

**UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT FORUM
COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFRON WALDEN
20th JANUARY 10am**

Present: Uttlesford District Councillor: Keith Eden (Chairman); Jeremy Pine (UDC); Paul Garland (Sustainable Uttlesford); Cllr Elizabeth Bellingham-Smith; Ian Shaw, David Rose and Malcolm Burrell (Uttlesford Community Transport); Barry Drinkwater (ULODA); Peter Blanchard (Walden Travel/CPT Essex); Ian Willard (Cycle Users Group); Sue Locke (UDC) Kerry Vinton (Uttlesford Futures) Wendy Jackson and Sam Barwick (ECC)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Nick Blackall (Essex County Council) Rose Johnson (Road Safety Officer), Councillors Catherine Dean and Jackie Cheetham; Steve Mills (BAA); Sue Locke and Murray Hardy (UDC); Kris Radley (RCCE).

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2009 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. ACTION ARISING

i) Transport Working Group Terms of Reference

3.1 Terms of Reference adopted at the last meeting, it was made clear that the PRG money was to reflect the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy and working group action plans. The work of the transport forum will feed into one or more of the national indicators.

ii) Transport Working Group Action Plan

3.2 Covered separately as an agenda item

iii) Uttlesford Futures'

3.3 Nick Blackall will represent the transport forum at the Uttlesford Futures' management team meeting, Sam Barwick will join Wendy Jackson from Essex County Council on the transport forum.

4. ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

Quality Taxi Partnership

4.1 The licensing committee approved the scheme in their November meeting. In December the scheme was launched to an invited audience of 40 guests. The scheme has been very well supported and has positive media coverage in the local press. The QTP hopes to secure £10k from Essex County Council, with Andrew James taking this forward as a lead agency. The next meeting will be held on 26th February 2010.

Buses – Improvements to local services

4.2 The sub group was felt to be effective and although they had an extremely good advocate for the bus services in the north of the district in David Corke, they needed representation for the north of the district, perhaps from Stansted or Hatfield Heath.

Jeremy Pine shared with group they concerns around publicity. Wendy Jacked confirmed that the replacement bus stops at Saffron Walden town centre and Audley End Station had been brought forward and hoped that all would be replaced by June 2010.

4.3 Paul Garland commented on the new shelter on the common, he also wanted to be assured that there will be dropped curbs for easy accessibility, he also mention the possibility to add plastic seating for passengers, encouraging passengers not to seat on the shop window ledges.

4.4 Paul Garland has stepped in to support the sub group in David Corke's absence.

Action 201.01.2010 – 01 Jeremy Pine to notify Cllr Eden of the date the next sub group meeting.

Action 20.01.2010 – 02 All to email contacts for representation on the sub group and Cllr Lemon to pass on the Hatfield Heath name to Cllr Eden.

Increasing Cycle Travel

4.5 Ian Willard circulated the priorities for the Cycling group, he hopes to review and update the Uttlesford Cycle Network Plan, Highways will be invited to comment on the revised document.

4.6 The hope to progress with the proposal of safe cycle routes from Saffron Walden and Audley End Station will be taken forward, meetings are planned with both the Audley End Estate and Wenden Ambo Parish Council. Sustrans will be invited to get involved with the group.

4.7 Ways of promoting Uttlesford for cycling are being pursued, the idea of having a DVD of the routes with a running commentary was floated around the group. Wendy Jackson will pass on the action to her colleague in the County Council who works with businesses, to see how they can promote cycling.

Mobility – Community Travel

4.8 Malcolm Burrell will be replacing David Rose when he stands down for the group, he will continue to push forward the priorities on the action plan.

5. SAINSBURY AND TESCO PLANNING APPLICATIONS

5.1 Cllr Eden declared an interest in this agenda item, so excused him-self from the meeting.

5.2 David Corke made a number of comments on the planning application on behalf of Sustainable Uttlesford,with regards to the public transport provision, he comments were circulated to the group for information.

5.3 The group had some concerns with lorry traffic through Gt Dunmow and Thaxted. Jeremy informed the group that further comments were welcome, although the official closing date had passed.

6. BUS SERVICES - Update

6.1 Wendy Jackson informed the group that the 6 month service letter is going out on the 7a Benfield Green service, there will be an on-board inspection, the feedback from the village has been positive.

6.2 There have been a number of complaints that the 301 and 7 services are too close on their timetable, the services are unable to change their timing due to other connexions, but there has been knock on effects with regards to purchasing train tickets in time. The bus operator wanted to keep the same timetable throughout the peak and off peak periods, the group agreed that this would not work due to the swell of traffic during peak periods.

6.3 Cllr Lemon shared with group his concerns with the 59 service that went through Hatfield Heath, 4/5 passengers have contacted him expressing their dismay when the bus drives straight past without stopping, Wendy Jackson will take up the issue.

6.4 Tesco have banned the parking of buses in their car park, there is no terminus for drivers to change crew. The free shuttle bus Tesco had provided as part of their planning application has now stopped, Sam Barwick will look into whether this has reneged on their original application. As an alternative the council may be persuaded to reduce the cost of parking at Swan Meadow.

6.5 It appears the Saffron Walden Shopper bus duplicate other services, Wendy Jackson will be doing a review on the following services 306, 444, and 445, as they appear to be failing services.

7. AUDLEY END STATION - update

7.1 Work has started on the bar park extension, bus operators to have a look at the plans in order to establish turning circle for the buses, the plans have been sent to Essex CC Highways.

8. STANSTED AIRPORT - update

8.1 The Competition Appeal Tribunal has handed down its judgement on BAA's appeal against the decision of the Competition Commission that BAA should sell Gatwick and Stansted Airports and one of its Scottish airports.

8.2 The Tribunal has found in favour of BAA on the ground of apparent bias. BAA's allegation of apparent bias relates to the participation of a person who had links to the Manchester Airport Group, a potential purchaser of BAA assets. The Tribunal concluded unanimously that in "the light of the material facts a fair-minded and informed observer would conclude that there was a real possibility of bias affecting the deliberations, thinking and outcome of the investigation". The Tribunal will now hear further argument from the parties as to the form of relief, unless the parties can agree it themselves.

8.3 It is not yet clear what form the relief will take, but it could mean the re-opening of the Competition Commission's original investigation.

8.4 On the ground of proportionality (i.e. that the Commission gave insufficient time for BAA to sell the Stansted Airport in the current economic circumstances), the Tribunal did not find in favour of BAA. The judgement does not affect the sale of Gatwick, which has now gone through. The Secretary of State will also have to decide what should happen to the stalled G2 inquiry, but it seems unlikely that it would proceed in the short term.

9. AOB

9.1 Bruce Tice, Saffron Walden Business Forum and the Tourist Information Centre are promoting changes to the signage at Audley End Station. Currently the station sign reads Audley End for Audley End House, it is hoped with a little pressure on the rail provider the sign can be changed to read Audley End for Saffron Walden.

9.2 The forum plan to produce a series of vinyl printed illustrations of Saffron Walden to put up in the station and other stations around the region, Ely has already agreed to have a picture up and Audley End will reciprocate. Ely have also invested in new planters and signs to make the station more attractive.

9.3 The group asked why the station name can not be changed to Saffron Walden, it appears to do this would be changing all the booking systems across the various networks and would be very complicated.

9.4 There has been a longstanding agreement with Audley End House, National Express and English Heritage regarding the signage, but no-one appears to have any original contracts or documents to support this agreement.

9.5 The group felt that Saffron Walden Town Council should be approach for their support.

Action 20.01.2010 – 03 Cllr Eden to provide an email for the Saffron Walden Business Forum, offering the support of the Uttlesford Transport Forum towards the changes on the Audley End Station signage.

Date of next meeting 14th April 2010, 10am, Committee Room, Saffron Walden Town Council.