

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION & STREETLIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2016, 7.30PM AT 9 HIGH STREET, WEST MALLING

Present: Ms H Marlor (vice-Chairman, in the chair)
Mr F Carroll
Mrs T Dean
Mr R Selkirk
Also in attendance:
Mr S Harriott (member of WMPC)

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
16/56	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> were received from Mr Bullard, Mr Galloway and Mrs Lane; also from co-opted members Borough Cllr Mrs Luck and Borough Cllr Miss Shrubsole			
16/57	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – none other than those routinely declared			
16/58	<u>MINUTES</u> of the meeting held on 23November 2015 were approved and signed			
16/	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u> from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda			
59.1	(15/579.3) Streetlighting Meeting with KCC – Mrs Dean reported that she, Mr Bullard and the Clerk had attended a meeting with KCC: Mrs Sue Kinsella (KCC Streetlighting Manager) and Mr Dan Pritchett. KCC had agreed to provide WMPC with a quote but this had not yet been received.			
59.2	(15/580.3) Research Worker – Mr Richard Byatt had been appointed to the post			
59.3	(15/590.1) Entrance to Ryarsh Lane car park – the Clerk apologised for not having contacted KCC straight away but had been informed that Mr Michael Heath was no longer dealing with this matter; it would in future be dealt with by Mr Paul Bland.			
59.4	(15/579.5) Streetlighting Inventory/Spreadsheet – Mr Selkirk reported that he had someone looking at preparing the inventory. Ms Marlor reported that she, Mr Bullard and the Clerk had visited the showrooms of Marwood Electricals and had met Mr David Player. WMPC had already sent Mr Player a spreadsheet but this did not appear to be complete. Ms Marlor reported that this had been a useful meeting and enabled WMPC to see the different types of lantern. Mr Selkirk commented that it was necessary to have a contractor in place to survey columns and WMPC needed to have an effective internal system. Mr Selkirk agreed to produce an up-to-date inventory. Mr Selkirk asked for an update on the light at the junction of Lavenders Road/Swan Street as it seemed that this had ceased working again.			

<p>16/60</p>	<p><u>PARKING REVIEW STEERING GROUP/PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF PARKING CHARGES</u></p> <p>Mrs Dean reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&MBC had informed her that it was their practice when making major changes to produce an officer report first, and then carry out a consultation • The procedure was for the Planning & Transportation Advisory Board to consider the proposed introduction of parking charges at its meeting on 12 January 2016 and then for this to go to T&MBC Cabinet • The Cabinet meeting scheduled for 2 February 2016 had been cancelled • Mrs Dean and Mr Selkirk had attended the Planning & Transportation Advisory Board meeting • Mrs Dean had urged T&MBC to convene a meeting of the Parking Review Steering Group before Cabinet meeting • The Chamber of Commerce had indicated that they wished to make a presentation to the Cabinet meeting and they had leafletted shops in WM. • Mrs Dean and Mr Selkirk collected 225 questionnaires at the Farmers' Market on Sunday 24 January 2016 • There would be a meeting of the Parking Review Steering Group on Friday 29 January 2016 • Borough Cllr Miss Sophie Shrubsole had indicated that she was opposed to the introduction of parking charges • Borough Cllr Mrs Luck was not convinced that introduction of parking charges would make any difference • Borough Cllr Luker had posed a question but had not indicated his views • East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council and Leybourne Parish Council had both written to oppose the proposals • Rev David Green had written and pointed out the disadvantage to church visitors • It seemed that Tesco would be likely to oppose • WMPC was to renew its offer to provide funding of £15,000 towards extra parking enforcement hours • T&MBC had agreed to work with WMPC's newly-appointed research worker • Agreement was being sought to allow him to complete his work before the implementation by T&MBC of any changes • After WM, T&MBC would be re-visiting Martin Square Larkfield, Snodland and Aylesford • It seemed wholly unfair to implement WM first; if these changes were to be introduced then they should be at all these locations at the same time • Mr Bullard had pointed out the likely impact on the WM Doctors' Surgery; parking was free for the surgery at Kings Hill and Leybourne • Mrs Dean had suggested possibly a period first free of charge <p>Mr Selkirk suggested that WMPC work in partnership with T&MBC to manage and administer the car park; possibly WMPC could issue passes.</p>			
	<p>Mr Selkirk asked the Clerk to provide him with contact details for Snodland Town Council and Aylesford Parish Council.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>	<p>✓</p>	
	<p>Mrs Dean agreed to provide the Clerk with a response to be sent to Mr Robert Styles (T&MBC) for consideration at the Steering Group meeting on 29 January 2016. [* subsequent to the meeting the following response was sent to Mr Styles on the evening of 27 January 2016: Dear Mr Styles,</p> <p>Thank you for alerting members of the West Malling Parish Council who are our representatives on the Parking Steering Group of the proposal for parking charges to be imposed on our short stay car park.</p> <p>You will understand that the council was not afforded the necessary three days' notice for an emergency meeting of the parish council, and therefore was not able to provide</p>	<p>TD/ Clerk</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>*</p>

<p>a response in advance of the Advisory Board Meeting. The Council's Highways and Transportation Committee has met and agreed to provide the following response in advance of the meeting of the Parking Steering Group on Friday.</p> <p>The members of the Committee were unanimous in their opposition to the Borough Council's proposals for the following reasons:</p> <p>A. Members believe it will result in a loss of trade to shops and businesses as customers take their business elsewhere to avoid charges. The evidence for this can be found in the comments of the currently 2,900 on line petitioners. West Malling is 20 minutes from Bluewater, and is surrounded by supermarkets with free parking at Kings Hill, Quarry Wood, Larkfield Tesco and Larkfield Morrisons.</p> <p>B. The Borough Council has had a long-held policy not to charge for short stay parking in rural areas except where commuters would otherwise fill them, as at Borough Green and Holly Hill.</p> <p>If the Council is to abandon this policy, it should implement charges to all the rural car parks together, so that West Malling business are not unfairly disadvantaged by being first in the process.</p> <p>C. Councillors believe that the proposal will cause congestion in the High Street and Swan Street as drivers wait for free parking spaces.</p> <p>D. Congestion will also occur as shoppers will compete for free parking in nearby residential areas.</p> <p>E. The Report to the Advisory Board contains very little information on the costs of the car park operation, maintenance and income from fines, and my members would like to receive this information together with the anticipated income which the Council expects to receive if charges are implemented.</p> <p>The report also states that there is a need for charging because of a high level of unsuccessful prosecutions of drivers purposely punching in the incorrect registration to extend their stay in the car park. My members would like to know how many such cases have occurred and whether the Borough Council has approached the Tribunal on the reasons for its decisions, since this fault in the Borough Council's system must also affect other authorities.</p> <p>The members of the Highway Committee would urge the Borough Council to continue working with the Parish Council on this issue. In particular we are keen to see enforcement levels enhanced to a level where current widespread abuses of the parking regime can no longer exist.</p> <p>We renew our offer to fund this enhancement on a pilot basis to demonstrate whether it can pay for itself in fines.</p> <p>Mrs Dean and Mr Bullard hope to pursue these issues with the Steering Group on Friday.</p> <p>Mrs Dean has requested that our researcher Richard Byatt be allowed to attend the meeting as an observer and would be grateful for a reply.]</p>				
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16/61	<p><u>PARKING CONSULTATIONS</u></p> <p>Mr Selkirk reported that the information provided by T&MBC in the consultations was incorrect in respect of Police Station Road, Frog Lane and Swan Street.</p> <p>Mrs Dean reported that it had been agreed that there would be no action yet in respect of Norman Road or London Road but letters had been sent to residents.</p> <p>Mr Harriott agreed to check on the information given for the Offham Road consultation.</p>	SH		
16/62	<p><u>A20 CORRIDOR ROUTE STUDY</u></p> <p>Receipt was noted of a copy of the letter dated 23 January 2016 from Amey to stakeholders; the Clerk had circulated this to all members</p> <p>Response was invited by 5 February 2016.</p> <p>Mr Carroll commented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there were six or seven sets of traffic lights along this stretch of road and they did not appear to be synchronised in any way. • Because the phases at the A228/A20 junction were so long this encouraged stacking. • Bad phasing at the A20/New Hythe Lane junction at Morrisons • Congestion near Larkfield Fire Station which impacts on the A20 			
	<p>Mrs Dean commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major hold-ups at the Ditton crossroads • Hold-ups at the Quarry Wood estate • At the Morrisons junction lights triggered by buses • Suggests yellow box at the Morrisons junction 			
	<p>Mr Selkirk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reminded members that Aylesford Newsprint used to allow traffic through its site but it is no longer in business. • Problems at the Lunsford Lane/Winterfield Lane junction • And also at the Esso garage and Tesco Express on the A20 			
	<p>Ms Marlor pointed out that there were air quality management issues.</p>			
	<p>Ms Marlor agreed to draft a response for submission on behalf of WMPC.</p>	HM/ Clerk	✓	*
	<p>[* subsequent to the meeting the response in Appendix 1 was submitted to Amey]</p>			
16/63	<p><u>BUDGET STATEMENT</u></p> <p>The statement of Receipts & Payments from 1.4.15 to the date of the meeting in respect of this Committee had been circulated to members.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to inform members when Simmons Lighting had ceased trading. [* Simmons Lighting e-mailed to the Clerk on 6 November 2015 a letter dated 2 November 2015 indicating that they were no longer in business]</p>	Clerk	✓	*
16/	<p><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS</u></p>			
64.1	<p>Town Hill – Mr Galloway had e-mailed to express his concerns about the repair work to the wall on Town Hill. Mrs Dean agreed to deal with the contractors.</p>	TD		
64.2	<p>Street Furniture Outside Douces Manor – Mr Carroll commented that there were galvanised posts which seemed to be for some sort of gateway. Clerk to report to KCC Highways.</p>	Clerk		
64.3	<p>A20/Town Hill roundabout – Mr Carroll reported that the light at this junction was not working. Clerk to report to KCC Highways.</p>	Clerk		

64.4	55 Swan Street – the Clerk was to forward to Mr Selkirk Mrs Dean’s e-mail	Clerk	✓	
64.5	<p>Next Meeting – it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 21 March 2016 at the Clout. Clerk to inform members. Clerk to book the meeting room.</p>	Clerk Clerk	✓ ✓	
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.20pm</p> <p>Signed.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>			

APPENDIX 1

Amey
Brenchley House 1st Floor
123 – 135 Week Street
Maidstone
Kent

For the attention of Elizabeth Elphick

Azo Route Study – Stakeholder feedback

Further to your letter of 25th January 2016 concerning the above. West Malling Parish Council (WMPC) has an active interest in the study as the A20 provides a key transport route through the Parish and it is keen that any alterations do not have a detrimental impact on West Malling.

I have noted WMPC's comments using the format suggested in your letter. Please note that some of the responses reference several of the topics in the responses.

Potential Issues:

Traffic congestion As with many local routes, the A20 suffers from traffic congestion at peak times, such as school runs and commuter traffic. However, there are junctions on this stretch of the A20 where there are delays throughout the day. These are with:

- Ashton Way (West Malling by-pass) slip road/Castle Way, *Leybourne*;
- Lunsford Lane, *Aylesford*;
- New Road, Larkfield (*adjacent to Larkfield Priory*);
- New Hythe Lane, Larkfield (*adjacent to Morrisons supermarket*);
- New Road/Station Road *Ditton*;
- Hall Road/Mills Road *Aylesford*.

All these junctions are traffic light controlled.

The junction at Ashton Way is notorious for detaining vehicles when there is no other stationary traffic at the junction. This suggests that the inductive-loop traffic detectors (vehicle detection loops) need better integration with the traffic light phasing and consideration should be given to introducing non-light controlled left hand slip lanes.

The junction at Lunsford Lane suffers from poor traffic flow co-ordination from the junctions at Ashton Way and New Road. These allow further vehicles along the A20 when vehicles are already queuing in the slip road at Lunsford Lane. The resulting tail-back blocks the traffic flow on the A20 and hampers the flow in Lunsford and Winterfield Lanes. This suggests that better control could be gained by using yellow box lines on at least part of the junction.

The junction at New Road needs better integration with traffic from the garage and superstore. Also, the pedestrian crossing facilities need to be reassessed as the current lighting and signage can obstruct motorists' sight lines, particularly when children are using the crossings.

The junction at New Hythe Lane has a bus lane and the traffic lights are triggered to give them priority. The lights allow a bus through but do not then continue with the interrupted sequence. Instead, they appear to return to the beginning of the sequence, thus further delaying traffic that was already waiting at the lights.

The junction at New Road/Station Road suffers from the amount of traffic using it but should gain substantial benefit from better management elsewhere on this stretch of the A20.

The junction at Hall Road/Mills Road needs basic improvement including resurfacing and repainting of road markings. However, without a major redesign of the business park road system, it is difficult to make viable suggestions.

Public transport provision While there is undoubtedly a major need for larger capacity vehicles at peak types, WMPC suggests that research should be done on providing smaller passenger capacity vehicles (e.g. 25 – 35 seat range) for non-peak times. This, along with the provision of bus lanes where practicable, could encourage more of the community to use public transport.

Barriers to walking and cycling There are a number of reasons why people chose not to walk or cycle. The main barrier on this stretch of the A20 is a perception that it's too dangerous because of the high volumes and speed of the traffic. While with-flow cycle lanes (marked on the road) can be very useful, shared-use pavements provide a visible separation from the traffic. Bus lanes provide a similar perception of safer use.

Currently, there is minimum separation between vehicles and other road users, particularly at junctions. Clear definition of separate areas and clearing or re-siting visual clutter, including road signs, street furniture etc, could help to reassure road users and go some way in changing their perception of the safety of this stretch of the A20.

Accessibility At peak pressure times, this stretch of road provides very poor accessibility to other routes such as the M20, M26, A228 etc as well as local roads serving residential areas. Providing a bus lane facility along the length of the A20 from its junction with Ashton Way to Hermitage Lane (Aylesford) could improve transit times for public transport and emergency response vehicles.

However, due to the residential character of much of the area and corresponding vehicle ownership, the volume of traffic will remain at a high level with no short term solution to the accessibility issues.

Community severance Roads with high traffic levels/speeds create physical and psychological barriers that affect walking and cycling and may have negative effects on individual health and social cohesion. WMPC feels that it is an important issue which should be considered as part of any improvements on this stretch of road, preferably after consultation with the local communities.

Potential Topics

While WMPC is pleased that Amey

has approached local stakeholders in writing, it considers that the *potential topics* could be handled more pro-actively on a person to person basis with a wider audience.

This could be by public exhibition of plans and proposals and/or by Amey attending local group or parish council meetings.

This approach would certainly be productive in defining ***the needs of particular groups***, gaining opinion on ***maintenance*** and ***route clarity and signage***.

Quality of environment is an emotive topic and would need careful definition; air quality and noise pollution are clearly related to transport and fall within the scope of the study.

However, residents may have other environmental concerns that they feel take priority in the short term, e.g. ***perception of safety***.

Yours