CANTERBURY TRANSPORT ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of meeting held on 29 June 2004
The Canteen, Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury

Present
Professor R Vickerman (Chairman)
City Council N Eden-Green (Portfolio Holder)
City Councillor P Halfpenny
City Councillor P Lee
City Councillor L Norris

Mr N Betts – Canterbury City Management Ltd/LSP
Mr K Bloxham – Canterbury & District Access Group
Inspector Ray Carver – Kent Police
Mr P Harding – Stagecoach in East Kent
Mr A Irons – Taxi Drivers’ Representative
Mr N Pundole – Canterbury Independent Traders Association
Professor P Robinson – Canterbury Conservation Advisory Committee
Mr M Rundell – The Wincheap Society
Mrs B Shire – SPOKES
Mr M Smith – Kent Highways NE Kent Area Office
Mr R Waters – St Stephen’s Road and Close Residents Association
Mr G Wall – The Pedestrian Association

Mrs J Blackwood – Technical Administration Support Officer
Mr I Brown – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Mr D Button – Highway Manager
Mr V Pritchard – Head of Transportation and Engineering

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Geoff Terry of Canterbury College and County Cllr Martin Vye. Paul Harding represented Paul Southgate of Stagecoach in East Kent.

The Chairman welcomed Andy Irons who replaces Mike Bowman as the taxi drivers’ representative and Cllr N Eden Green who is the new CCC Highway & Engineering Portfolio Holder.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2004 were approved as a correct record although in the Minutes and Matters arising it should have read “that ‘her’ Group wished to resign from CTAG”. There were no matters arising.

3. Integrated Kent Rail Franchise

VP updated the Group on the Integrated Kent Franchise and assured the Group that their comments from the last meeting were fed into the response from Canterbury City Council. The SRA have been inundated with comments from the area and this is delaying the production of the final bid document, which now looks like being ready in September. They have managed to identify four potential bidders. DB attended a presentation by the East Kent Partnership to the four bidders who were keen to know their expectations. All Authorities are in a difficult position whilst wanting the improvements but not at the expense of other services. It was felt there was still a lot of mileage in continuing with constructive and helpful advice. PL advised the Group that SRA are in a tight financial position with some projects taking longer and costing more than anticipated, and that they are looking closely at budgets – could mean less scope.
Cllr PH thought the CCC response captured the right balance especially highlighting the problems with the north Kent lines. BS commented that the new rail service will not make any provision for cycles and said what a disastrous approach to sustainable and integrated transport this was.

4. Quality Bus Partnership

The working draft of the protocol for the Quality Bus Partnership was circulated which VP, David Hall and Paul Southgate are working on. Stagecoach have already invested a substantial amount of money, showing real commitment to the Partnership. The bus priority lanes in Sturry Road should start next year and the Whitstable – Canterbury – Herne Bay routes (4 and 6) will be getting new stops and improved service. Paul Harding told the Group that everything is going to plan; they have invested in new vehicles which should be on the road in September, a new timetable for the 4 and 6 routes starts in August with buses running every 15 minutes and now Stagecoach will concentrating on the infrastructure. VP said it was important to highlight these steps and make the public aware via the press and media. This was one of the key priorities to arise from our conferences and to be successful it must start off well. KB was pleased that all buses were coming in at once and said his Group would be happy to help with any demonstrations of accessibility. NB asked for an update on the bus lane on the Canterbury Motor Co. side of Pin Hill, unfortunately no further information was available (next meeting with Babtie 30 June 2004). Post note: Work is expected to commence January 2005

Cllr PH was pleased that new development areas are looking at the proximity of bus services in the planning stage. He also asked about other bus services in the area and how they could also be brought into the loop. MS explained that Stagecoach was the logical company to start with as the main operator in the area but felt there was a way forward to include other operators in time. Real time information should be coming to the district soon, the buses already have GPS installed. IB stressed the importance of the business community role in green travel plans especially C4B and education institutions. IB then asked who was responsible for time tables on bus stops and shelters – Stagecoach are. KB tried the Stagecoach website for information on times and said how hopeless it was, particularly for the partially sighted. Paul Harding acknowledged this.

NEG pointed out that the University are already working on their own green travel plan. AI asked about the improvement plans for stops close to both train stations. VP advised a study had been commissioned by KCC for when CTRL comes in, as Canterbury will be a key station. LN asked if the new bus shelters were leased and was advised there is a 15 year contract with Adshel which started in 2003, and of the 37 shelters and 7 are without any advertising panels and each site is surveyed before installation and consultation taken.

5. Update reports

a) Local Strategic Partnership
NB advised the Group that there had not been a meeting recently, however there is one next week. Their Chairman has taken on the concerns of the SRA bid. NB attended a meeting in Thanet to discuss the formulation of the next local transport plan for Kent.

b) A2 Slip Roads Progress
MS told the Group that a steering group had been set up and already had a meeting. The 1999 brief now needs updating. It will be a slow process with a lots of hoops to go through but all is looking good and positive and it is included now on the Highway Agency list of works.

c) City Centre Issues
The St George’s roundabout off peak traffic signals started working today, there were a few problems with the timings, which were then adjusted, feedback on their operation is welcomed.

Palace Street pedestrian zone commenced on 1 June 2004, but there are still vehicles using the road between 10.30am and 4pm. The restaurateurs in the area are uneasy about putting table and chairs out because of this. More ideas about enforcement are required. NB said it was important for Palace Street that this experiment has the best opportunity to work as it will probably not have another chance and when the Whitefriars opens its new shops, it could have even more of an effect on trade. It is not only a transport solution that it needed but an
economic one as well. RC advised that it was not possible to have a policeman on duty full time in Palace Street, however he offered to meet with others at a site meeting and arranged this for tomorrow (30 June) at 2pm with officers from CCC, Neville Pundole and Kevin Bloxham. LN suggested physical barriers, temporary humps or pinch points, he felt that the experiment needed a fair crack of the whip; it would be shame to see it fail. NEG suggested planters on wheels and also felt it was important to give the traders a fair go at the scheme. DB advised that the main problem was that access had to be available to those few with permits and emergency services. IB asked if the licences were only for pavements as these are quite narrow in places. BS asked about the provision of accessible seating but was advised that unfortunately it leads to crime and disorder issues. AI asked about number plate recognition cameras in view of the lack of police presence in the area – but RC thought it was unsuitable. LN said part of solution relies on the traders and KB was concerned about access for the disabled.

The work on the crossing in Watling Street between the Dane John and Whitefriars is almost complete however the final road surface has not yet been laid, which makes the ramps appear steep. The multi storey car park is due to open in July and more shops opening in August. CCC is working with Land Securities on the signing issues and flip over signs are being discussed. The question of rising bollard in Rose Lane is being discussed at the next JTB on 13 July.

d) Whitstable Traffic and Parking Scheme
A report will go to the next WAMP meeting on 12 July and the JTB on 13 July recommending that the scheme be abandoned, as the results of the consultation were inconclusive. Of the 25% that responded only half were in favour of the proposals. NEG said that something needs to be done in Whitstable but there will need to be a clear steer from Members.

e) Future of Kent Highway Partnership
KCC as the Highway Authority are reviewing the client arrangements for the delivery of the highway service in the lead up to new contract arrangements with contractor and consultant. Various options are being considered from, leaving the situation as it is, to KCC taking it back. A decision by county members will need to be made by early autumn. RV said it was important to be aware of the clear routes of decision making, but that it was difficult to know what is the best option. Cllr PH asked if discussions were taking place with other districts and it appears each district has different pressures and views.

f) Sustainable Transport
A summary of the Sustainable Transport initiatives was handed round and VP highlighted some of the points. RC told the Group that since the distribution of officers has been revamped, the Police will be making regular checks on illegal parking at schools. BS commented that on the Walking for Health website there were no walks identified in Canterbury and Whitstable and only one in Herne Bay. RV said it was important to pull all these issues together and publicise that these things are happening and also making the link between health and exercise. Overall it looks very encouraging.

6. Transportation Conference
RV advised the Group that the next conference should be when things have been achieved, so it was agreed to have the next one in 2005. However, there will another All Together Now conference this year but as yet it has not been decided on the structure of the meeting. VP suggested that a newsletter could be sent out in October to remind everyone what we are working on and what has already been achieved.

7. Election of Chairman for the next 12 month
NB proposed that Roger Vickerman stay for one more year as Chairman and Beatrice Shire seconded the motion. Roger said he would be happy to chair for another year but that this one would be his last.

8. Any other business
None

9. Next Meeting
It was agreed that the next meeting should take place on Thursday 21 October 2004 at 6pm. The meeting closed at 7.30pm

**Canterbury Transport Advisory Group – Terms of reference**

- To consider, comment and make suggestions on reports by officers on issues relating to the Canterbury District Transport Strategy Review.
- To contribute to the preparation of the Canterbury Transport Plan.
- To participate in, and comment on the results of the public consultation on the Canterbury Transport Plan.
- To assist in building consensus on the actions approved in the adopted Plan.

Minutes of CTAG meetings will be referred to the Joint Transportation Board.

**Revised Membership of CTAG from 15 June 2004:-**

University of Kent at Canterbury – Professor Roger Vickerman (Chair)
Canterbury City Management Ltd/LSP – Nick Betts
SE Trains – Julie Houghton
Stagecoach East Kent – Paul Southgate
Canterbury Taxi Drivers Association – Andy Irons
Canterbury Conservation Advisory Committee – Professor P Robinson
Pedestrians Association – Guy Wall
SPOKES – Beatrice Shire
Wincheap Society – Michael Rundell
St Stephens’ Residents’ Association – Robert Waters
Kent Highways NE Kent Area – Mike Smith
East Kent Primary Care Trust Transport – Geoff Prince
Canterbury Police – Inspector Ray Carver
Canterbury Independent Traders Association – Neville Pundole
Canterbury College – Geoff Terry, Principal
Canterbury & District Access Group – Kevin Bloxham
4 City Councillors appointed by the City Council:-
  Councillors Peter Halfpenny, Lewis Norris, Peter Lee, Michael Nee
3 Kent County Councillors appointed by each political group in Canterbury District:-
  Councillors Martin Vye, Jean Butcher, John Simmonds.
CCC Highway and Engineering Portfolio Holder – Cllr Nick Eden-Green

The Chair of the group will be re-elected by the group annually at the July meeting.

The Head of Transportation and Engineering (Viv Pritchard) is lead officer for the group, supported by the Highway Manager (Dennis Button); Director of Development and Planning (David Reed), Head of Regeneration and Economic Development (Ian Brown) and other officers of the Council dealing with specific tasks. Jan Blackwood provides administrative support for the group. The group
now consists of 24 members + supporting officers, of which 2 members each will represent business; residents groups; motorised travel organisations; non-motorised travel groups; education; and one each representing train travel; police, health, disabled and conservation.