

ELSTREE AND BOREHAMWOOD TOWN COUNCIL (EBTC)

TRANSPORT FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting held at Fairway Hall, Brook Close, Borehamwood, WD6 5BT on Wednesday 24 October 2018 at 7.00pm

Present:

- Cllr S Rubner (Transport Forum Chairman - EBTC)
- Cllr Mrs S Parnell (EBTC)
- Cllr V Eni (EBTC)
- Cllr J Newmark (HBC)
- L Heyman (GTR)
- P Ladbury (GTR)
- M Asamcah (GTR)
- S Simmonds (Sullivan Buses)
- S Alford (EBRA)
- PCSO 6344 T J Hainsworth
- R Redman (Elstree Screen Heritage)
- J Cartledge (Resident)
- M Lawson (Resident)
- R Barry (Resident)
- N Clark (Resident)
- A de Swarte (Resident)
- I Mackay (Resident)
- R Jarvis (Neighbourhood Watch)
- T Malton (Deputy Town Clerk)

[Only those residents wishing their names to be included in the Minutes are recorded above.]

09. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr P Strack (EBTC) and J Cartledge (resident).

10. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

There were none.

11. TRANSPORT FORUM MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 4 July 2018 were approved and duly signed as a true record by the Chairman.

(Cllr S Rubner publicly thanked Cllr C Butchins for Chairing the Transport Forum meetings for the past seven years commenting that he has made the committee a great success).

12. BUS SERVICES IN ELSTREE AND BOREHAMWOOD

S Simmonds (Sullivan Buses) reported that since the Transport Forum meeting in July there had been some bus timetable changes to the Borehamwood and Watford services. The 398 service that started running to Watford in June 2015 has largely been withdrawn due to lack of passengers usually no more than half a dozen. Sullivan buses have decided to concentrate largely on the 306 which is much more popular and has been increased Monday to Friday peak hours. However, the 398 journey to Queens School has been retained with c110-115 school children using the service along with c15 adults making the school run service sustainable hopefully for the long term. There have been some changes to the University bus service with the 658 service to St Albans being withdrawn. The Uno 615 service from Stanmore to Borehamwood and Hatfield during peak hours has also been withdrawn resulting in Borehamwood losing its connection to Stanmore Station.

Sullivan Buses are looking at further possible changes to the 398 saying that the run from Potters Bar has always struggled as a service with as little as two to three passengers on each journey. The service will continue but with a slight reduction to the timetable. S Simmonds pointed out that Sullivan Buses are seeking funding from Hertfordshire County Council.

S Simmonds further reported that there were to be some proposed changes to the frequency of the 292 to every 20 minutes from Monday to Saturday daytimes. This has been expected for a number of years and there are three reasons why the service is being reduced. The first reason is the TfL budget has been reduced over the last number of years and they are looking to make savings. The second reason is the increase in traffic and anyone that uses the 292 will testify that the service from Rossington Avenue would very often need to be terminated at Tesco due to the traffic congestion and the service is proving a financial strain due to its unreliability and lack of funding. The only solution to making the 292 reliable is to reduce the frequency of its service. The third reason is TfL are planning to send route 384 via Edgware. The residents of Edgware have been seeking

a faster service to Barnet for a long time as they do not see the 107 as a satisfactory service, with the journey from Edgware to Barnet taking over an hour. S Simmonds said that he expected that when the 107 contract is due for renewal that TfL will reduce that service as well.

Information on new bus timetables could be found at:

Sullivan' Buses	www.sullivanbuses.co.uk
Metroline	www.metroline.co.uk
Uno	www.unobus.info

13. TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY REPORT

PC J Hainsworth gave an update on the road and traffic situation since the Transport Forum Meeting in July 2018. **(See attached Appendix A)**. This shows there are four different types of road incidences that are reported to the constabulary in two month periods. The four types of figures are:

- Road Traffic Collision, Damage Only
- Road Traffic Incident, Suspected Injury
- Road Offence
- Vehicle Nuisance

PC Hainsworth reported the ward the highest number of incidents was Hillside. The main bulk of these incidents occurred along Shenley Road making this the hot spot to focus on.

It was noted that the four types of figures for the period 1 July 2018 to 23 October 2018 compare favourably with the figures for each type of incident in those periods for 2016 and 2017 remarking that this was something to celebrate as there was an overall improvement with each type of incident in terms of the total numbers.

14. TRAIN SERVICES

Cllr Rubner welcomed P Ladbury (GTR) who will be taking over from L Heyman (GTR). Cllr Rubner also welcomed M Asamcah (GTR and new Elstree & Borehamwood Station Manager). Cllr Rubner went on to thank L Heyman on behalf of the Town Council for

his many years of attendance at the Transport Forum meetings remarking that he has had a very tough job and that he would be a very hard act to follow. Cllr Rubner wished L Haymen a very long, happy and healthy retirement.

The Forum received an update report from P Ladbury (GTR). **(See attached Appendix B).** P Ladbury began by apologising for GTR and the rail industry for the disruption the May timetable caused to passengers reporting that it was an industry wide problem. GTR introduced an interim timetable in July 2018 after the disruption in order to gain some stability and regular service, and over the months until now has started to increase the efficiency and stability with in fact the latest figures being at 85.7% for their performance targets, in terms of trains arriving on time. There will be a new timetable introduced in 9 December 2018. There will be an extra peak service for the weekday timetable for Elstree & Borehamwood with roughly two extra trains per hour during off peak period as well. P Ladbury further reported that GTR are going through the largest train driver recruitment process ever seen on the railways saying that there has been an extra 350 drivers recruited and trained to increase the number of trains, delivering up to 3,600 trains per day remarking that stabilising performance was the main issue and they are back on track with that. The number issues and cancellations that have happened over the last period have either been due to incidents on the rail, trespasses and fatalities, also signal and track failure. P Ladbury referred to the incident that happened on the 7 September 2018 at Elstree and Borehamwood Station remarking that the incident was currently being investigated by the rail accident investigation branch and had been advised that he would not be in a position to comment further, but said that he had been looking at the way the system works in order to prevent this happening again.

15. OPEN SESSION

[For clarity and context, questions raised in the Open Session but relating to other agenda items are recorded in the text of the relevant number above]

Some concerns raised by members of the forum were:

- Reduction of the 292 service affecting residents travelling to Barnet and Edgware hospital. **(Minute 12).**

S Simmonds (Sullivan Buses) remarked that the 292 would still run every 20 minutes and 30 minutes on a Sunday.

- The 292 service very often being terminated at Morrison's bus stop. **(Minute 12).**

S Simmonds response was that this is one of the problems created by the amount of traffic congestion in the area causing the bus service to run later than scheduled and that

termination of buses would only happen if there was another bus scheduled to arrive within minutes. It was noted that this was a big problem for all the services in Hertfordshire and that variation in time can be up to 45 minutes. S Simmonds assured the forum that it is their aim to produce a good service but they are finding it increasingly impossible to meet targets. **(Minute 12).**

Cllr J Newmark remarked on the above by saying *“the reduction in the 292 service represents a 25% cut in service, my concern is that the cuts will continue to be implicated further and deeper as experience shows. The responsibility of funding transport sits with County, they clearly do not have the money, and there is nothing to prevent the Borough and Town Council using ‘Community Infrastructure’ money to provide a sensual transport infrastructure in the area. There are many examples of Local District and Parish Councils up and down the country who have voluntarily taken on the responsibility of subsidising bus services of their own, and experience has shown that this has in fact got traffic off the roads because the solution to the traffic problem is to get cars off the roads and in the way you do that is by providing decent, affordable and reliable public transport services. It would be interesting to hear what views the Town Councillors have on this, and is it not time for the Borough and Town Councils to apply some of that cash they are sitting on in terms of ‘Community Infrastructure Levy’ to provide decent infrastructure for the Town”.* **(Minute 12).**

Cllr V Eni responded by saying *“one of the problems regarding the buses was lack of passengers to help them sustain the level of bus services they provide, and it would not be for the Borough or the Town Councils so sort this problem out, it would be down to TfL”.* **(Minute 12).**

Cllr S Rubner also responded by saying *“I agree with Cllr Eni on this matter that it would not be down to the Town or Borough but would under the auspices of the Mayor of London and as such, would not have a say in TfL services”.* **(Minute 12).**

Cllr Mrs S Parnell remarked by asking Cllr J Newmark to look into the figures regarding funding such a project as public transport.

IT was AGREED that:

Cllr J Newmark to provide a report to the Town Council regarding expenditure for the above. (Minute 12).

R Barry (resident) raised concerns regarding the continued inappropriate use of two wheeled vehicles, mainly motorbikes performing wheelies along Aycklyff road saying that it is still being use as a race track and asked if there were any plans by the police to address this issue. **(Minute 13).** PC Hainsworth remarked that he could not speculate at this time but is aware that there has been a spike in inappropriate use. PC Hainsworth assured the forum that he would report back to the PCO's that are assigned to Aycklyff

Road. R Barry gave consent for her contact details to be given to the officers for further information on the above.

S Simmonds (Sullivan Buses) reported that they were having great difficulty manoeuvring the 398 bus along Aycliff Road between the area of the shops and Theobold Street due to parked cars blocking the way and have on a number of occasions had to re divert the route. **(Minute 13)**. PC Hainsworth remarked that he would be reporting the above issue to the appropriate people.

Cllr Rubner invited R Jarvis (Neighbourhood Watch Hertsmere) to address the Forum. *R Jarvis remarked that he was asked to attend the meeting with security equipment that is sold by Neighbourhood Watch. He advised that they currently sell up to 72 items that would help protect your person, your home, and car from harm or theft and that they could be ordered through him.*

R Barry (resident) presented the forum with a verbal report on the accident of the 7 September 2018 that she and her small dog sadly were involved in. **(Minute 14)**.

R Barry said. *“My criticism of what could have taken place and of the driver and the train staff and basically for those that do not know, I was travelling from Elstree and Borehamwood to St Pancras Station accompanied by my very small shiatzu of eight years, as a disabled person I use a four wheel walking aid and had formerly been shown the place for me to alight the new trains. The position shown to me is under the stairs to the left on the station platform just under the stairs. I did notice as I came in there was one staff member with a Thameslink uniform on emptying a ticket machine. The office was closed with a sign on the window saying office was closed. It was 1.45pm on a Friday afternoon with very few passengers there and no other staff. I proceeded with my dog on a short lead and I was also carrying two carrier bags as I was going to be staying away for the weekend, I had my walker and walked down to the correct section and a train came in. One person got on in front of me and while I was getting myself onto the train the doors suddenly shut and I was holding the dog lead. There was no warning by way of a bell to alert me that the doors were closing they just closed and my little dog was hanging outside the doors attached by the lead as the train moved towards the tunnel. I was trying to alert somebody or a member of staff to help me even signalling to a train opposite. I also noticed that there is a bend in the platform as the train is moving towards the tunnel so the driver cannot look back to the disabled section so why do they put the disabled doors in a section of a platform where the driver has no view. I would like to point out that I have taken the train numerous times since that incident and I will say that there has always been a member of staff on the platform every time I have travelled. I would like to possibly recommend that when the refurbishment of the station commences that the train coaches are repositioned so the disabled area is not on the part of the platform that cannot be seen but in a straight section of the platform.*

L Heyman (TfL) responded by saying that it was very brave of R Barry to give an account of the events of that day and that he was very moved by what she said remarking

that it must have been a very stressful for her and the fact that she had the courage to continue using the trains was admirable. L Heyman reported that the accident investigation branch were conducting an extremely thorough review of everything and he pointed out that he hoped R Barry understood that he could not pre-empt the work they are doing as he does not have the expertise they have but in due course they will issue a report but is not something they are spinning out they want to get all the details and facts of this horrible incident in order to prevent anything similar happening ever again. L Heyman ended by thanking R Barry for coming along to tell in detail her terrible story. **(Minute 14)**

It was noted that the new trains would now be supplied with CCTV in the cab giving the driver a view to every single door along the length of the trains be it an eight or ten door train. There will also be a new thing called interlock so if there is anything blocking the door or somebody is in the way of the door they cannot close. It was further noted that the new trains would never have been approved if they were in any way inferior to the existing trains. (Minute 14)

Cllr S Rubner commented that he was a daily commuter from Elstree and Borehamwood station and his experience of ticket staff were that they were constantly using their mobile phones whilst they were present at the ticket barriers. He remarked that he imagined that it could be boring manning the ticket barriers but looked very unprofessional for staff to be distracted by their mobile phone use. Cllr S Rubner also felt it was very important that there was a train dispatcher on the station platform at all times. **(Minute 14)**

Cllr J Newmark requested clarification from TfL that the new timetable would be up and running by December remarking that the timetable promised by May had not transpired and given that the passengers had to contend with the above would they now have to contain with price increases. **(Minute 14).**

L Heyman responded that by Monday 10 December 2018 the new timetable will become available. He also reported that there would be four trains an hour on a Saturday and two trains an hour on a Sunday with a further enhanced timetable by the end of next year. L Heyman reported that moving forward no new timetables would be reported unless it could be confidently agreed that the timetables could be met. Regarding the fares revenue unlike any other train operators TfL do not keep the fares revenue this goes to the Department of Transport so the decision of rises in fares rests with the secretary of the Department of Transport and he remarked that passengers would be lobbying their members of parliament and Transport Focus expressing their views. **(Minute 14).**

It was noted that there was to be a stakeholder conference for users of Govia Thameslink held at Monument, 8 East Street on the 27 November 2018 between 10am and 4pm. If anyone would like to go they are to Contact T Malton – Deputy Clerk at the Town Council offices and your details will be put forward for attendance.

It was reported by P Ladbury (TfL) that the new station improvements were due to start at the end of November 2018. He remarked that a passenger survey produced two years ago asking passengers what improvements they would like to see at the station. The results of which will be evident when alterations are complete, there will be an extended shop, an extended café and two ticket office windows. First impressions have also contributed particularly with the design around the door. **(Minute 14).**

It was noted that there was to be a temporary ticket office whilst works are carried out.

Some members of the forum also raised concerns regarding overcrowding of the station car park making it unsafe for passengers walking to the station from the North of Borehamwood through to the station forecourt. This is due in part to drivers dropping passengers at the car park, driving around the car park and out again in order to avoid having to enter the roundabout. It was felt that unless drivers were intending to park in the car park there should be something in place to stop drivers dropping passengers off or picking passengers up.

L Heyman (TfL) reported that the car parks were gradually being extended to ANPR operations but pointed out that this may not solve the problem as there has been a lot of demand along the route to allow drop off at car parks because there isn't anywhere else to drop off. L Heyman suggested it might be useful to have a separate discussion on the above issue. **(Minute 14).**

It was noted that the owners of the Boulevard shopping park were looking to away the benefit of the three free hour parking. Part of the rationale for this being the overuse of the car park.

R Jarvis (resident) reported that Winstre Road in Borehamwood (a one way access road with restricted access and a 25 mile an hour speed limit) being used by residents as an exit and entry route. R Jarvis has been reporting these incidents as far back as ten years but has been told by the police at inspector level that there is no 'Traffic Monitoring Order' (TMO) in place but that police to enforce it. R Jarvis remarked that this is just not the case and would like to know if this order could be enforced through a motoring offence. **(Minute 13).**

PC Hainsworth responded by saying, *"I agree there must be something we can do but I'm not sure with what power we can use."*

Cllr S Rubner reported that Cllr S Brown was the councillor for Borehamwood North and advised R Jarvis to contact her to see what could be done.

Cllr S Parnell addressing M Asamcah (GTR Station Manager) asked if EBTC would still be able to erect a Christmas tree at the station, pointing out that this had been an historic arrangement set up with James Gillet. M Asamcah's response was that he would be seeking advice from those in authority to grant permission having to take into consideration the works to be carried out at the station.

J Cartlidge (apologised for late arrival). *Deferred to the buses situation by saying, "last year the government introduced and parliament enacted the bus services act which gives local authorities new powers to form partnerships with operators to agree how to promote services in terms of enhancing frequency and improve bus related infrastructure on the roads. We wrote to Hertfordshire asking what they were going to do with these new powers and their response was that they hadn't decided. In the meantime they have published their vision for Hertfordshire in 2030 which makes all the right comments but none affect Borehamwood apart from a few cycle lanes. My proposal is that we write back to Hertfordshire County Council and remind them of what they said a year ago and inviting them to share with us their plans.*

IT was AGREED that:

J Cartledge (Resident) would liaise with T Malton regarding correspondence to Hertfordshire County Council regarding the above.

16. CLOSURE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 20 February 2019 at 7.00pm at Fairway Hall, Brook Close, Borehamwood, WD6 5BT.

Date:..... CHAIRMAN.....