

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Wednesday, 30 August 2023

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Lenny Rolles (Chair)
County Councillor Conrad Broadley (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Deborah Croxton
Karina O'Malley
Jordan Meade (KCC)
Alan Ridgers (KCC)
Lauren Sullivan (KCC)
Bryan Sweetland (KCC)

Also in attendance: Cobham Parish Councillor Russell Nichols

Ryan Danton Parking and Highway Officer
Kevin Gore Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC)
Karen Gingles Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Aaron Elliott and Cllr Tony Rana.

2. To sign the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 23 May 2023 were signed by the Chair.

3. 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.

No declarations of interest were made.

4. 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

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that Emma Tilbury had emailed Tony Rana asking to meet on site to discuss the issues at Whitehill and were awaiting confirmation of a date.

Issues Crossing Valley Drive

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the board that having looked at past data there had not been many reported crossing issues in Valley Drive and therefore he was still looking into the types of issues the crossing posed.

Perry Street – White lines

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that works were scheduled for the 15th September 2023.

Constitution Hill – Residents Wall Broken

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised the board that a site meeting was to be held with the resident. He advised that there was not too much that could be done with the road in respect of traffic deterrents.

Whitehill School – Zebra Crossing

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the board that Emma Tilbury has emailed Tony Rana asking to meet on site to discuss the issues at Whitehill and was awaiting a response.

Pothole Program

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised this would be covered later in the agenda.

Valley Drive turn into Marling Way

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that due to Lower Thames Crossing being with the Planning Inspector, he was unable to give an update on the list of roads included within the scheme at present. The Chair asked when it was expected that the planning inspectors would be able to give a further update in relation to the turning from Marling Way into Valley Drive. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager advised that as the whole Lower Thames Crossing project was with the inspectors, only once passed, the matter of the turning could be investigated further.

Bus Gate – Barrack Row

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) updated the board that this was out for procurement, so there was no further update at this stage.

Bath Street – Fastrack Service

Following the request to invite Phil Lightowler (KCC Head of Public Transport), to a future meeting of the Gravesham Joint Transportation Board, The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised the board that there would need to be an item included on the agenda for him to attend. The Chair requested that the item be included on the agenda for the next meeting and queried what questions Dartford had posed, when Phil attended their recent meeting. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager informed the board that Dartford's questioning had included timetable changes, FastTrack, bus services and whether there would be any cuts in service. The Chair suggested also inviting a representative from Arriva to the next meeting.

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

5. Reports from Officers

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

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) presented the board with the Highways Forward Works Programme: 2022/23 and 2023/24. The purpose of the report was to provide an update and summarise schemes that had been programmed for delivery in 2022/23 and 2023/24. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised this paper was for information only.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) highlighted the following:

- Member of the board were updated that micro-resurfacing and excess stone removal works had been carried out.
- The site along Galley Hill Road towards Swanscombe, where the cliff/road had collapsed, was under investigation by a Geotech expert, who was carrying out surveys on the cliff structure. Once the results from these surveys had been received, more investigation would be carried out by KCC. He went on to say that the findings would also be shared with Thames Water.

Members raised concern whether road works in the area, especially in Northfleet would be completed before the schools returned in September. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) assured the board that he was confident road works would be completed before the schools returned from the summer holiday. It was explained that the Thong Lane footways work would still be ongoing, however. This was due to the large amount of work needed to be completed in the short 6-week period. To ensure the safety of pedestrians, temporary footways were in place and the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the main footpath by the school would be kept open.

The board highlighted that there were streetlights out in Dashwood Road and New House Lane. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) assured the board that a report would be logged and the situation rectified.

5.2 GBC TRO Amendment, Amendment 12

The Parking and Highway Officer presented the GBC TRO Amendment - The Kent County Council (Various Roads, Gravesham) (Waiting Restrictions and Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) (Amendment No.12) 2023. The purpose of the report was to seek support from the board to make the order.

The Committee supported the amendment order.

5.3 KCC Flagstone Paving in the Town Centre - Oral Update

The Dartford and Gravesham District Manager (KCC) gave an oral update on the Flagstone paving within the town centre. He updated the board that he had met with the mobility access group recently and a few issues had been highlighted. Due to the cost involved the works would be added to a local needs programme. Members were informed it was proposed that areas of the Riven York Stone be removed, for ease of use of mobility

scooters and wheelchairs, thereby being safer for the travelling public. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised he would be putting a proposal together to present to the Chief Executive and Planning department.

Concern was raised as to whether the changes in material in various areas of the town centre, would look mismatched and Members sought assurance that the materials would blend. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that stone would only be replaced by one other material and these alterations would only be made where it was appropriate to do so, for the safety of the public. Replacement would be in large sections so the change in material would not look mismatched.

5.4 KCC Update on Salt Bins - Oral Update

The Dartford and Gravesham District Manager (KCC) provided an oral update on the salt bin provision. Members were informed that work was in process, to replace bins where needed and to refill with salt. Work would be completed by 24 October 2023.

5.5 KCC Asset Management Plan - Presentation

Due to technical difficulties in displaying the presentation, the Chair agreed that this item be deferred until the next meeting of the Gravesham Joint Transportation Board.

5.6 Update on KCC Pothole Blitz - Oral Update

The Dartford and Gravesham District Manager (KCC) provided an oral update on the KCC Pothole Blitz. Members were informed that Dartford and Gravesham had been awarded a combined sum of £400K for a pothole blitz, with 13 sites in Gravesham identified as being in most need to receive the works. Roads that were included within the scheme were Whitepost Lane, Harvel road, Downs Road, Thong Lane, Melliker Lane, Coopers Road, Thames Way, Jellico Avenue, Winchester Crescent, Peartree Lane. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised further work would be required in the Valley Drive roundabout area but were awaiting costings for this. It was hoped works would be completed by the end of October 2023.

Members queries whether all districts were receiving £200K or £400K each. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that all districts were different and was unaware what other areas has been awarded. He went on to say that his team were doing as much work as possible with the funds and were hopeful of further funding in the future.

Members requested that feedback be passed on to the contractors carrying out pothole repairs, to be more attentive when clearing the site after the completion of works. It was mentioned that there had been an occasion on Old Road East, were after work had been completed, excess materials had been left behind. There was concern this could be treacherous for those with mobility issues.

Concern was raised regarding KCC having to fill potholes created due to leaks in the highway and what push back could be inflicted on the utility companies in question. Members were informed that Southern Water were notorious for leaks. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that unfortunately the more KCC provided temporary fixes to potholes caused by water leaks, reduced the urgency for the utility to attend and resolve the issue. He went on to say that the KCC Street Works team worked closely with the utility companies and when utility companies were found to be at fault, they

could be sent on an improvement plan. The correct repairs relied on KCC being aware of any damage and for residents to report any issues.

Members noted that as public money was spent maintaining the highway and repairing potholes, there should be an expectation that utility companies are responsible for carrying out the necessary repairs for any damage they caused. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that prior to pothole blitzes, utility companies were made aware of upcoming works, to encourage them to carry out any planned works beforehand.

The Chair offered assistance if required, to also meet with Southern Water on this matter. He requested that an update on conversations with Southern Water be provided at the next meeting of the Gravesham Joint Transportation Board.

Members queried whether KCC kept a log of the insurance claims made by the public in relation to damage to vehicles caused by potholes. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that every pothole complaint was investigated within 28 days, ensuring an initial safety repair and then booking for a full repair to the road. Severe pothole damage was investigated within 24 hours.

6. 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).

Karina O'Malley Issue

Cars Double Parking in Cruden Road

Cllr O'Malley informed the board that there had recently been an incident in Cruden Road, where a bus diverted its route and reverse, due to cars being double parked on both sides of the road. It was acknowledged that this could cause serious issues for the emergency services. Cllr Croxton concurred stating that she was aware there was another incident recently relating to access and that the bus situation was a regular occurrence. Cllr O'Malley asked if something could be done to prevent the double parking, such as introducing double yellow lines. The Parking and Highway Officer advised that double yellow lines were for KCC to consider but requested that full details be sent to him so that it can be looked into further and further advice given.

Bryan Sweetland Issue

Traffic calming solutions at Sole Street

Cobham Parish Councillor Russell Nichols introduced the item and explained that there was a safety issue with speeding through Sole Street. When issues arose on the A2 it caused Sole Street to become a 'rat run'. The road had no footpaths, the speed limit of 40 miles per hour was not kept to and this was becoming increasingly dangerous. He expressed that the Parish would like to find ways to make the road safer with the speed limit lowered to 20 miles per hour and proposed that chicanes be installed to reduce speed.

County Councillor Bryan Sweetland informed the board that he supported the suggestion to investigate ways to reduce the speed through Sole Street and explained that there had been a similar situation through Cobham, which had improved with road markings. He felt

however that chicanes did not always work and could in fact cause accidents. He suggested that maybe average speed cameras could be a possibility. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the board that 2 officers had monitored the speed over a 2 day period recently with mobile cameras and noted that there were a significant number of drivers not keeping to the speed limit. He advised that a Speed Indicator Device (SID) was being utilised and suggested using a SID in areas where there was a major issue, to gain a better picture of the situation. Bryan Sweetland agreed that mobile cameras worked well and had done so in Shorne and also in Harrietsham, where now no one exceeded 30 miles per hour. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to look further into average speed cameras.

The Chair asked if The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) could report back to County Councillor Bryan Sweetland, Parish Councillor Russell Nichols and himself, outside of the meeting but also feed back to the board at the next meeting of Gravesham Joint Transportation Board within the matters arising item, plus as a standalone item on the agenda.

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

County Councillor Ridgers expressed concern regarding the road works at Galley Hill Road, leading to drivers using surrounding roads as a cut through. He had noticed that there were no signs indicating a 'no through road'. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) informed the board that he would ensure signs were in place.

County Councillor Ridgers sought clarification regarding parking on Bank Holiday weekends within the town centre. He informed the board that following a personal experience over the bank holiday, signage was unclear in Wellington Street and Saddlington Street, whether street parking was free of charge on a bank holiday. He explained that having then checked in the Gurdwara car park, this was also not clear. The Parking and Highway Officer informed Members that the new signage in Parrock Street was very clear, however he would need to check the wording regarding the Gurdwara car park. He advised the board that wording in other car parks could be investigated, to ensure it is clear to the public that the charges apply. He went on to say that with regards to street parking, generally restrictions apply on bank holidays unless signage states otherwise.

County Councillor Conrad Broadley updated the board that ATC speed checks would be carried out in Springhead and Hever Court Road, which would be followed up at the next meeting in the matters arising item.

Concern was raised regarding a large tree stump in Hillingdon Road which had caused the pavement to lift in places, making the pavement very dangerous for elderly residents and children attending the nearby school. It was noted that urgent action was required and that this matter be followed up in the next meeting.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8:30pm