

Minutes of the meeting of the **DOVER JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Thursday, 14 April 2016 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor S C Manion (Minute Nos 43-53 only)

Councillors: N J Collor
T A Bond
P M Brivio (Minute Nos 43-51 only)
S S Chandler
M R Eddy
G Lymer
M J Ovenden
L B Ridings (Minute Nos 43-50 only)
E D Rowbotham (Minute Nos 43-51 only)
D A Sargent
P Walker

Also Present: Mr R J Frost (Deal Town Council)
Mrs L Burke (Dover Town Council)
Mr M W Moorhouse (Sandwich Town Council)
Mr K Gowland (KALC)
Mr A Minns (KALC)

Officers: East Kent Highway Manager (KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste)
Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager (KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste)
Freight and Network Improvement Officer (KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste)
Head of Community Safety, CCTV and Parking
Highways and Parking Team Leader
Corporate Estate and Coastal Engineer
Democratic Support Officer

43 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillors P I Carter and T P Johnstone, County Councillor G Cowan and Mr R S Walkden.

44 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules, Councillor S S Chandler had been appointed as substitute Member for Councillor P I Carter.

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

46 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on 18 February 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman advised that there were a number of people present for Agenda Item 10A (Sandwich Town Centre Improvements), a late report which he had agreed could be considered as an urgent item of business. With the Board's agreement, he proposed to vary the order of business so that this item could be considered as Agenda Item 4a.

RESOLVED: That the order of business be varied in order to consider Agenda Item 10a (Sandwich Town Centre Improvements) after Agenda Item 4 (Minutes).

48 SANDWICH TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

The Freight and Network Improvement Officer (KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste) presented the report which gave an update on progress in respect of measures taken to address traffic problems in Sandwich.

It was anticipated that the installation of gateways on the outskirts of the town would be completed by the end of May. In respect of the proposed 7.5-tonne weight restriction, six objections had been received in response to the Traffic Regulation Order. An external consultant, Rummey Design, had been appointed to carry out a holistic study of the town, and this work had already commenced. The consultant would work with Kent County Council (KCC) engineers to identify a solution for New Street and High Street.

KCC engineers had developed an outline proposal for Breezy Corner which would involve extending the footway and installing bollards. It was initially thought that this solution would prevent no. 14 buses from turning left at Breezy Corner and therefore the loss of this bus route. Accordingly, the public consultation had been based on this scenario, and 19 respondents had supported the loss of the bus route and 21 had objected to its loss. However, Stagecoach had since tested the route and confirmed that 9.9-metre buses were able to navigate the corner without mounting the footpath.

Councillor L B Ridings welcomed the proposals which would resolve long-standing problems. He welcomed the increased protection for pedestrians and the retention of the bus route. Councillor S S Chandler also welcomed the retention of the bus service, and praised the rapid progress of the scheme to date, particularly the weight restriction. In response to Councillor N J Collor, the Freight and Network Improvement Officer advised that funding for the works at Breezy Corner would come out of the Section 106 monies earmarked by Sandwich Town Council for the scheme. Whilst a detailed design had not yet been costed, it was anticipated that this could be achieved within budget.

RESOLVED: (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That it be recommended that the proposals for Breezy Corner be approved.

(In accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed that this item, which was not detailed on the agenda, should be considered as a matter of urgency for the reason that there is an

urgent need for a decision in respect of Breezy Corner due to ongoing damage being caused by vehicles.)

49 PROPOSED RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME

The Head of Community Safety, CCTV and Parking introduced the report which outlined proposals to create a residents' parking scheme covering Beechwood Avenue, Parkside and parts of Mill Road and London Road. Given that the scheme was the result of a petition submitted by local residents (and at the request of the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee), it had been agreed that the requirement for informal consultation with residents had already been met. However, as a consequence, the implications of the scheme would need to be fully explained during formal advertisement, for example, the fact that there would be only one permit per household and no allocated parking space. The consultation would be by letter to all houses in the area.

In response to Councillor Bond who questioned why Astor Drive had not been included when its residents had also signed the petition, the Head of Community Safety, CCTV and Parking advised that the proposed scheme followed natural boundaries and was of a manageable size. If Astor Drive were to be included, the other side of London Road would also need to be considered. That said, if Members felt strongly about the matter, an amended scheme could be developed. Councillor Bond argued that Astor Drive should be included as it created a natural boundary by being a cul de sac, and had experienced the same problems as Beechwood Avenue. Councillor M R Eddy agreed, pointing out that the majority of petition signatories had come from Beechwood Avenue only because it was the bigger street. Parking problems were the same for both streets. However, the scheme, if approved, would simply move the problem on elsewhere, putting more pressure on parking in Middle Deal and Albert Roads. A wider, more holistic solution needed to be found.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended that, subject to the inclusion of Astor Drive, the Residents' Parking Scheme set out at Appendix A of the report be approved for formal advertisement and, in the event that no objections are received, the scheme be recommended for sealing by Kent County Council. Any objections received will be referred back to the Dover Joint Transportation Board for further consideration.

50 UPDATE TO RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME - EXTENSION TO ZONE P, DEAL

The Highways and Parking Team Leader introduced the report which outlined details to extend the Zone P residents' parking scheme in Deal, subject to funding being available to carry out re-surfacing works to the verge in Middle Deal Road. The KCC highways engineer had advised that these works would cost approximately £2,500.

Councillor E D Rowbotham raised concerns that funding was expected to come from her Member Highway Fund which had already been reduced. She stressed that this was an opportunity to work with Deal Town Council to make what little funding there was go further. The East Kent Highway Manager (EKHM) agreed that this was an opportunity to remove traffic from the road, and he undertook to discuss the matter with the Dover District Manager, with a view to working collectively with the KCC Member and Deal Town Council to resolve the problem.

Councillor Bond was of the view that funding from the Member Highway Fund was not appropriate, and referred to traffic problems experienced by Southwall and Albert Roads as a result of the Minter's Yard development. Councillor Eddy commented that the proposals would facilitate the free movement of traffic and introduce parking capacity. He requested that any extension should include Southwall Road and Matthews Close, the latter also experiencing pressure on parking. He suggested that two parking zones should be consulted upon: the area included in Appendix A of the report and a second area which extended along Middle Deal Road to include Southwall Road and Matthews Close. In respect of the second area, the consultation document should make it clear that there would be a loss of parking spaces from Middle Deal Road to Southwall Road on one side. The EKHM assured the Board that funding would be found.

RESOLVED: (a) That initial consultation be undertaken on two schemes: i) The extension area as outlined at Appendix A of the report; and ii) The extension area as outlined at Appendix A of the report, with a further extension to include Middle Deal Road, Southwall Road and Matthews Close.

(b) That the report be noted.

51 RECOMMENDATION FROM SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE - PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS TO HOSPITALS

Mr Frost requested that a working group be formed to address the lack of public transport provision for hospitals in east Kent. Travelling to Ashford or Margate hospitals by bus necessitated at least two journeys which was unacceptable. Councillor Eddy advised that this was a long-standing issue which had previously been raised with the Quality Bus Partnership (QBP). The lack of a coordinated bus service caused a problem for junior hospital staff as well as visitors. Councillor Collor pointed out that the QBP for Dover was not responsible for bus services outside the district; other QBPs would therefore need to be involved if the matter was to be raised at this forum.

The Planning and Operations Manager – Public Transport advised that this matter had been raised on a number of occasions. The amalgamation of hospital services now meant a longer journey for many people to reach their nearest hospital. To provide bus services to the major population centres via the normal bus network would be physically difficult and require discrete funding. Neither KCC nor the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group was in a position to fund such services. That said, KCC was developing a pilot project with the NHS which involved the pooling of resources in order to provide better transport linkages using car clubs, etc. However, it was likely to be another year before they would be in a position to trial the pilot.

Councillor Chandler raised concerns about the apparent unreliability of patient transport. In her view, the Overview and Health Committee should be asking questions of service-providers whose services fell short of what was expected, particularly at the time they were re-commissioned. In respect of bus services, it was unrealistic to expect the network to fulfil the needs of all residents, particularly those in rural areas. There were voluntary networks that provided transport services, and better coordination and information about these was what was needed.

Councillor Eddy remarked that ambulance services and patient transport were commissioned by the NHS and therefore beyond the remit of KCC. However, hospital bus services were within KCC's remit and it was time to make progress on this matter by raising it with the appropriate body, whatever that may be. Councillor Bond commented that the issue of public transport accessibility had been an ongoing problem for a number of years and it was therefore also appropriate to raise it with the Head of Public Transport at KCC.

The Planning and Operations Manager – Public Transport informed Members that his department was responsible for all the QBPs. He would therefore look at holding a meeting with Stagecoach and representatives from all the QBPs with a view to discussing this problem and exploring ideas with Stagecoach.

RESOLVED: (a) That a meeting be arranged by Kent County Council with Stagecoach, Quality Bus Partnership representatives and others (as appropriate) in order to explore ideas and options for the improvement of bus services to Ashford, Canterbury and Margate hospitals.

(b) That the issue of public transport accessibility to hospitals in east Kent be raised with the Head of Public Transport at Kent County Council.

52 CONSULTATION ON SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES

The Planning and Operations Manager – Public Transport advised Members that the public consultation on subsidised bus services was due to end on 15 May. KCC had to date supported some bus journeys within existing services. However, as a result of budgetary pressures, it had reviewed its financial support for under-used bus services/journeys. As a result of the review, it was proposing to remove some journeys and bring others back into the commercial network, subject to changes to routes, timings, etc.

There were five proposals for the Dover area which was more than anywhere else in Kent. These proposals included changes to the 541 service which would see a reduction from five to three operating days. The proposals were not set in stone, and feedback was actively sought from bus-users in order to minimise the impact on local people. If necessary, the proposals would be revised and reconsidered in conjunction with the bus operators.

Councillor Eddy encouraged Members to spread the word about the consultation to other Members and local residents. A number of services would be affected, and it was important for the public to inform decisions on where subsidy money should go. Councillor Collor commented that Port shift-workers could be particularly affected. In respect of the 102 service, he suggested that it would be more sensible to remove the penultimate bus.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

53 CLEARANCE OF LITTER ON HIGH-SPEED ROADS

The Chairman advised that he had written to Charlie Elphicke, the MP for Dover and Deal, as resolved at the preceding Board meeting, but had not yet received a response.

Councillor Collor advised that there were various difficulties with clearing litter on high-speed roads and these were set out in the report. A meeting had been held with the MP who had been requested to make a case to Government for the A2/A20 to be designated a special road which would mean responsibility for litter clearance would rest with Highways England (HE). In essence, the clearance of litter from motorways was the responsibility of HE, with A roads being the responsibility of the local authority. Although efforts were made to coordinate litter clearance with contractors' road closures, contractors sometimes refused access. The EKHM added that the issue of litter clearance had been raised at a recent meeting with HE and Kent Police. Whilst KCC worked closely with partners, certain contractors were less than helpful when it came to permitting access during road closures. Connect Plus was due to take over the contract in June, and had already offered access in May for litter clearance around the Port of Dover.

Mrs L Burke commented that no other port in the UK took as much freight traffic as Dover did on the A2/A20. This added weight to the argument for the A2/A20 to be designated as a special road. Councillor M J Ovenden pointed out that litter was less visible and more difficult to clear when grass verges were overgrown. The EKHM advised that, due to budget constraints, KCC carried out a limited amount of grass-cutting. Councillor Chandler commented that the A256 was looking clearer but queried the large concrete rings that had recently appeared. The EKHM advised that the rings had been put in place to stop HGVs fly-parking and causing damage to grass verges. The rings were unsightly, and KCC and DDC were exploring a more satisfactory solution. One of the proposed functions of the new lorry park was to provide overnight parking for HGVs. During May a count would be conducted of illegally parked lorries in Kent. Kent Police was also training 150 local officers to seek out and fine illegally parked vehicles.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

54 HIGHWAY WORKS PROGRAMME 2016/17

The EKHM introduced the report which updated Members on works that had been approved for delivery in 2016/17. In respect of Appendix A, the EKHM advised that the first entry under surface dressing should be removed as it was a duplicated entry for works to the Ash by-pass. The Board was advised that the replacement of street-light columns, due to be completed in March, had not yet been completed but was in hand. In response to Councillor Bond, it was advised that the vast majority of flooding problems in Deal were caused by sudden deluges of water. The EKHM undertook to contact Southern Water to establish what works were taking place.

Councillor Collor queried why resurfacing work at Menzies Road, Whitfield had been given priority over the B2011 Folkestone Road which badly needed patching. Councillor Eddy agreed, commenting that more cars were using the road in order to avoid the new speed limits on the dual carriageway, with the surface near the station being particularly bad. Mrs Burke pointed out that more HGVs were now using Folkestone Road. She also raised concerns about the number of lorries parking in Coombe Valley Road, and was advised that this matter was being investigated by the Planning team. In respect of the cycle route at Queen Street, Dover, Councillor Collor questioned why designs were still being discussed when the Board had been assured 4/5 years previously that KCC would fund and complete the scheme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

55 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business on the grounds that the item to be considered involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

56 APPLICATIONS FOR DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING BAYS

The Corporate Estate and Coastal Engineer introduced the report which outlined details of six disabled persons' parking bay applications. Following informal consultation, no letters of objection had been received in respect of Applications D, E and F. Since these applications met all the criteria, it was recommended that they proceed to the second stage of formal advertisement and, thereafter, be sealed by KCC should no objections be received during the advertisement period.

One letter of objection had been received in respect of Applications A, B and C but, since they met all the criteria, it was recommended that these applications also be progressed to the second stage.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended that Applications A, B, C, D, E and F be formally advertised and, in the event that no objections are received, they be recommended for sealing by Kent County Council (with any objections being referred back to a future meeting of the Dover Joint Transportation Board for further consideration).

The meeting ended at 7.54 pm.