

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee
meeting held on the 14th September 2015, 6pm, Sevenoaks Town Council Offices

In attendance: Cllr Raikes (Chairman), Cllr Arnold, Cllr Hunter, Cllr Purves, Cllr Walshe, Cllr Hogarth, Cllr Piper, John Ingram, Geoff Brown, Simon Randall, Glenn Ball, Reg Oakley, Bob Carpenter, Roger Walshe, Flora Hill, Helen French, Linda Larter, Hugh D'Alton, 5 members of the public

Apologies: Cllr Clayton, Cllr Parson, Elizabeth Dolding, Byron Brown.

1. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the steering committee meeting held on the 3rd August 2015 were received and noted.

3. Integrated Transport Strategy

- **KI1 Development of a new orbital bus service linking town centre with rail stations and possible park and ride site**

The Committee were pleased that the response to this initiative were broadly positive, it was noted that some respondents had picked up on the need to allow the bus sufficient time (at least 2yrs) to attract a dedicated userbase, and that viability monitoring should be an ongoing process.

- **KI2 Review feasibility of the introduction of a park and ride system to serve the vehicles approaching from the north of the town**

It was noted that the initiative specified "north of the town" as only a northern site had been suggested to date.

- **KI3 Promote Travel Plans for all schools within the town and organise a school travel planning workshop, where best practice can be exchanged. The aim of this would be to ensure an overarching school travel plan is developed for the town, ensuring the best use of resources for maximum benefit**

The Committee was pleased at the general support for the proposal, though it was noted it may be problematic in the case of the proposed Wildernesse School scheme.

- **KI4 Work with the Sevenoaks Town Partnership and other business groups to help support the benefit of Work Place Travel plans, undertaking workshops with key business groups to demonstrate the benefits to both the employer and the employees**

It was noted that Sevenoaks District Council's economic development team were strengthening their engagement with Town Centre retailers and businesses. It was requested that this initiative be brought to the Sevenoaks Town Partnership for more detailed input.

- **KI5 Promote cycling within the town, in conjunction with a national cycling week, encourage existing cycling shops and related businesses to get involved to help promote cycling for commuting and leisure trips**

It was noted that Kent County Council had estimated circa 250 pupils would cycle to the new Wildernesse School site once operational and that this would present unique challenges.

The need to separate cyclists from pedestrians as a matter of safety was stressed.

It was agreed that the initiative should be modified to explicitly mention the need for more cycle parking in key locations within the Town.

It was noted that no reference had been made to the need for adequate parking for motorcycle users in the Town.

- **KI6 Support and lobby both national and regional funding bodies with respect to delivering the various improvements identified in the Sevenoaks Cycling Strategy.**
The committee noted the broad support for this initiative.

- **KI7 Promote walking within the town by creating a detailed network plan, with improved signage, crossing points at key junctions and general surfacing improvements to allow access for less able and disabled users**

It was noted there were no references to national guidance documents, though agreed that many of these were not a suitable basis for decision making in Sevenoaks with its constrained historic infrastructure, however were vital for informing the design of new large scale developments.

It was noted there was a lack of footpaths in the South of the Town.

The Quality of surfacing was also brought up as a key issue along with the camber of the pavements which pose issues to those with impaired mobility, especially with a slope towards the road.

The need for additional pedestrian crossings was reiterated.

It was noted that sometimes advertising boards posed an issue for those with mobility issues especially within the Town Centre with limited pavement widths.

In some areas of the town pavements abruptly stop.

- **KI8 Promote Car sharing schemes such as Liftshare or similar to key destinations such as Sevenoaks station, or the town centre. Look at potentially reduced parking charges for multiple occupancy vehicles**

The need to promote dial-a-ride style schemes for the less mobile was noted.

- **KI9 Work with local taxi services to ensure a regularised charging regime and a good level of service at key times for main pickup points near the station, encouraging taxi share where possible**

It was suggested there may be some conflict between this initiative and other initiatives, such as the orbital bus, but agreed that they were targeting separate areas of the community and would be complementary services as part of the integrated transport strategy.

- **KI10 Promote where possible with local retailers local delivery services and online shopping to minimise trips required by the car**

There was some confusion about the intention of this initiative.

Concern was expressed that this may lead to additional large delivery lorries in the Town Centre, which was not the intention.

- **KI11 Promote a scheme to generally improve pedestrian facilities within the town centre, including increased footway width and improved crossing points, along with a reduced vehicle speed with 20mph zones being introduced along the High Street and London Road**

It was questioned whether there were any bylaws preventing nuisance parking on pavements which blocks pedestrian movement, it was noted that this was technically a police matter who were unlikely to issue fines against perpetrators, it was suggested SDC be contacted to establish whether they could take control of enforcement for this type of offence noting their recent press release regarding enforcement action against the blocking of private drives.

- **KI12 Ensure that sufficient parking is provided in the right places within the town to meet the real demand of the area**

It was noted that the initiative highlighted the need to increase parking, and the body of the document expressed a preference for increasing the number of spaces on current sites before looking to additional sites.

It was questioned how much information KCC had on traffic flows, and data on where sources of demand were coming from.

- **KI13 Promote home working initiatives and better broadband speeds in the town**
The initiative was noted.

- **KI14 All new developments are to be supported by a travel plan and a travel welcome pack be provided to all new residents promoting travel awareness**

Caution was urged with regards to suggesting 'all' development should require a travel plan, it was suggested a minimum size be determined. In addition the need for monitoring protocol to be put into place was stressed.

- **KI15 Work with Network Rail and current train operators to develop Station Travel Plans**

It was questioned whether plans for the 'station square' should be realistic or ambitious, especially given the extant planning permissions for sites.

- **KI16 To investigate working with other authorities on the development a mobile application delivering real time information on bus and rail services to improve public confidence in service reliability**

It was noted that real time information on buses was available in some forms in Sevenoaks which may expedite the process of creating a mobile application.

- **KI17 Develop special Travel Awareness section to Town Council's website**

It was agreed that while this was a good idea, it would need to be carried out in conjunction with more active methods of improving the travel network in Sevenoaks.

4. NDP Banner Consultation

It was noted that banners summarising key themes from the Town Wide Questionnaire had been finalised, consultation dates in the Town Centre were currently being arranged with venues, once agreed these dates would be circulated to members of the steering committee along with a call for volunteers.

5. Dates of future meetings

It was noted that following dates had been set for future Steering Committee meetings, and that all meetings would begin at 6pm and finish at 6:55pm.

- a. 26th October 2015
- b. 7th December 2015
- c. 18th January 2016
- d. 29th February 2016
- e. 11th April 2016

Meeting concluded at: 6:55pm