

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Tony Rana (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Brian Francis
Nirmal Khabra
Jordan Meade (KCC)
Alan Ridgers (KCC)
Lauren Sullivan (KCC)
Bryan Sweetland (KCC)

Nick May	Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager
Kevin Gore	Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC)
Jenny Lumley	Whitehill Primary School (Business Manager)
Angela Carpenter	Whitehill Primary School (Headteacher)
Ben Clarke	Committee Services Officer
Karen Gingles	Committee Services Officer (minutes)

28. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Conrad Broadley (Chair), Councillors Aaron Elliot and Leslie Hills.

29. To sign the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Wednesday, 31 August 2022 were signed by the Chair.

30. To declare any interests members may have in the items contained on this agenda. When declaring an interest members should state what their interest is.

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

31. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Members were presented with an update on actions that were requested or promised at the previous Gravesham JTB meeting. Kevin Gore (Dartford & Gravesham District Manager for KCC) referred to the previous issue raised by Cllr Hills, which referred to the road works on Lower Higham Road in Chalk. The board were advised that the works had now been

completed, however there would be footway maintenance due to start soon, but this was not thought to cause too much disruption.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed Members that:

- The Gas Board had completed their road works on Lower Higham Road in Chalk and Thong Lane; there were some minor gas works being conducted in the new year but those shouldn't cause any disruption
- The issue relating to speeding on Springhead Road had been resolved
- Reference was also made to the Springhead Parkway rumble strips that had been raised previously by County Councillor Conrad Broadley. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) had invited the developer to the site and was waiting for a date to be scheduled; the board was assured that the rumble strips would be removed by March 2023

The Chair thanked The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) for the actions taken.

32. Reports from Officers

32.1 Highways Forward Works Programme: 2022/23 and 2023/24

The Board was presented with a report that updated them on the identified schemes approved for construction within Gravesham. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised this paper was for information only.

The board noted the report.

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

The Chair allowed Members to raise various issues which would be submitted to KCC for actioning.

Cllr Rana raised an issue on Whitehill Road. He informed the board that he had visited Whitehill Primary School and met with the Headteacher Angela Carpenter and Business Manager Jenny Lumley to discuss the traffic issues surrounding the school. He advised that there were several dangerous pinch points around the Whitehill Road and Sun Lane areas, plus by the main school entrance in Sun Lane, there was a blind spot which was dangerous and would benefit from a zebra crossing. There was also a lot of traffic congestion along School Road as it headed towards Jellicoe Avenue.

Cllr Rana introduced Jenny Lumley (Whitehill Primary School Business Manager), to the Board who spoke regarding the issues the school had experienced with traffic surrounding the school. She made the following points:

- The school were experiencing severe issues with the traffic especially in Sun Lane, where the school's main entrance was located. The road was very narrow and the school drive headed straight onto Sun Lane.
- There were zig zag and yellow lines but these were mostly ignored.
- Along this road footpaths were also narrow with some parents having to walk in the road at times.

- There was also a bottle neck point in the road, where Sun Lane met Smarts Road.
- The refuse collection truck on Mondays plus the bus route along Sun Lane, added to the congestion.
- The school was very large with 620 children and was one of the only schools in the area that did not have a safe road crossing. Children were rarely able to walk unaccompanied to school and it was not possible for children to use bikes or scooters to get to school, as it was not safe to do so.
- There was an increasing amount of intolerance, aggression and violence witnessed outside school due to the traffic congestion issues.

Cllr Rana informed the board that he had also met with Iona Radalski from Kent Safer Streets who was going to liaise with KCC to see what could be done and would suggest a zebra crossing in Sun Lane and propose methods to slow traffic in School Lane around school drop off/pick up times. Cllr Rana acknowledged this would require funding, so would need the support of both Cllr Meade and Cllr Ridgers. It was also suggested that railings be put in place to widen School Lane and offer protection for the children. Both Cllr Ridgers and Cllr Meade were in support of this suggestion, subject to costs.

County Councillor Bryan Sweetland advised the board that the maximum grant that could be given was £10 000. The cost of the works could be in between £10-15K and may exceed this, depending on whether lighting/power were also required. He advised the board that there was a KCC leaflet which outlined what the grant included, that he would share outside the meeting.

Cllr Jordan Meade addressed Jenny Lumley, stating that he would like to arrange a visit to the school to see the issues for himself. He referred the school to a useful website www.responsibleparking.co.uk where resources such as posters, and mock parking tickets could be printed. He advised that this site worked well for Timberwood School who had experienced similar issues. He suggested that this could also be something the children could get involved with.

The Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager offered the board and school information, on how GBC could assist with the issues. He suggested the following:

- Road markings fell under the remit of Gravesham Borough Council, so if any zig zag or yellow lines needed to be refreshed this could be arranged to make them clearer to parents.
- He would speak with Gravesham's Waste Management team to see if it was possible for the refuse trucks to avoid school drop off/pick up times on a Monday.
- He would ensure parking enforcement officers were as visible as possible but pointed out that due to the number of schools verses enforcement officers, they could not be present all the time.
- If parents parked on footpaths or junctions this would be a police matter. Engagement with Kent Police to work together and provide a joint presence, had been sought, but due to police resources this was not possible
- If the school felt there were areas outside school, that would benefit from further restrictions this could be discussed outside the meeting.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager KCC addressed the board regarding the suggestion of installing barriers along School Road. He advised this may prove difficult due to fibre optic cables being in place along the road. Jenny Lumley suggested that maybe

bollards could be a suitable alternative, as these would stop cars from mounting the kerb and potentially harming the children. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager KCC confirmed that as this would only be a small cost, he would be happy to fund the bollards from his own budget.

Jenny Lumley thanked the board for their assistance on this matter.

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

The Chair enquired about the new bus station and the cameras that monitored access through the bus gates. He queried if access was for buses only or whether taxis were also permitted. Nick May (Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager) advised the board that access through the gates was currently for buses only. KCC have made this decision but have stated that they will review this once the bus gate enforcement is in place and they have had the chance to review usage and effectiveness of the cameras. He also informed the board that documentation regarding the bus gates could be viewed within the agenda pack from the previous meeting (31 August 2022).

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager KCC advised the Chair that he could send him the report if he was unable to access the previous agenda.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8:03pm