

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Monday 17 October 2016

**PRESENT:** Borough Councillors Bulman (Chairman), Backhouse, Lidstone, Simmons and Stanyer  
County Councillors Hoare, Oakford and Scholes  
Parish Councillor Mackonochie

**Officers in Attendance:** Nick Baldwin (Senior Traffic Engineer), Earl Bournier (District Manager for Tunbridge Wells), Michael Hardy (Schemes Project Engineer), Vicki Hubert (Strategic Transport Planner), Katie Pettitt (Principal Transport Planner), Hilary Smith (Economic Development Manager), Carol Valentine (West Kent Highway Manager), Bartholomew Wren (Economic Development Officer) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillors Chapelard and Munn

### APOLOGIES

TB13/16 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Woodward and County Councillors Davies, King and Holden.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

TB14/16 Councillor Simmons advised that he was involved with the campaign group to reduce speeds in Southborough which may have a bearing on minute TB19/16 and TB22/16. This was not a pecuniary interest. No other interests were declared at the meeting.

### NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

TB15/16 Councillor Graham Munn had registered as wishing to speak on minute TB21/16.

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 18 JULY 2016

TB16/16 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 18 July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

### TUNBRIDGE WELLS TRACKER FOR OCTOBER 2016

TB17/16 The Board considered the Tunbridge Wells Tracker for October 2016. Comments were made in respect of the Tracker Items as follows:

**Tracker Item 1 – Grosvenor Bridge Repairs:**

Earl Bournier, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, KCC, advised that works were scheduled to commence in January 2017 once the power cables had been rerouted by Network Rail. Officers were mindful to avoid the busy Christmas period.

**Tracker Item 2 – LGF Underspend:**

Vicki Hubert, Strategic Transport Planner, KCC, advised that there was £1.2million left over from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) following completion

of the A26/Yew Tree Road/Speldhurst Road junction scheme which was available to be used on congestion alleviating schemes in Tunbridge Wells. Various schemes had been investigated, most recently Pembury Road/Halls Hole Road junction which had been determined to be too expensive under the LGF scheme. Work was progressing on alternatives including Royal Oak junction and traffic control systems for the town centre.

In response to a question from Councillor Bulman, Ms Hubert confirmed that the proposal for Pembury Road/Halls Hole Road junction had been demonstrated to be effective but progression would be dependant on the successful application for other sources of funding.

Councillor Backhouse commented that a roundabout at Hall Hole Road would be problematic due to the proximity of Skinners Kent Academy and the need for pedestrian crossings. A footbridge was suggested. Works to alleviate other junctions with Pembury Road such as a mini-roundabout at the junction with Sandhurst Road were suggested.

Councillor Stanyer noted that similar schemes such as the pedestrian crossing on Major York's Road had been cancelled due to a lack of funding and asked why money could not be vired to those schemes. Ms Hubert advised that the LGF was restricted for a specific purpose and the other schemes did not fit within its remit. Councillor Stanyer suggested that funding for congestion schemes such as cycle paths could be diverted to other works and the LGF could be used for the congestion schemes. Ms Hubert advised that the application process for such sources of funding was very complex and once awarded could only be used for the purpose for which it was intended. Potential access to the LGF funding had been extended for one year.

County Councillor Hoare asked what was the purpose of the Pembury Road/Halls Hole Road roundabout and sought reassurance that it was not to facilitate development along Blackhurst Lane. Ms Hubert commented that the proposed roundabout was intended only to alleviate the existing congestion problems on Pembury Road. The status of any future development on Blackhurst Lane was unknown. Councillor Bulman commented that the traffic lights appeared to have exacerbated an existing congestion problem on Pembury Road, evidence had suggested at a roundabout may help to alleviate the traffic.

Councillor Bulman asked whether traffic at the A26/Yew Tree Road/Speldhurst Road junction was being monitored and remarked that there appeared to be considerable queues building at peak times. Ms Hubert advised that it was standard practice to commence monitoring after six months to allow normal conditions to bed in. Councillor Bulman asked that an item be added to the Tracker to receive an update in due course. Councillor Oakford commented that the A26 was likely to be seeing increased traffic due to ongoing works on the A21 and that a review of the traffic lights might be beneficial once traffic flow returned to normal.

Councillor Lidstone asked for an explanation of Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) which had been included as a proposal for tackling congestion. Ms Hubert commented that it was a system whereby signalised junctions could be linked by computer so that where junctions were

experiencing heavy congestion other junctions could speed up or slow down feeding traffic. The system was in use in Maidstone and Canterbury, it appeared to be proving very successful.

County Councillor Scholes asked what timescales were expected for alternative LGF schemes. Ms Hubert advised that Kent County Council would need to report to South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) around January – February 2017, therefore, it was hoped that a list of preferred schemes would be known by Christmas 2016.

Jennifer Hemming had registered to speak on behalf of Calverley Park Gardens Residents' Association.

Mrs Hemming commented that Calverley Park Gardens was a residential road with high pedestrian and cycle use. The road was dangerous due to the inappropriately high number of vehicles travelling too quickly and trying to avoid the Royal Oak junction. Vehicles turning into or out of Calverley Park Gardens were also contributing to congestion on the main routes. The Residents' Association called upon Kent County Council to implement a 20mph speed restriction, safe pedestrian crossings and other traffic calming measures on Calverley Park Gardens and Lansdowne Road. Heavy Goods Vehicles should also be banned from Calverley Park Gardens as they were dangerous and causing excessive damage which required regular remedial work by Kent County Council. Mrs Hemming noted from the KCC Local Transport Plan 2016-31 the stated requirement of the Road Traffic Act 1989 to promote road safety and to act to reduce the likelihood of road casualties and commented that Calverley Park Gardens and Lansdowne Road posed a serious threat to safety. The requested actions would help improve safety and reduce congestion.

Ms Hubert referred to a recent statement issued by Tim Reed, Head of Transportation, KCC, and summarised its content noting that Kent County Council had investigated several of the issues that had been outlined. Any alterations to the priority route through Carrs Corner or implementing one-way or HGV bans on Calverley Park Gardens or Lansdowne Road would have a detrimental effect on Pembury Road, therefore Kent County Council were not planning any further measures in the vicinity.

County Councillor Scholes supported the proposals set out by the Calverley Gardens Residents' Association but acknowledged the budgetary constraints. He had previously agreed to provide some funding towards improvements although this would not cover the full cost. He was frustrated at a lack of progress and felt that HGVs cutting through Calverley Park Gardens were complicating the junction at Carrs Corner. Safe crossing points had been examined and found to be difficult but something would have to be done.

Michael Hardy, Schemes Project Engineer, KCC, commented that pedestrian flows had been investigated around Carrs Corner but any further work had been put on hold pending the LGF funded investigations at the Royal Oak junction, as any proposed works would have to fit in to the wider scheme. Changes to the direction of traffic or speed limits would require extensive investigations and Traffic Regulation Orders which in total amount to far more than the budget allowed. County Councillor Scholes commented that, having been through the process of implementing a 20mph zone, he recognised that it took a long time for changes to be made but there appeared to be no progress with Carrs Corner.

Councillor Backhouse drew members' attention to comments previously made by Councillor Rankin, who was a ward member and local resident, warning of the dangers at Carrs Corner. There had been concerns dating back at least five years.

Councillor Bulman commented that he shared the dissatisfaction at the proposed lack of action for Calverley Park Gardens. Having read the statement from Mr Reed it would appear that Kent County Council were not prepared to do anything about the problems. Calverley Park Gardens was being used as a rat run but all that was proposed was to adjust the traffic lights at Royal Oak junction.

Councillor Lidstone asked whether build-outs had been considered on Calverley Park Gardens which would provide safer crossing points and restrict access to deter HGVs. Mr Hardy commented that pinch-points would require expensive civil engineering and are also detrimental to cycle lanes.

Councillor Bulman commented that the problems suggested by Kent County Council should not be insurmountable.

Councillor Stanyer felt that something needed to be done. He acknowledged that the issues were complex and expensive but there should be a hierarchy of actions towards a solution. Whilst the large actions may not be possible immediately it must be possible to be able to show to residents what is being done leading towards it. Ms Hubert commented that Kent County Council had investigated the options. Councillor Stanyer commented that so far there had only been reasons why certain things could not be done but nothing that could be done.

Ms Hubert commented that identifying a problem to be solved was difficult. There were many people who felt their road was dangerous or there should be less traffic but unfortunately this was part of modern life. If there was a crash record, for example, it would help prioritise budgets or give a specific issue to resolve

Councillor Bulman proposed that the Board note its dissatisfaction with the situation until there are proposals along the lines that Councillor Stanyer suggested, with actions for the short term and long term objectives, so that residents could see a light at the end of the tunnel. Members agreed.

**Tracker Item 3 – Pedestrian crossing: Major York's Road:**

Councillor Bulman drew Members' attention to the letter from the County Cabinet Member, attached at appendix A to the Tracker.

Councillor Stanyer commented that he had hoped for an explanation as to where the money had gone and why the project that the money was spent on was considered higher priority. Councillor Bulman asked whether Members supported a second letter asking for further details. Members agreed.

Councillor Backhouse asked when the pedestrian crossing on Crescent Road was to be completed. Mr Hardy advised that designs were expected in December 2016 with construction being completed by the end of the financial year 2016/17.

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

## 21ST CENTURY WAY IMPROVEMENTS

- TB18/16 Bartholomew Wren, Economic Development Officer, TWBC, introduced the report which included the following comments:
- The Borough Cycling Strategy identified the 21st Century Way between the town centre and North Farm as a priority utility cycling route.
  - The route currently benefited from some segregated infrastructure but was not consistent or continuous and required improvement.
  - The Borough Council had previously secured Section 106 funding which was being used to prepare the designs and would also cover a significant part of the implementation costs.
  - Feedback and support was sought to enable the plans to be progressed through to public consultation.
  - The proposals included new signage and route-finding, improved layout and infrastructure, raised tables at certain road junctions and 20mph zones amongst other measures.
  - There was an amendment to the table of available funds shown at paragraph 6 of the report: funds from Fountains/Spa Retail Park and Medway Depot were £88,000 and £31,250 respectively, The total was therefore £376,179.
  - The implementation plan would include finalisation of plans, stakeholder consultation, application for further funding and negotiations with developers, and an agreement with Kent County Council for a phased delivery programme.
  - Following consultation the final plans would come back to the Board with a timetable for implementation.

Scott Purchas had registered to speak on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group (TWBUG). With the Chairman's consent Mr Purchas consolidated the Group's comments in respect of minute TB18/16, TB19/16 and TB20/16 into a single statement.

(Re: TB18/16) Mr Purchas commented that the Group intended to respond to the consultation fully but wished to highlight that the 21st Century Way not linking to the A21 non-motorised user route was a missed opportunity.

(Re: TB19/16) TWBUG was disappointed that no solution had been found to the gap in cycle route provision between Southborough Common and Mabledon but were not surprised given the constraints imposed by conventional infrastructure policies. The opening of the A21 non-motorised user route would have been the ideal opportunity to reconsider the purpose of the A26.

(Re: TB20/16) The Local Transport Plan 4 was demonstration of an absence of network planning and zero commitment to active travel. There was no analysis of transport need and no proposals to enable any choice in transport mode. Kent County Council consistently ignored evidence that showed that active travel was a key solution to the problems of congestion, air pollution and obesity. There was a strong cycling base in Tunbridge Wells and the borough could be used as a trailblazer for the county.

Mr Wren commented that the 21st Century Way route went further than had been expected at the time the Cycling Strategy was published and was a significant improvement.

Councillor Stanyer noted that the report later in the agenda identified that there was no viable way of creating a continuous Tonbridge to Tunbridge Wells route via the A26 therefore the 21st Century Way was an ideal opportunity to provide an alternative. There appeared to be wide pathways that could be used for cycling provision.

Councillor Simmons made comments regarding the gap in cycling provision on the A26 referred to in the report later in the agenda. He noted that the general policy was for segregated paths where possible and reduced speed elsewhere, yet between Vauxhall Lane and the A21 it was proposed that the speed continue to increase to 40mph. Whilst it was appreciated that there were particular circumstances to be considered, to do nothing seemed inadequate. He noted that traffic calming may not be practical but asked why could there not be speed enforcement. It had been mentioned in the report and at other times in the meeting that deaths or serious injuries help prioritise works but how many deaths were necessary to trigger action being taken. Councillor Bulman recalled that three deaths had been mentioned in the past. Councillor Simmons added that it should be the policy that works are considered to reduce the risk of accidents rather than waiting for them to occur.

Vicki Hubert, Strategic Transport Planner, KCC, commented that the key factor when looking at crashes was patterns that could be addressed through an improvement scheme. There was no such case in that location.

Councillor Bulman sought clarification on the number of deaths at the location. Mr Wren advised that there had been one death but the circumstances attributed to the incident had been addressed. Councillor Bulman commented that the area was still dangerous with speeding vehicles. Councillor Simmons reiterated his question on the number of deaths required before action was taken. Ms Hubert advised that she would confirm an answer for the minutes. Councillor Bulman asked that an answer be made in writing to members of the Board.

County Councillor Scholes noted that the works to the 21st Century Way were planned on a phased implementation but gave no indication when it might start.

County Councillor Oakford commented that he supported making roads safer for all users and not focussing on one particular group. He advised members that at the County Council Cabinet meeting that morning he had asked why when talking about road safety the topic was usually based on the number of deaths. He recalled from his experience in the oil industry that the focus was on prevention. Whilst an overnight transformation was unlikely there was the start of a culture change towards prevention. He added that as a child he used to cycle everywhere but sadly now he would not allow his children to cycle due to safety concerns. He noted that frequently there were people parked dangerously along the A26, on double yellow lines, on zig-zag lines and blocking the cycle lanes. Any attempt to improve cycling infrastructure must be accompanied with enforcement of the parking restrictions. The Council needed to tackle the root causes of problems as part of what it was trying to achieve.

Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, TWBC, advised that for both the A26 cycle route and 21st Century Way route it was hoped that the schemes could be implemented in 2017/18. Kent County Council had already

funded the design work for the A26 route and considering the advanced stage of design work it was expected that a bid for funding for construction would be successful. Section 106 funds were already held for the construction phase of the 21st Century Way route. She added that officers were aware and shared concerns about the gap in the cycle route on the A26 and would keep looking at options, however, it was not desirable to delay the whole scheme in the meantime. An incomplete route from Tonbridge through Southborough to Royal Tunbridge Wells would still be of benefit to a great many people and the link to the A21 non-motorised route via 21st Century Way would provide a continuous alternative.

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

**RESOLVED** – That the principle of the 21st Century Way cycle route proposals and the approach to implementation, as set out in the report, be supported.

### **CYCLE ROUTE OPTIONS BETWEEN SOUTHBOROUGH COMMON AND MABLEDON**

TB19/16 Councillor Simmons referred to his comments under the previous item and added that in the first paragraph of section 3 of the report it stated that the presence of direct frontage access to residential properties did not work in favour of a reduction of speed to 30mph. He was not aware of any commercial properties in the area and suggested that direct access to residential properties made it more important for lower speeds. Bartholomew Wren, Economic Development Officer, TWBC, commented that it was the intention to highlight that there was a lack of commercial properties and few accesses to residential properties. Under those circumstances a speed restriction was not warranted. He added that the Department of Transport guidance required that speed limits should be evidence-led and self-enforcing. Whilst it may appear that the speed restrictions were inconsistent along the A26 they were based on consistent design principles. The Council was unable to deviate from the guidance. For a 30mph limit to the self-enforcing the lane width would have to be reduced which would take space away from cyclists at a point where there was no segregated provision. Councillor Simmons commented that people accessing or leaving their homes along the A26 faced considerable challenges crossing the lanes of fast moving traffic.

Councillor Stanyer did not support the recommendation of the report and favoured a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph.

County Councillor Oakford commented that he drove the road regularly and whilst the majority appeared to abide the current limit he had witnessed a number of occasions where people had been driving dangerously. He asked whether a speed survey had been carried out since the limit had been reduced from 60mph to 40mph. Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, TWBC, advised that a survey could be arranged subject to the funding being made available. County Councillor Oakford agreed to fund the speed survey. Michael Hardy, Schemes Project Engineer, KCC, agreed to arrange a speed survey.

Councillor Lidstone sought clarification on the acceptable width of the cycle lane and whether the report was suggesting that a width of 0.9 metres meant that traffic calming measures would make the lane too narrow. Mr Wren confirmed.

Mrs Smith commented that officers were keen to press ahead with the public consultation on the A26 cycle route proposals and any delay could affect the ability to bid for funding. She asked that if members were minded to endorse a course of action contrary to the recommendation it be agreed that the consultation go ahead noting that options were still being considered for the location in question.

The Chairman, Councillor Bulman, sought agreement on the proposals.

#### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the recommendations be supported subject to consideration of further options following a speed survey on the section of the A26 between Southborough Common and Mabledon; and
2. That the public consultation on the route proposals being progressed be supported subject to it being noted that the above was under consideration.

#### **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4: DELIVERING GROWTH WITHOUT GRIDLOCK**

TB20/16 Katie Pettitt, Principal Transport Planner, KCC, introduced the report which included the following comments:

- Kent County Council had a statutory duty to have a Local Transport Plan in place.
- Since the last plan was written the context of local transport provision had changed with a many schemes now delivered through the Local Growth Fund.
- The new draft plan would run until 2031 and included nationally important priorities and local priorities for each district.
- The draft was open for public consultation until 30 October 2016 and everyone was encouraged to respond to the consultation in writing.
- Members were invited to note the Plan and the opportunity to comment of the plans.

Jane Fenwick had registered to speak on behalf of the Transport Working Group of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Mrs Fenwick commented that the Town Forum would be making a full submission to the consultation but wished to highlight its main concerns. The title Local Plan was a misnomer as it was too heavily weighted to major projects being delivered by Highways England and Rail companies, mainly in the north of Kent, designed to speed traffic through the county. There was no analysis of actual transport needs, only a limited reference to active travel and safety concerns were largely ignored. Proposals for the new Thames crossing missed the opportunity to improve north/south connections as existing routes along the A26 and A267 – both of which pass through the centre of Tunbridge Wells – were already overloaded. Conditions applied to the new crossing should include improvements to A28 Maidstone to Hastings, A229 Maidstone to Battle and the link to the A27 near Eastbourne, these

would provide more practical routes for HGVs serving businesses along the coast. Specific infrastructure projects and their funding should be included in the Plan, Tunbridge Wells already had adopted Transport and Cycling Strategies to support growth, encourage active travel and significantly contribute to reducing congestion if given funding. The total content for Tunbridge Wells consisted of two paragraphs admitting severe congestion due to four major routes converging in the town centre but with no solution offered. Kent County Council should devolve power and funding to local authorities to implement their transport strategies and place decision making in the hands of those who understand local needs. It would facilitate better decision making and enable the removal of the cumbersome Joint Transportation Board system.

David Scott, resident of Somerville Gardens, Royal Tunbridge Wells, had registered to speak.

Mr Scott reminded members that the Board had previously supported a proposal for a more radical approach to congestion and suggested that the resolution of that meeting should be incorporated into the Local Transport Plan. He commented that he had spoken on many occasions on how to use technology and bring it to Tunbridge Wells. The Gateway project in Greenwich was about to commence and the team behind it were prepared to use Tunbridge Wells as a second trial site for self-driving vehicles. Running such a trial, even over a relatively short period of several months, would help provide answers to many of the problems associated with congestion. Such a scheme would ease congestion, provide sustainable growth, improve the environment in addition to many other benefits. It would be a good candidate to attract funding but would require relatively low funding. The key would be the motivation to try a radical solution.

Ms Pettitt thanked the speakers and commented that the Local Transport Plan was intended to be a high-level document and not replicate or replace existing strategies such as the Road Safety Casualty Reduction Strategy and the Active Travel Strategy which had recently been consulted on. All responses to the consultation would be considered by the County Cabinet Member after 30 October 2016 before the revised Plan went through the process of adoption by Full Council in the new year.

Councillor Backhouse proposed that during the course of the consultation and before the publication of the final Plan; Kent County Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council should undertake to put forward a strategy that could realistically alleviate congestion in Tunbridge Wells for the next ten years. The Strategy should be evidence based with likely growth scenarios and incorporate the resolution of the Board at the meeting in February 2016.

Councillor Bulman sought to clarify his understanding that the proposal recognised the Local Transport Plan as an overarching strategy but signified that the Board wanted something specific to address the particular issues in Tunbridge Wells. Councillor Backhouse agreed and added that he would like to see a particular emphasis on the driverless vehicles technology, a three month trial would generate a lot of interest from school and tourists and drive engagement.

Parish Councillor Mackonochie supported the proposal but added that it should include the wider rural areas of the borough.

Councillor Lidstone noted that the Local Transport Plan stated that Kent should be a pioneer for active travel but saw little evidence of it in actions in the county.

Councillor Backhouse suggested that there should be a working group set up to steer the formation of the aforementioned Tunbridge Wells specific strategy. In answer to a request for clarification from the Chairman, Councillor Backhouse added that it should consist of five members, one member and one officer from Kent County Council; one member and one officer from Tunbridge Well Borough Council; and one independent person with relevant experience.

Vicki Hubert, Strategic Transport Planner, KCC, commented that more active travel was definitely a direction in which Kent County Council wished to go, however, the timing of the proposal would conflict with pre-existing arrangements. Officers were already working on a timescale to fit in with the new Local Plan Review where active travel would be brought to the forefront of a revised transport strategy. There would be plenty of opportunity for members to input into that process. Councillor Backhouse asked whether the proposed working group would be counterproductive.

Ms Hubert advised that the Local Plan Review process would take approximately 18-24 months, a revision of the transport strategy would need to fit within that time to support the new Plan. During that time members would have the opportunity to input into proposals.

County Councillor Oakford commented that the purpose of the consultation on the Local Transport Plan was to receive comments and input from interested parties, which could be made individually by any councillor or member of the public. All representations would be taken into consideration and may or may not form part of the final policy. He did not agree that a working party should try to amend the policy.

Councillor Bulman accepted the point and suggested that the opportunity to make representations to the consultation be endorsed with a request that the proposals for Tunbridge Wells be reviewed. Members were asked whether the resolution was agreed.

#### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the draft Local Transport Plan and the opportunity to respond to the consultation be noted; and
2. That the Board requests a review of the specific elements that were pertinent to Tunbridge Wells.

#### **ST JOHN'S 20MPH ZONE**

TB21/16 Michael Hardy, Schemes Project Engineer, KCC, introduced the report and noted that the proposals had been to public consultation as part of the Traffic Regulation Order, 283 responses supported the proposals with only 16 objections. The whole scheme had been deemed to be viable except Newlands Road as the existing speeds were too high for restrictions without further traffic calming. Members were asked to endorse the implementation of the scheme.

Adrian Berendt had registered to speak on behalf of 20's Plenty.

Mr Berendt commented that if Kent County Council met its own road death reduction targets, still 195 people would have died in the next five years. 20's Plenty strongly supported the proposals for the 20mph zone in St. John's and thanked the officers and County Councillor Oakford for making it a reality. The residents of St. John's had voiced their concerns about road-rage and rat-runs and he was pleased that the Council had listened. He drew Members' attention to several of the responses to the consultation and hoped the County Cabinet Members would note the same. Many residents had highlighted the dangerous conditions caused by speeding and careless drivers. Several of the objections were on the grounds that the scheme should cover a wider area or should include greater enforcement. 20's Plenty hoped that this would be the start of 20mph limits in all residential roads and encouraged Kent County Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to work together with residents to promote awareness and education. The cost of £40,000 to implement the scheme was the equivalent of £5 per person for the 8,000 residents of the area. This was a bargain in comparison to the multi-million pound schemes within the Local Transport Plan. The 20mph zones would make a real difference to residents.

David Scott, resident of Somerville Gardens, Royal Tunbridge Wells, had registered to speak.

Mr Scott strongly supported the proposals and was grateful to all involved in making it happen. The zone was the first step in changing attitudes that slower speeds were appropriate in residential areas. It will only be with a popular mandate that the limits would be respected, the existing 30mph limits were not enforced so it would need continual awareness and peer-pressure for behaviours to be changed. The Council now had the responsibility of maintaining momentum through publicity and garnering public support. This was the first stage in reclaiming streets as places to live and enjoy rather than simply traffic runs.

Councillor Graham Munn, Borough Councillor for Southborough and High Brooms Ward, had registered to speak.

Councillor Munn thanked all those involved and noted that some of the roads within the proposed zone were within Southborough and High Brooms Ward. Both he and his fellow member for the ward were enthusiastically in support of the proposals and would be keen to see it expanded, particularly in the west of the ward where there was a primary school and had been several near-misses.

County Councillor Scholes welcomed the proposals which he understood to be a pilot scheme. Given the positive response and the calls from residents in other areas including Park Ward there would need to be some system of prioritisation as not all areas could be implemented simultaneously. Councillor Bulman concurred.

Councillor Backhouse commented that attitudes to driving behaviours were changing and referenced the introduction of compulsory seat-belt wearing in vehicles which had been dismissed as unenforceable yet enjoyed almost total compliance. Councillor Bulman commented that the same could not be said for the ban on the use of mobile phones in vehicles.

Councillor Lidstone added his support for the proposals and commented that he had spoken to many residents in the area, particularly Newlands Road. Detailed comments had been passed to Mr Hardy but in summary it was noted that the speed humps enjoyed wide support and it had been suggested that if they started closer to the end of the road it would dissuade vehicles approaching from the east from entering the road too quickly.

County Councillor Oakford thanked members for the cross-party support and commented that the scheme had started as a proposal to tackle a problem in one road. It had subsequently grown to the current size through the support of members, campaign groups and residents. The cost had grown to £40,000 due to the necessary traffic calming measures on one road but his Members' Grant was only able to cover half. The County Cabinet Member, Councillor Balfour, had been able to provide £15,000 on the condition that the remainder could be found which was ultimately funded by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council with credit to Councillor Jukes. This was an excellent example of the authorities working together which he hoped would continue to bring similar schemes to other areas. This was a relatively small thing that would have a real effect on peoples' lives.

Councillor Bulman commented that it was pleasing to be able to endorse something in the confidence that it was going to happen and had wide support.

Councillor Lidstone asked when was it expected to have sufficient results in order to determine the success of the scheme. Mr Hardy confirmed that an assessment would be undertaken following implementation but was able to confirm exactly when.

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

**RESOLVED** – That the implementation of the 20mph zone in the St. John's area, as set out at appendix A to the report, be endorsed.

## **SPEEDING ON LONDON ROAD, SOUTHBOROUGH**

- TB22/16 Earl Bourner, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, KCC, introduced the report which included the following comments.
- This item was linked to the earlier item where it had been agreed to carry out a speed survey.
  - The section of road had previously been considered for a reduction from 40mph to 30mph but deemed not to meet the criteria.
  - The Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership had subsequently been contacted to determine whether the site would be suitable site for a mobile camera, the findings of the partnership was attached at appendix A to the report.
  - The Partnership determined that since 2010 there had been two incidents involving serious injuries but speed had not been listed as a contributory factor, therefore, this site was not suitable for a camera.

Andrew Robertson, resident of Harland Way, Southborough, had registered to speak.

Mr Robertson asked the Board for their support for a reduction in the speed limit between Vauxhall Lane and Bidborough Ridge from 40mph to 30mph. The reduction was easy to achieve and would make the area much safer. Being hit at 40mph there was a ten per cent chance of survival whereas the change of survival was eighty per cent if hit at 30mph. London Road was a busy road with many people having to cross for many reasons including buses into town. Traffic was stop-start and dangerous as it speeded up at the point where there were precarious junctions with Harland Way and Bidborough Ridge before having to slow down again at the Quarry Hill interchange. People having to slow or stop to let vehicles out of side roads created bottlenecks and impeded the flow of traffic, reducing the speed would actually improve the smooth flow. A smooth flow of traffic would also assist cyclists who, as part of the proposals for the A26 cycle route, would travel this section of road.

Denise Reynolds, resident of Glebelands, Bidborough, had registered to speak.

Mrs Reynolds commented that she first asked Kent County Council for a reduction in the speed limit following an incident where a car who had stopped to allow her to cross was hit from behind by another car. She had been advised that due to funding cuts all works had to be prioritised and only new works deemed safety critical were being considered. As there had been no personal injury incidents involving vulnerable people in the past three years there was no evidence of a safety problem. Whilst the need for prioritisation was recognised, only responding to deaths or serious injuries was a negative measure and it was asked why a more positive measure could not be used. No expensive works were being asked for, only an extension of the existing 30mph zone. Reducing the limit would reduce the average speed even if not everyone abided the limit, people exceeding the limit by ten per cent would be traveling at 35mph in a 30mph zone rather than going 44mph in a 40mph zone. It was rarely possible to cross the road in one go meaning people were required to wait on a small island only feet away from cars and heavy goods vehicles travelling at 40mph or more. If anyone had doubts on supporting a reduction in speed on the road they were urged to see for themselves and try to cross.

Councillor Simmons fully supported a reduction in the speed limit. As a local councillor and resident he knew from personal experience how dangerous the road was. It was only luck that more people had not been injured. If people even drove at the 40mph limit there would be an improvement but many drivers, having sat in traffic through Southborough, appeared to see the increased speed limit of 40mph and accelerated heavily, many were reluctant to give way to vehicles joining the road making it particularly difficult for drivers exiting side roads. Continuing the 30mph would relieve the pressure to accelerate and would result in a reduction in the average speed.

Councillor Bulman noted that a speed survey for the road had already been agreed and the Board could return to the matter once the results were known. Whilst many members and residents would prefer that something more immediate was done any action was unlikely without the evidence.

County Councillor Scholes asked whether it would be possible to arrange the speed survey in time for the next meeting, or at least sufficient for a verbal update. Michael Hardy, Scheme Project Engineer, KCC, confirmed.

The Chairman, Councillor Bulman, asked if Members were content to add the item to the tracker until the results of the speed survey could be considered. Members agreed.

Councillor Simmons thanked County Councillor Oakford for his support in making funding available for the speed survey.

**RESOLVED** – That the matter be deferred to the tracker pending the results of a speed survey.

## **HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME**

TB23/16 Earl Bournier, District Manager for Tunbridge Wells, KCC, introduced the report for information and invited questions.

Jane Fenwick had registered to speak on behalf of the Transport Working Group of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Mrs Fenwick reminded members that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that she would be consulted during the designing of the Crescent Road crossing but she had not yet been contacted. Many hours of council and officer time had been wasted trying to put right changes to Carrs Corner that had been undertaken without consultation. Nobody wanted to see this happen again so it was disturbing to see a continued aversion to speaking to people with local knowledge before time and money was spent designing the scheme. Pedestrians needed a safe crossing point and vehicles needed access to Crescent Road Car Park, Calverley Crescent and Calverley Park in addition to maintaining a busy traffic flow, local knowledge would be vital. Members were asked to ensure local people were involved in the design process.

Councillor Bulman was surprised to hear that Mrs Fenwick had not been consulted. Michael Hardy, Scheme Project Engineer, KCC, advised that the project was currently being investigated by the contractor and had not reached the consultation stage.

Councillor Bulman understood that it had been the intention that a discussion would have taken place prior to the contractor starting work so that any comments and local knowledge could feed into the design rather than being presented with a fait-accompli. Mr Hardy commented that the contractor was conducting surveys to map pedestrian flow, this would be used to produce a first design which would be consulted on.

Councillor Bulman asked when proposals would be available to be consulted on. Mr Hardy agreed to check with the contractor and report back. Councillor Bulman asked that Mr Hardy write to him with a clear indication of when representatives would be able to discuss the proposals. He reminded all of the urgency as completion had been promised within the financial year.

County Councillor Hoare asked that parishioners of St. Augustine's Church on the corner of Calverley Park be consulted as there were many users of the church who needed to cross at that point, particularly on Sundays but at other times as well. Councillor Bulman suggested that St. Augustine's Church could engage with the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum so that the number of consultees was reduced in order to maintain a more efficient process.

County Councillor Scholes sought clarification on an item appearing on page 70 of the agenda pack which appeared to show a duplication for Eridge Road. Mr Bourner commented that it was likely to be an error but he would check with the Schemes Team.

County Councillor Scholes asked if there was an end-date for the public realm works at Fiveways. Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, TWBC, advised that it was scheduled to be completed mid-November.

County Councillor Scholes enquired on the status of pedestrian ramps referred to on page 73 of the agenda pack. Mr Bourner agreed to check with the engineer and report back.

County Councillor Oakford referred to the works on Upper Grosvenor Road set out on page 67 of the agenda pack and noted that the traffic surveys were complete with the designs to be progressed. He asked when the designs were expected to be available and commented that the area was a particular black-spot with a number of vehicular crashes. Mr Hardy advised that the surveys noted that the incidents did not involve personal injury so would not prioritise as highly, therefore it was proposed to undertake remedial works including realigning the parking to change the way in which people drive around the corner. Speed cameras were not part of the proposed scheme. County Councillor Oakford commented that he was keen to see speed cameras as part of the proposals and asked that it be reconsidered and discussed with the Camera Safety Partnership. Whilst it was lucky that there had been no personal injuries, five cars had been written off having been crashed into by speeding vehicles. Excess speed was known to be a factor at this location and it was ideal for a speed camera. Mr Hardy confirmed that now the speed survey results were available a case would be put to the Camera Safety Partnership.

Councillor Stanyer noted the developer funded work on Eridge Road, referred to by County Councillor Scholes, and asked whether the proposed pedestrian crossing on Major York's Road could be incorporated into that scheme. Mr Bourner advised that the developer funded scheme was to provide access from the highway into the development, the crossing on Major York's Road was unrelated. Councillor Stanyer asked that when discussions took place regarding the developer funded works it be put to the developer to include the crossing as it would aid pedestrian access to the development. Mrs Smith agreed that the option would be discussed. Councillor Bulman commented that such a proposal was unlikely to find favour with the developer. Councillor Stanyer suggested that the developer in question may be open to suggestions.

County Councillor Scholes commented that there was a light pole at the bottom of Major York's Road which had not been connected to an electricity supply and had therefore been unused for approximately ten years. It was appreciated that to dig up the road at such a key location would bring considerable disruption but people had been waiting for a long time for it to be connected. Mr Bourner acknowledged that it had been a long time but Kent County Council were waiting for EDF to connect the electricity. It had now taken so long that lighting the post would tie in with the LED conversion project.

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

**RESOLVED** – That, subject to the comments made during the debate, the report be noted.

#### **NOTIFICATION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

TB24/16 The Chairman, Councillor Bulman, noted that Speeding on the A26 was due to return following the speed survey. There were no other topics for future meetings raised.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

TB25/16 The next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board would be held on Monday 9 January 2017 commencing at 6pm.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.