

Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **14th June 2016**.

Present:

Mr. C Simkins (Chairman);
Cllr. Bartlett (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Bradford, Burgess, Feacey, Mrs Martin, Mrs Webb
Mr. M J Angell, Mr P M Hill, Mr. D Smyth, Mr. J N Wedgbury, Mr M A Wickham.

Mr. K Ashby – KALC Representative.

Apology:

Mr S J G Koowaree.

Also Present:

Cllr. Sims.

Lorna Day (Parking Enforcement Manager – KCC), Lisa Willoughby (Ashford District Manager – KCC), Jo Fox (Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager – ABC), Chris Miller (Team Leader – Parking – ABC), William Train (Engineering Technical Officer – ABC), Danny Sheppard (Senior Member Services Officer – ABC).

31 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Mrs Webb	Made 'Voluntary Announcements' as the Ward Member for, and a resident near, the Beaver Road Bus Gate.	35

32 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Board held on the 8th March 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

33 Public Transport Liaison Task Group – 8th April 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Transport Liaison Task Group held on the 8th April 2016 be received and noted.

34 Parking and Waiting Restrictions Update

The report provided an update and summarised parking and waiting restriction schemes that had been brought through the Joint Transportation Board. It also asked the Board to agree recommendations regarding the recent consultation on the 'Amendment 1' order. Mrs Fox outlined the components of Amendment 1, which included: - Finn Farm Road, Ashford; Danemore, Tenterden; High Street, Tenterden; Wotton Road, Ashford; and Ellingham Way, Ashford and the objections and comments received. She further explained that the Appendix to the report also contained details of further schemes that were currently out to consultation. No decision had been made on any of these schemes and any comments received during the consultation period would be fully considered.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Goundry, a local resident and one of the owners of The Kennington Carvery spoke on this item. He said that as a business owner in Ulley Road and a lifelong local resident, he objected to the current proposals for Ulley Road. He wanted to work with Officers during the consultation period to find an acceptable solution, but at this stage he felt he had to lodge his opposition. He considered that the installation of double yellow lines would increase the speed of traffic on the road and he was concerned for the safety of pedestrians, especially children using the schools and playing field, as the footpath was only 18 inches wide in places. Mr Goundry said that the proposals appeared to have been suggested to facilitate larger vehicles including buses, but no bus routes actually used Ulley Road. He considered that the proposal was rushed, poorly communicated and poorly thought through and he would support a fuller investigation of the situation in the area to arrive at a more proportionate and satisfactory outcome.

The ABC Ward Member for Kennington said that there had already been approximately 290 objections to the proposals for Ulley Road in the three days since the consultation began and he personally could not support the proposed double yellow lines. Another Member, who was the adjacent Ward Member, said she also objected to the proposals and would like to be involved in any further investigations. Mrs Fox said that she would arrange a small site meeting, involving local Ward and Division Members, to discuss this particular proposal.

Resolved:

That the Board support the introduction of the recently advertised Amendment 1 order, plans of which are included at Appendix 2 to the report.

35 Beaver Road Bus Gate

Further to the request of this Board at its last meeting for KCC to consider a trial suspension, the report from KCC set out the need to retain the Beaver Road Bus Gate as a traffic restriction. Mrs Day introduced the report and gave the history of the scheme which was developed as a safety measure to discourage use of Beaver Road as an access route to Ashford town centre. An assessment of the road prior and after the installation of the bollard showed that the restriction had achieved an improvement in road safety. In the 19 years before the implementation of the bollard there was an average of eight crashes per year and in the 16 years following, the crash record had dropped to an average of four crashes per year. Over the last three years the crash record for Beaver Road was good with only one slight injury accident recorded and this was not attributed to the bollard. Therefore on balance there was currently no justification for implementing a trial from a safety or congestion benefit in light of the data available and KCC did not support either a trial or permanent removal of the Beaver Road Bus Gate.

The Chairman directed Members' attention to the tabled paper which included comments in support of the recommendation from Councillor Apps who was one of the Ward Members for the adjacent Ward.

The Ward Member said she was not surprised with the outcome but she was disappointed. The crash record prior to the installation of the Gate was misleading as at that time the road was two-way and did not have the pinch points it had now and she believed that if the road was re-opened the pinch points would slow the traffic down naturally. She considered the decision may have been taken on cost rather than safety grounds. She also understood there was the possibility of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras being introduced in the future but there was no reference to that in the report. She concluded by stating that this issue would not simply go away and she considered that in the absence of a satisfactory outcome it should be reviewed again in six months.

Some Members said they supported the points made by the Ward Member. Residents in this area were suffering and the traffic situation had changed significantly since the Gate was installed in 1999 with both Victoria Way and the by-pass. It was also likely to change even further with the Designer Outlet extension and other nearby developments. If there was to be a traffic control here ANPR cameras, which could exempt the vehicles of local residents, were surely preferable, but they did think a trial suspension had some merit. One Member considered it was more likely that accidents may increase on the A2042 Romney Marsh Road, as this was now the only route to get from central to south Ashford.

Other Members said they supported the recommendation of Officers. This was chiefly because of concerns about the potential safety effects of disabling the Gate. It had been put in for a reason, because traffic wanted to use the road as a rat run and if it was removed this would undoubtedly happen again because people would want to avoid coming past the Outlet. In terms of safety it was considered to be an unreserved success and road safety should be the primary consideration here. Ashford had one of the worst road safety records in the county and nothing should be done that could potentially make that situation worse. The views of the bus

company should also be taken in to consideration and it was likely that removal of the Gate would mean they would not be able to stick to their timetable. It was true to say that a lot was changing in the area, but that was more of an argument to not remove the restriction at this stage. The Designer Outlet extension, Model Railway centre, Victoria Way development and the trial of ANPR cameras at Bridgefield were all considered reasons to wait and see what happened in the area, and then perhaps re-consider this proposal in the future if the evidence suggested it was the best thing to do.

Mrs Fox advised that the conclusion to not support any sort of removal of the restriction was based purely on safety factors. They would never look at the financial situation over safety considerations. The ANPR test case at Park Farm could possibly create an opportunity as, if successful, the back office functions would already be set up, but this would be some time in to the future. At this stage though safety was the paramount concern and both KCC and ABC Officers were in agreement over the conclusion.

Resolved:

That the Board notes Kent County Council's conclusion that it would not support either a trial or permanent removal of the traffic restriction (Beaver Road Bus Gate).

36 Lorry Parking Update

Mrs Fox introduced the report which gave the Board an update on the continued overnight HGV parking enforcement and clamping of persistent offending HGVs in Ashford. She advised that after many years of hard work they were now slowly starting to see results. The percentage of PCNs paid continued to rise and at present was about 47% of those issued (30% higher than when the clamping trial had begun). The Board had earlier in the meeting agreed a full overnight and weekend HGV ban at Wotton Road and Ellingham Industrial Estate and work was continuing on a number of proposals to improve the situation at the Hothfield laybys. It was still clear though that additional HGV spaces were needed so displacement to other areas was a real issue. Enforcement was working and achieving a higher level of compliance but lorry parking spaces in the area were now full to capacity on most nights of the week. ABC's new draft Local Plan included a specific plan for the Borough's only dedicated off road lorry park at Waterbrook to expand the current park from 325 spaces to 600 spaces, but all parties were waiting for a decision from Government on the potential Operation Stack Lorry Park at Junction 11 and, if permitted, whether that would also be available for constant use throughout the year.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Fox for her update. He said slow, but sure progress was being made and this should be seen as a real positive.

In response to a question, Mrs Willoughby advised that KCC had conducted surveys on 7th, 8th and 10th June across the county at identified HGV parking locations, to ascertain numbers to assist in the formulation of future solutions. These surveys had been undertaken at 40 known locations and had identified 311 vehicles.

The Vice-Chairman said that he supported the possible expansion of the lorry parking facilities at Waterbrook, but he urged caution about moving too quickly when large numbers of houses were also being built in the area and he thought the Local Plan process should be allowed to play out properly.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted and the ongoing work supported.

37 Highway Works Programme 2016/17

The report updated Members on the identified schemes approved for construction in 2016/17.

Mrs Willoughby agreed to feedback more information to Members on the following matters surrounding the Highway Works Programme: -

- The drainage problems on private land in Hamstreet.
- A request from the Parish Council to install a footpath in front of Griffin Cottages, Victoria Terrace, Appledore.
- The precise location of drainage works on the A28 Canterbury Road.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

38 ABC Owned Amenity and Footway Lighting

The report was submitted for information having previously been agreed by the Cabinet of ABC. It outlined plans for ABC to fund up to £1m as a capital investment to upgrade and replace as appropriate, its amenity and footway lighting columns to adoptable KCC standard, and to transfer as many of the assets as possible to KCC. It also advised of proposals to remove amenity and footway lighting where deemed not necessary by KCC and/or ABC and where a third party (e.g. a Parish Council) did not want to adopt.

A Member asked Officers to bear in mind that some Parish Councils had their own bespoke light fittings which they had previously purchased from their own funds. Mr Train assured the Member that these were safely in storage.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

Queries concerning these Minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:
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