

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Monday, 14 October 2019

**PRESENT:** Borough Councillors Backhouse, Bruneau, Lidstone and Scott  
County Councillors Hamilton (Chairman), Holden, McInroy, Oakford  
and Rankin  
Parish Councillor Mackonochie

**Officers in Attendance:** Nick Baldwin (Senior Engineer, Parking), Mark O'Callaghan (Scrutiny and Engagement Officer), Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer), Julian Cook (District Manager), Richard Emmett (West Kent Highways Manager) and Jane Fineman (Head of Finance and Procurement)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillors McDermott, Morton and Rands

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

TB59/19 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stanyer and Woodward.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

TB60/19 There were no disclosable pecuniary or other significant interests declared at the meeting.

### NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

TB61/19 Councillor Rands had registered to speak on Agenda item 11.

The Chairman noted that there were 8 members of the public registered to speak on various items.

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 15 APRIL 2019

TB62/19 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 15 April 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 15 JULY 2019

TB63/19 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 15 July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### UPDATE REPORT

TB64/19 Paul Mason from the Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group had registered to speak on this item and made the following comments:

- The Update Report did not include anything on walking, cycling or public transport.
- Heavy traffic already existed in villages, towns and the countryside – the air was polluted and child obesity was a serious issue.

- Asked that the Board consider a new style Agenda that included items that actively looked at monitoring targets for walking, cycling, and the progression to a carbon neutral status by 2030. It would then allow action to be taken if those targets were not being reached.
- Concern was raised that the aims and objectives included in a number of transport related strategies (Transport Strategy 2015-2026, Cycling Strategy 2016-2020 and the Kent Active Travel Strategy) would not be achieved.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Recognition that monitoring was important and that particular attention should be given to cycling, walking and the various modes of public transport.
- It was noted that as the fleet was being replaced, buses were becoming more environmentally friendly.
- That there was a paradox between requests received for free parking in Tunbridge Wells and complaints about congestion and pollution.
- To consider a standing report to the JTB's across the County that gave details on the progress of key projects and business performance indicators.
- To note, that the Report did include items on pedestrian safety and pollution.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

#### **ZONE HA PERMIT PARKING RESTRICTIONS, HAWKENBURY, TUNBRIDGE WELLS - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

TB65/19 Nick Baldwin, Senior Engineer TWBC introduced the report that proposed to advertise amendments to the permit parking restrictions in the Hawkenbury area of Tunbridge Wells. In summary:

- A new permit parking zone in Hawkenbury was introduced in 2018.
- Initially and based on the interest shown, restrictions were only introduced in a few streets.
- A survey was undertaken in the summer of 2019 the outcome of which was that there was now sufficient interest to expand the scheme and introduce more roads where permit parking would apply.
- There was an expectation that the introduction of a wider scheme would have a knock on effect to those streets outside the permit parking area so it was likely there would be a need for further work at a later date.
- The recommendation to now go to a formal public consultation with the results to be reported back either at the January 2020 or April 2020 meeting.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Confirmation that the consultation would last for a period of 3 weeks.
- The aim was to complete the consultation process by Christmas 2019.
- There was recognition of the good work done so far on this issue.

**RESOLVED** – The Board endorsed the proposal to advertise amendments to permit parking restrictions in the Hawkenbury area of Tunbridge Wells.

## **ZONE A PERMIT PARKING RESTRICTIONS, TUNBRIDGE WELLS - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

TB66/19 Nick Baldwin, Senior Engineer TWBC introduced the report that proposed to advertise amendments to the permit parking restrictions in parts of Zone A. In summary:

- The amendment would apply to 2 small parts of the existing Zone A parking area.
- The lower end of Warwick Park (Northern end) where some properties had no off street parking facilities and where it had now become difficult to find spaces to park. The intention was to expand this area to include Rodmell Road which was currently unrestricted.
- In addition to the 1 hour morning restriction in the streets off Claremont Road, the introduction of a 1 hour restriction in the afternoon. It was hoped that this would reduce the impact long term parking had on residents.

Mr Max Eddy resident of Warwick Park had registered to speak, which included the following comments:

- Ability to park on the lower part of Warwick Park had become much more difficult over the last few years.
- There were 70 parking spaces in this area of which there were about 50 Zone A Permits. There were 10 houses and a couple of flats without off street parking. As such parking should not be an issue in the area. However, this part of the road was shared with Kentish Mansions, flats in the Chapel Place area and Lower Cumberland Walk which had an impact on the availability of spaces.
- The use of this area by commuters was also a major concern especially as they did not pay for permits so were parking for 'free'.
- Endorsed the expansion of the scheme as a minimum. And it should include around the enclave and Rodmell Road.
- Undertook a survey on the availability of the 23 spaces in Rodmell Road and found that 14 cars had stayed for the entire day with 4 cars having parked for at least half the day. Only 3 spaces had 3 different cars during the day.
- The flow of cars and availability of spaces would benefit traders and allow for more shoppers.

Ms Elaine Cole resident of Warwick Park had registered to speak, which included the following comments:

- Had also seen a marked change in the ability to park in the area.
- Endorsed the introduction of permits in Rodmell Road.
- The hotel advertised the use of their function room which exacerbated the current parking problems especially in the evening.
- Concern that the proposed scheme would not be sufficient – additional spaces being used by the new Pantiles flats. Current occupants creating off street parking thereby reducing the number of on street parking spaces.
- Hazardous for the Mead school drop off and pick up – additional parking provision would make it safer.
- Consideration be given to Sunday restrictions.

- The scheme to be extended to include Rodmell Road, Warwick Park and Roedean Road.

Mrs Jean Phillips-Martinsson resident of Rodmell Road had registered to speak, which included the following comments:

- Rodmell Road being used as a cut through particularly by large lorries.
- Private driveway being used for reversing – resulted in damage to car left on the driveway.
- Difficulties in actually getting out of private driveway.
- Request that consideration be given to stop HGV's using the road.
- Additional cars due to One Warwick Park Hotel and particularly when weddings took place.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Start of the process. The recommendation was to now go out to a public consultation.
- Not sufficient evidence at the moment to extend the scheme to more of Warwick Park. In response to the suggestion that it was very difficult to park between Nevill Street and Rodmell Road, TWBC had visited the area everyday over a period of a couple of weeks and at different times of the day and had found there had always been spaces to park – on occasion up to 14 spaces. If the scheme extended to this area, it would likely result in parking issues displaced to other roads.
- Not ruling out extending the scheme in the future, but recommended a step by step approach rather than a big scheme approach which would cause much more disruption. Permit parking needed to be achieved in a sensitive way.
- Not aware of any proposals to restrict HGV's from using these roads but it would need to be referred to the KCC safety team to determine whether there was any concerns related to safety.
- Inappropriate road use by HGV drivers was a major concern across the country. HGV Group set up with the aim of creating a pattern of strategic routes – similar to the London Lorry Scheme. In the early stages, but a trial area south of Maidstone had been identified.
- Understood there was a 7.5tonne limit in most residential areas, except for deliveries. Sat Nav's were a particular issue with lorry drivers as they didn't distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate roads.
- Parking around Railway Stations a wider issue that should be looked at.
- Consideration to be given to look at measures to reduce reliance on Cars.
- Insufficient car parking in the Tunbridge Wells area.
- Acknowledgement that 'on street' users might not be able to afford car parking fees.
- Understood that this was a step by step process but a request to review more frequently.
- HGV restrictions was an enforcement matter although it was suggested this did not happen. Wanted to see the powers transferred from the police to the Highways Authority.

**RESOLVED** – That the Board endorsed the proposal to advertise

amendments to permit parking restrictions in parts of Zone A, Tunbridge Wells.

## **CRANBROOK EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER**

TB67/19 Nick Baldwin, Senior Engineer TWBC introduced the report regarding the experimental Traffic Regulation Order that was introduced in Cranbrook. In summary:

- The restrictions included in the current Traffic Regulation Orders in Cranbrook did not match, nor were they what was wanted.
- Options were considered relating to appropriate measures as to how new restrictions should be signed and lined.
- As such, earlier this year, an experimental Traffic Regulation Order was implemented.
- The scheme included changes to the restrictions in Cranbrook and the use of a paler and narrower yellow line.
- As an experimental scheme it could run for a maximum of 18 months, then a decision would have to be taken as to whether it became permanent, or adjusted if necessary.
- There was no prior consultation for an experimental scheme – the first six months was the period when the public could make comments.
- It was recommended that the scheme should continue, and more information gathered. There was no pressing need to change anything at this time. Instead, a report would be submitted at the end of the scheme and would include recommendations regarding the best final arrangement.

Discussion included the following comments:

- The experimental scheme would expire on 20 September 2020 so would aim to report back to JTB at either the April 2020 or the July 2020 meeting.
- The work to progress this scheme, the liaison with the community, the additional budget required were to be applauded – it had worked well and made the restrictions enforceable.

**RESOLVED** – That the Board noted the comments received.

## **REVISED JTB AGREEMENT**

TB68/19 Mark O'Callaghan, Scrutiny and Engagement Officer introduced the report highlighting the changes made to the report following the meeting in April 2019. Further clarification had since been made. In summary:

- Voting rights for Parish Members could be at the discretion of the Board, and;
- The number of public speakers to be made consistent with Tunbridge Wells' usual procedure rules.
- Subject to these changes, the Board would be invited to comment which would then be fed back to Cabinet for approval.

Adrian Berendt, Chair of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum had

registered to speak which included the following comments:

- The agreement allowed for representatives to be appointed from Town or Parish Councils. As Royal Tunbridge Wells was an unparished Council, the Town Forum would be an appropriate representative and as such would like to be included for nomination.

Discussion included the following comments:

- The Board was made up of accountable elected members and as such suggested that in the first instance, legal advice should be sought. Also, as a non decision making Committee, it would need to be reviewed/decided at a different level.
- Any decision would set a precedent for other non elected groups.
- Recognition that there was expertise and professionalism within non elected groups, including the Town Forum that could add value to the Committee.
- There was a process to create a Town Council so it was an option open to Tunbridge Wells. It would then be able to have representation as elected Members on a range of Committees.
- The Audit and Governance Committee had non elected representatives who made a valuable contribution to the Committee but did not have a vote.
- Elected Members were also required to sign the Code of Conduct.
- Need to separate the request for non elected Groups to be included to speak on a Committee and their ability to vote.
- A request was made that 5.3 of the agreement also included the words 'active travel'.
- Further clarification was sought as to whether the agreement would offer Parish Councillors the opportunity to vote (para 2.2 and 2.3 refers). It was noted that Maidstone and Swale JTB's (also Tonbridge and Malling?) already allowed Parish Representatives the vote.
- Sections 2.1 – 2.4 not explicitly clear about voting rights. Suggested that the wording needed to be reviewed.
- Maidstone JTB agreement stated 'All Board members, including Parish Council Members shall have the right to propose motions and amendments and to vote on the same'. It was suggested the same wording could be used for the TWBC agreement.
- General agreement that the Board should be able to decide whether Parish Councillors be given the ability to vote. The revised JTB could be supported subject to it being revised to include the reference to 'active travel' and the Board's ability to assign voting rights to Parish Members being expressly stated. The inclusion of the Town Forum was a different issue and would need to be dealt with separately.
- The JTB Agreement was a Kent wide document that needed to be agreed by all 12 districts. As such there would be a need to establish whether any amendments would require agreement by all 12 districts or whether there would be flexibility to make small changes to suit the requirements of individual districts.
- Representations to the JTB on the Maidstone JTB Agreement was written simply as follows: ' Any JTB Member, KCC elected Member and any Maidstone Borough Council elected Member, may place a relevant item on the agenda and attend and speak at any meeting of the JTB but may not vote nor propose a motion nor an amendment (unless already a voting member of the JTB). It was suggested this wording be put forward as an amendment to the current wording.

**RESOLVED** – That the revised JTB Agreement be supported subject to the following amendments:

- The addition of 'active travel' under Section 5.3.
- Review of Section 2.3 to include the Board having the ability to assign voting rights to Parish Councillors.

## HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME

TB69/19 Julian Cook, District Manager, Kent County Council introduced the report that gave a summary of the schemes that were programmed for delivery in 2019/20.

Discussion included the following comments:

- There was no further update on the A26 Cycleway at this time.
- It was agreed that Kent CC would respond directly to Cllr Holden regarding the current position on the realignment of Heartenoak Road junction with Cranbrook Road, Hawkhurst.
- Traffic counts had been completed for proposed 20mph limits. Now waiting for a survey to be completed to ascertain that the demand was there and then for a consultation to take place. Looking at Banner Farm as an example of what could be achieved. To note that Culverden was interested in something similar.
- The minutes of 15 July made reference to the use of Bell Mouth access points on Benhall Mill Road and Bayham Road. It was confirmed that a response had been sent.

Mr James McGrath, Ms Pippa Collard and Cllr James Rands had all registered to speak on Appendix D of Agenda Item 11 – Tunbridge Wells Public Realm Works which included the following comments:

- The 2 month temporary closure of York Road had been very beneficial to the residents. The residents of the road had now requested that the temporary closure be made permanent.
- Residents of York Road, Suffolk Mews and Norfolk Heights approved the closure of York Road, making it safer, quieter and with improved parking for residents. 2 carriage turning circles within the road worked and were useful.
- To reopen York Road would allow it to be used as a rat run for cars wanting to get to Mount Pleasant. The road was unsuitable to accommodate this additional traffic.
- Broadly in favour of the newly created pedestrian area of the Town Centre but felt the benefits would be negated if traffic was allowed to use both York Road and Dudley Road. The point of the Public Realm was the reduction of traffic and the enhancement of public space for pedestrians.
- It was suggested that the installation of removable bollards would be the most cost effective method to effect the closure.
- A petition with 78 signatories had been collected.
- If it was an administrative issue to convert a temporary closure to a permanent closure, perhaps the way forward was an experimental TRO that could then be converted to a permanent TRO at a later date.

- Very expensive to get Sat Nav's to exclude York Road, so there was strong assumption that traffic using Church Road and wanting to get onto Mount Pleasant Road would be directed down York Road.
- Another option considered was the creation of 2 U shaped loops but this was considered difficult and too expensive.
- Whilst the residents of Dudley Road had not yet come to a final decision – they would expect equitable treatment - if York Road was closed, Dudley Road would expect the same.

Discussion included the following comments:

- A decision on the continuation of a road closure (York Road and Dudley Road) could not be given at this time. Once the work had been completed there would be a need to assess the impact of the works across the whole area. The next steps would be a discussion between Kent CC and TWBC with the aim of bringing a report to the next JTB meeting.
- There was a concern about the time it would take for a decision to be made. Given the clear support from residents and that the traffic displacement had caused no adverse effect could something not be done to an earlier timescale. Otherwise it might be an opportunity missed.
- Suggested that there might be an opportunity to convene a meeting before the next scheduled JTB meeting in January. It would have to be lead by TWBC but Kent CC would be happy to join that discussion. Councillors to approach TWBC.

Mr Paul Mason for Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group had registered to speak on Appendix E of Agenda Item 11 with particular reference to Bell Mouth Junctions which included the following comments:

- The installation of Bell Mouth junctions were considered dangerous to both cyclists and pedestrians. It was recommended that this type of junction should no longer be built thereby making it safer for cyclists to travel and pedestrians to cross.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Not always possible to have a square junction and as such a certain number of Bell Mouth junctions were necessary to allow safe and easier access for large vehicles.
- It was normal practice to ensure pedestrian crossings were appropriately located and not put at the widest point of a Bell Mouth junction.
- The Kent Design Guide made clear that the width of a Bell Mouth be constructed that would be appropriate for the road/location – residential or industrial.
- Understood that a response to this effect had been forwarded to Mr Mason by the Kent CC Safety Engineer – agreed to follow up.
- To look at Appendix E and the number of Bell Mouth Junctions and establish where each were located. It would then be possible to determine whether or not they had been constructed appropriately.
- Kent CC happy to meet to discuss existing Bell Mouth sites. If a new Bell Mouth the Kent Design Guide which was currently under review, would allow for comments as part of the consultation process.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

TB70/19 Comments were made in respect of the following matters:

- To note and as a reminder to Members, issues in the first instance should be directed to the relevant 'owner' before being raised at JTB. For Highways Safety and Highways Improvement matters please contact Kent CC in the first instance, for any parking related matters, TWBC.
- To consider levels of engagement especially once the Transport Plan had been issued.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a Working Group that was looking at engagement.
- Consider a standing agenda item for Kent CC to report on their strategic goals and their progress towards targets. The JTB would then have the option to make recommendations.
- Any such report should be County wide so would be consistent and comparisons could be made.
- Zone G Parking – Home owners were not able to sell their houses. They were not able to pass their parking permits to the new owners and because they were placed at the bottom of the queue, it was taking up to 2 years for any new owners to get a permit.
  - o TWBC had spoken to an estate agent to see what could be done to help residents. One measure taken forward was to reduce the amount of double yellow lines behind Argos which created an extra couple of spaces. A new permit type was created specifically for residents of Zone G to have a full time permit for Crescent Road carpark at a cost of £200. Although more than a normal permit, it gave residents a guaranteed space.
  - o Need to make clear to current residents and potential buyers what the options were.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

TB71/19 The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 27 January 2020 at 6:00pm

### **NOTES:**

The meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.

An audio recording of this meeting is available on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website.