

Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **11th September 2012**

Present:

Mr M A Wickham (Chairman);
Cllr. Burgess (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Chilton, Claughton, Davey, Feacey, Heyes
Mr M J Angell, Mrs E Tweed, Mr J N Wedgbury

Mr K Ashby – KALC Representative

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(iii) Councillor Chilton attended as Substitute Member for Councillor Yeo.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Mrs Blanford, Robey, Yeo, Mr P M Hill, Mr R E King, Mr S J G Koowaree.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Galpin, Sims.

Lisa Holder (District Highway Manager Ashford – KCC Highways & Transportation), Paul Jackson (Head of Environmental Services - ABC), Ray Wilkinson (Engineering Services Manager – ABC), Danny Sheppard (Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer – ABC).

110 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Feacey	Announced an 'Other Interest' as a Governor of Towers School	116, 117
Mr Wedgbury	Announced an 'Other Interest' as his wife worked at Henwood Industrial Estate	114

111 Minutes

A Member said that at the last meeting, when the issue of the bus gates at both Beaver Road and Godinton Road had been raised, he had asked for this to be discussed at a future Board Meeting but this had not been noted in the Minutes. This was a long running issue and there was now legislation in place to install

enforcement cameras at bus gates and there was money available to do this at Godinton Road, so in his view there was no reason not to proceed. He requested an item on the next Agenda updating on the situation and the funding.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Board held on the 12th June 2012 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

112 Tracker Report

The Chairman drew Members attention to the Tracker of Decisions.

Resolved:

That the Tracker be received and noted.

113 Update from Member Working Group on Lorry Issues

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board had provided an update on the work of the Working Group and answered Members questions. It was explained that the next meeting of the Group would take place in the next few weeks and it was hoped that this would involve colleagues from Shepway and Dover District Councils. A Member said that she wanted to make it clear that both the KCC Leader (Paul Carter) and Cabinet Member (Bryan Sweetland) were extremely supportive and encouraged by the work of the Group. Bryan Sweetland had actually attended the last meeting. All present agreed that it was important to keep the momentum up as the Group was making headway. The Chairman explained that the Kent Mini-Summit would involve representatives from KCC and all Kent Districts and the wider political summit would need to draw in National Government as questions of wider funding would need to be addressed.

Resolved:

That the ongoing work of the Member Working Group on Lorry Issues be noted and supported.

114 Henwood Safety Scheme Post Implementation Review

The report presented the findings of a three month post implementation review of the Henwood Safety Scheme as requested by the Board at their meeting of the 13th December 2011.

The Chairman directed the Board's attention to the Addendum Paper which included the comments of ABC's Portfolio Holder.

Mr Wilkinson introduced his report giving the background to the scheme, the methodology and results of the review and outlined the conclusion that the scheme be signed off as completed.

One of the Ward Members thanked Officers for their hard work on this scheme and said that whilst there were still a couple of minor issues to iron out with one or two of the businesses at Henwood, the scheme had been implemented extremely smoothly and should be signed off as completed.

Other Members said that the scheme had been a success story and there had been a big improvement to the parking situation at Henwood, but concerns remained about the charging regime in the pay and display car park and that the fees were still too high to encourage people to park there. Making better use of assets such as the Council car parks should be looked at in the near future.

Resolved:

That the Henwood Safety Scheme be signed off as completed.

115 Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme Proposals

The report presented details of the proposed Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme for consideration by the Board prior to taking the scheme to formal public consultation. The scheme was aimed at addressing unsafe and obstructive parking practices, primarily generated by overspill parking from the William Harvey Hospital, in residential roads around the periphery of the existing Zone F controlled parking zone.

The Chairman directed the Board's attention to the Addendum Paper which included the comments of the ABC Portfolio Holder and two documents that had been submitted by the speaker, Mr Bailey, in support of his address. It was also reported that the County Councillor for the area and one of the ABC Ward Members supported the proposals.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Bailey, a local resident spoke on this item. He explained that he was a resident of Wilson Close and had been working on this issue with other residents in the area. The problem was caused by a proliferation of on-street parking, chiefly by users of the William Harvey Hospital, which blocked roads and made them dangerous. The report submitted to the Board proposed the wrong solution and whilst it did address some problems such as parking at corners and junctions, it did not provide an acceptable solution to residents. He understood there was a need for double yellow lines in certain areas of the scheme, but not everywhere and not outside people's homes and driveways. This would affect residents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and was too heavy handed. In canvassing local people it had become clear that the majority view was that the Council should be seeking a solution directly with the hospital. The 135 questionnaires which he had distributed, (the results of which were contained within the tabled papers), had generated a 70% response which showed the strength of feeling in the area. This issue affected residents on a daily basis and they did not like how it had been dealt with by ABC, KCC and the Police. If a quick solution with the hospital was not available, the residents would call for single yellow lines effective at certain times of the day, which would be better for residents. There were other areas in the County where such systems worked and a more flexible solution such as this was needed.

In response Mr Wilkinson said that the proposed double yellow lines were merely to show people where it was illegal to park. Any safety scheme would have to contain those measures and would be about eliminating parking in those locations where it would cause either a danger or obstruction to other road users as identified in the Highway Code.

Mr Wilkinson then introduced his report giving the background to the scheme, the history of parking in the area, a summary of the multi-agency discussions that had taken place over this issue and a recommendation that the proposals be approved for formal public consultation. Drawings of the proposals were also displayed on the overhead projectors. It was also important to point out that the proposals were part of a package of measures. He explained that three approaches had been identified for further investigation: - this proposed safety scheme; the provision of additional parking facilities at the hospital site; and improvements to bus services serving the site. He said that clearly no one approach was capable of fully addressing all of the issues and all were subject to limitations, but it was envisioned that by exploring all avenues a cumulative effect could be achieved sufficient to address all issues.

Mr Jackson explained that meetings had taken place with the Hospitals Trust on increasing on-site car parking and how they used their current car parking, especially with regards to staff. Recent meetings had been constructive and Officers were hoping to be able to share some new ideas about controlling parking on-site with the Board shortly.

After a lengthy debate the Board agreed that the proposed safety scheme should be put forward for public consultation, but Members were keen to point out that they had concerns about the proposals and were not giving any approval to the scheme as it stood. They wanted a meaningful consultation to take place and to be able to fully analyse the results of that consultation before taking a decision on this scheme. Under the current proposals it appeared that a lot of residents were going to be inconvenienced and the problems might simply be displaced to other areas and cause slightly different issues. It would also be vitally important to continue an active dialogue with the William Harvey Hospital and to continue lobbying for an improved bus service from the Kennington area. County Members would be willing to contribute funding towards this if there were developments.

Resolved:

That the proposed safety scheme be put forward for formal public consultation.

116 Goat Lees Safety Scheme Proposals

The report presented details of the proposed Goat Lees Safety Scheme for consideration by the Board prior to taking the scheme to formal public consultation. The scheme was aimed at addressing unsafe and obstructive parking practices, primarily generated by overspill parking from the Eureka Business Park, in adjoining residential roads on Goat Lees.

The Chairman directed the Board's attention to the Addendum Paper which included the comments of the ABC Portfolio Holder, a statement from the ABC Ward Member and comments from Boughton Aluph & Eastwell Parish Council and a number of local residents. The Chairman also reported that both the KCC and ABC Ward Members had asked that the report be deferred.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Smith, a local resident spoke on this item. He explained that he had been a resident of Aylesbury Road for eight years and in that time he had seen the Eureka Business Park develop and the residential streets become progressively clogged by business parking. The landlord, Quadrant Estates, had exacerbated the problem by putting double yellow lines on their private roads Upper Pemberton and Nicholas Road. Residents had also seen the car park that they had fought for get approval for 300 spaces only be to be downgraded to 150 spaces. This car park was underutilised every day because the tenants of Eureka would not or could not pay to use it and they knew they had a free alternative – the surrounding residential streets. The report stated that residents had to tolerate on-street parking to help businesses in Ashford, but if the landlord would not tolerate it, and they derived their income from business, why should residents? The Council all too often appeared to be on the side of business. Mr Smith said that in this case the solution should be single yellow lines with a restriction from 9am to 10am on Monday to Friday. This would force the landlord to look at alternatives to support their clients such as removing the double yellow lines on one side of Upper Pemberton Road – something they would not do when their clients could use the residential roads. Single yellow lines would also promote and re-instate the Green Travel Plan which had been key to the landlord obtaining planning permission with the reduced parking facilities on this site. As to date the Green Travel Plan had failed in this area. He also considered that the report was inaccurate and missed key points. The residents considered they had not been consulted or been asked to contribute to the report. They had asked the Parish Council to invite key ABC and KCC representatives to their meetings so that residents could make their frustrations clear but so far this had not happened. He considered the report followed this pattern - inward looking and not engaging. In conclusion Mr Smith passed round some photos taken that afternoon that showed business cars parked in Aylesbury Road but Nicholas Road empty. He asked the Board to defer the decision so that Officers could engage with residents, business users, local Members and the Parish Council to produce a report that engaged with all and offered a real solution that all parties could buy in to.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Matthews, Chairman of Boughton Aluph & Eastwell Parish Council spoke on this item. He wanted to convey to the Board the position of the Parish Council and Ward Member and the depth of feeling of numerous residents. One Parish Council Meeting had over 130 residents attend to vent their frustration and anger that their streets were being used as a business car park whilst the landlord would not allow parking on his own roads because of the double yellow lines they had painted. The vast majority of residents had indicated that they required single yellow lines in Aylesbury, Dunnock, Siskin and Hurst Roads, restricting parking for 90 minutes between 9am and 10.30am Monday to Friday and the Parish Council fully supported this approach and were prepared to make a significant financial contribution to enable this to happen. Such a system was currently in place at Underwood Close, Canterbury, close to the Chaucer Hospital and worked well there and this would force the landlord to properly address their

parking needs. He therefore asked the Board to defer any decision until the Ward Member, Parish Council and residents had been given an opportunity to provide input into the report so it could be re-written to be far more representative of the situation in Goat Lees.

In discussion Members agreed that given the comments of local Members, the Parish Council and residents, this issue should certainly go no further in its current guise. Rather than deferring the item, Members considered that there appeared to be so many areas of disagreement that the Board should reject the report and the process be re-started.

Resolved:

That the proposed safety scheme be rejected and the process to find a solution for Goat Lees be re-started.

117 Highway Works Programme 2012/13

The report updated Members on the identified schemes approved for construction in 2012/13.

Officers agreed to feed back more information to Members on the following matters that appeared on the Highway Works Programme: -

- There was concern about the length of time some of the Member Highway Fund Projects were taking to get completed. Projects programmed as far back as December 2011 for example had still not been progressed. Could this be looked at? A Member particularly mentioned her request for a review and design of a scheme for better signage directing vehicles to and around the town centre. This was a vitally important scheme as a lot of the signage was either out of date or still temporary from the ring road works.
- Surfacing had not been completed along the whole length of Beckett Road, Appledore as stated within the report. Also what road markings were proposed?
- What works had been completed at the BUPA Care Home at Warren Lane?
- The new signalised access at Templar Way.
- A Member advised that since the production of this report: - additional signage had been agreed to stop HGV's mistakenly turning in to Mill Court; new Give Way signs had been agreed for Bybrook; as had the much needed resurfacing of a pavement at Tudor End, Kennington.
- A Member advised that the local needs housing project at Church Lane, Kenardington was being led by West Kent Housing Association rather than English Rural Housing Association as stated in the report.

- Could something be done about the signage at the top of Charing Hill A252? It no longer directed vehicles towards Faversham via Faversham Road and they were therefore taking the long way round via Canterbury Road.

Ms Holder read out a list of extra resurfacing schemes that had just been agreed for the Ashford Borough as part of the additional £6m programme available across Kent. Full details of that list would also be circulated to Members outside of the meeting. In response to a question she explained that there were no programmed dates for these yet and they would be subject to road availability.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

118 Drovers Roundabout

The report gave an update after almost a year since the formal completion of the Drovers Roundabout.

The Board considered the report and made the following points: -

- There were still issues with the layout of the roundabout. Chief in this was that some of the lane markings were still wrong and this was dangerous. A Meeting had taken place on site with Ms Holder recently and it was hoped that she had gotten a feel for the problems that had been raised.
- The Ashford Driving Instructors Association had highlighted a number of issues of concern about the roundabout and a copy of their comments was given to Ms Holder. There did appear to be elements of the roundabout that were still dangerous and it was important to consider these points and put them right.
- On the whole the traffic did flow well around the roundabout and the anticipated congestion had not happened so that was a positive point.
- The phasing of the lights did sometimes cause issues with traffic backed up on the roundabout itself and overhanging entrances/exits. Some of the lights were also difficult to see at times because of their 'slatted' design.
- There was quite a bit of red light jumping (2 or 3 cars at a time) but unfortunately that seemed to be common across Ashford as a whole.
- An update was requested for the December Meeting of the Board with John Farmer from KCC in attendance. If he could not make the 11th December date, perhaps the meeting could be moved to a date when he was available?

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

119 Maintenance of Ashford Shared Space

The report gave an update from KCC on the Ashford Ring Road Shared Space Scheme and its ongoing maintenance.

The Chairman read out the comments of the ABC Portfolio Holder who expressed her frustration at the time it was taking to review the maintenance of the Shared Space. A review had been promised this summer, but now it appeared that an agency would not even be commissioned to undertake the work until November and that would continue over several more months. It was considered that KCC were dragging their heels over this important matter. The scheme had generated a lot of attention and it was clear that suitable materials had not always been used, and the cost and basis of the maintenance had been an issue since it opened, yet there was still no firm proposal as to the continued maintenance. She considered that the deterioration of the surface was not a good advertisement for KCC or Ashford as a whole.

During discussion the following points were raised: -

- At the start of the project Members had been assured that by agreeing to employ the more expensive materials it would make maintenance easier and more cost effective. If that was not the case Members said they would feel let down and Officers would have questions to answer.
- ABC's Overview & Scrutiny Committee had also written to KCC on the issue of maintenance of the Shared Space and had a lot of the same concerns expressed by this Board. A Member said he was pleased an investigation would take place in to what went wrong but maintenance in terms of getting what they had been left with right was the more important point.
- Ms Holder confirmed the timetable for engaging a consultant and commencing the review. The contract would be awarded in November so more details could be provided to the Board meeting in December. The consultant would be putting forward longer term solutions, although ongoing maintenance would continue to ensure that the environment was safe.
- It was agreed that an update on this issue should be on the Agenda for the December meeting of this Board and, again, if this meant moving the date to ensure that the relevant Officers could be present, then this should be considered.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

120 Lane Rental Scheme

The report advised the Board of the current consultation on the Kent Lane Rental Scheme. The scheme aimed to further cut congestion on key routes by giving those working on the highway a clear financial incentive to reduce the scale and duration of roadworks on the busiest roads.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

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