

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Tuesday, 23 May 2023

19:30pm

Present:

Cllr Lenny Rolles (Chair)

Councillors: Deborah Croxton
Karina O'Malley
Tony Rana
Aaron Elliott
Alan Ridgers (KCC)
Lauren Sullivan (KCC)

Nick May Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager
Kevin Gore Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC)
Ben Clarke Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

41. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Bryan Sweetland and County Councillor Jordan Meade.

42. Minutes

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43. Declarations of Interest

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Wednesday, 08 March 2023 were signed by the Chair.

44. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

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

Traffic Issues raised on White Hill Road

Cllr Rana confirmed that he had received no response from the Service Team working on the issue; the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to chase the team for an update.

Springhead Parkway Rumble Strips

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that the rumble strips had been removed.

Speeding on Rochester Road

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that a response had been emailed directly to Cllr Hills and Bob Lane.

Issues Crossing Valley Drive

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that a team of officers was still looking into the issue with crossing Valley Drive.

Kent County Council Salt Bins

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the work was almost completed filling up all requested salt bins and an email would be sent out to everyone who requested one soon.

In total, Gravesham had fifteen salt bins stolen this year.

Improvements to Northfleet Roundabout

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that a street works team were looking into the improvements for the roundabout and discussions were ongoing about the placement of a refurbished anchor to be placed there. The Chair requested that an update be fed back to County Cllr Sullivan regarding the anchor.

45. Reports from Officers

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

The Board was presented with a report that provided an update and summarised the schemes that had been programmed for delivery in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Following a discussion, Members requested that:

- Information should be included in the programme relating to the fixing of potholes and any strategic programmes that impacted Gravesham
- Inclusion of an asset management plan and a presentation at the next Committee meeting explaining how the works were determined and how decisions were made; if possible, a Highways Director should be invited to attend a meeting
- Officers from different relevant departments (street works, highways, resurfacing etc) and those responsible for projects in Gravesham to be invited to Committee meetings to explain their work and answer Members questions
- Lower Higham Road had recently had micro resurfacing works carried and there were excess stones on the pavement causing problems to residents with mobility issues; County Cllr Sullivan requested that KCC send a team to clean up the site

Following Members comments and questions, the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) explained that:

- Team Leaders were the best officers to invite to Committee meetings as they would have the best knowledge of the projects and works that Members were interested in finding out further information on
- Following micro resurfacing works carried out by KCC, a clean up team revisits the area one month after completion to remove excess stones on the highway/pavements. If KCC received further reports of excess stones then another visit would be scheduled; occasionally Gravesham's own road sweepers would take care of the issue during their usual routes, but it was KCC's responsibility. The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to resolve the matter
- The site where the cliff/road collapsed along Galley Hill Road towards Swanscombe was now fully within KCC's control; the road closure was in effect for eighteen months and would affect the residents of Swanscombe the most although residents living in Northfleet would also be impacted. KCC had imposed traffic orders with a 7.5 tonne limit on the surrounding roads in order to stop lorries using residential roads; those traffic orders went live yesterday and further orders may be imposed to parts of Northfleet in order to keep roads clear for residents and buses

The Chair informed the Board that moving forward, he would have agenda setting meetings with the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) to ensure the necessary items were on the agenda for the board meetings.

The Chair reminded Members that the public were able to raise transport issues in the Borough, through Councillors, to be discussed at the Board meetings.

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

The Chair allowed Members to raise various issues in the Borough with the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC).

Cllr Ridgers Issues

Perry Street – White lines

Cllr Ridgers advised that money had been allocated in the past to redraw white lines through Perry Street but they had not been completed yet.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) confirmed that the order was in the system but there was backlog due to frost damage and a large amount of potholes; the money to address the issue was secured against last years budget and the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to follow it up.

Parrock Road – Island

Cllr Ridgers asked if some highlighted kerb stones or arrows could be placed around the island on Parrock Road heading towards Echo Square to show that drivers should keep left.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) explained that a bollard indicating drivers to stick to the left lane had been placed at the start of the island.

Constitution Hill – Residents Wall Broken

Cllr Ridgers advised that a resident at the top of Constitution Hill had a house wall damaged several times from vehicles using the road as a cut through and asked what measures could be taken to deter vehicles from attempting the cut through.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) advised that there was a weight limit in place, and it was a 'except for access' road; the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) added that it wasn't possible to reverse down the road and the damage reported had been mainly from refuse lorries. A bollard has been looked at in the past but it would have toppled lorries and caused more damage to buildings. The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to look into the matter further.

Cllr Rana's Issues

Whitehill School – Zebra Crossing

Cllr Rana had previously asked for a zebra crossing to be installed outside of Whitehill School and it was looked into by Claire Venner before she left KCC. Cllr Rana requested an update.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) advised that the matter was with the West Kent Improvement Team; the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to contact the team and request an update on when it would be completed

Lack of Bus Services

Cllr Rana and Cllr O'Malley had received numerous complaints from residents about the lack of bus services; specifically, one resident lived in Coldharbour and could not use the bus to get to work as the earliest bus was 10:00am.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to speak to the Public Transport Team and Arriva; KCC weren't able to control the bus schedule, but KCC did work closely with bus companies to make sure the demand for all areas were met. The Public Transport Team could request that a representative of Arriva attend a Board meeting.

County Cllr Sullivan advised that in the past Arriva and Redcoach had been invited to attend Board meetings and it would be interesting to discuss BSIP which was a scheme developed so that money could be invested into local bus services by the Government.

Pothole – Programme

Cllr Rana requested that a pothole works programme be submitted at future board meetings so that Members were able to see where work was being completed and where work was due to be carried out. Cllr Rana also questioned the repair work for some of the potholes in the Borough and raised concerns over whether an officer was checking on the quality of work carried out.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) explained that temporary fixes to potholes to remove the most dangerous defects were carried out by Highway Stewards and then orders were placed to have permanent repairs carried out. In Gravesham, there had been just under 30,000 potholes reported since January 2023 and there was a significant

backlog to work though before any new potholes could be fixed unless they were considered dangerous. Members were advised that the budget for fixing potholes was relatively small. Following further questions, the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) advised that:

- His annual budget for Gravesham including all types of works was £150K and the average pothole including traffic management was £80-£100 to fix
- Following a temporary repair of a pothole it took, on average, between six months to twelve months before a permanent repair was completed but it depended entirely on where the pothole was and how dangerous it was to road users
- The annual pothole and patching programme (Pothole Blitz) was out to tender; the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) was waiting on the final paperwork to be signed. Once the blitz was in effect, the roads that had the most potholes would be identified, and a programme of work put together which could then be shared with Members

The Chair requested an update on the 'Pothole Blitz' at the next Board meeting.

Valley Drive turn into Marling Way

Cllr Rana asked if the road leading into Marling Way from Valley Drive could be widened to allow traffic to pass the cars waiting to turn into Marling Way.

Cllr Ridgers explained that he had requested something similar a few years ago and had been informed that there were a number of services running under the grass verge which would triple the cost of widening the road. Cllr Ridgers had previously suggested that the cost could be offset by charging it to the LTC as that road would become a cut through once the LTC works began.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) was hopeful to receive £20 million from the LTC mitigation for the disruption the building of the LTC would cause; the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to check to see if the road widening cost was factored into that package.

Following a request from the Chair, the Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) agreed to find out if he was able to share the £20 million bid with Members.

Pavement – Whitehill Road

Cllr Rana raised concern over the sunken pavement on Whitehill Road where cars were driving over it; a disabled resident's father was worried that a vehicle driving over the pavement would hit his daughter's wheelchair.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) explained that the kerb damage fell under his remit and would be reported but the issue with vehicles driving on the pavement would need to be reported to Kent Police.

County Cllr Sullivan Issues

Bus Gate – Barrack Row

County Cllr Sullivan raised concerns over vehicles driving through the bus gate and causing delays with the traffic light system around Barrack Row.

The Parking Services & Environmental Enforcement Manager advised that KCC would be in charge of the ANPR camera, and the estimated date of the camera being installed was September/October time. However, KCC still hadn't tendered for the cameras and software but that was due to the tender encompassing a multitude of cameras at a variety of sites across Kent.

Bath Street – Fastrack Service

County Cllr Sullivan queried the timetable for improvements to be completed at Bath Street and the fastrack service implemented.

The Chair advised that it would be helpful to have an agenda item for the next meeting for Bath Street and have representatives from the KCC public transport team and Arriva/Redcoach to attend.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) recommended inviting Phil Lightowler, KCC Head of Public Transport to a future meeting; he had recently attended a Dartford meeting of Joint Transportation Board.

One Way Road – Hammerton Road

County Cllr Sullivan advised that her member grant was due to be used to fund a one way system in Hammerton Road and should be included in Appendix H in the report; a request was made to add it to the appendix moving forward and provide an update on the project at the next meeting.

A2 by Tollgate – New Slip Way

County Councillor Sullivan queried the decision making of the modified slip road coming off the A2 towards Tollgate; it slowed down traffic and drivers were unsure of when to go.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) explained that the slip road works were completed via a developer scheme through Highways England; the land wasn't owned by KCC, and the plans did not go through Kent Planning although requests could be made by KCC to make slight adjustments if required.

Cllr Elliott Issues

Drainage – Whinfell Way

Cllr Elliott raised concerns over a historic issue of large puddles forming on Whinfell way due to drainage issues; the puddles caused a hazard for drivers.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) noted the report.

Cllr Croxtons Issue

Potholes – Saddington Street & Thong Lane

Cllr Croxton reported large potholes on the speed bumps on Saddington Street and Thong Lane which meant some drivers were not slowing down anymore.

The Gravesend & Dartford District Manager (KCC) advised that some potholes had already been repaired on Thong Lane but he noted the information.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 20:19pm.