



**Hastings and Rother Transport Action Group**  
Minutes of Meeting held on

Thursday, 21 February 2019 at Muriel Matters House

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**Chair:** Cllr Andy Batsford - Hastings Borough Council (HBC)

**Present:**

Battle Town Council Transport Advisor - Bev Marks  
East Sussex County Council (ESCC) - Andrew Keer  
Hastings Borough Council (HBC) - Cllr Andy Batsford  
Hastings Borough Council (HBC) - Katy Wiseman  
Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum - Ian Sier  
Rother District Council (RDC) - Cllr Ian Hollidge

**In attendance:**

Hastings Borough Council (HBC) – Chris Gibbs (Minutes)  
Hastings Borough Council (HBC) – Coral Harding  
Hastings Borough Council (HBC) – Kevin Boorman  
Stagecoach – Matthew Arnold  
Stagecoach – Dimitri Bridgland  
Stagecoach – Hugh Loy

**Apologies for absence:** Rother District Council (RDC) - Tim Hickling

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**Summary of Notes and actions**

**1. Notes and actions of last meeting held on 29 November 2018**

**a) Overview of work being undertaken in relation to transport in East Sussex -**

By request, a copy of the presentation would be circulated to HARTAG Executive members – A copy has been circulated to members

**b) Overview of work being undertaken in relation to transport in East Sussex -**  
prepare a briefing on the current situation for HARTAG Executive members –

Current rail issues have been circulated but are not specific to high speed rail

**ACTION:** pass on thanks for the update but request for an update on high speed rail.

**c) Overview of work being undertaken in relation to transport in East Sussex -**

raise all of the above issues at a forthcoming meeting with Network Rail – **ACTION:**  
Check with Tessa Sweet-Escott to see if feedback was made at network rail meeting

d) **AfA bid in support of Battle, and St Leonards Warrior Square Rail Stations** - raise this with Network Rail – **ACTION:** Check with Tessa Sweet-Escott to see if feedback was made at network rail meeting

e) **Any other business, Bus lanes in Bexhill Road – traffic regulations and planned opening** – Update on the current situation was provided

f) **Any other business, Road Safety Report** - request a written comment on the report about the current position from Brian Banks at ESCC's Road Safety Team – No update at this time

g) **Any other business, Road Safety Report** - provide a quarterly A4 briefing in advance of meetings on current transport developments – Briefing note and letter attached to the agenda pack

HARTAG members spoke about how the department for transport is giving funding for cycle hubs, it requires 10% match funding from ESCC and 10% from RDC. It was also mentioned that the new cycle area at battle station is now usable. It has a train timetable board by the cycle racks so cyclist can see the train times whilst locking their bikes up. It was commented that it might be a good idea to push for indicator boards near future cycle hubs.

A discussion was had around the cycle route to the Hastings Station from the promenade and how it needs improvement. It was mentioned that with new developments coming up there may be an opportunity to integrate works into this. **ACTION:** Cllr Andy Batsford to look at this route and the local plan and see what is happening with this.

## **2. DESTI-SMART**

### **Presented by Kevin Boorman**

Kevin Boorman was invited to give a presentation on the DESTI-SMART (Delivering Efficient Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel) project. This project is an information exchange project, with the purpose to fund feasibility studies and exchange best practises. It is funded by EU grant money and 15% funded by Hastings Borough Council (funded entirely by staff time), and looks to fund a feasibility study to improve seafront transport. Stagecoach are also involved in this project. The second partner meeting will be held in Hastings on the 27<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> of March and involves 9 other cities across Europe. The most likely solution to improved seafront travel is a 27 seat double-ended electric bus dubbed “the mini tram”. As there is no area for a large vehicle such as a bus to turn in the town then a double-ended bus makes the most sense. It may be hydrogen powered or electric, batteries are heavy and it would require a lot of them to power the vehicle. It is possible the bus will run on the pavement in the same way as the Dotto train in Eastbourne which is also run by Stagecoach. There is potential for it to plug into the rail network and either Hastings or St Leonard's warrior square stations would be good candidates for this. The aim is for this bus to eventually connect the old town and the town centre to the new bohemia development project, which is a large regeneration project that Hastings Borough Council are looking to work on. Once the

DESTI-SMART feasibility study is complete Hastings Borough Council will look at funding options for the project based on the outcomes of the study.

Members were invited to ask questions. Concerns were raised around the lack of places to turn in Hastings town. Kevin Boorman commented that plans to create a turning point were looked at but were very expensive and Hastings Borough Council do not have the budget to achieve this but would like to. Stagecoach pointed out that the 20 service provides the link that this project is aiming to provide and is every twenty minutes. Stagecoach were asked if they had plans to upgrade to an electric/hydrogen fleet of buses in the future. In answer they currently do not have plans to upgrade their fleet due to the difference in cost between the different types of powered bus, but in the future when the price of electric comes down Stagecoach hope to begin upgrading the fleet. There are schemes available to help fund this but Stagecoach are unsure when the next round of funding will be. The current costs of different types of bus were noted for context as follows:

Standard Diesel bus £200,000

Hybrid bus (Diesel and electric) £300,000

Fully electric bus £400,000 - £450,000

Hydrogen powered bus £1,000,000

Other concerns were raised around the charging requirements of electric buses and the cost involved in installing three phase charging points.

Stagecoach gave the members a brief outline of their plans to run an open top bus service along the seafront in the summer, and asked for the information to be published at a later date when it has been made public.

### **3. Stagecoach south east and service improvement planning Presented by Matthew Arnold/Dimitri Bridgland**

Matthew Arnold was invited to give a presentation on the issues Stagecoach face that cause delays and disruption to service. These included: congestion, roadworks (especially unplanned/unauthorized) and drivers who park in bus pickup zones. Picture examples were shown to co-inside with these points. Dimitri Bridgland offered to take questions.

Members asked if the police were co-operative in their efforts to enforce against the issue of people parking in bus lanes. Stagecoach commented that the police are making every effort to enforce but cannot always be there to see every issue as by the time it is reported, and the officer has re-routed to enforce, the car has moved on. Officers cannot be everywhere at once and unless an issue arises where the officer happens to be then it cannot be enforced. Members asked if the new bus lanes have been a success and if there were plans to add more. Andrew Keer commented that the new bus lanes have been a positive impact but it is hard to fully gauge the success until the new ALDI has opened and the traffic around this increases. There are two more phases to complete around the bus lanes and these should be completed within the next year. East Sussex County Council transport are

monitoring the turn by Ravenside opposite the bus stop for any potential issues.

**ACTION:** Andrew Keer to check with East Sussex County Council transport why the bus stop near the garage has not been upgraded as of yet.

Stagecoach outlined a few changes to their services two of these in particular, the 22a and the 98, would be significant changes. These are yet to be announced to the public and should delay these minutes until the announcement is made. The 22a will no longer continue on to Sidley this will make the service more regular. The 98 will now continue on to provide a service from Bexhill to the Conquest hospital. Stagecoach asked that the minutes be delayed in their publishing until this information is released to the public.

Members asked questions about the Stagecoach app service, such as the difference in live bus tracking times and scheduled timetabled times as well as if there are any plans for real time bus cancellations on the app. Stagecoach commented that the app will show real time bus information in an aqua coloured text, but if connection with the bus tracker is lost for any reason then the colour of the estimated arrival time will change to black coloured text to reflect that it is the buses timetabled arrival time and not a real time update. The new version of the app will show cancelled buses however Twitter is still the best place for live updates to cancelled buses.

#### **4. Joint working HBC and RDC Presented by Katy Wiseman**

Katy Wiseman was invited to give an update on any joint working projects between Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council. Hastings Borough Council are undertaking joint working with Rother District Council on cross-boundary strategic planning issues as part of reviewing their respective Local Plans, both Local Plans will cover the plan period until 2036. They have a duty to co-operate and will both be looking at governance as part of this joint working venture.

Cllr Hollidge spoke on how this joint working would bring in the right developments in the right locations. And that it would look at developments connecting into public transport much more, as some applications never consider the local transport routes and fail to connect to them. Stagecoach commented that they have a document that will be sent around to all planning authorities that they work with which will outline what requirements should be considered to allow Stagecoach to operate. It will lay out the ideal situations for new developments, and will recommend a change in the way section 106 operates to give a bit more flexibility in the way they are fulfilled. Members commented on how walking and cycling also need to be considered as forms of transport and the disability forum and the rambles association should be consulted to aid in this. More consideration should be given to active travel and issues around active travel; this should inform better design decisions at the early stage. This should also include travel issues that are not necessarily within the boundaries of the development but are affected by it. It was commented that Hastings and Bexhill are connected and should be treated as such and that conversations should be had to prevent issues arising.

**5. National federation of the blind on shared space**  
**Presented by Katy Wiseman**

Katy Wiseman was invited to give an update on the correspondence the council received from the Department for Transport (DFT). The letter was sent to clarify the approach to shared space schemes following the publication of the Department for Transport's inclusive Transport strategy and the Ministry for housing, Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework in July. A letter was also received from National Federation of the Blind of the UK (NFBUK) campaigning against the principles of shared space.

Members discussed the DFT's need to clarify what they mean by shared spaces and the need to pass the parking on pavement bill to stop cars parking on the pavements. Members considered the necessity of shared spaces and the wider picture. It was agreed that this was a large piece of work for all authorities involved and the changing of legislation or drivers rules would also be a large piece of work.

**6. Written updates**

None

**7. Forward Planning**

Cycle hub

**8. Any other business**

None

**9. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday, 29 May 2019 at 10am at Bexhill Town Hall