

Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2024 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Roy (Chairman)

Cllr. Chard (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Baker, Ball, Brazier, Clayton, Cole, England, Gough, Haslam, Horwood, McArthur, Streatfeild, Wightman and Williams

Cllrs. Clack, Granville, Purves, Robinson, Shea and Thornton were also present.

33. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held 28 November 2023 be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

34. Declarations of interest

Cllr. Horwood declared for Minute 39 – EV Charging Pilots and Trials Update that he worked for the electricity distribution network operator for the area, but that he did not work in a role related to connections and had no pecuniary interest.

35. Matters Arising/Update (Including Actions from Previous Meetings)

There were none.

36. Sevenoaks Townwide 20mph Limit Update

The Chairman presented the report, which set out the results of the consultation on the Townwide 20mph speed limit scheme, and the working group's discussions thereof. The group were divided on the best way to progress the scheme, with half the group seeking to progress a revised scheme, removing, Mt. Harry/Hitchen Hatch Road, St. Botolph's Road (Scheme A), and the northern section of the A225 from the Vine to Bat and Ball Junction, and the other half seeking to bring the scheme forward as designed (Scheme B).

Members were addressed by two members of the public, in support of Scheme A and Scheme B respectively. They were further addressed by two Members of the Council, similarly, with one in support of Scheme A and one supporting Scheme B.

Members discussed the report and the consultation response. They discussed the large number of school students that came to Sevenoaks each week, and the positive

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impact to the safety of these pupils that the reduced speed limit would have. Members further discussed the issue of compliance on the roads excluded in Scheme A. Members expressed concern that drivers that did not support speed limits in certain roads would ignore them in others within the scheme, as suggested by government guidance regarding blanket speed limits. The roads removed in Scheme A displayed average speeds outside of KCC's tolerances, and Members were not confident that drivers would comply with limits on these roads, especially as the scheme as proposed did not contain traffic calming measures. A blanket scheme may also result in a false sense of security in pedestrians, creating areas of increased risk.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Kent County Council that the extent of the Sevenoaks Townwide 20mph Speed Limit Scheme be reduced by removing Mount Harry/Hitchen hatch Road, St Botolph's Road, and the northern section of the A225 from the Vine to the Bat and Ball junction.

37. London Road, Swanley, Sevenoaks TRO consultation feedback

The Highway Manager (KCC) presented the report, which set out the feedback received from consultations regarding two Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).. The TRO proposals set out waiting restrictions and the prohibition of traffic movement on sections of London Road, Swanley, to facilitate the requirements of planning permission for a commercial development on the Broomhill site, Swanley. Ten responses had been received during the consultation for waiting restrictions, nine of which were objections, Five responses were received for the prohibition of traffic movement order, all of which were objections.

Members were addressed by a Swanley resident and a representative of Swanley Town Council in opposition to the TROs. They set out the negative impacts of the waiting restrictions. A significant proportion of the parking covered by the proposed waiting restrictions was to access the bus service to London. The restrictions would displace parking into surrounding roads and exacerbate the pre-existing parking issues.

Members discussed the proposals. They further raised that the creation of a bus lane would further deflect parking and traffic into neighbouring roads, without interlinking with other bus lanes. Members objected to the bus lane and supported allowing off-road parking in the area.

Resolved: That the Traffic Regulation Orders not be implemented as proposed.

38. Highways Forward Works Programme 2023/24

The Highway Manager presented the report, which set out the Highways Forward Works Programme for 2023/24.

Members discussed the Programme. They requested further information be provided regarding the extent of unfunded work across the district. The Highway Manager

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would investigate delivering this to a future meeting of the Board. Members further noted that Egerton Avenue was in the parish of Hextable, not Swanley, as listed.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

39. EV Charging Pilots and Trials Update

The Chairman introduced the report, which updated the committee regarding Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in Sevenoaks.

Members discussed the possibility of allowing the public access to the taxi charging point in the centre of Sevenoaks. They further discussed the potential introduction of pavement charging channels around Sevenoaks, noting the ongoing trial process in Bromley and Oxford. Members raised the possibility of introducing this scheme on roads owned by the District Council. Members discussed the County Council's ongoing investigations into other options, and any potential issues, including insurance and parking access. It was suggested that the public acknowledged that they would not be able to access street charging at all times, but would appreciate the option regardless.

Members discussed the Electric Vehicle Working Group, as proposed at the March 2024 meeting of the board. The Chairman explained that few members had expressed availability to participate in the group, and that the KCC Innovations Team did not have the resources to provide officer support for district-focused initiatives - though regular updates would continue to be provided to the committee. Members acknowledged that this would make the delivery of the Working Group unfeasible. They further discussed the importance of delivering schemes that satisfied local residents in a timely manner, and would continue to work towards this in partnership with the County Council.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Members discussed a Work Plan for future meetings. An Active Travel Update, EV Charging Update, and enhanced Highways Forward Works Programme were added to the Work Plan.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8:20PM

CHAIRMAN