

Extract of the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 10th April 2014.

397 M20 Junction 10A

The report considered the pro's and cons of the available options for the delivery of a new motorway junction and to establish a Cabinet position on the subject to inform future discussions with the Highways Agency, Kent County Council and developers as well as potential funding agencies such as the South East LEP.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development confirmed that Junction 10A was one of the "Big Eight" proposals prioritised by the Council and was vital for the development in South East Ashford. He said that Highway Agency modelling indicated that the proposal could provide traffic capacity up to 2030 with a potential opening date of 2018.

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism and the Rural Economy considered the report dealt too heavily on the "pro's" rather than the "cons" of the proposal and suggested that there was a need to look further into the future. She considered that the new Junction might mean that Ashford had to increase the overall number of houses it would have to supply within its Local Plan and therefore she would have liked to see the information in the report challenged. She referred to the financial implications section of the report and drew attention to the fact that if any direct financial consequences arose for this Council, there could be a potential impact on the general revenue fund.

The Chairman explained that proposals for Junction 10A had been around for quite a while and confirmed that Kent County Council would be the Planning Authority. He said that the proposal was being developed by Kent County Council working with the Highways Agency and would involve detailed traffic modelling of the Junction. He emphasised that Cabinet was being asked to support in principle the Junction making no assumptions about future planning decisions which would be taken on their merits and at the appropriate time.

A Member, whilst accepting the need for a Junction 10A, said that it was important that it was the right one for Ashford. He said that he had concerns during the recent presentation by a representative of the Highways Agency on the current proposal. The Chairman explained that one of the reasons behind establishing Ashford's Strategic Delivery Board was that it was comprised of all partners who would be associated with the delivery of the Junction and he said that he would emphasise at meetings that it was vitally important that the Junction worked in practice. The Portfolio Holder for Transportation, Highways and Engineering said he had concerns over the proposed design of the Junction and was extremely worried that it could cause congestion in other areas of the Town.

The Head of Planning and Development explained that £20 million was available through LEP Funding but he said Kent County Council would be spending much of the forthcoming year working on a detailed business case. The LEP would need to be convinced that this was realistic. The Junction would only have Folkestone facing slip roads because of its proximity to Junction 10 and he commented that the interim scheme was the only option available at the present time.

The Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control referred to the recommendations in the report and confirmed that support was being sought in principle as a way to move forward. In terms of any future financial implications, he said that these would obviously need to be considered in terms of the potential benefits of the Junction in terms of the commercial impact on the Town Centre.

Resolved:

That (i) support be given in principle to the delivery of the SELEP's funded scheme for Junction 10A by 2019.

(ii) support in principle be given to the subsequent delivery of an enhanced SELEP scheme to create a new, all movements Junction 10A in the same location when funding permits.