

Gravesham Joint Transportation Board

Wednesday, 06 March 2024

19:30pm

Present:

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

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

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

20. Apologies

Apologies for absence was received from County Cllr Ridgers and County Cllr Sweetland.

21. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Wednesday, 29 November 2024 were signed by the Chair.

22. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

23. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Chair requested that for all future meetings written responses be provided for all outstanding actions so that they could be included within the agenda pack and reviewed prior to the meeting.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to send over written responses with the Highways Works Programme agenda item.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) apologised that he would not be able to provide an update for every outstanding action as the software that held responses was not functioning properly. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to circulate the information that was unavailable outside the meeting at a later date.

Double Yellow Lines on Cruden Road

As mentioned above, the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to circulate a response outside of the meeting.

Traffic Issues raised on Whitehill Road

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the area that was causing an issue had been investigated and it had been determined that the piece of land where the dangerous turning was happening was owned by Gravesham borough Council (GBC). KCC would work GBC to see if that section of the road could be widened. Cllr Rana explained that current traffic issues meant that cars on the opposite side of the road had been collided with.

Cllr Rana added that recently there had been issues with roadworks for emergency repairs on Whitehill Road; signage was placed on the road advising motorists about the road closure, but many members of the public were mounting the kerb to drive around the road closure. Cllr Rana had pictures of motorists mounting the kerb and asked that the companies be contacted to strengthen the placement of the road closure signage.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) responded that UK Power Networks were responsible for those repairs; KCC had recently appointed a West Kent Road Closure Coordinator whose responsibility would be to visit the utility repair sites and make sure they were in good order, as much as was possible. KCC had less control over utility repair works but the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to raise the issue at the next board meeting that all utility providers attended.

Issues Crossing Valley Drive

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that they were waiting on the Planning Inspector to finish their recommendations on the LTC; an update on works proposed in the area would be available for the Board soon.

Improvements to Northfleet Roundabout – Placement of Anchor

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that Cllr Meade was still progressing the matter, but he had not yet met with County Cllrs Sullivan, Broadley, and Meade.

The Chair asked that the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) contact Cllr Meade to see how the matter was progressing and ensure he liaised with County Cllrs Sullivan, and Broadley outside of the meeting. County Cllr Broadley stated that he was happy to wait for an update directly from County Cllr Meade.

Perry Street – White Lines

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the works were due to be completed sometime in April 2024.

Whitehill School – Zebra Crossing

Cllr Rana explained that the path on the school side was not deep enough for lights to be installed as previously outlined; the lights could be installed on the opposite side. Additionally, there was a blind spot going into the school which needed signage put up advising motorists that they were heading into a school area.

Cllr Rana added that the area had seen significant traffic issues recently which stemmed from utility works on Smart Road, Central Avenue and Norfolk Road; Sun Lane also had very large potholes which were dangerous to motorists.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that scheduled works were planned for filling in the potholes on Sun Lane however it would not be a full resurfacing. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that works to improve that area around Whitehill School could be incorporated into the next project; the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed keep Cllr Rana updated on progress.

Valley Drive turning into Marling Way

As mentioned above, the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that they were waiting on the Planning Inspector to finish their recommendations for the LTC; an update on works proposed in the area would be available for the Board soon.

Bus Gate Barrack Row

An update would be provided under agenda item 8b.

Traffic Calming Solutions in Sole Street

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) had provided the requested information to the KCC Cabinet Member for Transport; Cllr Sweetland was also due to hold discussions with Cobham Parish Council regarding the information.

ATC Speed Checks

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) advised that the speed review had been completed and County Cllr Broadley confirmed that the speed limit had been reduced from 40mph to 30mph on Springhead Road.

Gravesend Active Travel Scheme

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that the scheme would potentially be considered as part of the regeneration scheme for Gravesham; he had met with GBC's Assistant Director (Inclusive Growth) to discuss regeneration and future meetings were planned.

County Cllrs Sullivan and Broadley echoed their previous negative feedback for the schemes proposed options and reconfirmed their desire to move ahead with 'Option C'.

The Chair asked that the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) liaise with the Assistant Director (Inclusive Growth) and County Cllrs Sullivan and Broadley outside of the meeting to discuss how best to move forward with 'Option C'. The Chair also asked that a report be brought back to a future meeting of Gravesham Joint Transportation Board once a path forward had been agreed.

Gravesham Highways Works Programme Report

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that progress had been made on Galley Hill Road; the land had been acquired from the previous landowner and permits were in place to start stabilisation works. As the cliff face wasn't owned by KCC, there was a lot of legal work happening in the background, but the works were now in a position where they could be started.

24. Reports from Officers

24.1 Highways Forward Works Programme: 2023/24

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) presented the Board with a report that updated them on the identified schemes approved for construction.

In response to Members question regarding allocation of KCC resources between Gravesham and Dartford, the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that Dartford and Gravesham were only marked together by KCC for grouping purposes. Each area was its own district and received a budget based on network requirements, inquiry numbers and what demand there was for each area; resources were not split between the two districts.

The Board noted the report.

24.2 Clive Road Bus Gate

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) apologised that an officer from the KCC team responsible for the Clive Road Bus Gate was not in attendance. As KCC's stance was officers were not expected to attend evening meetings, any future meetings with the team would have to be held during the working day.

The Chair asked the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) to arrange a meeting with the team and himself between the hours of 09:00am and 17:00pm and the Chair would report the outcome of that meeting at a future Gravesham Joint Transportation Board.

The Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager advised that KCC's consultation requesting the public views on the bus gate was public and closed on the 12 March 2024.

County Councillor Sullivan noted that the consultation was a very short yes/no questionnaire which didn't have any areas where additional feedback or concerns could be outlined.

The Chair agreed that a collective response from the Board should be submitted via a letter rather than the consultation; the Chair asked the Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager to draft a letter that outlined the Boards previous concerns and state that taxis must be allowed to use the bus gate.

The Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager agreed to draft the letter and share it with Members prior to submission. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to share the letter with the team responsible for the consultation. A response would be brought back to the Board.

In response to the Chairs question, the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) confirmed that a meeting with the Network Manager, the Chair and the Chair of the Gravesham Taxi Association had not taken place.

The Chair requested that the meeting be held prior to the next Board meeting; the Parking & Environmental Enforcement Services Manager agreed to contact the Association and schedule a meeting.

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

The Chair allowed Cllr Rana, Cllr Croxton and Cllr O'Malley to raise several issues at the meeting.

a) Old Road East pavement between Pine venue and St John's School entrance

Cllr Rana stated that there was a kerb that was too parked on that was a blind spot to drivers; there had been few near misses and one car accident so far on that piece of land. There were concerns that children crossing the road to go to St Johns School could be hit; Cllr Rana requested a review of the area.

b) Echo Square Roundabout

Cllr Rana stated that there was discussion several years ago regarding revising the layout of the roundabout; motorists found the layout confusing and often ending up cutting across Sun Lane.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that Claire Venner was looking into that before she left KCC; he agreed to follow up the matter and provide a response to Cllr Rana.

c) Old Road West – Singlewell Road – Old Road East – Prince of Orange Junction

Cllr Rana described a resident's concern over the lack of pedestrian crossing lights when crossing the road from the Prince of Orange to Wrotham Road/Windmill Street.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) was aware of the resident's concern and agreed to look into the matter.

d) Hillingdon Avenue and Singlewell Road

Cllr Rana advised that there had been a number of near misses when residents crossed the road to go towards the shop Hillingdon Avenue; Cllr Rana requested a pedestrian or zebra crossing be installed.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to look into the matter.

e) Chantry School – Ordnance Road

Cllr Croxton described a resident's concern over the 30mph speed limit outside Chantry School on Ordnance Road; neighbouring schools had a 20mph limit and Cllr Croxton requested similar limits or 'wigwags' imposed on the area outside Chantry School.

Cllr Croxton agreed to share the residents details with the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) so that he could update them directly; KCC were already looking into that matter and had contacted several residents previously.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) agreed to bring a response back to a future Board meeting.

f) Brown Road and Old Road West

Cllr O'Malley and Cllr Rolles had met with residents of Brown Road and Old Road West to investigate resident concerns over a footpath not being restored safely, large pieces of cement and other related rubbish left near the kerb following recent gas works. Photos and videos from residents could be forwarded if necessary.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that he would send the Street Team to review the area and talk to the utility company responsible as it wasn't acceptable to leave the area in the state described.

Cllr O'Malley added that there was a three metre gap in the green railing between the path and the road, near the junction on Old Road East, which was a hazard for young children; the broken railing was lying on the grass verge but it had been taken since it was first spotted.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that a street cleaning crew may have taken the broken railing to stop it being stolen; he agreed to look into the matter.

g) Dropped Kerb Query

Cllr Rana queried who was responsible for maintaining the pavement when a resident paid for a dropped kerb in which a utility company had to dig up and move a cable.

The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) explained that KCC approved dropped kerb requests and once the work was completed, there was a two year maintenance period on the footway and then it was transferred to Kent Highway Services. Utilities companies were made aware of any planned works in the area although emergencies works were always a possibility.

Following a Member question regarding challenging utility companies that didn't complete works satisfactorily, the Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) expanded that Street work Inspectors visited the majority of sites where works occurred to ensure utility companies were complying with regulations and completing all works to a satisfactory standard. A section 64 fine could be given to utility companies that did not complete the work to a satisfactory standard. The Dartford & Gravesham District Manager (KCC) asked Members to email him were aware of any areas where they were a utility company hadn't completed works properly.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 20:20pm.