

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MINUTES of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on Tuesday 3 March 2020 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor B Garden (Chairman)
Mrs A Allen (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs P Cole
Mr J Kite MBE
Mr J Ozog

Councillor S P Butterfill
Councillor K J Grehan
Councillor Mrs J A Ozog
Councillor L J Reynolds
Councillor R J Wells

Councillor Yvonne Seymour (Parish Representative)

45. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for Absence were received from Mr Butler – Rhule, Mr Harman, Ms Threadgle and Ms Sutton.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were not any declarations received

47. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DARTFORD JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2019.

That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on 3 December 2019 be confirmed as a correct record of that meeting.

Arising from this matter it was noted that Councillor Mrs Butterfill had tendered her apologies for this meeting and thus her name was added to the list of apologies for absence for that meeting.

48. URGENT ITEMS

It was noted that there were no urgent matters for the Board to consider.

49. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES (IF ANY)

It was reported that there were no items referred to the Board for consideration.

50. MATTERS ARISING

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The Board received an update report on a number of issues raised at our last, and previous meetings and noted that a number were addressed on the agenda for this meeting.

Arising from this it was noted that representation from Kent County Council Highways was not in attendance due to illness and that some issues would therefore remain unaddressed.

Information on the following matters was provided:

Parking Issues: Ingress Park

Councillor Butterfill undertook to contact Crest Nicholson regarding the installation of yellow lines.

Dropped Kerbs / Amendments to TRO

It was understood that this had now been addressed, but Teresa Ryszkowska undertook to look into this and clarify the current position.

Future of Bus Routes 428 and 492

It was reported that resulting from the responses received on proposals to curtail the services, Transport for London was reconsidering the issues and had deferred any decision on the future of the routes.

Drainage in Dartford Road

Mr Ozog reported that there were still flooding issues along Dartford Road and that he continued to report these via the KCC Highways web site.

Car Parking Signage: Kent Road

Mr Ozog reported that the off street car park signs had been renewed and now showed consistent times for operation. The sign, setting out the operation times for on – street parking regulation was still, in his opinion too close to the off street parking and could cause confusion.

Reinstatement of Verges: Burnham Road

It was noted that verges in Burnham Road had now been re - instated with bollards, replacement grass and planting following work in the area.

Emergency Works by Thames Water

Councillor Reynolds reported that he had contacted Kent Highways over this matter but had been informed that they were unable to assist him as Thames Water had declared the work “Emergency”.

51. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Verbal reports on the following were given by the Chairman;

1. Govia Thameslink Station Improvements

It was reported that Govia Thameslink had made no progress in implementing the Board's suggestions for improvements at Railway stations in the Borough.

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2. Future of Bus Routes 428 and 492

It was reported that resulting from the responses received on proposals to curtail the services, Transport for London was reconsidering the issues and had deferred any decision on the future of the routes.

3. Cabinet Reference: Parking Enforcement

The Chairman explained that he had received a letter from the Leader of Dartford Council in response to the Board reference. The letter explained that as the Council had adopted a balanced approach to enforcement, with a number of new parking schemes being proposed, the blanket increase to enforcement resources would be premature. There would be a need for additional enforcement resources but these which would be introduced once need was assessed.

4. Matters Raised by Wilmington Parish Council

The Board considered a number of traffic issues raised by Wilmington Parish Council and agreed that it was most appropriate for these to be resolved between Kent Highways and the parish council.

52. **FASTRACK**

The Board received a report on a number of developments and proposals relating to the Fastrack bus system. The report was presented in two sections by Mr Hymers of KCC and Messrs Monahan and Jennings from Arriva buses,

Section one which was mainly a verbal report updated the Board on the following issues

- The progress on the proposed Bean Road Tunnel
- The trial of autonomous (driverless) shuttle buses
- The introduction of electric buses on the Fastrack system
- Service Mobility (Arrangements for single ticketing and point of entry across the Borough)
- Working with TfL

Additionally Mr Monahan informed the Board that a revised timetable for Route B had been introduced but that the benefits would not be seen until current large scale roadworks in Ebbsfleet were completed and temporary traffic signals were removed, as they were delaying the route.

The second part of the report related to operational issues, performance data, traffic signal co - ordination and the possible introduction of camera enforcement on some sections of the system which were being pursued by the Fastrack Advisory Board.

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Mr Hymers explained the details of the Performance Review undertaken in December 2019 and highlighted a number of issues which were of concern and actions planned to rectify them.

Mr Hymers also presented the findings of a market research project undertaken by Lake Market Research with travelling users of Fastrack.

Mr Hymers reminded the Board that discussions had taken place at a number of Board meetings relating to camera enforcement of Fastrack busways. He updated Members on the arrangements for a pilot enforcement scheme which had taken place in Tunbridge Wells in 2015 / 16, and sought support for the introduction of a similar scheme in Dartford.

Having considered a brief outline of a possible scheme, the Board expressed concern at possible long term financial commitment that any such scheme could entail. It was also noted that support for such a scheme would require detailed discussion with Dartford Officers and approval from Dartford Borough Council's Cabinet.

In addition to this matter Mrs Monahan and Robinson informed the Board that, in the period since the original introduction of Fastrack, there had been a steady degradation in the mechanisms which allowed buses priority at traffic signals.

Consequently buses were being delayed at such signals and in some cases drivers were choosing to avoid the priority signalling altogether.

In response to this the Fastrack Advisory Board has proposed an overhaul of the priority system and amendments to some route hardware to ease the flow of buses through traffic lights.

Board Members expressed concern that such an overhaul would impact upon general traffic flows across the Borough and that details of this were not available. Additionally such work would require further detailed discussion with Dartford Council's officers and approval from the Borough Cabinet.

While the introduction of both such initiatives appeared attractive it was felt that further information was necessary before support could be given to their introduction. Additionally it was also noted that detailed reports on these matters were to be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet for decision.

Accordingly the Board thanked Messrs, Hymers, Monahan and Robinson for their presentation and noted that reports on these matters will be presented to the Cabinet for decision.

53. HIGHWAYS ENGLAND

The Chairman introduced Mr Thomas Whittingham the Highways Agency Route sponsor for the local area.

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Mr Whittingham explained that in April 2017, the Government had committed £10 million for improvements to tackle congestion at the Dartford Crossing, and a study to look at further measures to address congestion in the Dartford and Thurrock areas.

This funding had been used to finance a number of schemes:

M25 Jct 2 improvement: Completed in August 2019.

A282 Jct 1b Yellow Box camera enforcement: Currently in design and construction and enforcement expected in summer 2020.

A282 Jct 1a Improvements: We are designing an improvement scheme to widen the A206 over the Littlebrook junction. This is currently in detailed design, and funding confirmation for construction in 2020/21 is being sought.

Dartford Northern Crossovers: This again is currently in detailed design, and funding confirmation for construction in 2020/21 is being sought.

Dart Charge Permanent Signing: This scheme will provide permanent roadside signing providing road users with the charging information when using the Dartford Crossing and how to pay them. It was noted that temporary signing is currently in place, and the permanent signing is being designed and funding confirmation for construction in 2020/21 is being sought.

Arising from the report Members expressed concern that there was little information to support the efficacy of the schemes nor detailed explanation of the schemes themselves. This was especially relevant to the Board's understanding of the introduction of measures and proposed enforcement on the "Blue Star" roundabout and issues relating to the road markings and enforcement by the Kent Police Service (KPS).

It was therefore agreed that Mr Whittingham be asked to return to a future meeting of the Board and provide further details regarding

- Comparative junction transit data before and after the Junction 2 Junction improvements
- A detailed proposed layout plan for the Blue Star roundabout, showing the siting of the yellow boxes
- A progress report on the negotiations with KPS regarding enforcement and an explanation of the legal processes involved
- A detailed plan of the junction improvements and the estimated benefits which they will bring.

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- Detailed information on the current transit speeds for the crossing, in both directions, comparing before and after data.

54. MEMBERS ENQUIRY ITEMS

Councillor Grehan asked if anything could be done to reduce or remove move the high numbers of lorries which were parking overnight in London Road, Stone.

It was noted that there were not currently parking restrictions in the area nor any weight restrictions prohibiting heavy vehicles.

While the provision of local lorry parks might provide an apparent solution, it was suggested that these did exist but that drivers did not use them due to the cost involved.

It was agreed therefore that regrettably a ready solution to this matter was not available.

55. JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD : CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

The Board noted that at the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council held on 13 January 2020 the detail of the new Joint Transportation Board Agreement with Kent County Council had been adopted.

Additionally it was noted that arrangements for Parish Council representation on the Board had been approved.

56. ROAD WORKS IN THE BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

The Board received a report from KCC Highways which updated Members on road works which were to be undertaken or proposed to take place in Dartford.

57. KCC - ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

The Board received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Kent County Council Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee held on 29 November 2019.

58. LAST MEETING

The Chairman reported that this was the last Board meeting of the current Municipal year, and he thanked Members and Officers for the work that had been undertaken during the year.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

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CHAIRMAN