategy objectives.
- The purpose of the Cycling Strategy was to make cycling a normal part of everyday life in Tunbridge Wells by providing a safe and welcoming environment for cyclists of all ages and abilities.
- The Strategy identified the benefits of cycling and related actions including the provision of a network of key routes, additional cycle parking, cycle training and other road safety initiatives.
- Encouraging utility cycling was critical to the success of the Strategy objectives of reducing congestion and improving air quality.
- Included in the Strategy were a number of route assessments for new and existing cycle routes.
- Implementation of the actions identified in the Strategy had the potential to improve the quality of life for local people.
- Agreement was now being sought to publish the document for six weeks public consultation to commence in September 2015 to include feedback from Town Councils, land owners, schools and Tunbridge Wells Access Group.

Councillor Tracy Moore, a Borough Member for Park ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore noted that the planned consultation which would include schools was due to occur during school holidays. Encouraging children to cycle to school would be key to the success of both the Cycling and Transport Strategies so this was an important group to include. Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, confirmed that the consultation would be timed to allow schools to participate.

Councillor Woodward commended the report, particularly noting the route assessments, and asked what specifically was meant by 'high quality cycle routes' and whether these would be finished within the life of the strategy. Councillor Woodward added that there was a need to change attitudes of both cyclist and driver. Furthermore, the picture used to illustrate the strategy document gave the impression that it focussed on the seasoned cyclist whereas it would be important to target all, especially the casual cyclist.

Councillor Scott noted that it was important to ensure these strategy documents have a strong emphasis on safety and that transportation strategies included pedestrians. It was felt that the element of choice had been lost by the overwhelming influence of cars. There needed to be a mix of transport methods available, to include cars, bicycles, walking, public transport and innovative sustainable modes to enable a person to have choice over the most appropriate form of transport.

County Councillor Hoare supported the report but suggested it could be bolder. The example of the route along London/St John's Road (Route 1) was used to highlight that there was a great number of schools in the area but that St. John's Road was one of the busiest and most polluted roads in the Borough, expecting children to cycle along it was unreasonable. All efforts should be made to separate cycle paths from roads by opening parks and open spaces.

Mr Wren confirmed that high quality cycle routes would be fit for purpose and meet a range of objectives, providing routes that are safe, direct, coherent, comfortable and attractive. Route 1, although busy, was also a direct route to several key destinations. In response to a point of clarification from Councillor Woodward, Mr Wren confirmed that they would be the highest quality possible rather than a set standard. Delivery of the routes within the life of the strategy would be challenging and dependant on many factors. Mrs Smith advised that much of the infrastructure was dependant on a variety of factors and having a strategy document offered the best opportunity in overcoming barriers.

Councillor Woodward asked whether the objectives were over aspirational and the outcomes were likely to be less. Mr Wren felt that significant progress would be made and many schemes were already underway. With regards to changing attitudes Mr Wren noted the public support which had already been shown for cycling and pointed out the Department of Transport's 'Think Bike' and the AA's 'Think Cyclist' campaigns. The sharing of road space would be inevitable in some places and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council would work with Kent County Council to promote the public safety campaigns. Mr Wren

noted the comments about the image of a cyclist on the strategy document and advised that it was a bit of cross-promotion as it was taken at the Great Tunbridge Wells Bike Ride but that it would be reconsidered.

Councillor Stanyer advised that Essex County Council was in receipt of a £1million grant from the EU for cycling initiatives and wondered whether Kent County Council had applied. It was noted that every opportunity for resources should be taken. County Councillor Hoare noted that cycling infrastructure was considerably cheaper than other methods of combatting congestion and all opportunities must be grasped.

In response to a question, David Candlin, Head of Economic Development, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, suggested that the results of the consultation were unlikely to be ready for the October Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board so an update would be provided for the January meeting.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED – That the Board supports the strategy being approved for consultation.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

TB10/15 Earl Bournier, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, Kent County Council, introduced the report which was for Members' information and invited questions and comments.

Mr Martin Dawes, a resident of Park Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, had registered to speak.

Mr Dawes noted that while the issues of Park Road may be considered minor in comparison to the strategic issues already debated they benefitted from being easily resolved in a low cost and timely way. Park Road had become a rat run and problems had been made worse by the parking on both sides of the road which created a narrow lane through which the traffic is often observed speeding. The condition of the painted yellow and white lines have become so faded they are irrelevant, cars are routinely parked on the double yellow lines even on the junctions. White lines outside communal access to apartments and private driveways were disregarded. Mr Dawes advised that the residents of Park Road were calling for the reinstatement of the yellow and white lines and the consideration of restricted residents parking which the road currently lacked.

Mr Bournier advised that the reinstatement of the lines would be looked at. Steven Noad, Traffic Engineer, Kent County Council, added that he was not currently aware of parking restrictions for Park Road but that it could be looked at in cooperation with Borough colleagues.

Councillor Tracy Moore, a Borough Member for Park ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Moore referred to page 131 of the agenda pack on which the table showed surface dressing works on Prospect Road as complete and advised

that the work had only been completed around parked cars. This had caused a seam which not only would be a point of weakness requiring future attention but also caused a hazard for cyclists. The works were unsatisfactory and should be redressed. In respect of the Member Fund works outlined on pages 152 and 153, Councillor Moore asked why one scheme for a 20mph zone was £10,220 whilst another was listed as £4,500.

County Councillor Oakford advised that the more expensive scheme on Powder Mill Lane included additional safety works such as flashing electronic signs and bollards.

Councillor Woodward noted that at the public realm works following heavy rain, water was seen pooling rather than draining away and this would need rectifying. Councillor Scott added that the quality of the initial work had been very poor but that the second contractor had done a superior job. There had been assurances that the outstanding work would be completed. Mr Bournier advised that he, along with County and Borough colleagues had inspected the site recently and identified a long list of snagging issues which would be rectified. After Kent County Council were satisfied it would assume responsibility for maintenance. Mr Bournier added, in respect of the surface dressing works identified by Councillor Moore, that Kent County Council had done all the usual public information drops but some residents had failed to move the vehicles. The road has subsequently been marked for micro-dressing which should fix the problems and is due for completion in the near future.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked to note the report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CARRS CORNER

TB11/15 Mr Peter Perry had registered to speak on behalf of Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Mr Perry thanked Steven Noad, Traffic Engineer, Kent County Council, for his response to his proposals following the previous meeting. Mr Perry advised that the Town Forum would prefer Exclamation Mark warning triangles with appropriate sub-plates, as apposed to the Elderly Persons warning triangles. In any case, there should be 'SLOW' warnings painted on the road. Any signs should be as large as the regulations permit to have the maximum effect on the motorists. Mr Perry explained that his original proposals had advocated introducing signs on only the eastern end of Calverley Road as this was the area where it was most likely that vehicles would be approaching at speed and so additional signs would be unnecessary elsewhere. The best effect would be achieved by the combination of electronic speed signs and a 20mph zone. It was noted that 20mph zones were gaining support in various forums. The Town Forum feels that any improved signage should only be an interim solution as there being a major trunk route crossing through the centre of town was ultimately unacceptable. Accepting that the built environment makes pedestrian crossings impractical the next logical step is that an alternative route must be found for the A264. Traffic on Carrs Corner and the town centre needs to be removed and a relief road is necessary in achieving this. Finally, the state of the planting on the Carrs Corner roundabout was unsatisfactory and demonstrated a lack of pride.

Mr Noad responded by thanking Mr Perry for the feedback on the proposals and advised that Exclamation Mark warning triangles were usually only used where no other sign was appropriate, as such there was often a lack of understanding by motorists of their meaning. Signs showing a person using a dotted line path should only be used where there is a designated crossing point and would not be applicable at Carrs Corner. The staking of the tree on the roundabout was only a temporary measure and the tree would be replanted in November and maintained annually thereafter.

Councillor Catherine Rankin, a Borough Member for Park ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Rankin was pleased that the roundabout had been fixed since the last meeting but suggested that annual maintenance would not be sufficient. The adjacent water trough which was maintained by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council was given as an example of the standard expected for the roundabout planting. The proposal for 20mph zones was strongly endorsed not only for residential streets, many people living in town along the arterial roads had the same rights as those in residential areas. Furthermore, disappointment was expressed there was a lack of timeframes in the report so that there was no confidence that anything would happen. Councillor Rankin agreed with the comments of the Town Forum in that a relief road should be on the agenda but that in the interim the present efforts failed to address the issues faced by pedestrians using the junction.

Mr Noad commented that previous surveys of the area had shown that pedestrian crossing were not feasible at Carrs Corner and that the wider picture was being looked into as part of the route assessments of the A26 and A264. It was noted that there were no reported accidents at Carrs Corner. Mr Noad felt it was unlikely that further works beyond the agreed signs and road markings would be funded prior to the completion of the ongoing studies.

In response to a question of clarification from Councillor Bulman, Mr Noad confirmed that a 20mph zone would not be realistic unless as part of a Borough-wide project. He added that the Police had confirmed to him that they would not actively enforce the 20mph zones. Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, commented that a commitment to explore 20mph zones throughout the town centre was included in the Transport Strategy and the zones were something that the Borough Council was very keen for. Vicky Hubert, Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent County Council, added that 20mph zones were something that would need County buy-in and proposed that a report on the matter be brought to a future meeting

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, summarised the discussions and suggested several motions.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Board supports the expedited implementation of the quick fixes for Carrs Corner.
2. That the Board requests a full report on 20mph speed restriction options for Tunbridge Wells.
3. That the report be noted.

YEW TREE ROAD

- TB12/15 Vicky Hubert, Strategic Transport and Development Planner, Kent County Council, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- Since the last meeting of the Joint Transportation Board several representations had been received against the removal of five trees to make way for enhanced pedestrian crossings on Yew Tree Road
 - Two alternatives had been investigated:
 - Leave Yew Tree Road as is without a pedestrian splitter island
 - Remove two trees allowing a splitter island but reducing the number of approach lanes to one
 - On further investigation it is believed that the time required to allow crossing of Yew Tree Road in one go can be accommodated within the revised phasing of the lights with no detrimental effect on the flow of traffic along the A26, London/St. John's Road.

Councillor Woodward referred to comments made at the recent public meeting at Skinners' School which included the voicing of concerns that the situation for pedestrians was worse and asked whether there had been any further consultation on these proposed changes. Ms Hubert confirmed that the speaker at the public meeting was now satisfied.

In response to a question from Councillor Scott, Ms Hubert confirmed that monitoring traffic statistics after the works was part of the funding requirement.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bulman, invited further questions and comments. There being none, Members were asked whether the recommendation was supported.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and the Board supports the continuation of the detail design and implementation stage.

TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- TB13/15 The following topics had been raised for consideration at a future meeting:
- Traffic calming measures Cambrian Road
 - Traffic calming measures Upper Grosvenor Road

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- TB14/15 The next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board will be on Monday 19 October 2015 commencing at 6pm.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.