

ELSTREE AND BOREHAMWOOD TOWN COUNCIL (EBTC)

TRANSPORT FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting held at Fairway Hall, Brook Close, Borehamwood, WD6 5BT on Wednesday 24th February 2016 at 7.00pm

Present:

- Cllr C Butchins (Chairman in the Chair) (EBTC)
- Cllr S Rubner (Vice Chairman) (EBTC)
- Cllr Mrs S Parnell (EBTC)
- J Gillett (Thameslink)
- L Heyman (Thameslink)
- PCSO 6263 T Conway (Hertfordshire Constabulary)
- PC 1184 K Endersbee (Hertfordshire Constabulary)
- A De' Swarte (Resident)
- D Sullivan (Sullivan Buses)
- J Cartledge (Resident)
- L Stack (EBRA)
- R Redman (First Impressions and Elstree Screen Heritage)
- P Stone (Resident)
- S Alford (EBRA)
- S, J and B Melinek (Residents)
- H Jones (Town Clerk)

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

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from O Dowden MP (MP for Hertsmere), A Dismore AM (London Assembly: Barnet and Camden), Cllr D Ashley (Hertfordshire County Council), G Brigden (Hertfordshire County Council), Cllr Mrs P Strack (EBTC), Cllr Mrs F Turner (EBTC and Hertsmere Borough Council), Cllr V Eni (EBTC and Hertsmere Borough Council), Cllr G Silver (EBTC and Hertsmere Borough Council), Cllr C Barker (EBTC and Hertsmere Borough Council), Cllr C Kelly (Hertsmere Borough Council), Cllr C Clapper (Hertsmere Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council), Cllr A Plancey (Hertsmere Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council), Cllr M Bright (Hertsmere Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council), Cllr J Heywood (Hertsmere Borough Council), S Simmonds (Sullivan Buses), Mr and Mrs C Blake, (Residents), C Messetter (Hertfordshire Constabulary), P Bradley (TfL), S Davies (BW Driving Instructors Association), N Clark (Resident) and Cllr L Reeve (Hertfordshire County Council).

21. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

There were none.

23. TRANSPORT FORUM MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 29 October 2015 were approved and duly signed as a true record by the Chairman.

24. BUS SERVICES IN ELSTREE AND BOREHAMWOOD

The Forum received an update report from Sullivan's Buses on service changes in Borehamwood from 27 March 2016 and updates (outlined below) [*Post Meeting Note: The change to the 655 UNO service was reported after the meeting and publicised by the Town Council on its website and social media pages together with the other changes*]:

ROUTE & OPERATOR	ROUTE DESCRIPTION	CHANGE
B3 SULLIVAN BUSES (Herts CC contract)	BOREHAMWOOD TOWN SERVICE: Well End-Town Centre - Organ Hall or Tennison Avenue	Minor timetable changes but no change to number of journeys. However, to improve reliability route will no longer serve Elstree and Borehamwood station between 9.30 and 15.30. Alternative stops nearby in Shenley Road
615 UNO (was Herts CC contract – operated commercially from 29th March)	STANMORE STATION- BOREHAMWOOD- HATFIELD (via A1)	Service withdrawn Mondays to Friday outside of peak hours (9.30 to 15.30) and all day on Saturdays. Now 6/7 journeys a day in each direction in Mon-Fri peak hours only. Was every 60 minutes Mon-Sat (every 30 mins Mon-Fri peak hours)
655 UNO (Herts CC contract)	BOREHAMWOOD- RADLETT-ST ALBANS- HATFIELD	Service will no longer serve Gateshead Road and Cowley Hill between Leeming Road and Hartforde Road and Brook Road between Hartforde Rd and Elstree Studios. Instead diverted from Gateshead Road via Brook Road, Hartforde Road, Cowley Hill and Shenley Road to Elstree Studios.

Members of the Forum received a report by the Chairman on comments in relation to the possible subsidy reductions to 107 and 292 routes which specifically served Borehamwood. It was noted that the Hertfordshire County Council Transport Portfolio Holder had been invited to the meeting. Both P Bradley (TfL) and Cllr D Ashley (Hertfordshire County Council) had indicated that there were no current changes planned. Some Members of the Forum emphasised that TfL had a duty to provide a bus service not only in London but also to and from London and that the evidence of collected data suggested that the loss of the subsidy would have a negative impact on the local economy and wellbeing of residents (the Department for Transport's research into the value of bus subsidies could be viewed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/value-for-money-of-tendered-bus-services).

It was noted that TfL currently shared the funding of these services with Hertfordshire County Council which had provided an annual subsidy of £390,000 to support five bus routes linking a small number of southern Hertfordshire destinations with Greater London. For the five services subsidised by Hertfordshire County Council, TfL had an annual budget of £11.3m with the Council's subsidy amounting to 4% cent of their total costs. Some Forum Members remarked that the subsidy sum was relatively greater for Hertfordshire County Council than for TfL because Hertfordshire's total spending on buses was much lower.

The Chairman re-emphasised that the reports that he had received were that there were no "current" plans to make changes to the 107 or 292 routes, as confirmed by TfL representatives.

25. TRAIN SERVICES

L Heyman (Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd) (GTR) provided the Forum with an overview of the new franchise management arrangements and performance targets for Thameslink and noted that there were challenges for the company in meeting its obligations and the service standards that the residents of Elstree and Borehamwood both expected and deserved. It was noted that service performance statistics could be viewed by passengers on the company's website facility (www.thameslinkrailway.com/about-us/performance/).

Matters noted included the cleanliness of stations, vermin control (it was noted that Rentokil had been instructed to provide additional rat boxes), parking and the passenger congestion problem at the gates.

It was noted that O Dowden MP had organised a public meeting on 31 March 2016 from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm at the Civic Offices (Hertsmere Borough Council), Borehamwood, as part of his campaign to seek to improve the Thameslink service. Those wishing to attend were asked to email to confirm on: oliver@oliverdowden.com.

A matter likely to be discussed at the above meeting was the proposed changes to the ticket office arrangements at Elstree and Borehamwood railway station (i.e. the closure of the ticket office in favour of three self-service ticket machines 'hosted' by Staff). Some Members of the Forum raised concerns that the changes could leave some customers dependent upon using ticket machines for purchasing fares who would better be served by the traditional staffed office, especially as the ticket machines could not produce all ticket types. J Gillett (Station Manager) reported that the intention was for 98% of tickets to be available from the machines.

It was further clarified that the role of the 'Host' was to provide assistance with ticket purchases, travel information and, if required, tickets from a hand-held machine that were not available at the self-service machines. A member of Staff would be on duty from the at all times, on a seven days per week basis.

A consultation on the proposed changes was active and scheduled to conclude on 13 March 2016 (www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/news/view?id=581&x). Posters about the consultation had been displayed on the station concourse. However, at the request of some Forum Members, it was agreed that flyers would be produced for passengers in order to take every effort to alert them to the consultation process. [Post meeting note : On 22 March 2016 London TravelWatch decided that some aspects of GTR's proposals had not been sufficiently explained, and that it would like the new arrangements to be piloted before any decision was taken to implement them network-wide. It would therefore be recommending to the Secretary of State that approval be deferred pending further discussions.]

It was noted that GTR's case for the ticket office closures was set out at www.thameslinkrailway.com/your-journey/station-information/changes-to-the-opening-hours-of-ticket-offices-list.

The Chairman thanked L Heyman for all of his contributions to the Transport Forum and wished him a well-deserved retirement in May 2016. These sentiments were echoed by all the Forum Members present.

26. TRAFFIC FLOW IN BOREHAMWOOD AND ELSTREE

The Forum discussed the impact of traffic flow difficulties (as expressed in the Borehamwood Times among other publications) especially at the Elstree and Borehamwood train station roundabout and Elstree Crossroads. Forum Members provided a number of anecdotal accounts of traffic jams and near accidents at these sites. Population increases in Borehamwood were identified as a major contributor to the traffic flow problems with access and egress to the Boulevard (shopping park) being highlighted as one of the most frustrating factors for residents.

It was felt that many of the difficulties were anticipated by the Elstree & Borehamwood Urban Transport Plan 2013 and that an update report on how effective this document had been would be timely. It was noted that the Forum had provided formal comments on

this document at consultation stage. [*Post Meeting Note: The details of Hertfordshire County Council's scheme for improving the junction at the station are on pages 48 to 51 of Appendix D to the Elstree & Borehamwood Urban Transport Plan 2013:*
www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/tranpan/tcatp/beutp/.]

It was AGREED that:

representations be made to Hertfordshire County Council to seek to obtain an update report on the progress made to date in implementing the Elstree & Borehamwood Urban Transport Plan 2013, including the proposals for signalling the junction near the station (with County Councillors being invited to a Transport Forum meeting to speak to the topic).

27. STIRLING CORNER

Some Members reiterated the comment made at previous meetings regarding the access Road to Morrison's supermarket being congested by large vehicles using the mobile fast food facilities.

It was noted that the Transport Forum had previously welcomed Hertfordshire County Council's plans to upgrade two stops in Balmoral Drive to incorporate a raised kerb. However, some concern was voiced at the fact that there appeared to have been no progress in response to a previous request from the Forum for similar work to be undertaken at the stops in Barnet Lane near Stirling Corner. These stops served Morrison's supermarket and the adjacent static home park which had many elderly residents. Hertfordshire County Council had indicated that the kerb at this location was scheduled to be raised in 2015.

It was AGREED that:

representations be made to Hertfordshire County Council to seek ascertain an implementation time for the agreed work to raise the kerb at the bus stops in Barnet Lane near Stirling Corner.

28. TRANSPORT FACTS AND CASUALTY FACTS

The availability of Hertfordshire Transport and Road Casualty Facts 2015 (produced by Hertfordshire County Council www.hertsdirect.org/tanda) was noted.

29. OPEN SESSION

Mini Roundabout Suggestion for Leeming Road

Some Forum Members asked whether the construction of a mini roundabout at the end of Leeming Road (junction with Aycliffe Road) would help to resolve the problem of drivers performing dangerous U-turns at this location when searching for parking bays at the shopping area. It was noted that the suggestion would be submitted to Hertfordshire County Council by way of the Minutes of the meeting.

Potholes, Speed Cushions and Signage

It was noted that Hertfordshire County Council would be reminded of the Forum's observation of resident dissatisfaction with the cleanliness, obstruction and repair of road signage (especially a large amount of green algae on the signs on Green Street). Similarly, it was noted that a number of comments had been received concerning the timeliness of pothole repairs and damaged speed cushions being replaced or repaired.

Possibility of multi-storey car park at train station

Responding to a query from S Alford (EBRA), L Heyman (Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd) clarified that a multi-storey car park facility at Elstree and Borehamwood train station had been considered and but found to be very difficult to implement because of the need to maintain access to Network Rail's premises at the northern end of the site. It was further believed by some Members that such a facility would have a potentially negative impact on local traffic by drawing more vehicles to an already congested part of Borehamwood. It was agreed that the availability of parking facilities (run by Hertsmere Borough Council) at Furzehill Road should be highlighted for rail commuters (together with the availability of season permits for such car parks).

30. CLOSURE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 4 May 2016 at 7.00 pm at Fairway Hall, Brook Close, Borehamwood, WD6 5BT

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

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