

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2017**

**Present:** Councillors Bird, Brown, D Burton, Carter, Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cuming, Daley, Garten, Mrs Grigg, Hotson (Chairman), T Sams, Springett, Mrs Stockell, Vizzard, Mrs Whittle and Willis

**Also Present:** Councillors M Burton, Cox, Harvey and Prendergast

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

30. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members.

31. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillors M Burton, Cox, Harvey and Prendergast were present as visiting members.

32. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by members or officers.

33. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

34. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

**RESOLVED:** That all items be taken in public as proposed.

35. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record and signed.

36. PETITIONS (IF ANY)

Councillor Dan Daley presented a petition to the Committee with the following wording:

You will be aware of issues of traffic safety and congestion in Queens Avenue.

We the undersigned require our local representatives to take action to ensure that KCC undertakes a full study to explore all opportunities for controlling and limiting traffic movement and inconsiderate parking, fully consults all affected residents and businesses in Queens Avenue and adjoining roads and further acts to implement appropriate solutions.

Councillor Daley spoke on the petition and suggested:

- That an officer from Kent County Council Highways should conduct a traffic survey of this area, with a view to regulating the traffic flow better; and
- Some solutions to the problems faced by residents may include single yellow lines, a commuter ban or introducing a one way system on Queens Avenue.

Peter Wiles presented a petition to the Committee with the following wording:

Maidstone Arriva – Service 19 Bus

We, the undersigned, as regular users of the above service, consider that the service is unpunctual and unreliable. It is often late and regularly does not turn up. We would like Arriva, if it is to continue running this service, to make satisfactory improvements.

Mr Wiles spoke to the committee on his petition and stated that in his opinion, the number 19 service had been particularly poor and Arriva's handling of complaints by bus users had not been satisfactory.

At the conclusion of Mr Wiles' speech the Chairman stated that the points Mr Wiles raised would be addressed during agenda item 11. Question and Answer Service with Arriva: Changes to Bus Services and their Effect on Rural Areas.

**RESOLVED:**

That an officer report on the feasibility of a traffic study to explore congestion issues on Queen's Avenue be brought back to a future Joint Transportation Board meeting.

37. QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Bob Hinder, Chairman of Boxley Parish Council, asked the following question of the Chairman of the Committee:

Boxley Parish Council recognises that due to the financial cutbacks that services and highway projects have to be prioritised but it

feels, certainly to this parish council and its residents, that communities are being abandoned and common sense is going out of the window. The report before the committee highlights the issues that residents are bringing to the parish council; some of the issues are not huge money pits but rather common sense preventative measures that, in the case of yellow lines at Grove Green, are preventative to stop injuries to children and other road users.

Recognising the dire financial straits that principle councils face Boxley Parish Council has identified a budget of up to £40,000 to be spent on a suitable highway project or projects and is also investigating the possibility of using Crowdfunding. The parish council wants to work with Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council but currently feels that even though it is willing, as the saying goes, to put its money where its mouth is there is no dialogue or even a sense that the principle authorities are willing to talk to parish councils who are attempting to find solutions to problems that they don't want to know about, even though they might have caused them.

The Chairman of the Committee referred the question to the Leader of Kent County Council, who stated that Kent County Council would always look to work with Parish Councils and welcomes the proposals put forward by Boxley Parish Council.

Angelo Martinez, of the Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum, asked the following question of the Chairman of the Committee:

Would the relevant authority consider the addition of protection barriers and extra lighting in a very dangerous section of the Medway Towpath as it passes under the Maidstone Bridges, so we do not have to lament any fatalities?

The Chairman of the Committee referred the question to the Senior Public Rights of Way Project Officer.

**RESOLVED:** That the Senior Public Rights of Way Project Officer provides a written response to Mr Martinez's question

38. VERBAL REPORT OF KCC'S HEAD OF TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE ON PETITIONS SUBMITTED TO KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

There were no petitions.

39. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH ARRIVA: CHANGES TO BUS SERVICES AND THEIR EFFECT ON RURAL AREAS

Kevin Root, Arriva Maidstone General Manager, gave a presentation to the committee that covered the following areas:

- That Arriva had a change to their management team, and the new team had undertaken a review of the network
- Congestion had been a huge issue for Arriva in Maidstone. Therefore the network review had aimed to prevent congestion in particular areas of the town having an impact on bus routes that crossed the borough
- The way in which the new routing had been designed to address the issue of congestion was to use central Maidstone as a hub by running routes into and out of the centre, rather than routes running across the borough
- This had meant that some of the routes that had previously crossed the borough had been split into two services. However it also meant that Arriva could be more flexible by re-routing buses that were affected by congestion
- Arriva had upgraded the buses on the network in Maidstone, bringing new and nearly new buses into the Maidstone network from other areas of their network
- Arriva had also made changes to their drivers' working day to ensure there was more time to allow for problems that may occur on their route
- Altogether, Mr Root believed that these changes would provide a more reliable service in Maidstone

Members of the committee raised some specific issues that they had faced in their wards, including:

- The number 19 - which often didn't turn up in the mornings meaning children couldn't get to school and commuters could not get into work
- The number 12 bus had stopped serving the bus stop in Heath Road, Langley Heath, which meant residents had to cross a dangerous busy road to get to the bus stop
- The new timetable for the number 12 bus meant it left later in the mornings, not leaving enough room for school pupils to get into school on time if there were any hold ups
- The cancellation of the service to East Farleigh
- Reliability of the service in Fant, and that the service level was being reduced
- There was a lack of response from Arriva when the public and members raised issues, particularly as complaints were dealt with in

Luton not locally

- The 59 bus service, which served Maplesden Noakes School and Maidstone Girls Grammar School from the South of the borough at school times, did not align well with the school start and finish times for both of these schools

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Committee Clerk writes to Arriva, outlining the individual concerns about services raised by ward members, so that Arriva can provide a formal response to the Committee
- 2) That Arriva be invited back in four months time, once the changes to the timetable have come into place, to provide an update to the Joint Transportation Board

40. **REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE: MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE**

The Major Capital Programme Project Manager presented his report on the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP). The Committee noted:

- The MITP was a package of measures designed to address congestion due to population growth, and corresponding transport growth
- The MITP was funded through developer contributions (Section 106 funding) from major housing sites and was supported by the Local Growth Fund provided by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)
- The funding agreed by SELEP was for the specific measures outlined in the MITP, and was time limited, meaning that if the schemes were not in place by the end of the period the funding would be withdrawn

In response to questions from members, the Major Capital Programme Project Manager explained that all of the schemes in the MITP would include public engagement before construction.

The Committee discussed the report and reminded the Major Capital Programme Project Manager that any bus prioritisation measures proposed in the MITP must not be to the detriment to the motorist, as per their previous resolution.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) The Joint Transportation Board notes the report

- 2) The Joint Transportation Board requests an update report on the further development of the MITP schemes at a future Joint Transportation Board meeting

41. REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE - MAIDSTONE SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT LEP SCHEME: RIVER MEDWAY TOWPATH

The Senior Public Rights of Way Project Officer updated the Committee on the progress of the River Medway towpath scheme.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Senior Public Rights of Way Project Officer stated:

- That benches had been included in the finished scheme; and
- Cycle path orders were being applied for, and after these had been granted signage would be erected

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

42. REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND WASTE: A BOARDS

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred to the next Joint Transportation Board Meeting.

43. REFERENCE FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE - WEST STREET, HARRIETSHAM, KENT

The Committee discussed this reference and pointed out that Kent County Council Highways had been consulted on this planning application, and it was up to the Planning Committee to ensure that the comments from Highways were incorporated in conditions set for any permission. The Committee also stated that developers should be made to contribute to any mitigation for developments and this money should not come from the public purse.

**RESOLVED:** That the reference from Planning Committee be returned to the Planning Committee

44. REFERENCE FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE - A229/HEADCORN ROAD/MARDEN ROAD JUNCTION

The Chairman refused to take this item as it related to legal proceedings underway between Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council.

45. REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND LAW: AMENDMENTS TO THE MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD AGREEMENT

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred to the next Joint Transportation Board Meeting.

46. VERBAL REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE- BEFORE AND AFTER STATISTICS FOR BRIDGES GYRATORY AND POTENTIAL CHANGES TO LIGHT TIMINGS

The Strategic Transport and Development Planner updated the Committee on the before and after statistics for the new layout for the bridges gyratory system in Maidstone.

The committee noted:

- New signage and road markings had been introduced to improve usage of the junctions
- Light timings will be adjusted once evidence had been gathered on the usage and effectiveness of the junction
- Evidence from the traffic control centre suggested that the new system had a positive effect on traffic flow in the network

**RESOLVED:** That a further review is brought back to the Joint Transportation Board once the light timing changes have been implemented.

47. VERBAL REPORT OF THE MBC PLANNING POLICY MANAGER - PARK AND RIDE, PARKING AND BUS WORKSTREAMS

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred to the next Joint Transportation Board Meeting.

48. VERBAL REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE - LEEDS/LANGLEY RELIEF ROAD FUNDING

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred to the next Joint Transportation Board Meeting.

49. VERBAL REPORT OF THE KCC DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE - A20 THROUGH HARRIETSHAM UPDATE

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred to the next Joint Transportation Board Meeting.

50. DURATION OF MEETING

3.00 pm to 6.18 pm