

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Wednesday, 9 September 2020

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Peter Scollard (Acting-Chair)

Councillors: Brian Francis
Leslie Hills
Nirmal Khabra
John Burden (KCC)
Bryan Sweetland (KCC)
Lauren Sullivan (KCC)

Please Note: Cllr Sarah Gow and Cllr Tony Rana were also in attendance

Kevin Gore District Manager – Gravesham (KCC)
Nick May Parking Services Manager (GBC)
Ben Clarke Committee & Scrutiny Assistant (Minutes)

154. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Alan Michael Ridgers and Cllr Bob Lane.

155. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2018 were signed by the Chair.

156. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Nirmal Khabra declared an interest in respect of item 8b as he was a local Taxi Driver for the Borough of Gravesham.

157. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Minute 124. Corner Protection (Yellow Lines) at the junction of Cob Drive and Forge Lane - Requested by Cllr Bob Lane

An update was received from Cllr Bob Lane; the informal consultation carried out by Shorne Parish Council received 24 responses (23 in favour, one neutral, none opposed). On 30th May 2020 KCC wrote to confirm that they will now proceed with the TRO request and formal Consultation process.

The Parking Services Manager informed Members that the matter had been progressed and KCC were due to start the formal consultation in the next 2-3 weeks..

With the agreement of the Chair, Cllr Leslie Hills asked that yellow lines be added to the junctions on Havisham Road, Chalk Road, Vicarage Lane and Lower Higham Road.

Cllr Leslie Hills advised that he had already spoken about funding with his KCC Councillor for Chalk, Cllr Alan Ridgers, but he was already in the process of funding a speed test in Lower Higham Road which would commence once Covid-19 was over.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) noted the requests and agreed to provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

Cllr Bryan Sweetland advised that he was still waiting for the extension of the yellow lines at the junction of Northumberland Road and Brookside Road in Istead Rise.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that the action was with the contractors and he agreed to provide Cllr Bryan Sweetland with a date for when that would be completed.

Minute 127. The Hill, Northfleet - Speeding issues and Accidents - Requested by Cllr Peter Scollard

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that he had no update concerning the Hill as Emma Green, the Schemes and Planning Manager had recently left her position at Kent Highways. The team had been looking at increasing the lining and signage along the Hill though and the District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained to the Chair that the automatic traffic counts carried out monitoring of the level of traffic in the area and took speed surveys to see what times of the day were busiest which then informed the team of trends/patterns.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) promised to come back to the Committee with an answer of when the traffic count surveys would be completed.

Minute 147. Highways Works Programme 2019/20 onwards (Information only)

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised Members that he had no update on measures to improve visibility and speed reduction at Sainsbury's roundabout as the Schemes and Planning Team would not take any on new requests until the Covid-19 tranche of work for active travel and high street repair was completed.

It was pointed out by Cllr John Burden that the requests submitted for that roundabout were not new and had been in circulation for over six months.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) defended the work of the team so far and explained that officers had visited the site and vegetation had been cutback around the signs and the island. All physical traffic calming measures such as new lining had been put on hold until the Covid works had been completed.

Cllr John Burden further asked for an update on the proposed cycle lanes in Gravesham and in particular, between Meopham and Istead Rise.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that the team had been redoing the road linings on Gravesend Road, parts of Northfleet and the Thamesway as well as looking

into the proposed 20mph zones in the Town Centre. The team had also been looking at widening the footway on Milton Road to allow for safer passage for pedestrians.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) agreed to inquire about the proposed cycle lane between Meopham and Istead Rise and provide an update to the Committee.

Minute 148. Any Other Business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency

Whitehill Traffic Issues – raised by Cllr Tony Rana

The Chair invited Cllr Sarah Gow and Cllr Tony Rana to join the Committee for discussion on minute 148.

Cllr Tony Rana informed the Committee that a site visit and walk around Whitehill had not been arranged with him and all emails requesting a date had been ignored.

The Chair echoed Cllr Ranas comments of receiving no responses from KCC officers as he had received numerous complaints from officers and the public on the issue.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that he would strive to respond to emails promptly and then explained that a site visit was conducted to Whitehill with the Planning Team and Cllr Diane Marsh as she was the KCC Councillor for that area. Due to the restrictions in place because of Covid-19, there was a limit on the amount of people invited to attend the site visit which was why Cllr Tony Rana was not included.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) directed Members attention to page thirty two of the report as it made reference to the site visit and it was agreed that a one way system was not suitable. There was the possibility of a design change to the roundabout bell mouths if funding became available.

Cllr Tony Rana responded that he was more concerned with receiving a recommendation from KCC on how to deal with increased traffic issues in Whitehill Road, Sun Lane and Echo Square. Cllr Tony Rana insisted that a site visit needed to be carried out in Whitehill with himself in attendance to discuss what measures could be implemented to deescalate the amount of traffic seen on a daily basis. To conclude, Cllr Tony Rana also asked for the statistics recorded by the monitoring camera chained to the lamppost on Whitehill Road.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) assured Cllr Tony Rana that a site visit would be arranged in line with Government guidance of a group less than six people; with regards to the statistics they went directly to Cllr Marsh but he would attain them for the Committee.

General concern was raised by the Committee that GBC Councillors were being ignored when they raised issues with KCC and the Chair requested that it be noted that all Councillors who raised an issue/request with KCC should be consulted first on any actions that were proposed to be implemented.

**Minute 150. Highways Works Programme 2019/20 onwards
(Information only)**

Bus Hub at Garrick Street

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) directed the Committee to page 33 where there was an update on the Bus Hub at Barrack Row; the Bus Hub and Garrick Street had been combined into one scheme and would be tendered together. With regards to a question regarding if taxis could use the bus gate the District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that as part of the consultation it would ask what vehicles should be allowed to pass through it. If taxis were given permission to use the bus gate then the traffic regulations would have to be amended and an ANPR camera installed to fine those who did not have permission to use it. The consultation will commence in February 2021.

The Parking Services Manager further added that he met with KCC yesterday regarding the Bus Hub and KCC have agreed that an ANPR enforcement camera could be installed however any changes to the layout of the road and enforcement would all have to go through the formal consultation. It was still very early on in the consultation process as to what vehicles would be allowed to use the Bus Hub and which would be restricted. Discussions were also ongoing regarding who would manage the enforcement.

158. Formal Consultation for the remaining Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) in the Borough

The Parking Services Manager advised that the public notices for the controlled parking zones (CPZ's) were for information and formed part of the formal consultation. The review of the controlled parking zones in the Town Centre was completed last year and it was the intention to review the remaining controlled parking zones in the area once that was finished. Two informal consultations have been carried out where resident feedback was gathered on how they wanted to see the schemes run in the future. All resident feedback was considered by the Parking Team and this feedback was used to propose changes to the scheme under the statutory formal consultation.

A question was raised about advertisement of the consultation and if there was a social media campaign to promote it.

The Parking Services Manager explained that there was not a social media campaign but there was a statutory requirement for it to be advertised in local papers and notices were put up on streets and the affected roads. In addition a letter from GBC with all the information on the notices was sent to every household in the CPZ. The Parking Services Manager advised that those three methods made sure that every resident that the CPZ affected was fully

159. Gravesham Highway Forward Works Programme - 2019/20 onwards

The Committee were provided with the Gravesham Highway Forward Works Programme – 2019/20 which provided Members with an update on the identified schemes approved for construction.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) highlighted key points from various sections within the report.

Machine Resurfacing

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that the main contractors were on hold for six to eight weeks due to Covid-19 but they were back on track now and most of the resurfacing works had been completed.

Cllr Bryan Sweetland gave his thanks to the team as the surfacing works completed on Sole Street were up to an excellent standard.

Cllr Lauren Sullivan requested an update on the provision of the three roads that were highlighted by Members that needed urgent servicing especially St Marks Avenue and Haynes Road.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that the three roads were submitted to the unfunded list of works; authorisation to spend had not been given yet and the team were waiting on a Council meeting to find out what was happening to the budget for that list and where it would be allocated.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) assured the Committee that St Marks Avenue would be completed in March/April 2021 and the funds would come out of next year's budget.

Cllr Bryan Sweetland advised the budget would be released following the County Council meeting on Wednesday, 10 September 2020.

Footway Improvement

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that half of Valley Drive was classified and the other half wasn't; the improvements were being dealt with by the Planners.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that Arnold Avenue had been designed and programmed in.

Surface Treatments

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that only Chalk Road was outstanding due to the gas board works and had been postponed to 2021.

Drainage Repairs & Improvements

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that Bracondale Avenue had had a design created by testing and commissioning and the feasibility of that design was being looked into.

There was no further update for Whitepost Lane.

With regard to Factory Road, the District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that the team were still trying to deal with the landowners and had encountered some problems. The Chair asked to be kept informed of all progress on Factory Road as he was the Governor of Lawn Community Primary School that was affected by the flooding. The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) agreed to copy the Chair into correspondence with the drainage team so that he had their direct contact details.

Cllr John Burden raised the issue of flooding at Perry Street as it was an ongoing issue and would only worsen over winter.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) was aware of the issue and it hadn't progressed as the Enforcement Officer was on long term sick leave; it was likely that the officer would not return so a replacement was being sought. A total of 540 applications were received for

the role which took a long time to sort through and short list. As a result the works were still on a list of works to be completed and there was a backlog as there was only one Enforcement Officer covering the whole of Kent.

In response to Cllr John Burdens query regarding giving delegated authority to Gravesham, the District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that he would talk to the registered magistrate when he returned from annual leave to find out if anything was possible and then report back to the Parking Services Manager.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) agreed to add an appendix to the report called 'District Manager Issues; and include the flooding at Perry Street as an item so it was brought to every Committee meeting until it was dealt with.

With regard to Timber Bank, The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that there was another flooding recently and the residents were met with. A lot of work was carried out on the highway and a cleanse was commenced to ensure that there were no more flooding events over the winter.

Street Lighting

The Chair raised an issue with the lighting in Church Park Lane as it had not worked properly in two years and was a safety issue for local residents as there were concerns with muggings and drug taking.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised the Chair that when the columns were installed they were never transferred over to KCC's asset list which was why they weren't maintained. The Chair was assured that they had now been transferred to the asset list and would be maintained and monitored by KCC.

Externally Funded Schemes

The Chair queried who owned the land outside Northfleet Train Station as a resident had complained about the lack of parking enforcement there which caused problems for residents.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) thought it was private land which meant it wasn't up to KCC to provide parking enforcement; The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) agreed to discuss the issue with Jaime Watson.

Cllr Lauren Sullivan asked for further clarification on how schemes were added to the list such as the installation of a Pelican Crossing in Northfleet.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) explained that Claire Venner managed the Schemes Planning Team and Jaime Watson was also part of the team. If anything was requested by GBC then the District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) would pass it to the Schemes Planning Team who would pass it onto Jaime Watson to action.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that there were several items listed on page 32 which related to Dartford; they would be removed from the report before submission to the next meeting.

Cllr Leslie Hills made several observations to the Committee:

- Vegetation in the Borough had become very overgrown especially with weeds growing out in gully's/alleyways and it made Gravesham look very untidy. Kent Highways did undertake to maintain the vegetation and it needed serious maintenance as soon as possible
- The small sign advising no access from Stone Street to Wrotham Road was far too small and easily obstructed; Cllr Leslie Hills was informed that a bigger sign could not be placed under the bridge due to the excess weight

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) responded:

- The vegetation was far too overgrown but weed treatments had just commenced in Gravesham and all of the vegetation would be cut back
- Cllr Leslie Hills had been informed incorrectly; a bigger sign could not be placed on the bridge due to wind loading which would cause structural damage to the bridge. However, a major renewal of the lining on that road would make the 'no entry' sign more visible to drivers and a new location was being sought for the 'no entry' sign

Cllr Lauren Sullivan queried how it was decided that the tranche of money would go towards the installation of 20mph zones in the Town Centre instead of the three roads that were highlighted as in need of urgent servicing by GBC Councillors.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) informed Members that Emma Green, the previous Schemes and Planning Manager decided the schemes put forward for Gravesham would be the widening of Milton Road and the 20mph zones. The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that he had not seen the full report so GBC's suggestions may have been included; the new Schemes and Planning Manager will be invited to attend the next Committee meeting.

Cllr Bryan Sweetland further added that three Councillors put their names towards the proposed cycle path down the A227 and improving access for cyclists at the roundabout which received full backing from Cyclo Park.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) advised that it was Tim Reeds team who made the decision but he would find out if the proposed cycle path had been included.

Cllr John Burden advised that when the budget came forward, all Boroughs and Districts were asked by KCC to put forward roads that needed short term and long term work or they would lose any potential funding. GBC put forward the east/west and north/south cycle/foot path connections which would have linked the Town Centre to Cyclo Park and Meopham to Istead Rise.

The District Manager – Gravesham (KCC) agreed to look into the second tranche of funding for projects and report back to the Committee.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 20.31pm