

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISIONS

(in terms of Access to Information Rule 18)

CABINET

Thursday 10 May 2007

**Present: Councillor Davies (Deputy Leader in the Chair)
Councillors Bullock, Bulman, Mrs Mayhew, Scholes and Mrs Thomas.**

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

CAB176/06 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cunningham, Horwood and Howell.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

CAB177/06 None were declared.

APPROVAL OF CABINET MINUTES DATED 12 APRIL 2007

CAB178/06 It was agreed that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 April 2007 be confirmed as correct record.

MINUTES OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD DATED 16 APRIL 2007

CAB179/06 The Minutes of the Joint Transportation Board dated 16 April 2007 were submitted for Members' approval.

Members were informed that Kent County Council had not implemented another Joint Transportation Board recommendation. This related to minute TB26/06 of 16 April 2007 meeting. Cabinet Members expressed their concerns that Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board's recommendations were not being carried out in the way they should be.

Further, the Cabinet agreed the Joint Transportation Board's decision that the current Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board write to the County Portfolio Holder for Highways, Environment and Highways Advisory Board regarding the various instances of Joint Transportation Board's recommendations not being followed by County and expressing the Borough Council's wider concerns on the effectiveness of the relationship between Borough and County on highway matters following the ending of the joint partnership.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations of the Joint Transportation Board, dated 16 April 2007, as set out in appendix A, be supported.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

DECISION NO. CAB180/06

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

TITLE OF REPORT:

*** Members' Remuneration (070510/CAB002)**

PRIORITIES:

All

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Finance and Property Services reminded Members that the Council was required to annually review its Remuneration scheme for elected Members and to publish it when set.

Members were informed that the officer recommendation was for an increase of 3% in line with the Council's budgeted increase for Members' Allowances (see appendix B to these minutes) with the additional observations and amendments as follows:

Chair of Standards Committee – (in respect of elected Members) would receive 25% of the Basic Allowance as set by Council.

Chair of Audit Committee – (in respect of elected Members) until the Remuneration Panel report back, the Chair should also receive 25% of the Basic Allowance

Chair of Select Committees – would receive special responsibility allowance of 100%

Members were informed that a detailed review of Members' Allowances will be carried out in the light of changes to the Council's committees and consideration will be given to the possibility of linking allowances to attendance and/or performance. The next review would be commissioned towards the end of Summer 2007.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the Scheme of Members' Allowances as set out in Appendix B and the amendments as listed above be considered and recommended to Full Council; and
- (2) That the need for a more in-depth review of allowances in the new municipal year be endorsed and that any changes, where applicable, be back-dated to the start of the current municipal year and that part of the review include vice-chairmen, lead Members and performance related payment.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

There is an annual requirement to set a Scheme for Members' Remuneration.

Contact Officer: Sean Clark, Head of Finance and Property Services
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: sean.clark@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

URGENT BUSINESS

In accordance with Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Chairman agreed that the following item of business be taken as it was understood that the premises had been let or sold. It had come to light that the premises had been remarketed.

EXEMPT ITEM

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100A (4)

RESOLVED - That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business referred to below on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act namely: -

DECISION NO. CAB181/06

Paragraph (3) - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

DECISION NO. CAB181/06**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:**

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

TITLE OF REPORT:

*** Gateway (070510/CAB006)**

PRIORITIES:

All

DISCUSSION:

The Director of Change and Business Support informed Members that the Council had an opportunity to acquire premises suitable for a Gateway. The Gateway concept offered residents convenient physical access to frontline customer services from a range of public sector bodies.

Members were informed that this would address a number of key priorities and commitments in the Strategic Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and ICT Strategy.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's continued commitment to the Gateway concept be endorsed;
- (2) That the ongoing negotiations with a view to possibly securing suitable premises be noted; and
- (3) That Cabinet recommends to Council (if officers are successful in their negotiations) that the Head of Finance and Property Services and the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (in consultation with the Leader of the Council) be authorised to enter into a contract for the purchase of the freehold of a suitable gateway site and that Council make budgetary provision as mentioned in the report to purchase and refurbish the premises.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The property would provide a real opportunity for the Council to develop a Gateway in the heart of the retail area of Royal Tunbridge Wells. A Gateway would address a number of key priorities and commitments in the Strategic Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and ICT Strategy most importantly improving the quality of customer access to Council services and improving partnership working.

Contact Officer: William Benson, Director of Change and Business Support
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: william.benson@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

CABINET DECISIONS

DECISION NO. CAB182/06

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

TITLE OF REPORT:

Forward Plan (070510/CAB001)

PRIORITY:

Delivering high quality services to our customers

DECISION MADE:

That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions be approved, subject to the following additions:

Planning Portfolio –

(i) Planning Inspection – 7 June 2007

Housing Portfolio –

(ii) Housing Renewal Assistance Policy/Housing Grant Outturn for 2006/2007 – 7 June 2007

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To comply with Access to Information Procedure Rule 14.

Contact Officer: Samantha Timms, Senior Committee Administrator

Tel: 01892 554219 or e-mail: sam.timms@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB183/06

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

HOUSING

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Mayhew

TITLE OF REPORT:

**Audit Commission Housing Inspection – Final Progress Report
(070510/CAB003)**

PRIORITIES:

Having housing suitable for local people.

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet noted the final progress report on the implementation of the action plan that was approved by Cabinet at its March 2006 to respond to the recommendations made by the Audit Commission relating to the Housing Inspection that had been undertaken in October/November 2006.

Members' attention was drawn to actions that were still being progressed, namely: Recommendations R4.1 and R4.2; R5.4; R7.1 and R7.2. It was noted that two action items had been implemented outside the required timescales suggested by the Audit Commission, namely: Recommendation R.2.1 and R4.3.

DISCUSSION Cont./..

The Head of Housing Services stated that the next steps would be that as part of the Housing Services Service Plan for 2007/08 a review and self-assessment of the Council's Housing Services be undertaken by the end of 2007.

Details on progress in implementing the action plan was appended to the report for Members' information.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the final progress report detailing the implementation of the action plan in response to recommendations made by the Audit Commission within their report on the Housing Inspection undertaken in October/November 2006, be noted; and
- (2) That the proposal to conduct a self-assessment of the Housing Service in advance of any decision to request the Audit Commission to conduct a further Housing Inspection, be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To comply with the Audit Commission's recommendation that the findings of the Housing Inspection are shared with Members and that weaknesses identified in the Housing Inspection report are addressed.

Contact Officer: David Crosby, Head of Housing Services
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: david.crosby@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB184/06**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTIVITY AND ICT****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Bulman****TITLE OF REPORT:****Draft Comprehensive Equality Scheme for Consultation**
(070510/CAB005)**PRIORITIES:****All****DISCUSSION:**

Members were informed on how the consultation on the gender, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation elements of the Comprehensive Equality Scheme would be carried out. They were also asked to agree the four documents for consultation prior to the adoption by full Council later in 2007.

All the documents were appended to the report for Members' approval.

DECISION MADE:

That the gender, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation equality documents be agreed for consultation.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To agree the gender, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation elements of the Comprehensive Equality Scheme documents for consultation.

Contact Officer: Sarah Andrews, Equality Policy Officer
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: sarah.andrews@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB185/06

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTIVITY AND ICT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Bullock

TITLE OF REPORT:

Outturn (Quarter Four) 2006/07 Performance Summary
(070510/CAB004)

PRIORITIES:

All

DISCUSSION:

The Director of Change and Business Support briefed Members on Council performance against a range of key performance indicators for the fourth quarter of 2006-7 and of BVPI and LPI outturns.

Members noted details of BVPI performance for 2005/06; the report provided a together with the underlying analysis and noted the discussions that had taken place between Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service relating to Local Performance Indicators (LPI).

Cabinet noted that performance had now regained momentum and that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council had more BVPIs in the top quartile. The initial target of 50% of all BVPIs had been in the top quartile by December 2007. Listed in the report were the areas of significant progress and areas for improvement.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the summary performance report for the outturn position 2006/07 and the progress made to date be noted; and
- (2) That the range of measures for improvement listed in paragraph (7) of the report be endorsed, to include:
 - Portfolio Holders should meet with their respective Head(s) of Service to review BVPI outturns relative to other authorities and identifying any short-term corrective measures that could be undertaken to improve performance this year and longer-term plans for improving performance.
 - All BVPIs and LPIs will be aligned more closely with the Council's Corporate Priorities, to clarify the extent to which we are delivering against those priorities. A summary of how the Council is performing against its priorities will be available for Quarter 1 of 2007/08.
 - Underperforming Best Value Performance Indicators will be addressed more fully in the Best Value Performance Plan and associated Corporate Improvement Plan. This will be published in June.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To provide Members with details of Council performance against a range of key performance indicators by theme.

Contact Officer: Raymond Warren, Performance and Improvement Manager
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: raymond.warren@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

URGENT BUSINESS

In accordance with Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Chairman agreed that the following item of business be taken in order that a decision be made on whether tender documents should be sent out to potential contractors.

EXEMPT ITEM**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100A (4)**

RESOLVED - That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business referred to below on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act namely: -

DECISION NO. CAB186/06

Paragraph (3) - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

DECISION NO. CAB18606

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

ENVIRONMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Cunningham

TITLE OF REPORT:

Household Waste and Doorstep Recycling Collection and Street Cleansing Contracts (070510/CAB007)

PRIORITIES:

**Care for our environment
 Ensuring that we are well managed, proactive and deliver value-for-money services**

DISCUSSION:

Members were asked to determine whether the Council's interests would be best served by proceeding with the letting of a conventional contracts, or alternatively, by pursuing an innovative framework procurement partnership with other authorities, which would take longer and require an extension to the current contract in the interim.

DECISION MADE:

(1) That officers be instructed to withdraw from the existing tender process and to pursue a leading role in the creation of a wider framework agreement for procuring household waste collection, doorstep recycling and street cleansing contracts. This, subject to the successful negotiation of an extension to existing contracts. Further reports be considered on the practical implications prior to finalising a decision. Delegated authority be given to the Director of Services to the Community, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Property, and the Portfolio Holder, to negotiate an extension of the existing contracts within the budget parameters for up to one year to the end of March 2008;

DECISION MADE Cont./

- (2) That the financial implications highlighted in the report, regarding the need to make adequate financial provision in 2008/9 for the potential costs of any extension to the existing waste collection and street compared to budget provision, be noted;
- (3) That Cabinet recommend to full Council, should it not be possible to achieve a one year extension of the existing contracts for a price which falls within the existing adopted budget, to make an adjustment to the adopted budget to accommodate that cost if it is considered to offer value for money otherwise the tender process should recommence;
- (4) That officers bring a report back to Cabinet no later than October 2007, in order to enable a firm decision to be made on whether to pursue a framework agreement or to proceed with a conventional tender process; and
- (5) That an interim report setting out progress be presented to Cabinet no later than July 2007.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To provide time to allow the feasibility and benefits of participating in the emerging framework procurement partnership opportunity to be fully identified considered whilst maintaining the effective delivery of the services.

Contact Officer: Richard Powell, Director of Services to the Community
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: richard.powell@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

(NOTE:

- (1) In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 5.3, Councillors Mrs North and Weeden both attended the meeting and spoke on the following decisions: Weeden CAB179/06, CAB186/06, Mrs North and Weeden CAB180/06, CAB181/06;
- (2) Councillors Mrs Thomas and Weeden both left the meeting during consideration of decision CAB186/06.)

APPENDIX A

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MONDAY 16 APRIL 2007

MINUTES of the Joint Transportation Board held at the Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells on 16 April 2007.

PRESENT: County Councillors Manning (Vice Chairman), Bullock, King and Scholes
Borough Councillors Davies (Chairman), Marriott, Neve, Ransley and Smith
Parish Representative: Councillor Patterson

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Borough Councillors Crawford, Mrs Mayhew and Weeden.

OFFICERS: David Bond, Transport Manager (KCC); Behdad Haratbar, Head of Transport Planning (KCC); Adrian Holland, Acting Head of Operations (KCC); Vicki Farley, Senior Transport Planner (KCC); Richard Powell, Director of Services to the Community (TWBC); and Gary Stevenson, Head of Environment and Street Scene Services, (TWBC).

APOLOGIES: Borough Councillor Rusbridge.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

TB25/06 In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Part 5, Councillor Marriott declared a personal interest in minute TB29/06 because he lived on Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood. He took no part in the discussion or voting on this item.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2007

TB26/06 **RECOMMENDED** – That the minutes of the Joint Transportation Board held on 15 January 2007 be agreed.

Members noted the comments made by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Cabinet on 8 February 2007, as follows:

“Councillor Bulman requested further details on the working party that had been established to look at the options available for the improvements to the junction of Yew Tree Road/Speldhurst Road. He was advised to make a written submission to the Joint Transportation Board.

Members were advised that Councillor Poile would be attending the working party meeting, not Councillor Bannister as was stated in the minutes.”

Councillor Weeden expressed concern that Kent County Council had not carried out the recommendation made on 15 January relating to Moor Hill (A229) in Hawkhurst. Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board was not informed of this decision. It was agreed that Kent County Council should implement the original recommendation (3) as made on 15 January 2007 as soon as practicable.

The Board also agreed that an updated progress report relating to the Tunbridge Wells Taxi Ranks be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEME PRIORITISATION METHODOLOGY (PIPKIN) (Item 4 report of the KCC Transport Policy Team)

TB27/06 The Kent County Council Transport Policy Team submitted a report (070416/TB001) that provided Members with an update on the implementation and application of Kent County Council's Integrated Transport Programme scheme prioritisation methodology. Members were advised that it could assist in delivering the County Council's key transport objectives as set out in the Local Transport Plan for Kent 2006/07 to 2010/11.

The Board was informed that in December 2006, the Government had announced the results of its formal assessment of Kent's Local Transport Plan and it was rated "Good". A Good assessment reflected Upper Quartile status at a regional and national level.

Members requested that copies of the PIPKIN User Guidance Manual be circulated to them via email in due course.

RECOMMENDED – That the principles of PIPKIN and the Kent County Council's approach to implement the new scheme be noted.

HIGHWAY WORKS' PROGRAMME 2006/2007 (Item 5 report of the KCC Programme Delivery Manager)

TB28/06 The Programme Delivery Manager submitted a report (060416/TB002) which explained the progress on all highway works contained in the programme, covering: thin surfacing; high friction surfacing; surface dressing; named maintenance schemes; street lighting schemes; reconditioning; traffic regulation orders; integrated transport schemes; and bridge maintenance.

The progress of all schemes under the above categories was set out in an appendix to the report.

Members of the Board expressed their concern that the report covered only the 2006/07 programme and that there was a lack of involvement in the Highway Works' Programme 2007/08. It was agreed that a special meeting of the Joint Transportation Board be convened on Tuesday 29 May 2007 at 6.00pm to discuss the details of the proposed work programme 2007/08. It was also noted that several other recommendations that the Board had made in recent months were not being implemented or had been delayed, with no explanation given as to why.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) That the Highway Works' Programme 2006/07 be noted;
- (2) That the Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board write a letter to the County Portfolio Holder for Highways and Environment and the Highways Advisory Board, expressing the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board's concerns about the lack of partnership between the two councils;
- (3) That a special meeting of Joint Transportation Board take place on Tuesday 29 May 2007 at 6.00pm to discuss the following:
 - The Highway Works' Programme 2007/08.
 - Proposed Integrated Transport Programme for 2007/08, and any revisions following the decision to scale down the works at Sandrock Road/Pembury Road.
 - A26 Yew Tree Road/Speldhurst Road Junction.

PETITIONS RECEIVED (Item 6(A) report of the KCC Mid-Kent Divisional Manager)

TB29/06 The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager submitted a report (070416/TB003) which reminded Members that it had been an established policy that any petitions received should be reported to the next meeting of the Board.

Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green – Members were informed that a petition covering concerns on a variety of highway issues including heavy goods vehicles, traffic speed, rat running and pedestrian safety had been received.

The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager stated that the three-year crash record for Whetsted Road showed that there had been only one injury crash in that time. In order to establish the current traffic situation, two traffic surveys were to be undertaken; one in the south side approach to the railway bridge to determine what traffic uses the bridge and the second would be at the 30mph terminal point on the northern edge of the residential area to establish both usage and vehicle speeds. A meeting would also be held with the owners of the fruit packing station to identify a solution to residents' concerns relating to heavy good vehicles.

Members of the Board, after giving consideration to the above, agreed that a progress report be submitted to the July meeting of the Board.

B2160 Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood – Members were informed that a petition had been received that raised concerns over the number of crashes, noise, vibration, heavy good vehicles, quality of life and safety for both pedestrians and drivers.

The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager stated that the three-year injury crash record for this area had not raised concerns although historically there were two clusters, one at the junction with Transfesa and one at the junction with Eldon Way.

Members were informed that a detailed review of the signing had been undertaken and some deficiencies relating to the signing for Eldon Way had been identified; these would be corrected later in the year. New speed survey work would be carried out in the future to determine the speed and classification of vehicles using Maidstone Road both in the vicinity of the 30mph terminal sign near Transfesa and on the railway bridge.

Members of the Board agreed that a progress report be submitted to the July Board meeting.

Red Lion Corner and Simmonds Court, Rusthall – Members were reminded that a petition had been received that asked that the pedestrian crossing facilities be provided in both Rusthall Red Lion Corner and Simmonds Court, Rusthall; investigation work had now been carried out.

The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager stated that no 'evidence of need' had been found at Red Lion Corner; at two different times of the day no pedestrians were observed crossing Lower Green Road at Red Lion Corner. It was the Officers' view that the site be deemed as unsuitable for a pedestrian crossing.

The second site was situation at Simmonds Court and the pedestrian demand had been low except at the start and finish of school times. Officers suggested that a school crossing patrol be introduced to cover the times of greatest pedestrian demand. It was agreed that a further report would be submitted to the Board in July 2007.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) That in relation to Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green and the B2160 Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood, further work be undertaken and that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board in July 2007;
- (2) That the pedestrian crossing at Red Lion Corner, Rusthall, be deemed unsuitable, therefore, no pedestrian crossing would be made available; and

- (3) That the pedestrian crossing at Simmonds Court, Rusthall, be investigated further and the findings be reported back at the next meeting of Joint Transportation Board in July 2007.

THE NEED TO ASSIST THE PROVISION OF QUALITY BUS SERVICES IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Item 4(D) report of the KCC Mid-Kent Divisional Manager)

TB30/06 The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager submitted a report (070416/TB004) which reminded Members that at its meeting in April 2006, the Joint Transportation Board had recommended the removal of the bus lane on the northbound approach to Speldhurst Road and southbound between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. A report was also presented to the January 2007 Board meeting that recommended that the original decision made in April 2006 be upheld.

It was noted that, alongside the Transport Strategy, the Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Plan (adopted in 2004 following an extensive consultation exercise) showed that the transport issues of greatest concern to residents included congestion, public transport, poor roads and parking problems. The Community Plan outlined key actions that included promoting and improving sustainable transport modes, including public transport.

Members, after having considered these points, were also advised that the Joint Transportation Board recommendation to remove the bus lanes of April 2006 was contrary to County Council Policy. The County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) clearly set out the need to reduce the number of journeys by car and to increase the proportion made by walking, cycling and public transport. Members were further informed that the original recommendation was contrary to the LTP for Kent, the Kent Bus Strategy, The Tunbridge Wells Transport Strategy, Tunbridge Wells Community Plan and the objectives of 'Towards 2010'.

The Kent Highways Advisory Board met on 6 March 2007 to discuss the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board recommendation in depth and after giving careful consideration, the Highways Advisory Board made the decision not to support the Joint Transportation Board's recommendation and stand by the retention of the bus lanes at the locations, St John's Road on the northbound approach to the traffic signals at Speldhurst Road and southbound on St John's Road between Woodbury Park Road and Grosvenor Road.

After further discussion, the following recommendation was agreed.

RECOMMENDED – That Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board inform the Highways Advisory Board and the County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and the Environment, that the Board would use their best efforts to assist the County Council in achieving the 2010 targets of reducing congestion by 10%, improving air quality and removing unnecessary short lengths of bus lanes.

(NOTE: Borough Councillor Neve requested that a recorded vote be taken; the votes cast were as follows:

In favour of the above recommendation: Borough Councillors Davies, Marriott, Ransley; County Councillors Bullock, King and Scholes.

Against the above recommendation: Borough Councillor Neve and County Councillor Manning.)

SANDROCK ROAD/PEMBURY ROAD – PROPOSED TRAFFIC SIGNAL SCHEME (Item 6(C) report of the KCC Mid-Kent Divisional Manager)

TB31/06 The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager submitted a report (070416/TB006) that reminded Members of the Board of the proposed scheme to improve the safety, management of traffic and facilities for buses, pedestrians and cyclists at the junction of Sandrock Road and Pembury Road.

The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager briefed Members on the design considerations and cost implication involved. He also outlined the two options available to Members. The options were as follows:

Option One – Abandon the scheme altogether and use the funds to address priority schemes within the list that was first approved at the April 2006 JTB, and contained in the report 'Proposed IT schemes for 2007/08'.

Option Two – Review the current design and investigate the provision of the following:

- a toucan crossing in Pembury Road to the south west of Sandrock Road, which would also allow ease of movement in and out of Sandrock Road when the pedestrian/cycle phase was activated.
- a new pedestrian refuge in the mouth of Sandrock Road, which would help enforce the right turn ban as well as allowing an easier crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists.
- review the right turn lane from Pembury Road into Sandrock Road to examine what scope there was to widen and lengthen.
- The need for pedestrians to safely cross Pembury Road and Sandrock Road had been identified as a major area of concern in the St James' Primary School Travel Plan and was seen as barriers to increasing the numbers of children walking to school.

The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager recommended to Members of the Board that of the two options, option two should be preferred. Members of the Board agreed the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDED – That the original scheme be abandoned and that option 2 be progressed. The remaining funds (£100,000) be allocated to other priority schemes as outlined in the report and that additional work on junction safety be carried out.

[NOTE: County Councillor Scholes conveyed Borough Councillor Mrs Mayhew's view that option 2 did not deal with the growing problem of traffic leaving the Dunorlan Park Car Park.]

PROPOSED INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PROGRAMME FOR 2007/08 (Item 6(D) report of the KCC Mid-Kent Divisional Manager)

TB32/06 The Mid-Kent Divisional Manager submitted a report (070416/TB007) that reminded Members of the Board that in December 2006, the County Council revised its Local Transport Plan capital settlement from Government for 2007/08 and that an allocation of £7,239,000 for Integrated Transport (IT) Schemes for 2007/08 was approved by the Highways Advisory Board on 6 March 2007; the allocation was 23% less than the approved allocation for 2006/07.

The report identified the approved funding for urban schemes in Tunbridge Wells, totalling £385,000 and the approved funding for rural schemes in Tunbridge Well, totalling £55,320. However, Members noted that identified schemes for Hawkhurst and Paddock Wood totalled £155,320 (i.e. £100,000 was shortfall). The Board also noted the reserve schemes for both Tunbridge Wells urban and rural packages.

However, Members expressed their wishes that the report be deferred to enable the report to include Yew Tree Road/Speldhurst Road junction improvements and

to identify other priority projects that could benefit from the cost savings from the reduced Pembury Road/Sandrock Road scheme.

RECOMMENDED – That the report be deferred until the Special Joint Transportation Board meeting due to take place on Tuesday 29 May 2007 to allow the report to include Speldhurst Road/Yew Tree Road junction.

DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING BAYS (Item 7 report of Head of Environment and Street Scene)

TB33/06 The Head of Environment and Street Scene submitted a report (070416/TB008) that informed Members that several applications had been received for disabled persons' bays in various areas across the borough and each application had been investigated and additional information sought.

Members were informed that Kent County Council had agreed that the statutory consultation process should begin that would require the advertising of orders and that formal objections could then be received. Should no formal objections be received by the given date, then the orders would be made and implemented. Members noted that should formal objections be received, a report would be submitted to the next Joint Transportation Board meeting.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) That the following disabled persons' parking bay orders be endorsed as requested by Kent County Council:
 - Andrew Road, Southborough
 - Burslem Road, Tunbridge Wells
 - Bright Ridge, Southborough
 - Cogate Road, Paddock Wood
 - Colebrook Road, Southborough
 - Crundwell Road, Southborough
 - Fuggles Close, Paddock Wood
 - Hill View Road, Rusthall
 - Pennington Road, Southborough and Vale Road, Southborough
- (2) That the disabled persons' parking bays in Dorothy Avenue, Cranbrook; Holmewood Road, Tunbridge Wells; Ridgeway, Pembury; and Yeoman Gardens, Paddock Wood be noted; and
- (3) That any disabled persons' parking bays that are no longer needed, because the eligible resident had moved, be rescinded.

TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY – TOWN FORUM (Item 8(A) report of the Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board)

TB34/06 The Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board submitted a report (070416/TB009) that informed Members that the Tunbridge Wells Town Forum had met on Thursday 22 February 2007 and one of their topics for discussion was the Transportation Strategy.

For the borough, the Chairman agreed to meet with Members of the Town Forum to identify and to develop some of the ideas in the report that were within the control of the borough.

Members of the Board received the Tunbridge Wells Town Forum report.

RECOMMENDED – That the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board receive and note the Tunbridge Wells Town Forum's report and that Kent County Council respond and make comment in relation to the Town Forum's document.

HIGHWAY ISSUES FROM LOCAL PARISHES (Item 8(B) Report of the Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board)

TB35/06 The Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board informed the Board that this subject would be a standard item on future Joint Transportation Board agendas. It would enable Parish Councils to express their views on matters being discussed on the agenda. It was agreed that their views should be submitted to the Senior Committee Administrator in advance, by 4pm the last working day prior to the meeting.

(NOTE:

- (1) In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12 on public speaking at Board/Committee meetings, the following members of the public attended and spoke on the minute numbers indicated: Mr Fogel TB27/06; Mr Rousell TB29/06; Mr Knights TB30/06; and Mr Goodwin TB34/06;
- (2) Borough Councillors Crawford, Mrs Mayhew and Weeden attended the meeting, with the Chairman's permission;
- (3) Borough Councillor Weeden took part in the discussion but not the voting on minute TB26/06; and
- (4) Borough Councillors Mrs Mayhew and Weeden both left the meeting during consideration of minute TB27/06. Borough Councillor Crawford left during consideration of minute TB26/06. Councillor Smith left the meeting during consideration of minute TB30/06. County Councillor King left the meeting during consideration of minute TB31/06.)

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES SCHEME

Introduction

The scheme has been made in exercise of the powers conferred on the Council by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

In this scheme the term 'year' means the 12 months ending 31 March.

The scheme will be reviewed before the beginning of each year and may be amended at any time during the course of the financial year by resolution of the Council after having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Basic Allowance

For each 'year' the Basic Allowance specified in Schedule 1 shall be paid to each elected member of the Borough Council.

Special Responsibility Allowance

For each year councillors who hold the special responsibilities that are specified in Schedule 1 will be paid the Special Responsibility Allowance stated in the Schedule.

With the exception of the allowance payable to Group Leaders no member will be entitled to more than one special responsibility allowance.

Dependant Carers' Allowance

Members are able to claim the Childcare and Dependants' Carers' Allowance stated in Schedule 1 for any 'Approved Duty' specified in Schedule 2.

The definition of a dependant for the purpose of payment of an allowance should be that used in S57A (3) of the Employment Right Act 1996. This is a spouse, a child, a parent, a person who lives in the same household but who is not an employee, tenant, lodger or boarder.

Additionally the secondary carer must not be a member of the claimant's immediate family i.e. spouse or partner, other children of the Member or the Member's spouse or any member of the Member's family who lives at the same address as the Member. Nor should it be an employee, tenant, lodger or boarder who lives at that address.

Payment of Dependant Carers' Allowances will be on the production of invoices.

Travelling and Motor Mileage Allowances

Members including Co-opted members will be re-imbursed travel expenses, including car parking, for the Approved Duties specified in Schedule 2.

Members will be reimbursed car mileage from their home to place of duty and return in respect of attendance at approved duties, in accordance with the rates specified in Schedule 1.

For longer journeys outside the Borough the second-class rail fare will normally be paid (irrespective of whether the Member chooses to use a car), together with taxi fares, parking charges and underground fares incurred.

However, where it is impractical for a Member to travel by train because the venue is difficult to get to by train or within the time allowed, or extra passengers/luggage have to be taken, car mileage will be allowed at the appropriate rate specified in Schedule 1.

Subsistence

Actual costs necessarily incurred in undertaking Approved Duties specified in Schedule 2 will be re-imbursed subject to the maximum subsistence allowances set in Schedule 1. Receipts should be obtained and submitted.

Internet Access for Council Business

Members will be re-imbursed the expenses incurred for providing internet access for council business in accordance with the scheme agreed by the Council and set out in Schedule 1.

Approved Duties

Travelling and Subsistence and Dependants' Carers' Allowances are payable in respect of the duties set out in the regulations. These include attendance at meetings, undertaking duties on behalf of the council and other duties approved by the council in connection with discharging the duties of the council or its committees or sub-committees.

Approved Duties are specified in Schedule 2.

Forgoing Allowances

A member may, by notice in writing to the Head of Financial and Property Services, elect to forego all or part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

Part Year Entitlements

Entitlement to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances will be calculated to reflect a part year's membership of the Council and the holding of special responsibilities.

Payments

Allowances will be paid in instalments of one-twelfth of the amounts specified (except where a lesser amount is due) by BACS transfer on the 15th of the month, one month in arrears. Travel and subsistence will be paid subject to a claim being received.

Schedule 1

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

APPLICABLE TO 31 MARCH

Type of Allowance	2006/07	2007/08	Est	Est	Assumptions
	£	£	No.	£	
Basic Allowance	3,480	3,585	48	172,080	
Special Responsibility Allowances					
Group Leaders					
- Majority Group - included in Leader's Allowance	-				
- Opposition Group - 10+ Members	3,515	3,630			
- Opposition Group - 5-9 Members	1,224	1,260	1	1,260	Based on political balance at time of writing
- Opposition Group - less than 5 Members	-	-			
Leader	6,960	7,170	1	7,170	
Cabinet Member	5,220	5,370	6	32,220	Based on assumed number of Cabinet post Annual Council
Chair of:-					
Advisory Panels	435	N/A			
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5,220	N/A			
Scrutiny Sub Committees	522	N/A			
Scrutiny Select Committees	N/A	3,585	3	10,755	
Licensing	1,740	1,800	1	1,800	
General Purposes	870	900	1	900	
Joint Transportation Board	870	900	0	-	Assumes KCC take the Chair in 2007/08
Standards/Audit Committee	870	900	0	-	Assumes both Chairs are taken by an Independent Member
Planning Committees	1,740	1,800	2	3,600	
Vice Chairs of Planning Committees	870	900	2	1,800	

Type of Allowance	2006/07	2007/08	Est	Est	Assumptions
	£	£	No.	£	
Co-Optees Allowance					
Chair of Standards/Audit Committee	1,000	1,020	2	2,040	Assumes both Chairs are taken by an Independent Member
Non Borough members of Standards/Audit Cttees	100	100	6	600	
Per Meeting	60	60	44	2,640	Assumes 6 meetings Standards and 4 Meetings Audit Cttees
		Estimate		236,865	
		Budget		248,600	

Schedule 1 (Cont)

Childcare and Dependant Carers' Allowances

An allowance for any approved duty of **£5 per hour**

Motor Mileage Allowances

Paid in accordance with the rates published annually by the National Joint Council.

The current rates are as follows:

up to 999 cc	38.7 p per mile
1000cc to 1199cc	42.0 p per mile
1200cc and above	52.7 p per mile

Passengers – for each passenger authorised or eligible to attend an approved duty an addition of 5 pence per mile.

Travel by Bus – the actual fare paid

Travel by Rail – the actual fare paid (limited to second class)

Travel by Taxi – the actual fare paid where alternative transport not available or appropriate.

Travel by Cycle – 20 pence per mile

Subsistence and Overnight Accommodation Expenses

Actual expenditure necessarily incurred will be reimbursed subject to the maximum allowances set out below. All receipts should be produced to enable the Council to reclaim VAT where appropriate

Day Subsistence – Paid at the maximum rates published by the National Joint Council. The current rates (**still to be updated by the NJC**) are:-

- (1) **Breakfast allowance** (only where an overnight stay is necessary) - **£6.06**
- (2) **Lunch allowance** (away from normal place of residence between 12 noon and 2pm and prevented from following normal lunch arrangements- **£8.37**
- (3) **Tea allowance** away from normal place of residence between 3pm and 6pm and prevented from following normal tea arrangements - **£3.31**
- (4) **Evening meal allowance** away from normal place of residence between 7pm and 10pm and prevented from following normal evening meal arrangements or an overnight stay away from home is necessitated - **£10.36**

Overnight Accommodation

- (1) In the case of absence overnight from the usual place of residence - **£84.75**
- (2) For such an absence overnight in London or, for the purposes of attendance at an annual conference of the Local Government Association - **£96.70**

These rates will apply for re-imburement claims where the need for overnight accommodation was unforeseen.

Where the need for accommodation for meetings, conferences and seminars is known it should be booked in advance at the most appropriate rate available having regard to the location and the place of the meeting and duration of the required stay. Please contact Committee and Members' Services regarding the booking.

Internet Access for Council Business

1. The expense allowance is to meet the costs incurred in providing in a full year the equipment and access for use on council business. The maximum amount which may be claimed each year is **£500** irrespective of the costs which you actually incur. An annual claim will be required.
2. The allowance is intended to cover the following costs:-
 - Depreciation over a 4 year period of the initial cost of your equipment including a printer and if necessary an additional telephone line and software.
 - Internet charges, printer toner/ink, paper, line rental for additional line (where installed) and maintenance charges if not included in initial equipment cost.
3. Members should make a reasonable apportionment of the use of their equipment and internet access on council business.
4. If a member or others in the member's household are already users of the household's personal computer and internet access for home or business use then that use should be taken into account in arriving at the apportionment for council use.
5. If a member provides equipment and access solely for the purpose of undertaking their council business and it is not used for any other purpose then the whole of the costs incurred can be apportioned as council business.
6. If you make a claim based on an estimate of your council business use then you may adjust your claim later in the year to reflect a more up to date assessment of use and cost.