

Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **12th March 2019**.

Present:

Mr. P W Bartlett (Chairman);

Cllr. Heyes (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Bradford, Buchanan, Feacey, Howard-Smith, Mrs Martin, Smith

Mrs C L Bell, Mr C Simkins, Mr S J G Koowaree

Mr. K Ashby – KALC Representative.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Councillor Smith attended as a Substitute Member for Councillor Michael.

Apologies:

Cllr. Michael, Mr M J Angell

Also Present:

Cllrs. Iliffe, Miss Martin

Commercial Director – Stagecoach South East, Managing Director – Stagecoach Bus South East England, Director of Highways and Transportation – (KCC), Assistant Project Manager – J10A (Highways England), Stakeholder Liaison – J10A (Vinci Construction UK), Senior Highway Manager – (KCC), Ashford District Manager – (KCC), Deputy Head of Community Safety and Wellbeing (ABC), Parking, Highways and Transportation Technical Officer (ABC), Civil Enforcement Officer Team Leader (ABC), Economic Development Manager (ABC), Economic Development Assistant (ABC), Member Services Liaison Manager – (ABC).

354 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Bartlett	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he lived close to Junction 10 of the M20	360

355 Minutes

The Chairman referred to Minute No. 259 – Kingsnorth Rail Halt and advised that he had made a further request for information to be circulated to the Board regarding how much of the original S106 funding was available.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Board held on the 11th December 2018 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

356 Operation Brock

The Senior Highway Manager (KCC) gave a presentation on the latest position in terms of Operation Brock and Brexit Preparedness. The presentation covered; the work of the Kent Resilience Forum; Operation Fennel; the use of the motorway and highway network for storing lorries wishing to access the ferries or Eurotunnel; the Manston Trial on 7th January 2019 and its revised layout; Operation Perch; and Communities. The presentation had been published on the Council's web site under:

[https://ashfordextranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=190&MId=3260&Ver=4&\\$LO\\$=1](https://ashfordextranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=190&MId=3260&Ver=4&LO=1)

Following the presentation the Chairman invited questions and comments and a summary of the responses is set out below:

- The fixed barrier on the M20 was the responsibility of Highways England and would initially be in place for a period of 6 months and would take approximately 3 weeks to remove. The M20 now had 3 lanes open in each direction, and if the London bound carriageway was joined at J10 or J11, the outside lane behind the barrier was available for non-lorry traffic.
- The Senior Highway Manager undertook to ascertain why it was not possible to have a moveable barrier between J9 and J8, similar to the one previously in place near J11, although he believed that the reason might be related to the distance involved ie approximately 15 miles.
- There were plans in place to minimise freight leaving the main routes and causing problems on rural roads. Resources were available to monitor traffic movements and the police and local authorities would have a role in enforcing weight restrictions. A Communication Plan was being developed by the County Council which would be shared with Ashford Borough Council (ABC) and other partners. ABC was also represented on the various Groups established by KCC to plan for Brexit.
- The impact on the A20 resulting from closures of the M20 was acknowledged and therefore KCC had been undertaking various strengthening works and had also introduced an embargo for roadworks on key routes.

- Funding of £28.8m had been provided to KCC by the Government for various works associated with Brexit, including the scheme at Manston.
- Operation Brock had an operational set up time of 3 hours and it was noted that the Port of Dover had a capacity for 1000 lorries; the Dover TAP, 250 lorries; Brock, 2000 lorries, Manston, 6,500, lorries and the M26 between 1,150 and 2,300 lorries. The Leader of KCC would also be writing to the Secretary of State in terms of what national plans would be put in place in the event that all of the above sites were full.
- The Department of Transport would redirect lorries carrying livestock to alternative ports.
- The 50mph restriction between J10 and J8 was monitored by average speed cameras, however the problem with foreign lorries ignoring this limit was acknowledged.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Highway Manager for the presentation.

Resolved:

That the presentation be received and noted.

357 Stagecoach Bus Services in Ashford

The Commercial Director of Stagecoach South East gave a presentation on Stagecoach bus services in Ashford.

He explained that two years ago they had introduced the 'small but often' mini buses but these had had to be replaced by larger buses due to demand. The last two years had also seen major disruption to services arising from the extensive closure of Newtown Road for 32 weeks and the on going construction works at J10a. The recently completed works at the Newtown Road junction were also causing a problem for smaller buses due to the camber on the new highway, and the congestion in Church Road Willesborough also presented a challenge for bus services. Contingency plans were also in place to deal with Operation Brock.

The Commercial Director also explained that the C line usage was now 50% larger than 10 years ago and additional buses had been provided on the B and C lines. He also referred to specific problems in terms of the failure of the traffic signals at Bridgefield and the congestion which often occurred around Ashford Railway Station.

In conclusion he said that passenger numbers were increasing and Stagecoach was working with ABC on the Quality Bus Partnership and were committed to support growth in the Borough.

Following the presentation the Chairman invited questions and comments and a summary of the responses is set out below:

- In terms of the congestion in Church Road, Willesborough, ABC would be happy to investigate this issue and to see whether it was possible to create some passing places. ABC was also keen to work with the landowner, Network Rail in terms of improving the Station Forecourt area. KCC would investigate problems being experienced with the traffic lights on Bridgefield Road.
- The service between Repton Park and Eureka was often sporadic and did not provide an early morning service for workers. The Commercial Manager advised that the G and R services were operated under contract with KCC who were responsible for setting the timetable and Stagecoach worked proactively with them. He also advised that his Company did not tolerate drivers running red lights.
- Due to increases in demand Stagecoach had to replace the small buses with larger vehicles, and Kent generally operated more large buses than smaller ones. In terms of the 666 Service, this was operated under contract with KCC and was also subject to a new tender process. The issue of the provision of rural services was also to be looked at with KCC.
- The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing advised that in terms of the station, the Borough Council had worked with Southeastern on design work for the station forecourt but this had not progressed. This would be taken forward with the new franchisee when announced. He also reported upon the success of the Rolvenden Rocket project and explained that a similar scheme was shortly to be introduced in Woodchurch. Discussions were also planned with the villages of Wye and Bethersden.
- The Ward Member for the South Willesborough Ward said that he wished to thank Stagecoach and their team for their work in providing a bus service during the closure of Newtown Road.
- In terms of comments in respect of the timings and frequency of services in Kennington and routes 1 and 1X, the Commercial Manager said that he would examine these comments, but he explained that in terms of the services 1 and 1X from Canterbury problems were often experienced due to traffic congestion and also the need for the buses to cross the railway to serve Chartham and Wye.
- Stagecoach were aware of a problem with the Godinton Road lights and they believed it was being caused by a faulty sensor. An additional bus had been introduced from 24 February on the B line to improve punctuality and Stagecoach would be launching an updated app with a live map feature following a test period.
- With reference to extending the B line into Finberry, this was something Stagecoach wished to do but the route was currently blocked. This would also help improve the service to Bridgefield. ABC and KCC Officers agreed to check the position on this matter and in particular whether buses could operate on unadopted highway.

In conclusion the Managing Director said that Stagecoach believed in providing bus services to the community and they would help to take this forward in years to come.

The Chairman thanked Stagecoach for their presentation and said he wished to encourage all to utilise the KCC report it app to report any highway problems. The link to the KCC web page is shown below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Resolved:

That the presentation be received and noted.

358 Parking and Waiting Restrictions – Update Summary

The report provided an update and summarised parking and waiting restriction schemes that had been through the Joint Transportation Board. The Deputy Head of Community Safety and Wellbeing advised that her team was undertaking a school education programme and were also receiving income for undertaking traffic regulation orders for developers.

The Chairman referred to page 17 of the report and asked when resurfacing work would be undertaken in Gasworks Lane and Elwick Road. The Ashford District Manager said that there were no plans to resurface Gasworks Lane. The Parking, Highways and Transportation Technical Officer advised that the TRO on Elwick Road was to amend the order to reflect the restrictions as they appeared on the ground. ABC and KCC were looking at improvements to directional signing in that area of the town.

Resolved:

That the update on schemes be noted.

359 Experimental Overnight HGV Enforcement and Clamping Trial 2017

The report provided an update on the operation of the pilot clamping scheme on the A20 between Charing and the Drivers roundabout which had been introduced on the 30th October 2017.

The Deputy Head of Community Safety and Wellbeing said that the end of the 18 month trial period was approaching and that the pilot had been very successful. Discussions were now taking place with the DfT with a view to obtaining their consent to make the order permanent. Following approval the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would need to be subject to a 3 week period of consultation. If objections were received it was noted that there may be the need for an extraordinary meeting of the Board. It was noted that this would be a Kent County Council TRO.

In response to a question about the total cost of the trial, the Deputy Head of Community Safety and Wellbeing undertook to let the Vice Chairman have details in due course. In terms of the operation of the 'unofficial' lorry park in Victoria Way, she also undertook to check the position with the planning team and also said that KCC could be asked to monitor the use by lorries of the layby on the A28 near Great Chart when doing their county wide monitoring.

In response to a question from the Chairman regarding the letters sent out by Highways England regarding additional lorry sites, the Director of Highways and Transportation said that Highways England were evaluating 14 to 16 sites, but despite requests they had not disclosed the locations of them. As and when this information became available he said it would be circulated to interested parties.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

360 M20 J10A Construction Programme Update

The report advised on progress on the above scheme since the last meeting in December 2018.

The Assistant Project Manager outlined the work undertaken to date which included the installation of the East and West Interchange Bridges and concrete pours on the new bridge decks; installation of edge beams on the West Interchange bridge; and the completion of the traffic switch on the A2070.

In response to a question about traffic backing up to J10 and the Orbital roundabout. the Assistant Project Manager said that traffic was currently single file but when the scheme was complete it would revert to a dual carriageway. The removal of the existing slip road would also help the situation.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Highways England for attending the meeting.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

361 Ashford International Station and Eurostar Services

The report provided an update on the project to enable the new Eurostar trains to access Ashford International Station.

Following the identification of complex technical issues operating the Class 374 Eurostar trains through Ashford, a number of tests had been undertaken to identify a solution. A Project Team had been put in place and Atkins had been commissioned

by Network Rail High Speed to provide specialist consultancy support and to design the preferred solution.

The Economic Development Manager also explained that work was continuing with Eurostar in terms of the timetable.

A further report would be submitted to the next meeting in June.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted

362 Highway Works Programme 2019/20

The report updated Members on the identified schemes approved for construction in 2019/20.

The Ashford District Manager referred to the Safer Roads Fund and explained that the KCC Project Team was now in place. The KCC Member for Ashford Rural East said that she wished to be involved with this scheme. The Ashford District Manager agreed to relay this request. She also referred to the street works at Newtown Road and said that these would commence from 13 May 2019.

Following a request from the Ward Member, the Ashford District Manager said she would ask the Street Works Team to inspect the raised camber and also to investigate whether there would be temporary traffic lights at the junction of Crowbridge and Gladstone Roads which had been in place during the last closure. In response to a question she also confirmed that grips were not part of programmed schemes but were made in the highway as part of reactive works and also that in terms of the Flanders Roundabout, it was not considered suitable to be undertaken with development work.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.