

Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of a Hybrid Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held in Committee Room No. 2, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **6th June 2023**.

Present:

Cllr. Michael (Interim Chairman) - ABC;
Mr. P Bartlett (Vice Chairman) - KCC;

Cllrs. Forest, Gathern, Iliffe, Joseph, Meaden, Shilton – ABC.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(c), Cllrs Iliffe and Shilton attended as Substitute Members for Cllrs Feacey and Heyes.

Mr S Campkin, Mr M Hill, Mr D Ross – KCC.

Mrs C Drury, Mrs A Hicks – KALC Representatives.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Feacey, Heyes – ABC.

Mr D Robey, Mr C Simkins – KCC.

Mr A Rogers – KALC.

Enhanced Partnership and Infrastructure Manager – KCC, Highway Manager – Ashford – KCC.

Also present

Cllrs. Blanford, Dean, Spain, Wright - ABC.

Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Civil Enforcement Team Leader, Senior Civil Enforcement Officer, Member Services and Ombudsman Complaints Officer.

In Attendance (virtually):

Cllr. Anckorn – ABC.

Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC.

14 Declarations of Interest

Cllr	Interest	Minute No
Bartlett	Made a Voluntary Announcement that he lived close to the truck stop facility at Sevington.	23

15 Minutes

The Vice-Chairman said that he had previously agreed to contact National Highways to discuss the traffic light project on the A2070. He had subsequently arranged to meet with them on 20th June and he would provide feedback to the next Board meeting.

A Member asked about progress on the scooter trial in Canterbury City Centre. The Safety and Wellbeing Manager said that no information had yet been released on the trial but she would share with the Board as soon as any further details were available.

The Chairman noted that the current short-term government funding on bus services would end on 30th June and he asked about proposals going forward. The Safety and Wellbeing Manager said that she would be meeting with KCC shortly to discuss establishing a District Focus Group, including Stagecoach, to consider bus services generally and to support the strategic county-wide response.

In response to a question, the Vice-Chairman advised that there was a KCC proposal to enforce moving traffic violations through the three bus gates in Ashford. If this was financially viable, it was expected that KCC would extend enforcement of moving traffic violations to other areas in the Borough, possibly including the bus link between Finberry and Bridgefield.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Board held on the 7th March 2023 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

16 Petition on lorry traffic on A292 Hythe Road

Mr Collins, a local resident, attended the meeting and presented a petition to the Chairman. In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Collins addressed the Board and his speech is attached to these Minutes at Appendix A.

Mr Mathews, a local resident, also attended the meeting. In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 he addressed the Board and his speech is attached to these Minutes at Appendix B.

The Chairman thanked the speakers and said that the petition would be passed on to the appropriate officers for investigation and the matter would be reported back to a future meeting.

One of the Ward Members for Willesborough asked about the proposals for provision of a cycle-friendly route from the railway bridge to the Mace roundabout. Cllr Bartlett responded that this was part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and he hoped that the new Administration would take this forward at a pace.

Resolved

That the petition be received and officers to provide a response in due course.

17 Pedestrian Crossing Assessments

The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC introduced this item and drew Members' attention to the main points within the report.

The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments/questions were raised:

- A question was asked about criteria for the provision of refuge islands. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC confirmed that there was clear criteria for the introduction of refuge islands, such as the width of the road. She suggested emailing her directly about any concerns on individual locations and she would investigate further and provide a response.
- The Vice-Chairman noted that there was developer-funded work planned to a series of traffic lights on the A28 through Kennington. He would like further information on how assessment of crossings would be carried out to ensure that the necessary pedestrian safety crossings were included. The design phase was complete for the Simone Weil junction but future work was still required on the Bybrook Road and Penlee Point junctions. He suggested that a report on plans for the three junctions should be submitted to a future Board meeting. Other Members agreed and spoke of the need for consideration to also be given to the exit onto the A28 next to the doctors' surgery where crossing for pedestrians was extremely difficult. It was noted that funding for this project would come from the Conningbrook Park S106 funds and that the appropriate Planning Officer could be asked to report back to the Board on details for the scheme. A Member also pointed out that there was a blind spot on the A28 between Cemetery Lane and Bybrook Road and this needed to be considered as a matter of urgency.
- A KALC representative said that this report would be considered at the next KALC meeting in July, but there would be a number of questions arising, as well as a need for clarification of the process for liaison between KCC and communities over local needs and ideas. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said that the KCC Community Engagement Teams were tasked with liaising with local areas over development of Highways

Improvement Plans (HIPs) and she suggested that she should be contacted directly to facilitate these discussions after the KALC meeting in July. The KALC representative said she was content with that suggestion.

- A Member noted that Ward Members in unparished areas were disadvantaged in the preparation of HIPs due to lack of resources and that they may need additional support from KCC in this area. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said that there was an Ashford Engagement Officer at KCC who could assist Ward Members where necessary, or she would welcome any suggestions about how Members could be better assisted in this regard.
- There was a suggestion that KCC could arrange a quarterly meeting to draft an Ashford-wide response and collate all suggestions. It was agreed that the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC would discuss this further with the Vice-Chairman and Mr Ross.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

18 Kent Enhanced Partnership and Bus Service Improvement Plan Update

It was noted that the appendix referred to in the report had not been provided and it was requested that a copy of the appendix be appended to the Minutes of the meeting. This is included at Appendix C to these Minutes.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

19 20 MPH Speed limits (including outside Towers School)

The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC introduced this item and highlighted the key points within the report.

The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments/questions were raised:

- A Member commented that there were a number of factors that should be considered, including the pinch points at the Gatehouse and the school access and egress points. In addition the school had increased admissions which resulted in a larger number of pupils using the area. The Member questioned whether more proactive and preventative measures should be taken. He also queried the average road speed by the school and why it did not qualify in the criteria for a 20mph speed limit. He said markers on the

road slowed drivers down, which he believed may have affected the average speed readings.

- A Member asked whether a 20mph speed limit could be enforced during the school run period by using a 'wig wag' sign for example. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said she would explore the possibility and feedback.
- A Member said that he considered the roundels on the southern part of the Bybrook Road to be very ineffective as drivers ignored them altogether and there was a severe speeding issue in that area. He suggested that an analysis of the current speeding situation was required, together with an assessment of the effectiveness of the scheme. He also suggested that consideration should be given to enhancing the self-enforcing element of the scheme. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said she would respond to the Member directly. Another Member for an adjoining ward said he supported any efforts to raise awareness about speeding on this road.
- A Member raised concerns about residents parking on the road near Towers School and proposed that double yellow lines in the area should be considered. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said that a site visit was needed, and the Road Safety Users Behaviour Team could liaise with the school to provide more education to pupils on awareness of road safety. The Chairman asked the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC to pursue both these suggestions.
- A Member said that a 20mph limit had been introduced between Faversham Road and Bybrook Road, but this did not include the area around Nettlefield and the Ridge in Kennington. This had become a 'rat run' with cars travelling at unsafe speeds. In addition members of the public were parking on the road bend near the Ridge children's playground which was creating a very dangerous situation. He said that this needed urgent attention as there were a lot of young families and elderly people in the area.
- The Vice-Chairman advised that in the Speed Watch report of May 2023, 17 vehicles had been travelling in excess of the speed limit, with a maximum speed recorded of 49mph. He also questioned what progress had been achieved on the proposals to provide a cycle way at the lower end of Bybrook Road. He asked the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC to investigate and report back to him.
- The Chairman advised that research indicated clear evidence between decreased traffic speed interventions and additional health benefits in terms of reduced collisions and less serious casualties.
- The Chairman also noted the KCC report dated 2008 regarding speed limits outside schools. He suggested that this report may now be outdated and asked the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC to pursue. A

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Member requested further information on the feasibility of wig wags/zig zags outside schools.

- A Member asked about the role of the school and what discussions were encouraged with children and parents regarding road safety in the vicinity of the school. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said she would liaise with the Road Safety User Behaviour Team with a view to engagement with the school.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

20 Potholes

The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC read out a verbal report which explained that KCC had experienced five times the volume of reports for March 2023 compared with the same period for last year. This was due to accelerated end of life decline following the winter period of cold, wet weather. Pothole enquiry levels were at an all-time high compared to the previous nine years. A new pothole system (Pothole Pro) came into use in May, to be incorporated into the new Pothole Blitz programme, which was expected to be fully underway in June/July 2023. It was also expected that more pothole patching per day could be achieved with the new system, in addition to normal routine maintenance.

The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments/questions were raised:

- The Chairman noted that KCC had purchased new machines, were using new material and were undertaking trials of the new system in Kent. He was pleased to note that the new system did not require the closure of roads whilst repairs were being undertaken. He asked for an update on the progress of the trials and the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said she would take this back to the appropriate officer for a response. The Chairman suggested that a report should come to a future Board meeting. Members requested that a written, not verbal, report be provided in future.
- A KALC representative asked about the Government funding programme for potholes, some of which had been allocated to KCC. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC said she would refer this to an appropriate officer for a response.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

21 Ashford Highways Works Programme Update

The Vice- Chairman read out a personal statement from a Kennington Community Councillor in respect of Bybrook Road and the need for proper resurfacing. He noted the KCC scheme to rehabilitate concrete from the A28 to Nine Acres, but was disappointed to see that it had not been extended to The Pasture. He asked the Board to recommend to Cabinet that they should provide funding where action was needed on schemes of sufficient importance, in the same way that the previous administration had done.

A Member expressed concern regarding the closure of Finn Farm Road and the impact on residents of Heritage Road. He said that the closure of Finn Farm Road would encourage construction traffic to use Heritage Road, which was unsuitable as a focal point for heavy traffic. He requested a KCC assessment of the impact of that road closure and the possibility of maintaining a three way traffic light system at Finn Farm Road. He considered that the situation needed to be reappraised until the site was fully built and established. It was agreed that he would pass more detailed comments to the Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC for a response from the appropriate KCC officer. The Chairman said he would like a report to a future meeting.

A KALC representative reported that a serious accident had occurred recently at Potters Corner junction on the A20. She requested that the outcome of the Police investigation report, once received, be considered at a future Board meeting. She also requested that an appendix be added to the report in future to update on HIPs. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) – KCC suggested that a quarterly newsletter could be emailed to Members. It was agreed that both approaches were necessary. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) agreed to liaise with the appropriate officers responsible for the newsletter and the report.

In response to a question, the Highway Improvements Manager (East) explained that micro surfacing was a slurry-like dressing. The effect achieved was somewhere between ordinary surface dressing and full resurfacing.

The Chairman said that there were some items of importance missing from the report. Firstly, the poor state of Faversham Road between the Trinity Road traffic lights and the Towers School. This was in desperate need of resurfacing and the Chairman had discussed the problem with KCC officers. However, it did not appear to be included in the programme. He wanted a site visit and an explanation of why there appeared to be no plan to address the potholes. Secondly, he noted that some houses opposite the Towers School were experiencing flooding problems. Following a site visit by KCC officers it had been suggested that a gully was created to alleviate the problem. This did not appear to be included in the work programme and the Chairman requested that it was added. The Highway Improvements Manager (East) said she would pass these comments to the appropriate officer.

Resolved

- i) The Joint Transportation Board asks Cabinet to provide funding where action is needed on road surfacing schemes which are considered of sufficient importance.**
- ii) That the report be received and noted.**

22 Parking and Waiting Restrictions

The Safety and Wellbeing Manager introduced this item and drew Members' attention to the key points. She said that she would report back on usage of electric charging points in the Borough to a future meeting. In response to a question about alternative charging methods, the Safety and Wellbeing Manager said officers were working closely with KCC to consider on-street charging projects. Potential pilot projects would be led by KCC, with support from ABC. The Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that there was only 1 electric vehicle taxi in the Borough, so it may be necessary to consider more encouragement for the use of electric or hybrid vehicles.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

23 Ashford HGV Enforcement and Clamping Update

The Civil Enforcement Team Leader introduced this item and drew Members' attention to main points within the report.

The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments/questions were raised:

- A Member questioned whether the truck stop was operating at full capacity and the Civil Enforcement Team Leader replied that it was nearly full every night. In response to another question about the clamping problem, the Civil Enforcement Team Leader said that the truck stop appeared to be contributing to a reduction in clamping. She advised that individual companies had different arrangements over who was responsible for payment of clamping enforcement fines.
- In response to a question about income from clamping enforcement, the Civil Enforcement Team Leader explained that the majority of the income from fines was kept by the clamping agency. The Council did not view clamping as an income-generating service, but rather as part of supporting the local community.
- A KALC representative noted that during Operation Brock drivers were fined for continuing to use the A20. She suggested that enforcement of an

overnight lorry ban on the Hythe Road may be worth considering. The Civil Enforcement Team Leader advised that this would be a moving traffic matter.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

24 For information: KCC Budget pressure on frontline highway maintenance services

Members wished to thank Mr Brazier for his welcome communication.

MR COLLINS – LOCAL RESIDENT

I'm here tonight to present a petition signed by 231 Hythe Road residents to ask the Council to impose greater traffic controls along the Hythe Road between Henwood Industrial Estate and Junction 10 of the M20

In the 30 years I have lived on the Hythe Road the volume, speed and noise of traffic has increased significantly, along with the fumes they emit

Despite the opening of Junction 10a HGV's continue to use the Hythe Road as their through-route, in some cases to park up overnight on Henwood Industrial estate.

This will only get worse as on 31st May the length of lorries has been increased by just over 2 metres to 18.55 metres

The weight of traffic through the night is unbearable people complain of;

Disturbed sleep

Shaking and rattling house

And in some cases plaster falling off walls, ceilings and cracks appearing in their properties.

The Hythe Road is a busy route and we are asking the council to impose greater traffic calming measures, particularly as we have
3 schools - Knatchbull, North and Willesborough
2 Special Needs Schools - Cornfields and Lenworth Clinic 2 Nursing Homes -
Ashworth and Brabourne

all along the Hythe Road

The measures we are asking for between Henwood and Junction 10 could be;
Traffic calming such the banning HGV's between 10pm and 7am. speed bumps,
road tables to slow down traffic.

More camera's and make sure the camera we have in place at the moment works.

Or, Average speed cameras,

APPENDIX B

MR MATTHEWS – LOCAL RESIDENT

I live in Hythe Road for about 40 years and I am concerned that the constant HGV traffic is causing seismic vibrations, loud noise and the physical shaking of my property this is especially disturbing the night when the HGVs are moving at 30mph or in many cases faster and I believe these high intensity seismic vibrations are causing damaging my property and others along Hythe Road with cracks appearing inside on the ceilings plaster and on external walls.

There are 7 main problems in Hythe Road that now make it unsuitable for HGV traffic.

- 1) It's a built up residential area with high traffic levels servicing 3X Schools 2X Nursing Homes (used to be 3) and an Special needs School.
- 2) At peak times the existing pavements cannot cope with high level of pedestrians cyclists and of course School Buses in addition to normal Bus services.
- 3) Hythe Road has more than 6 Pinch points that make it difficult for 2x HGVs to pass each other safely.
- 4) Hythe Road has a number of Service Trenches that cross Hythe and when traversed at speed by HGVs with their Multiple Wheels and Axels this seismic vibration is transmitted into the foundations of surrounding houses.
- 5) Below the Railway bridge the houses are elevated by about 20feet so the vibration and disturbance is amplified causing the physical shaking of houses felt by many residents.
- 6) This disturbance is damaging property and disturbing Resident sleep and in many cases makes the front 2x bedrooms unusable.
- 7) The existing speed Camera (when working) is ignored by Continental HGVs.

There is also significant noise problem as these HGVs pass about 5 minutes this problem is worse at night and early morning as these Juggernauts thunder both up and down Hythe Road from Junction 10 down to the Henwood Roundabout.

Only a very small percentage of the HGVs need to access Henwood industrial Estate most are just passing through or have been diverted because the M20 is closed between junction 9 and Junction 10.

Surly these HGVs could be diverted round the Orbital and Junction 10 instead.

Action must be taken to slow down or divert these HGVs to minimise the damage, noise and disturbance nuisance caused to buildings and residents before someone is killed or injured.

It's our view that traffic calming is not appropriate for HGVs on Hythe Road the only solution is to close this Road to HGVs and divert or reroute via the Orbital Road to the South Of Ashford.

I also understand that a petition signed by nearly 200 Hythe Road residents similarly affected has been presented by this committee.

APPENDIX A – Initiatives with Agreed BSIP Funding

Bus priority schemes in Dover Pencester Road, Dartford Rennie Drive and a series of measures in Thanet.
A number of smaller highway schemes to enable more reliable bus services, e.g. at pinch points.
Introduction of Bus Gates enforced with cameras at 10 sites in Kent.
A school travel promotional campaign with support for the Kent Travel Saver scheme
Other large fares promotions such as Reconnect and the Kent Big Weekend.
Introduction of a trial multi-operator ticketing scheme (for a small geographical area) using existing technology.
Funding for smaller operators to upgrade ticketing equipment to enable multi-operator ticketing.

Network support funding (sustaining some services following any end to Government Covid support)
A bus network planning tool
Support for a Community Transport grant scheme
Delivery of a countywide Passenger Information Portal with a journey planner, timetable database and online map, backed up by individual operator websites.
Delivery of real time information screens at key bus stops and QR codes at all stops, linking to the Information Portal.
The delivery of a Mobility-as-a-Service platform in Kent Thameside that offers travel options on a number of modes, including bus and rail, in one app