

Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **19th February 2013**

Present:

Mr M A Wickham (Chairman);

Cllr. Burgess (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Mrs Blanford, Davey, Feacey, Heyes.

Mr M J Angell, Mr P M Hill, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr J N Wedgbury.

Mr K Ashby – KALC Ashford Area Committee.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Claughton, Robey, Mrs E Tweed.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Michael, Mortimer, Sims.

Lisa Holder (District Highway Manager Ashford – KCC Highways & Transportation), Paul Jackson (Head of Environmental Services – ABC), Ray Wilkinson (Engineering Services Manager – ABC), Sarah Paul (Technical Administrative Assistant – ABC), Kirsty Liddell (Member Services and Scrutiny Support Officer – ABC).

325 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Mrs Blanford	Announced an 'Other Interest' as a resident of Pluckley.	331
Davey	Announced an 'Other Interest' as a governor of Willesborough Infants School.	330
Mortimer	Announced an 'Other Interest' as he knew some of the objectors to the scheme as it was within his Ward.	332
Sims	Announced an 'Other Interest' as he was a governor of Downs View Infant School.	329
Mr J N Wedgbury	Announced an 'Other Interest' as a member of the London Fire and Rescue Service.	330

Mr M A Wickham Announced an 'Other Interest' as a resident of 331
Pluckley.

326 Petitions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.1 Councillor Sims advised that he wished to present a petition regarding the installation of a zebra crossing on Faversham Road in the vicinity of the Co-operative Store.

Councillor Sims then presented the petition to the Chairman of the Board. The Chairman advised that he would pass the petition to Mrs Holder who would take the petition back to Kent County Council.

327 Local Parking Schemes

The Chairman of the Board advised that prior to the proposed Highway Safety Schemes being debated, Officers would give an overview of the law and what could and could not be done in relation to parking schemes.

Mrs Paul advised that parking restrictions should be the exception rather than the rule. The Highway Code provided clear guidance on where parking should and should not take place. Motorists generally followed the Highway Code and employed their own judgement in assessing the suitability of a potential parking space. Where there was heavy competition for parking however there was a tendency for people to be tempted to use unsuitable locations to park their vehicle.

The Road Traffic Act 1984 set out the reasons for which a traffic order may be made;

- For avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road to which the order relates or any other road
- From preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising
- For preventing damage to the road or buildings on or near it
- For facilitating the passage of vehicular traffic on the road
- For preserving or improving the amenities of an area by prohibiting or restricting the use on a road or roads in that area of heavy commercial vehicles

Parking schemes could be divided into two types, highway safety schemes and parking management schemes. Highway safety schemes were the most commonly used form of scheme and were designed to deal with unsafe/obstructive parking practices. These schemes generally employed 'no waiting at any time' restrictions but could also include other forms of restriction such as 'school keep clear' markings.

Parking management schemes also dealt with unsafe/obstructive parking but were designed in addition to provide a particular user group with greater opportunity to find a parking space. Such schemes were only proposed in areas where there was significant competition between different user groups and where one or more of those groups had no other option but to find parking on-street in the area (e.g. in residential areas where the majority of residents had no off-street parking facility).

These schemes generally consisted of 'no waiting at any time' restrictions in those locations unsuitable for parking and time limited bays (with optional residents' exemption permits) elsewhere.

The use of 'no waiting at any time' restrictions within highway safety schemes followed specific criteria in line with the Highway Code. Lines should therefore be provided; within 10 metres of a junction (15 metres for a major junction), on bends, the brow of hills, across pedestrian crossing points, on roads that were less than 4.8 metres wide and where parking would significantly impede the free flow of traffic.

In response to questions from Members Mrs Paul advised that the legislation did not allow for the use of waiting restrictions specifically to protect private driveways. White access markings could be used; however these were just advisory and were administered by Kent County Council. It would be difficult to justify the use of yellow lines to protect driveways.

In response to further questions from Members Mr Wilkinson advised that yellow lines were used to protect junctions. White access markings had to be justified; they were usually used where there were habitual parking problems. The applicant paid for the markings and they were not enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers.

328 Aldington Primary School – Highway Safety Scheme

The report set out the scheme, which had been requested to address unsafe and obstructive parking practices at the beginning and end of the school day in the vicinity of Aldington Primary School. The proposed scheme consisted of 'School Keep Clear' markings to protect the crossing point and informal white access markings to discourage parking across the school vehicular accesses and shared vehicular access serving 1 – 12 Goldwell Houses. The scheme was to be funded from the District Member's Highway Member Fund.

Consultation had taken place between 3rd and 25th January 2013, with a notice being placed in the newspaper, copies of the notice erected on site and 38 properties in the immediate vicinity had received letters detailing the proposals. Only one representation had been received. The representation acknowledged that the proposals were a positive step forward but requested various additional works including the hard paving of a section of verge, footway lighting and the introduction of 'residents only' parking. With the exception of the 'residents only' parking the requested additional works fell outside the remit of the scheme. There were no grounds for the introduction of a 'residents only' scheme as this would be a poor use of publicly maintained road space, with the bays likely to remain empty for long periods of time. Residents had vehicular access to the rear of their properties for parking so were not reliant on on-street parking and such a scheme would be difficult to enforce and could cause problems for visitors, trades people etc.

Resolved:

That the scheme be approved for implementation.

329 Downs View Infant & Kennington Junior Schools – Highway Safety Scheme

The report set out the scheme, which had been requested to address dangerous and obstructive parking practices taking place at the beginning and end of the school day. The proposed scheme consisted of 'no waiting at any time' restrictions to be installed in the following locations in the vicinity of the schools; within 10 metres of junctions, where the road was too narrow to accommodate parking on one side, where the road was too narrow to accommodate parking on both sides (and where this practice took place) and where passing places were necessary.

Consultation had taken place between 3rd and 25th January 2013, with a notice being placed in the newspaper, copies of the notice erected on site and 142 properties in the immediate vicinity had received letters detailing the proposals. A total of 14 individual representations had been received, with a petition submitted by the Treasurer of St Mary's Church containing 46 signatories.

Following the consultation Officers had visited the site again and proposed that there be a reduction of the length of the 'no waiting at any time' restriction outside St.Mary's Church.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Thompsett, the Vice-Chairman of the Parochial Church Council, spoke on this item. He was pleased to hear that the Officers were proposing a reduction in the length of the 'no waiting at any time' restriction along Church Road. The Church itself was well used, with events taking place outside of school hours, which resulted in a large number of vehicles parking in the vicinity. A lot of the parish were elderly and so it was vital that users could park close to the Church. It was important to protect the junctions however he was pleased that the reduction had been proposed as this would allow for additional parking spaces along the church wall.

The ABC Ward Member acknowledged the concerted attempted to resolve this issue. The problem was further impacted by a lack of parking for staff at both the schools. Half the staff of the Downs View Infant School were forced to park on-street due to a lack of on-site parking facilities. It was important to ensure that there were not too many restrictions placed along Church Road as it was an area that was heavily used outside of school hours. There were concerns that parking problems could be pushed further afield if the restrictions were too onerous. There were a number of disabled parents that regularly struggled to drop their children off at Downs View Infant School due to unsafe parking; he therefore proposed that double yellow lines be installed at the entrance to the School. He questioned whether safety barriers could be installed in front of both Schools to stop young children running into the road.

The ABC Ward Member went on to say that the scheme did not appear to address the issue of the large number of vehicle movements, including coaches, generated by the Hockey Club. Of particular concern was the narrow section of Ball Lane north-east of its junction with Church Road.

In respect of the safety barriers, Mrs Holder advised that she would take this matter back to KCC for discussion.

Mr Wilkinson advised that there was a build out outside Downs View Infant School that created a pinch point. This could be removed and re-instated as carriageway to increase the available on-street parking although this would obviously fall outside the remit of the current scheme, being a KCC function. Any additional double yellow lines would have to be subject to a separate consultation. There had been a number of proposals put forward during the consultation process, such as the extension of the current one-way system, the provision of a footpath in Church Road and the construction of a public car park in the locale these would all be relayed to the appropriate department.

The Chairman, who was also the KCC Division Member, advised that he was pleased with the scheme as put forward by Officers. Many discussions had taken place regarding the ongoing problem in the area and he was happy with the reduction in the length of the section of the 'no waiting at any time' restriction along Church Road from the junction with Ball Lane.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr Wilkinson advised that it was illegal to park at junctions at any time. The problems experienced in the area were not restricted to the Schools nor just Monday to Friday. Should the scheme be approved, a post implementation review would be carried out once the scheme had settled in.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the scheme be approved for implementation subject to the reduction of the length of the section of 'no waiting at any time' restriction extending south along Church Road from its junction with Ball Lane in line with the point at which the carriageway attains a width of 4.8 metres.**
 - (ii) subject to post-implementation review of the scheme, a separate consultation be held on the introduction of a length of 'no waiting at any time' restriction on both sides of the carriageway along the section of Church Road between its junctions with Studio Close and Ulley Road/The Street where the road width is less than 4.8 metres.**

330 Willesborough Infant & Junior Schools – Highway Safety Scheme

The report set out the scheme, which had been requested to address dangerous and obstructive parking practices taking place at the beginning and end of the school day. The proposed scheme consisted of 'no waiting at any time' restrictions around junctions, bends and where passing places were necessary in roads within easy walking distance of the Willesborough Infant and Junior Schools.

Consultation had taken place between 3rd and 25th January 2013, with a notice being placed in the newspaper, copies of the notice erected on site and 386 properties in the immediate vicinity had received letters detailing the proposals. A total of 31 representations had been received. 8 of the representations made reference to the scheme detrimentally impacting upon residents. The proposed scheme would only protect areas where parking should not take place, such as around junctions and on bends in the road. Enforcement action would be undertaken, with Civil Enforcement Officers patrolling the area as needed.

The ABC Ward Member advised that she supported the scheme and had received many supportive comments from residents regarding the proposals.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr Wilkinson advised that the proposed 'no waiting at any time' restrictions in Highfield Road, Ripley Road, Collard Road and Luckhurst Road were intended to discourage unsafe parking on bends and around junctions, where it was illegal to park. The properties in these roads also had off-road parking and garages so did not rely on on-street parking. A large proportion of on-street parking would be retained and it was therefore not anticipated that there would be an opportunity created for vehicles to speed in Highfield Road at the beginning and end of the school day.

The KCC Division Member supported the scheme and advised the Board that he had committed funding from his Member Fund for the installation of a flashing 'School' warning light.

Resolved:

That the scheme be approved for implementation.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.5 Mr J N Wedgbury requested that it be recorded that he voted against the implementation of the scheme.

331 Pluckley Station – Highway Safety Scheme Extension

The report set out the scheme, which consisted of a 'no waiting at any time' restriction to protect the corner at the junction of The Grove and Station Approach in addition to the previously agreed restrictions laid out in the Pluckley Station Highway Safety Scheme (JTB 13th Dec 2012).

Consultation had taken place between 3rd and 25th January 2013, with a notice being placed in the newspaper, copies of the notice erected on site and 23 properties in the immediate vicinity had received letters detailing the proposals. A total of 3 representations had been received.

The ABC Ward Member supported the scheme and advised the Board that it had the full support of the Parish Council.

Resolved:

That the scheme be approved for implementation.

332 Willesborough Lees – Highway Safety Scheme

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Bailey, a local resident spoke on this item. He felt that the report was little more than smoke and mirrors, nothing had changed. In his opinion the report was inaccurate; a large majority of residents had rejected the scheme. His assessment of the figures had shown that the ratio of objectors was 5:1. The report appeared to confuse the issue and covered up the fact that residents objected to the scheme. Should the proposed scheme be implemented it would only result in the problem being moved elsewhere. It would be a PR disaster for the Council and he felt that there should be a moratorium period and the William Harvey Hospital should attempt to resolve this issue by providing more parking on their site. He urged the Board to reject the scheme and support local residents.

Mrs Paul advised the Board that the proposed scheme was part of a wider scheme being developed by the William Harvey Hospital, Kent County Council, the Borough Council and the bus companies. Consultation had taken place between 18th October and 9th November 2012, with a notice being placed in the newspaper, copies of the notice erected on site and 474 properties in the immediate vicinity had received letters detailing the proposals. A total of 64 representations had been received from 60 households, with a further 60 pre-populated letters from 50 households. These representations contained a variety of comments with the most common being that it was the responsibility of the Hospital Trust to provide staff parking. The highway safety scheme was one of a number of solutions being explored. The Hospital Trust would be submitting a planning application to extend the current staff car park, if approved this would remove the current waiting list and hopefully help alleviate parking issues currently experienced in the area. All residents that had responded via a pre-populated letter had been written to for further clarification. Of the 60 people written to, only 19 responses had been received with 13 reiterating their objection to the scheme and 4 in support, a breakdown of these responses was contained at appendix 5 to the report. Mrs Paul also confirmed that 24% of those households consulted responded to the consultation. The majority of properties in the area had off-street parking and it would be extremely difficult to justify a parking management scheme. It was therefore recommended that the highway safety scheme be implemented. The Board could write to the Head of Planning and Development and request that a legal agreement be entered into with the Hospital Trust should planning permission be granted for an extension to the staff car park for further measures to be implemented should the extension to the staff car park not ameliorate parking issues in the area.

One of the ABC Ward Members advised the Board that residents opposed the scheme. He had tried to facilitate a meeting between the residents, Officers and the KCC Division Member, however ABC Officers had declined. He suggested that a modified scheme be considered.

Mr Wilkinson advised that a modified scheme could only be considered if it were a reduced scheme; it could not be extended without further consultation.

The KCC Division Member felt that the scheme had not been accepted by residents and it was important to listen to what they wanted. He felt that he could not support the proposal.

Mr Wilkinson advised that he had been asked to look at the implementation of a highway safety scheme by the KCC Division Member and KCC Officers. This scheme did not differ from the other highway safety schemes already considered by the Board that evening. The scheme would prevent parking on junctions, narrow roads and on roundabouts. He understood that residents had requested more onerous restrictions be implemented however there was insufficient justification for the introduction of such a scheme. There had however been a number of instances of obstructive parking in the area with dustcarts unable to access areas and buses being delayed. The proposed scheme would help to manage the worst of the problems and would be reviewed after one year.

Members of the Board were concerned about the level of objections received by residents.

Mr Wilkinson advised that the scheme would not prevent parking in its entirety; it would only prevent parking in areas where it was illegal and unsafe to park. Officers were satisfied with the analysis of the representations.

An ABC Member felt it was important to bear in mind that this was a highway safety scheme and should be welcomed. The scheme would be assessed in a year and amendments could be made if required. She urged the Board to press on with the scheme.

Members of the Board questioned whether amendments could be made to the scheme following further discussions between the ABC Ward Member and Officers.

Mr Wilkinson advised that the item could be deferred to the next meeting of the Board pending further discussions with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board, Officers, and the ABC Ward Member and KCC Division Member.

Resolved:

That the scheme be deferred to the March Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board to allow for further discussions to be held with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board, Officers, and the ABC Ward Member and KCC Division Member.