

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Wednesday, 31 August 2022

7.30 pm

Present:

County Cllr Conrad Broadley (Chair)
Cllr Tony Rana (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Brian Francis
 Aaron Elliott
 Leslie Hills
 Nirmal Khabra
 Jordan Meade (KCC)
 Lauren Sullivan (KCC)
 Bryan Sweetland (KCC)

Kevin Gore	Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC)
Shane Hymers	Fastrack Development Manager (KCC)
Graham Killick	Project Manager (KCC)
Phillip Lightowler	Interim Director of Highways and Transportation (KCC)
Ryan Danton	Parking & Highway Officer
Carlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager (Minutes)
Chloe Taylor	Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

22. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from County Cllr Alan Ridgers.

23. To sign the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 May 2022 were signed the Chair.

24. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Nirmal Khabra declared an interest as he was a local taxi driver in the Borough of Gravesham.

25. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Members were presented with an update on actions that were requested or promised at the previous Gravesham JTB meeting.

The Board noted the update.

26. Reports from Officers

26a. Highways Forward Works Programme: 2022/23

The Board was presented with Gravesham's Highways Forward Works Programme for 2022/23. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the Board that the report updated Members on the identified schemes approved for construction.

The Board noted the report.

26b. Gravesend Bus Hub – Clive Road Bus Gate

Further to minute 20.2 (24.05.2022), the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed Members that the report was produced in response to the letter dated 22 June 2022 from Cllr Conrad Broadley, Chair of Gravesham Joint Transportation Board, regarding Clive Road Bus Gate and the request for a 6 months trial period to be introduced under an experimental or temporary TRO to allow taxis through the Bus Gate with the trial being monitored to determine the impact of both taxis and buses using the Bus Gate.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) and the Project Manager (KCC) outlined the following: -

- Whilst Kent County Council (KCC) recognise the crucial role that taxis play, it is committed to improving bus usage, journey times and service reliability in order to reduce traffic pollution and congestion. The misuse of bus gates can severely impact on bus journey times and cause frustration to motorists who adhere to the regulations, often creating local conflict.
- There had been an increase in all vehicle types misusing the Bus Gate partly due to a distinct lack of enforcement by the Police as it was seen as low-level crime and not a good use of limited Police resources. Use of an enforcement camera would address the misuse as it was now affecting the traffic lights and putting more demand on Parrock Street. Members acknowledged that there was more traffic surrounding the Civic Centre/Town Centre.
- There was already a taxi rank in Rathmore Road adjacent to Gravesend Railway Station which was accessible via all platforms. Taxis also had use of the taxi rank in nearby New Road and were permitted to traverse Garrick Street and Barrack Row to exit the New Road rank.
- If the Bus Gate was enforced and traffic misuse had generally ceased, it may be possible to consider a trial for taxis however there would be practicalities in the creation of a temporary exemption / whitelist as this would be registration based and could not be easily amended.
- The Bus Gate was awaiting the implementation of an enforcement camera and until it was installed, trial routes were unable to be considered. A first tranche of sites requiring enforcement had already been assessed and public engagement had taken place for these in preparation to begin enforcement in early 2023. The Clive Road Bus Gate was being assessed for inclusion in the second tranche of sites.

- The trail would be the responsibility of KCC's Camera Enforcement Team, and it would be that Team who would consider and determine any additional use of the Bus Gate.

Concern was expressed regarding the upkeep and cleanliness of the Gravesend Bus Hub. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that street cleansing was a responsibility of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) and that any concerns would need to be reported to GBC. KCC had attempted to make contact with GBC regarding the upkeep.

The Board noted the report and acknowledged that it would receive an update on this as the implementation of Clive Road Bus Gate enforcement progresses.

27. Issues raised by Councillors with the approval of the Chair

The Chair allowed Members to raise various issues that would be submitted to KCC and/or GBC for actioning.

Cllr Leslie Hills highlighted the following issues: -

- **RS Skips in Lower Higham Road**

Residents were having repeated issues with RS Skips vehicles driving through Lower Higham Road and Chalk Road.

Cllr Hills sought clarity on the operating times/licence and whether the 74 visits a day strictly applied to RS Skips vehicles only. Concern was also raised regarding the 7.5 tonne limit regulations and whether it was being adhered to.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the Board that Cllr Bob Lane had also raised this with the MP for Gravesham, Adam Holloway. The issues were currently being investigated by KCC and Kent Police. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) will liaise with KCC's Planning Development Team regarding the operating times/licence. A report was being produced and will be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

- **Road works on Lower Higham Road (and Chalk)**
(Cllr Hills also raised this issue on behalf of Cllr Bob Lane)

Residents were concerned regarding the status of the ongoing road works on Lower Higham Road (and Chalk) which had been under construction for a long period of time due to gas mains replacement works.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the works should have finished on Lower Higham Road and would be moving to Thong Lane. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that he would contact KCC's Street Works Team for an update as footway maintenance work was also due to start soon.

County Cllr Conrad Broadley (Chair) highlighted the following issue: -

- **Speeding on Springhead Road**

Speeding on Springhead Road needed to be addressed. Action needed to be taken in the form of additional signage and/or traffic calming measures.

- **Springhead Parkway Rumble Strips**

County Cllr Conrad Broadley (Chair) raised concerns regarding Springhead Parkway rumble strips. It had previously been agreed between the developer, KCC and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) that they would be removed but this had not yet been actioned.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) assured Members that KCC had liaised with the developer and agreed for the rumble strips to be removed. KCC was waiting for a plan to be submitted by the developer. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that he would set up a meeting in order for this to be progressed.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 7.54 pm