

**UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT FORUM  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2007 AT DISTRICT  
COUNCIL OFFICES, HIGH STREET, GREAT DUNMOW, ESSEX**

**THOSE PRESENT**

District Councillors Elizabeth Bellingham-Smith, Keith Eden and Mark Lemon, Sue Locke and Jeremy Pine (UDC), Wendy Jackson, Rose Johnson, Moira Mason and Chris Stoneham (ECC), David Corke and Paul Garland (LA21), Peter Blanchard (Walden Travel / CPT Essex), Sue Meyer (UALC), Steve Mills (BAA Stansted), Kris Radley (RCCE), David Rose (Uttlesford Community Travel) and Ian Willard (Saffron Cycle Campaign).

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1. Apologies were received from Murray Hardy (UDC), Sean Bailey (West Essex PCT), Marilyn Moore (Uttlesford MIND) and Richmonds Coaches.

**2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

2.1. It was proposed and seconded and agreed that Councillor Keith Eden would chair the Forum.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 27 JUNE 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 Minutes 4.2 and 4.4, no reply had been received. **Wendy Jackson to check with Richard Gravatt at ECC.**

4.2. Re Minute 4.3, Jeremy Pine confirmed that there were photocopies of the main bus route timetables in racks at the UDC Dunmow office. The timetable book was available on request from the counter staff there. David Corke said that ECC supplied copies for tourism offices. **Jeremy Pine to check whether a rack could be provided for each service.**

4.3. Re Minute 5.3, **Jeremy Pine to provide Peter Riding's contact details to Moira Mason.**

4.4. Re Minute 10.1, Ian Willard said that he had a report containing recommendations from cyclists. **Ian Willard to send a copy of the report to the Area Highways Office at Harlow ASAP.**

**5. PROPOSED REVIEW OF BUS SERVICES IN UTTLESFORD - UPDATE**

5.1. Wendy Jackson explained that the review involved working with RCCE. Open days had been held in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow, the former being better attended. RCCE had prepared a report containing many suggestions which involved issues relating to information availability, publicity and more evening / Sunday journeys. There were some quick wins. The tender process was being looked at (only one service). The review was slipping a bit, and a sensitive issue was the proposed closure of Post Offices

(Quendon, Little Hallingbury, Molehill Green and Rowntree Way, Saffron Walden).

5.2. Sue Mayer referred to Great Hallingbury Parish Council's letter requesting a bus service into town each day, with a return journey 2 hours later. Relying on friends and neighbours was difficult.

5.3. Kris Radley explained that RCCE was part of the Rural Essex Partnership and was working with rural communities re Post Office closures. The relevant website was [www.essexruralpartnership.co.uk](http://www.essexruralpartnership.co.uk)

5.4. In answer to a question from the Chairman, Kris Radley confirmed that 30 attended the Walden open day and 19 Dunmow. A PDF version of the RCCE report would be forwarded to the Forum. **Jeremy Pine to distribute when received.** Useful information came out of the open days, combined with what was already known by ECC. ECC was using the information as part of accessibility planning.

5.5. In relation to Minute 5.4 of the last meeting, Rose Johnson asked whether accessibility to bus stops was being looked at as part of the review. Wendy Jackson said it wasn't, but was featuring under accessibility planning. Mark Lemon referred to what he felt was a huge lack of information regarding bus services, and felt sorry for the operators.

5.6. Paul Garland mentioned the LA21 survey of bus stops, which was being used by ECC in the review. A major criticism was that bus travel was ok if you were "in the know". Otherwise, there were no posts indicating which buses stopped there, or a relevant timetable. Kris Radley concurred that a key issue was raising awareness. Wendy Jackson explained that there was a working partnership with operators to replace timetable frames which was now moving forward following earlier problems.

5.7. In answer to a question from the Chairman about who is responsible for the cost of the frames, Peter Blanchard said that CPT Essex had been involved with ECC for 2 years. ECC pay for the first round, then individual operators. However, his company was not prepared to pay £50 / frame. So far, the review had not involved any consultation with operators. It was possible that the review could destroy commercial services.

5.8. Paul Garland was concerned about the open day attendances. LA21 involvement had boosted attendance in Walden. The voluntary sector was always keen to help, and could have delivered leaflets. Peter Blanchard said that leaflets could have been put in buses if operators had been asked. Mark Lemon felt it was appalling that operators didn't know about the review. In reply, Kris Radley outlined the role that RCCE had been asked to play.

5.9. In answer to a question from Sue Mayer, Wendy Jackson confirmed that all new housing developments would be taken into account in the review.

5.10. Mark Lemon said that it was essential that the issue of who was to pay for timetables was resolved. **Wendy Jackson to speak to Robbie Watson at ECC.**

## **6. DUNMOW BUS STOPS – GENERAL ISSUES**

6.1. Jeremy Pine had received an Email from Richard Bailey (Senior Transport Specialist, ECC) following comments that had been made about some confusion concerning the direction of travel of buses calling at bus stops in Great Dunmow High Street. Richard Bailey explained that the confusion arose because, whilst certain early and late journeys start at the Post Office stop and proceed direct via The Causeway, during the main part of the day the buses start at Tesco and proceed via the Boar's Head stop then via St Edmunds Lane and Church End. He felt that this was probably counter-intuitive to anyone unfamiliar with the route.

6.2. Richard Bailey's Email also referred to some strange information being shown on the telematics sign in the High Street, which is being checked. He also confirmed that there would be a new telematics sign at the Post Office stop when it is moved in conjunction with the Dunmow Inn development. In addition, First have requested that the bus stop which was taken away from the Stortford Road / Rosemary Lane location for eastbound journeys be relocated to outside Perkins Garage. First have also suggested additional stops outside the Oxfam shop and Barclays Bank. These would be quite close to the main stops, but could be more convenient for the North Street area.

6.3. David Corke pointed out that, when working, the telematics sign only showed buses that operated the system. Telematics could help with Saffron Walden services. Wendy Jackson said that buses would need to be equipped with the technology to enable telematics to be triggered. The new publicity partnership was tasked with providing information at bus stops. Peter Blanchard said that, as an operator, he was not prepared to add more electronics to buses. David Corke felt that information could be hauled off the computerised timetable.

## **7. PROPOSED FORECOURT IMPROVEMENTS AT AUDLEY END STATION**

7.1. Jeremy Pine gave details of a recent meeting at County Hall that he had attended to discuss a suggested improved forecourt layout which had been drawn up by Waterman Civils on behalf of ECC. The meeting was chaired by Andrew Harding, a transport consultant, who had been engaged by ECC to deliver the improvements by the end of the current financial year. Timing was tight if the improvements were to be delivered on time. The layout followed the earlier work by Mouchel Parkman. The main parts of the scheme were:

- Relining to deliver a bus turning arrangement without loss of car parking
- A designated pedestrian route across the site from the end of the approach road to the station entrance
- A modified and marked out taxi stand

- Installation of a shelter for bus and taxi passengers
- Installation of new cycle and motorcycle shelters adjacent to Platform 1
- Removal of the existing cycle shelter

7.2. Discussion at the County Hall meeting was wide ranging, with a number of concerns being expressed which would be looked at. In summary, they were:

- Whether the bus turning circle would be adequate for all buses
- How would passengers be directed to the taxi at the head of the rank
- Whether taxi drivers were happy with the arrangement
- How would pick up / drop off passengers negotiate their way through the taxi rank?
- How would the works be carried out to minimise disruption to residents and passengers?
- The status of the building being demolished
- Marking of spaces for people with disabilities and visibility of the shelter

7.3. Peter Blanchard expressed concern at the use of CAD for bus turning circles. He offered to provide a bus to check turning circles on site. Paul Garland commented about the brief not to lose any parking spaces on site. Jeremy Pine said that, at the County Hall meeting, he had commented that in his view the overall public benefit of the scheme outweighed the loss of a few spaces.

7.4. David Corke felt that the new arrangements didn't cater for buses waiting at the stop. Wendy Jackson said that 40 cycle racks would be provided, which Ian Willard did not think was enough. Paul Garland said that there were insufficient racks at present. Ian Willard queried whether existing on-platform racks would stay, and also felt that there could be conflict at the station entrance road between turning cars and buses.

7.5. Wendens Ambo Parish Council had been invited to send a representative to the Forum to express its views. The Parish Council's comments were:

- The pedestrian area marked by bollards should be raised, as should the bus stop area
- Concerns about pedestrians walking behind the taxi rank
- Concerned that any loss of parking spaces would add to village parking problems
- What was happening re proposed 2-tier parking in the lower part of the car park?
- Cutting back of hedgerows required
- Relationship with the dental surgery
- Not a lot of help for people with disabilities (Sue Locke referred to Access for All funding)
- Carry out work during holiday periods

- No problem with demolition of the outbuilding, which was used as an informal toilet

7.6. Moira Mason mentioned travel planning for rail stations, which could include the provision of dedicated car sharing bays. Travel planning could be publicised at the station.

**7.7. Chris Stoneham to pass all these comments onto Andrew Harding.**  
(Note: this has now been done).

## **8. STANSTED AIRPORT GENERATION 1 – UPDATE ON PUBLIC INQUIRY**

8.1. Jeremy Pine explained that the inquiry had finished on 19<sup>th</sup> October after nearly 50 sitting days. Counsel for UDC, ECC and Herts CC was currently responding to BAA's application for a partial award of costs.

## **9. NEW BUS / COACH STATION AT STANSTED AIRPORT - UPDATE**

9.1. Steve Mills said that there had been a number of issues one month after opening. The main one was the National Express coach hitting the waiting room. Luckily, no-one was seriously hurt. The waiting room was partially closed whilst repairs were carried out. When works are finished, the Access Group will be invited to inspect the facility. Measures were being undertaken to prevent a similar accident occurring and to prevent passengers walking out onto the coach area.

## **10. UPDATE ON VOLUNTARY CAR SERVICE – LICENSING IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. This update had been requested by Sue Locke, and had been raised at the last meeting. The implication was that volunteer operators would have to provide licensed vehicles if they did not fit the "not for commercial gain" criteria. A meeting was to be held with Murray Hardy on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The Chairman said this was a national issue.

10.2. David Rose referred to a note that had been circulated by the Community Transport association on this issue. The note said:

*"Some volunteer car scheme operators have been told by their local taxi licensing officers that they need to license their vehicles as private hire vehicles and license all drivers by January 2007. This, they say, is due to the introduction of the Road Safety Act 2006 which repeals section 75 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.*

*The CTA has worked with the Department for Transport on this misinterpretation and this has resulted in draft guidance for taxi licensing officers that clarifies the fact that volunteer car schemes operate under the car sharing legislation contained in the Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981. These schemes are not affected by the repeal of Section 75 and do not require to be licensed as private hire vehicles.*

*The draft guidance document is available on the CTA website and is due to be published shortly.*

*There will be a feature about volunteer car schemes which explains more about the legal background in the forthcoming November / December issue of CTA journal”.*

## **11. PROGRESS ON LA21’S REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF BUS SERVICES**

11.1. This information was requested by Sue Locke. She referred to UDC’s Disability Equality Scheme, which was concerned with people with disabilities obtaining work. However, lack of bus stop information was discouraging use. LA21 had worked with area panels. What was happening now?

11.2. Paul Garland said that the report had been presented to UDC and the Town Council for endorsement and had been sent to ECC. David Corke said that he hoped that the points made in the report would be picked up in the review. Wendy Jackson said she couldn’t give a date for when the review would be concluded. Mark Lemon felt that things were no further forward.

11.3. The Chairman said that a timetable for the review and details of contents were needed. What issues are and are not being considered?

11.4. Wendy Jackson referred to the rolling out of the Publicity Partnership, and agreed to invite Robbie Watson to the next meeting. **Wendy Jackson to invite accordingly.** Mark Lemon was concerned lest it was lack of finance that was delaying things.

11.5. Paul Garland requested that the rolling out of information be initially targeted to Uttlesford and not Chelmsford, which was already well endowed.

## **12. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

12.1. Jeremy Pine requested that any items be notified to him by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at the latest. The bus services review (Minute 5) and the Audley End forecourt improvements (Minute 7) would be rolled forward items.

## **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

13.1. David Corke was pleased that the First 33 service had been extended to Bishop’s Stortford, but would have appreciated publicity for the changes. Peter Blanchard pointed out that the service was funded by First, and publicity was down to them.

13.2. Steve Mills announced that the Bus / Coach Working Group of the Stansted Airport Transport Forum had been shortlisted in the Annual Bus Awards for realising new passengers. The awards would be held on 7<sup>th</sup> November. Also, a new Ipswich service would shortly be announced following the evaluation of 3 proposals by the Working Group.

13.3. Following the Sustainable Communities Strategy Workshop held on 18<sup>th</sup> October, Paul Garland reported a strong recommendation that there should be high profile transport representation on the Board of Uttlesford Futures (the Forum was not represented at all). Whoever that person was should also be able to speak with authority on cycling and walking. **The Chairman to speak to Jeremy Pine about who the representative ought to be.** Kris Radley agreed, feeling that transport / access issues are not being recognised as key elements in local strategic partnerships. Wendy Jackson reported a further recommendation coming out of the workshop that the Forum should become a working party group of the local strategic partnership.

#### **14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

14.1. 10:00am on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at the Council Offices, Great Dunmow.