

Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Roy (Chairman)

Cllr. Chard (Vice-Chairman)

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

Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr. McArthur and KALC Representative Cllr. Haslam

Cllrs. Purves and Robinson were also present.

23. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held 18 September 2023 be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

24. Declarations of interest

There were none.

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

Members noted the actions from previous meetings. The Chairman tabled a draft letter to the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to present the Board's opinions on the proposals. The Board discussed the importance of presenting the Board's joint views. They further discussed the review of the Board and its remit. It was moved from the Chair that the letter be sent to the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

Resolved: That the tabled draft letter be sent to the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

26. Proposed Sevenoaks Townwide 20mph Working Group Update

The Senior Programme Manager for Active Travel presented the report, which updated Members on the Sevenoaks Townwide 20mph scheme and working group. The proposed limit was part of a consultation which was due to finish on 14 December. This had been advertised in the Town Crier, with large maps available at the Town Council offices, Bat & Ball station, and the library. The consultation was also publicised through social media. Information events would be held at markets, supermarkets, and Sevenoaks station.

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The feedback from the consultation would be analysed by the working group, which would inform their recommendations to the Board in the future.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

27. Sevenoaks East/West Walking Wheeling and Cycling Route Update

The Senior Programme Manager for Active Travel presented the report, which set out the progress and next steps of the Sevenoaks East/West Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling project. Design work continued, incorporating feedback from the consultation held 1 June - 14 July 2023. Part of the route at Bradbourne Park Road and St. James' Road had been revisited, after the consultation showed that none of the options provided were viewed as favourable. An alternative option with routes along the A25, Oakdene Road, and St. John's Road was supported by the Steering Group, and would be subject to a local consultation in January 2024. Work was also ongoing on the delivery program for the project.

Members discussed the report. They noted that proposed new route along the A25 integrated well with another route in the LCWIP in a constructive manner.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

28. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) Update

Members considered the report, which updated the committee on the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) process. The HIP was introduced to formalise the process by which parish councils could promote, prioritise, and receive advice on changes to the highways network and highway safety issues. The HIP further allowed parishes to decide to put their own funding towards projects, which would be delivered by KCC officers. It was not suitable for addressing urgent matters, or for issues that the parish would not address itself. It was noted however that KCC could help with funding very small projects brought forward in this way.

The Community Engagement Officer outlined the HIP review process. The Community Engagement Team would meet with the parish council to discuss the requests and gather further information, to determine which projects were feasible. The Highways Improvement Team would then provide final proposals or alternative solutions, where required. This sometimes required a design fee, which would cover site visits, site designs, road safety audits, and utilities plans, among other elements. A final invoice would then be submitted to the council. Schemes delivered through this process were delivered to the same standards and regulations as all other works.

56 Highway Improvement Plans had been received from West Kent parishes since April, with over £200,000 spent. Plans were submitted on an annual basis, to ensure parishes confirmed their priorities, and due to the strain on resources that more frequent applications would cause.

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Members discussed the report and asked questions of clarification. Any projects brought through the HIP process that required a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) could be brought before the Board, should it receive the requisite number of objections.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

29. Applications For Disabled Persons (Blue Badge) Parking Bays

The Head of Direct Services presented the report, which updated the Committee on Disabled Persons Parking Bays within the district. There had been four applications for disabled parking bays; they were all declined as they did not satisfy the KCC assessment criteria. Disabled parking bays in Alder Way, Swanley and Caxton Close, Hartley would be removed as they were no longer required.

Resolved: That it be noted that

- a) the applications received for disabled persons parking bays in Greatness Lane, Sevenoaks, Clarks Lane, Hartley, Dane Road, Otford and St. Peters Row, Fordcombe did not satisfy Kent County Council's assessment criteria, and were declined for the reasons given in this report; and
- b) Following consultation, the following disabled parking bays will be removed from Alder Way, Swanley and Caxton Close, Hartley, as they are no longer required.

30. Sevenoaks District Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure and Accessible Chargers Update

The Chairman introduced the report, which provided an update on EV charging infrastructure in Sevenoaks. The Board heard from a member of the public, who raised their concern regarding the provision of charging for terraced houses in towns. This issue was significant, as town centres were densely populated and had a significant amount of pollution, increasing the need for electric vehicles. They proposed that self-paid cable channels on residential streets were the most appropriate solution, as there was adequate resident parking, and the chargers would primarily be used at night.

The Head of Direct Services (SDC) outlined the report, and made several corrections. The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding received by KCC was £12,081,000. Figure 1 within the report was outdated; there were now 44 EV Charging Points within the district. Consultants were working to correct inaccuracies within the EV Infrastructure Survey, and it would be reissued. No decisions were being made based on the incorrect data.

12 new 50kw points had been commissioned, and would be installed in early 2024 in off-street car parks across the district. Officers were investigating opening one of the rapid taxi chargers in South Park for public use, before the electric taxis were introduced.

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In response to questions, the officer explained that KCC were waiting for OLEZ guidance on channels, which would be issued in 2024. SDC were exploring EV channels as an option for sites on council-owned land, alongside other pilot schemes. Discussions with other authorities regarding these options were ongoing. The DFT map of public chargers did not include home chargers, which Sevenoaks had in high proportion. Disabled bays with EV charging were being actively investigated, and initial inquiries with residents were underway.

Members discussed the relative advantages and disadvantages of EV channels. They used a low-speed power supply overnight, which would reduce their impact on the electrical grid, and were cheaper for residents to charge at. They could also be provided without cost to the authority. Members noted that issues surrounding insurance, maintenance, and the lack of a guarantee of parking had not been fully resolved. They further discussed the balance necessary between central guidance and local initiative. It was proposed, and duly seconded, that a working group to examine EV Charging Infrastructure options be established, with membership and terms of reference to be decided at a later date. The motion was put to the vote and it was

Resolved: that a working group to investigate EV Charging Infrastructure options be established, with membership and terms of reference to be decided at a later date.

Members further discussed the report.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

31. Highways Forward Works Programme 2023/24

The Sevenoaks Highway Manager presented the report, which updated Members on the identified schemes approved for construction. Members considered the schemes and asked questions of clarification. They were advised that sites listed as “technically approved” had been approved by KCC engineers, but construction had not yet begun on site. The new signage for the reduced speed limit on Seal Road would be installed soon.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

32. Work Plan

6 March 2024

- EV Charging Pilots and Trials Update
- Active Travel Grant Update
- Potholes Progress Update
- Sevenoaks Townwide 20mph Limit Update

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8:05PM

CHAIRMAN