

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board held on
21 September 2010 commencing at 7 pm

Present: Chairman: Cllr. Brazier

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. London (James)

District Councillors: Mrs Davison, Underwood, Waller and Williamson.

County Councillors: Brookbank, Chard, Gough, London (John) and Parry.

The representative from the Kent Association of Parish Councils: Cllr. Robson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs. Dawson and Dibsfall.

Officers: Messrs. Dines (KCC), Burton (KCC), Ms. Squires (KCC), Wilson (SDC), Connor (SDC) , Bracey (SDC) and Round (SDC).

Cllrs. Davison, Fleming and Piper were also in attendance.

14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 15 JUNE 2010 (Item No. 1)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board held on 15 June 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item No. 2)

Cllr. Chard declared a personal interest in Minute Items 17 and 19 as he lived in Sevenoaks High Street and his son was a blue badge holder.

Cllr. Williamson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute Item 17 as he was a trader in London Road, Sevenoaks. He also declared a personal interest in Minute Item 19 for the same reason.

16. MATTERS ARISING/UPDATES (INCLUDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS) (Report No. 3)

a) Actions from Previous Meetings

Officers circulated an update on some of the actions contained within the agenda papers.

Petition relating to Cold Arbor Road, Bessels Green

Members were informed that discussions would be ongoing with the local County Member as to whether he would be prepared to fund the works from his Highway

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Allocations Budget. Subject to funding, it was hoped that works could be undertaken within the current financial year. A resident from Bessels Green stated that the papers incorrectly recorded that residents wanted a pedestrian crossing in Bessels Green – this was not the case. Instead, residents wanted the traffic to be slowed and restricted. It was agreed that Officers would liaise with the County Member and local residents in drawing up a scheme.

Petition relating to a pedestrian crossing in Main Road, Crockham Hill

Officers stated that there would be a Speed Indicator Device in place on this road in November and it would also be in place again in March 2011. Requests had also been made to the police for extra enforcement. The local County Member felt that more needed to be done in this area.

Swanley Lane, between Swanley and Hextable

Members received an update report. The local County Member, who was funding the work from his Highway Allocations Budget, stated that further discussion was needed regarding the type of markings around the bus stops but was generally satisfied with progress.

30mph speed interactive sign in Sundridge

Officers stated that these works would be undertaken in November. Subject to funding being found from the Members Highway Fund, there was also the possibility of an interactive speed sign being installed on the eastbound approach to the village

Speed limit on the B2042 at Goat Hurst Common

Officers informed the Board that KCC had been undertaking a speed limit review of all A and B roads in the county but unfortunately, work was not completed in the western part of the county and it had now been terminated due to reductions in funding. Speed limits would now only be reviewed if they were a priority, which normally meant that they would be a crash remedial measure. The Local Member thought this stretch of road posed a serious problem, which could not wait. A resident also stated that it was a very narrow road and cars went through it far too fast. He stated that a 30-40mph limit was needed on the road and there was a petition with 70 signatures to that effect. The Chairman agreed to send a copy of the petition to the Cabinet Member for Highways.

17. HGVs IN SEVENOAKS TOWN (Report No. 4)

Officers informed the Board that a traffic survey of HGVs travelling through the town had been undertaken and the number which were using the High Street as a through route was low, with most involved in making deliveries. The proposal was for a ban on vehicles exceeding 7.5 tonnes from travelling along the High Street between the junctions with Pembroke Road and London Road unless they were loading or unloading, with London Road and Pembroke Road being used as a diversion. It was proposed that the scheme would run for an initial 18-month trial period, with residents able to respond to submit comments towards a review during the first 6 months of the scheme.

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A number of Members and local residents felt that given the low number of lorries using the High Street as a through route, the scheme was unlikely to greatly improve the issues relating to HGVs using the upper High Street. In fact, it was generally felt that diverting some HGVs through London Road would either lead to displacement traffic through Riverhead or HGVs having to undertake a very difficult right turn onto Pembroke Road. Members and local residents were concerned about the impact on residents living in Pembroke Road and in Riverhead if the scheme were progressed. The view was expressed that lorries who were using the town as a through route should instead be redirected along the A21, M25 and M20.

The KCC Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Highways stated that whilst nobody wanted HGVs in the High Street, it was necessary so that shops could receive their deliveries. He stated that KCC was actively engaging with haulage firms to ensure that they were aware of the key strategic routes across the county. Members noted the difficulties that could arise with satellite navigation systems directing lorries through the High Street.

Following the views expressed by the Board and local residents, the KCC Portfolio Holder for Highways stated that he would not be implementing the proposed scheme in its current form.

18. TRO AMENDMENT 12 (CHANGES TO PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN PLYMOUTH DRIVE, SEVENOAKS) (Report No. 5)

Sevenoaks District Council's (SDC's) Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer informed the Board that the owner of the property had asked for a new access onto the Highway. The owner had separately applied for planning permission to build a new dwelling in what was currently the garden of his property. The Board were advised of a correction to the final sentence of paragraph 6 of the report, which should read "the application for amendments to the existing property was not approved by the planning process". However, the resident would still be able to appeal this decision.

The Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer stated that notwithstanding the planning process for the new dwelling, the owner had the right to ask for a new access to the highway under permitted development and KCC had no grounds on which to refuse the request. Once that consent had been obtained from KCC, SDC then had no grounds to refuse the application to amend the parking bays.

Members noted that there were a number of objections to the proposal but that, notwithstanding this, there were no grounds on which to refuse the amendment of the parking bays to accommodate the new access. A Member expressed concern that the proposal would remove the gap in parked cars, which might make it hard for traffic to get past each other. However, the Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer informed the Board that the road was wide enough to allow for parked cars and two lines of traffic to pass safely but that, given residents' wishes, a small gap was still to be retained.

In response to a question, the Board was informed that the applicant would be funding the process.

Resolved: That it be recommended that the parking restrictions should be

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made as proposed in the report.

19. TRO AMENDMENT 13 (CHANGES TO PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN HIGH STREET, SEVENOAKS) (Report No. 6)

The Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer explained proposals for the northern section of the High Street. He informed the Board that when Southern Water had undertaken some work in the High Street about three years ago, some temporary limited waiting bays had been in place outside WH Smith. Given the parking pressures being experienced now as a result of the Waitrose development, it was proposed to reintroduce those bays but extend them further north towards Blighs Road. It also was proposed to replace the current “no waiting at any time” restrictions outside Tesco’s to “no waiting at any time and no loading (Monday to Saturday 8:30am to 6:30pm). This would help to reduce delays. A new loading bay would be introduced to serve the commercial premises nearby.

The Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer also explained proposals for the southern section of the High Street. The current five-space taxi rank was currently underused, and only allowed taxis to ply for hire. However, it was proposed that this be converted into a two-space parking place for taxis, which would allow them to park as well. It was proposed that the disabled bay outside 88 High Street be removed, as it was tending to be occupied by all day blue-badge parking and was not allowing turnover of spaces. It was proposed that pay and display parking be extended outside Lorimers to improve parking availability and to upgrade the single lines across Akehurst Lane to double yellow lines to improve access. There was also a need to make some adjustments to the parking bays and double yellow lines outside the Chequers following legal advice.

A Board member objected to the removal of the disabled bay outside 88 High Street and stated that in his opinion, blue badge holders did not park all day. He did not feel that removing the bay sent out the right message to disabled people. He also felt that most traffic turning out of Akehurst Lane would be likely to travel south and that the layout of the junction as proposed did not accommodate this. Further, he was concerned about how effective the restriction of loading would be outside Tesco’s and asked where the Sevenoaks Minibus and the postman would be loading.

In response to the point regarding the disabled bay, the Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer informed Members that disabled users would still be able to park in the pay and display bays free of charge. He stated that draft proposals had involved retaining a disabled bay outside 92-94 High Street, however this had been removed on the advice of officers from KCC. Members felt that the notwithstanding these comments, the bay should be retained.

In response to the other points raised, the Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer stated that the Sevenoaks minibus would still be able to drop off its passengers in Suffolk Way and that this would be a similar distance away. A Member felt that this was not as convenient a location for older people to be dropped off in the town. The Board was also informed that the postman was exempted from all loading restrictions, although they were encouraged to use loading bays when these were available.

Members discussed the potential impact of leaving the disabled bay outside 88 High

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Street but continuing with the remainder of the scheme. The Senior Parking and Traffic Engineer replied that this would make the parking bays much harder to enforce as people were likely to encroach into the disabled bay from the pay and display bays.

Resolved: That it be recommended that the proposals contained within the report be implemented, subject to the retention of a disabled bay at some point on the southern High Street.

20. HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME PROGRESS REPORT (Report No. 7)

The report was noted.

21. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – ENVIRONMENT HIGHWAYS AND WASTE POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCURTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS – FOR INFORMATION (Report No. 13)

These were noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8:42 P.M.

Chairman