

**UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT FORUM
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2007 AT DISTRICT COUNCIL
OFFICES, HIGH STREET, GREAT DUNMOW, ESSEX**

THOSE PRESENT

District Councillors Catherine Dean, Keith Eden and Mark Lemon, Sue Locke and Jeremy Pine (UDC), Richard Gravatt and Moira Mason (ECC), Peter Carmichael and David Rose (Uttlesford Community Travel), Sean Bailey (West Essex PCT), Peter Blanchard (Walden Travel / CPT Essex), Sue Meyer (UALC), Kris Radley (RCCE) and Peter Riding (LA21)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1. Apologies were received from District Councillor Jackie Cheetham, Murray Hardy and Pam Kennedy (UDC), Chris Stoneham (ECC), Barry Drinkwater (ULODA), Paul Garland (LA21), Steve Mills (BAA) and Marilyn Moore (Uttlesford MIND)

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

2.1. It was proposed and seconded and agreed that Councillor Mark Lemon would chair the Forum.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 27 MARCH 2007

3.1. These were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

4. ACTION ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1. Re Minute 3.1, Peter Blanchard confirmed that he now had a copy of the survey.

4.2. Re Minute 3.2, Peter Riding asked if the timetable had been replaced. Richard Gravatt advised that ECC had a team who dealt with repairs to bus stops. **Richard Gravatt to follow up.**

4.3. Re Minute 3.3, Peter Blanchard remarked that there still wasn't a bus timetable in the rack at UDC's Dunmow offices. Jeremy Pine said he had overheard someone asking for it earlier that morning and the receptionist saying it was somewhere. **Jeremy Pine to double-check.**

4.4. Re Minute 3.3, Peter Riding said that LA21 still had received no formal response to its letter to ECC. **Richard Gravatt to follow up.**

4.5. Re Minute 4.3, Catherine Dean welcomed the forthcoming bus review. She felt that every bus stop should have a timetable. Richard Gravatt agreed, but there were installation and updating costs to consider.

5. GREEN TRAVEL PLANNING

5.1. Moira Mason explained her role as Travel Plans Co-ordinator within the County Council. She would decide whether a travel plan was needed for a new development, and would give advice to the developer, who would write it. Stansted Airport had a site-wide travel plan. Travel plans would look at use of

smartcards, car sharing schemes, walking and cycling. Plans could be secured via S106 Agreements. ECC would monitor plans for 5 years. Large organisations could voluntarily produce plans.

5.2. New residential developments were a particular target, where one option was to persuade developers to provide season tickets to residents for local buses (Barratt Homes, Harlow). It was an ECC requirement that a travel information pack be provided where more than 12 dwellings are proposed.

5.3. Peter Riding referred to BAA Stansted's travelcard, which subsidised local bus travel for employees. Richard Gravatt confirmed that there were many different arrangements and ECC was happy to work with DC officers. Mark Lemon queried whether most businesses would prepare travel plans, and asked whether a campaign was needed. Peter Riding said that the Saffron Walden Business Forum had 66 members, and it would be useful if Moira Mason could speak to the Forum. **Moira Mason to liaise with Peter Riding.**

5.4. Richard Gravatt explained ECC's liaison role with schools over the production of school travel plans. 73% of schools had a plan, and there was an LTP budget for "Safer Journeys to School" routes. 20% of all rush hour traffic was school based. Walking buses were popular, and there were incentive schemes. The new Education and Inspections Act 2006 promoted sustainable travel. The Act extended to independent schools and 6th form colleges. Sue Locke questioned the need for pedestrian crossings, e.g. at Orford House, Ugley. Richard Gravatt confirmed that there was a "wish list" for funding.

5.5. Kris Radley asked how rural communities could be helped to be more sustainable. A travel plan service could be offered to a rural community where common needs for travel could be identified.

5.6. Mark Lemon said it would be good to get school governors on side. Richard Gravatt explained that initial approaches were to head teachers. Walking buses were reliant on parental contributions. It would be useful to copy all correspondence to the Chair of Governors, but care was needed not to alienate head teachers.

6. PROPOSED REVIEW OF BUS SERVICES IN UTTLESFORD

6.1. Richard Gravatt explained DfT's new policy, emphasising that a lot did not apply to local bus. There was a reorganisation of the traffic commissioners and minor relaxations of rules for introducing Quality Bus contracts. It would be easier to get voluntary and statutory Quality Bus Partnerships (most are voluntary in Essex). There was very little else that would impact on Essex. It would be very possible for a local transport authority not to do anything as a result of the Act. A major new power was a planning authority's ability to introduce road user charging. Peter Blanchard said he felt that the new policy was a political sop to get left wing controlled PTAs off the Government's back.

6.2. Richard Gravatt explained that the review consultation had just started with the issuing of an RCCE / ECC leaflet. The background to the review was the statutory minimum levels of service and accessibility planning requirements.

6.3. Kris Radley explained that the leaflet was an opportunity for direct feedback. Interactive sessions had been organised in Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden. ECC / RCCE wanted to know what worked well, what didn't and what services were / were not being accessed. It was important that as much publicity as possible was given to the two sessions. UCT were assisting with travel on the day. Those informed so far were District and County Councillors, parish / town councils, passenger transport representatives, schools, colleges, hospitals, forums etc. Jeremy Pine suggested that BAA be informed.

6.4. Catherine Dean asked if information was being placed on local buses. Peter Blanchard was surprised that bus operators appeared not to be involved. He was happy to be involved if asked. Richard Gravatt said he would talk to the local bus team.

6.5. Peter Riding said that the session in Saffron Walden was on a market day and wondered whether an earlier start would be possible. Richard Gravatt said they would look at an earlier start. He asked whether leaflets could be handed out, or face to face questionnaires. Kris Radley said that time would be tight. Peter Riding suggested that LA21 could talk to people outside using a simple questionnaire. Mark Lemon felt that few people from Hatfield Heath would travel to Dunmow and it would be better to deal through parish councils. Richard Gravatt confirmed that the letters sent to parish council clerks gave this opportunity, and that the deadline for their responses could be extended.

6.6. Catherine Dean asked whether there was scope to put researchers on buses, but Kris Radley said the RCCE did not have sufficient resources. Moira Mason said that the Essex car sharing scheme was free to join.

6.7. Jeremy Pine queried the timescale of the review. Richard Gravatt confirmed by Christmas, involving a report summary and proposals. There would be a presentation to the Forum which, allowing for discussion would probably be enough to take up most of one meeting. **Jeremy Pine to keep this as a progress item on the Forum agenda.**

7. STANSTED AIRPORT GENERATION 1 – UPDATE ON PUBLIC INQUIRY

7.1. Jeremy Pine gave an update on progress with the inquiry. The inquiry was currently in recess for a week, but would resume with further BAA witnesses. The inquiry was due to finish on 5th October.

Footnote: The inquiry is now scheduled to finish on 19th October, an extended period being included in the timetable for surface access.

8. NEW BUS / COACH STATION AT STANSTED AIRPORT - UPDATE

8.1. Jeremy Pine gave an update, particularly that the bus / coach station was now open. Sue Locke pointed out that the Access Group was still waiting for its chance to assess the facility. **Jeremy Pine to let BAA know.**

9. CURRENT RAIL ISSUES – FOR INFORMATION

9.1. Jeremy Pine gave a brief outline of what the current issues were:

- BAA had just published its Generation 2 rail schemes consultation following on from its more general surface access consultation in February. The rail consultation was due to conclude on 31 July. Essentially, and at BAA's own admission, the proposal for a third track on some sections of the line was solely to meet the needs of airport rail passengers and not other regional demand.
- Network Rail was currently out to consultation on the draft Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS). The RUS sets out the options to improve the performance and grow the capacity of the railway on the Greater Anglia route up to 2016/17, but also looked ahead until 2021 to tie in with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Consultation was due to close on 13th July.
- The Government's new Rail White Paper was expected next month.

9.2. Jeremy Pine confirmed that officers would be responding to BAA on the G2 rail scheme, following discussions with Essex and Herts CCs . Uttlesford belonged to the West Anglia Routes Group (WARG) of the North London Strategic Alliance, which would be responding to Network Rail on behalf of its members. **Jeremy Pine to circulate a copy of WARG's letter to the Forum.**

9.3. Sue Mayer was concerned about the extent of BAA's rail schemes consultation, as letters had only been sent to residents who lived close to the stations being improved. Her other specific concerns were:

- No platform lengthening at Broxbourne
- No canopies for extended platforms
- Improvements were needed now for G1, not G2
- Airport trains were nearly full
- Start date not until 2020
- Disparity between when DfT and the train operators say that new trains will be available
- Too little, too late
- Too short a consultation period

9.4. Keith Eden was concerned about the relationship between BAA's proposals and the development of rail services between Liverpool Street and Cambridge.

9.5. On separate matters, Catherine Dean said that work had started on a footbridge at Elsenham station. Peter Blanchard referred to the new franchise taking over from Central Trains.

10. POSSIBLE ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

10.1. Items raised were:

- Progress on improvement work at Audley End Station, including naming policy
- Progress on re-engineering works along Walden Road. **Peter Riding to find out from Ian Willard what has happened to Saffron Cycle's comments. These are urgently needed by ECC.**

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1. Sue Locke referred to changes to taxi / private hire legislation, which would include the need for hospital car services to be registered, including CRB checks. The Access Group intended to write to Sir Alan Haselhurst. David Rose said that MPVs may be affected. Mark Lemon said he would raise at Licensing Committee that evening.

11.2. Richard Gravatt referred to the concessionary fares scheme for elderly people. There would be a national scheme from 2008, which would likely change the way LAs paid for it. Each LA would pay for all journeys starting within the district. The effect should be neutral for UDC, as there was not an extensive cross country bus network. He also referred to the appeal by Stagecoach to the Secretary of State this year, which if won could double the concessionary fares bill. Peter Blanchard pointed to the converse, which could mean that more services are run commercially.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

12.1. 10:00am on Thursday 25th October 2007 at the Council Offices, Great Dunmow.