

SEVENOAKS TOWN FORUM

**Meeting to be held at Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber
Bradbourne Vale Road, TN13 3QG**

Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 6.30 p.m.

Coffee available from 6.00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Meetings held on:
 - (i) 3rd September 2019
 - (ii) 26th November 2019

(Copies previously distributed and attached)

3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Updates since the last meeting
5. Open Forum
6. Date of next meeting

**Minutes of the Town Forum Meeting held at
Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks
On Tuesday 3rd September 2019**

Present (details from signed attendance sheet)

Cllr Peter Fleming OBE, Chairman	Sevenoaks District Council
Anthea Belsay	St John's Resident Association
Geoff Brown	St John's Resident Association
Jonathan Drury	White Hart Estates Residents Association / Wednesday Market Traders
Henry Pound	Knole Paddock Resident Association
Cllr Avril Hunter	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Victoria Granville Baxter	Sevenoaks Town Council
John Harris	St John's Resident Association
Naomi Annable	St John's Primary School
Cllr Simon Raikes	Sevenoaks District / Town Council
Bob Carpenter	St John's Resident Association
Byron Brown	Bradbourne Residents Association
Keith Loney	Lyle Park Residents Association
Cllr Elizabeth Purves	Sevenoaks District Council / Hollybush Residents Association
Edward Oakley	St John's Primary School
Lesley Smith	St John's Resident Association
Miss Helen O'Sullivan	Granville Road and Eardley Road Residents Association
Jana Petkova	Granville Road and Eardley Road Residents Association
Cllr Tony Clayton	Sevenoaks District / Town Council
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Sevenoaks District / Town Council
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Sevenoaks District / Town Council
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council
Doug Ellish	Sevenoaks Cyclist User Group

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Cllr Matthew Dickins, Cllr Richard Parry and Roger Walshe.

The Chairman changed the order of the agenda to enable the presentations and debate relating to '20s Plenty' to take place at the beginning of the meeting.

2. '20s Plenty'

Cllr Fleming had met with officers from KCC who had provided him with information relating to '20s Plenty' which was provided to the Forum as a presentation. During the presentation Cllr Fleming attempted to answer numerous questions as they were raised. The key points were:

- i) In preparing for a submission for a 20 mph provision most of the residents of the road involved need to support the proposal and ideally submit it.
- ii) The submission to KCC requires a councillor to sponsor it.
- iii) If i) and ii) are in place KCC would carry out 24hr traffic study (not during school holidays).

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- iv) Following the survey KCC calculate mean speed and 85th percentile of traffic
- v) KCC do not fund capital costs relating to implementation of 20mph
- vi) The process for the introduction of 20 mph would be either via Traffic Regulation Order or Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (lasts 12 months)
- vii) 20 mph is normally applied to an area or single road with natural road calming. This would be done via signage only.
- viii) 20 mph zone is normally for residential streets and requires installation of physical traffic calming measures at least at entrance and exit of zone.
- ix) KCC state that they have a direct relationship with Town and Parish Councils for discussion of such matters via its Highway Improvement Plan. Bullfinch Corner in Riverhead was considered a good example.

Jonathan Drury stated that KCC need to make it clearer in relation to 20 mph what was its policy and what was legislation.

Byron Brown asked if the Speed Watch programme was continuing as Bradbourne Residents Association found this most effective. It was noted that it was.

It was noted that the Joint Transport Planning Meeting to be held on 10th September 2019 was discussing the provision of 20 mph close to St. John's Primary School. The meeting would be open to the public.

It was agreed that Cllr Fleming would request that KCC officers attend a meeting with residents (during the day) to enable further discussion about 20 mph.

Jonathan Drury informed the Forum that if they were not happy with KCC **process** they could submit an official complaint to KCC and then the local government ombudsman. He also recommended that Resident Associations made contact with their local Highway Engineer Officer to discuss local problems on site.

Doug Elish from the Sevenoaks Cyclist User Group then addressed the Forum. It was noted that a petition of over 1,000 signatures had been submitted to KCC for the introduction of 20 mph close to St. John's Primary School. General discussion took place with the main points being

- i) 20 mph is being introduced close to schools around the country, residents would continue to push for this happening in Sevenoaks.

- ii) Reiterated the need to meet with KCC officers.
- iii) Would prefer 20 mph zones rather than streets.

3 Minutes of the Town Forum Meeting held on 9th April 2019

The following was noted:

- i) Jonathan Drury stated that he had raised the matter of the Wednesday Market on behalf of the Market Traders.
- ii) Helen O' Sullivan stated that she had requested, and Cllr Fleming had agreed that a representative from the SDC Environmental Health Team attend the Town Forum to discuss air pollution data and air quality.
- iii) Byron Brown stated that he did not agree with the previous minutes that stated that the retail vacancy rate for Sevenoaks was 2%. It was agreed that any figures would be a moment in time.
- iv) Byron Brown stated that he had not agreed that Operation Brock was unlikely to impact the M26.
- v) Helen O' Sullivan asked for clarification on when SDC Parking Review would start and what were its Terms of Reference?
Cllr Fleming reiterated his previous notification that the SDC Parking Review would commence 6 months after the opening of the new town centre car park, therefore would be October 2019. The Parking Review would be holistic to ensure that improvements in one area did not negatively impact another area. Cllr Fleming reminded the Forum that public and resident associations would be encouraged to become involved. The scope of the SDC Parking Review would be made available to Forum members.
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet stated that she hoped northern Sevenoaks would be included.

4 Sevenoaks District Council's updates since the last meeting

- i) **Local Plan**
The Local Plan hearing sessions will take place over four weeks.
 - Week one - 24 to 27 September 2019
 - Week two - 1 to 3 October 2019
 - Week three - 5 to 7 November 2019
 - Week four - 12 to 15 November 2019

The venue for weeks one, two and three will be the Stag Theatre, London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1ZZ.

The venue for week four will be Sevenoaks District Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1HG.

Further details were available on Sevenoaks District Council website.

<https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/localplanexamination>

- ii) **Tesco Site**
Cllr Fleming has met with agents of Freshwater who were owners of the site. The owners were reviewing options for development which could include smaller retail units and other combined uses, possibly rental residential units. Matters relating to lighting and bins in the alleyway had been addressed. 'Meanwhile usage' over the Christmas period was being discussed.
- iii) **Sevenoaks Town Car Park**
The car park was open and operational to schedule at approximately three quarters full. Houses were being constructed with the show home due to open in December 2019. The capital income from the houses contributed towards the cost of the car park.
- iv) **Electric Car Charging Points**
These were being installed in SDC off street car parks, using a company called Polar. All new developments as part of a new planning policy would require installation of infrastructure to enable cars to be charged. Long term plans were being reviewed to enable rental of electric cars.
- v) **Operation Brock and Operation Fennel**
The Kent Resilience Forum was overseeing the plan in relation to the impact of Brexit. SDC had been provided with the following government funding two x £17.5k and £70k to assist in relation to potential impact.

5. **Open Forum**

- i) Byron Brown requested clarification on the article in the Sevenoaks Chronicle relating to the potential impact of Brexit on waste collection and the possible need to use the old park and ride site in Otford Road for storing waste. Cllr Fleming confirmed it was not SDC's plan to use the Otford Road site. They were reviewing a variety of options for movement of waste should there be problems relating to Brexit.
- ii) Henry Pound requested an update on the Wednesday market. Cllr Fleming stated that SDC would be writing to the operator on the matter.
- iii) Jana Petkova requested that provision of plastic refuse bins be provided to residents of flats to prevent them being opened by foxes etc. and making a mess in the roads. Cllr Fleming stated that there was a procedure in place for residents of flats to request these.

- iv) Byron Brown asked that the Minutes record that the Bradbourne Residents Association appreciated the work of the newly appointed Ashley Walmsley, SDC Open Spaces Manager.
- v) Jonathan Drury also requested that the Minutes record gratitude to the SDC road and footway sweepers.
- vi) It was noted that a Sevenoaks Common Festival was taking place on 15th September 2019. This had been arranged jointly between Sevenoaks District Council and Sevenoaks Town Council.

6. Date of Next Meeting

This was scheduled for 14th January 2020.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m.

**Minutes of the Town Forum Meeting to Discuss the 20s Plenty Speed Limit Scheme
held at
Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks
on Tuesday 26th November at 10.30am**

Present (details from signed attendance sheet)

Cllr Peter Fleming OBE, Chairman	Sevenoaks District Council
Geoff Bineham	Schemes Project Manager, KCC
Emma Green	Schemes Project Manager, KCC
Linda Larter MBE	Chief Executive, Sevenoaks Town Council
Alison Futtit	Senior Committee Clerk, Sevenoaks Town Council
John Harris	St John's Resident Association
Cllr Simon Raikes	Sevenoaks District/Town Council
Byron Brown	Bradbourne Residents Association
Cllr Elizabeth Purves	Sevenoaks District Council/Hollybush Residents Assoc.
Jim Purves	Hollybush Residents Association
Jana Petkova	Granville Road and Eardley Road Residents Association
Cllr Tony Clayton	Sevenoaks District/Town Council
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Sevenoaks District/Town Council/Hollybush Residents Association
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Sevenoaks District/Town Council
Doug Ellish	Sevenoaks Bicycle Users Group
Richard Baxter	The Drive Residents Association
Edward Preedy	Hollybush Residents Association
Nigel Jepps	Linden Chase Residents Association
Richard Pursell	The Drive Residents Association
John Ingram	Bradbourne Residents Association
Cllr Claire Shea	Sevenoaks Town Council
Cllr Robert Piper	Sevenoaks Town Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Jonathan Drury, Henry Pound, Helen O'Sullivan and Naomi Griffiths.

2. Introductions

Introductions were made around the room and Geoff Bineham and Emma Green from KCC were welcomed to the meeting.

3. Presentation by KCC Highways

Emma Green (EG) and Geoff Bineham stated that they were part of the Highways Schemes Project Management Team at KCC. The team's statutory function (and funding) was to look at crash sites. There were 6 officers allocated to West Kent.

Forum members sought clarification on the application process to request a 20mph scheme limit and were advised that:

- requests had to be sponsored by an elected representative (County, District, Town or Parish Councillor)
- This could trigger an Automatic Traffic Count (requests would be prioritised due to volume)
- Community support for the scheme had to be demonstrated (including local residents living in the roads who would be affected if physical features were installed)
- Community support was ascertained through the TRO consultation process
- Funding had to be identified

It was noted that following a request by Cllr Crabtree at KCC, traffic counts had started at Bradbourne Road, Bradbourne Park Road, Quakers Hall Lane and Bayham Road. The results would not be available until the March 2020 meeting of the Joint Transportation Board. Cllr Crabtree had also requested that Britains Lane/New Beacon School be surveyed.

In response to questions, EG and GB confirmed that:

- 20mph zones were not generally enforced by the police
- They were self-enforcing by people driving at the appropriate speed
- 20mph speed limits were only signed where natural traffic calming existed
- 20mph zones normally required speed limiting measures to be installed – e.g. roundel, cushions, chicanes etc.
- Areas where signing only was introduced had not been very successful, only resulting in a 1mph reduction in speed on average
- Areas were generally only considered where the speed was already 24 or below
- Higher speed areas (24-28) could be looked at, but consideration had to be given to the measures needed to implement and the area might not be considered suitable
- All schemes were subject to funding being identified

GB further stated that the following factors were taken into account: category (weighted), casualty analysis, public health indicators, existing speeds, road area type, cost effectiveness (ability to self-enforce), land use and community support. He cautioned that 20mph was not usually introduced on bus routes for reasons of passenger comfort (similarly for ambulances) and that traffic flows could have serious effects on residents.

Forum members commented that there had been a large increase in the number of pupils and volume of traffic in Sevenoaks and two schools had submitted petitions. Both the Town Council and local parents would like to see speed limited near schools, Forum members queried how to proceed with the creation of a broader 20mph zone. EG advised that the first step was to include proposed schemes in the Highway Improvement Plan

Forum members expressed their frustration with the process believing that there were real hazards near schools which could be reduced by the introduction of signage.

The Forum was very disappointed to hear that the police did not generally enforce 20mph speed limits. Forum members who had participated in speed watch schemes commented that, similarly, there was no follow up from the police. Members believed that if drivers saw signs they would slow down.

Members queried when KCC would review its policy, as there had been demographic changes in Sevenoaks and climate change implications to be considered. Encouraging children to walk or cycle to school was currently inhibited by traffic speeds and volume, and parents believing that the safest way to travel was by car. Noted that policy matters should be raised with County Councillors.

GB advised that Iona Rogulski, Transport Planner at KCC would look at travel plans with schools to promote active travel measures. (See link section below)

GB recommended that traffic light phasing concerns be reported using the tool on KCC's website.

GB explained the TRO Process:

- Experimental TRO – signs put out once enforced, consultation period from start to 6 months, after which it would be reviewed, and decision taken whether to keep in place for the full 18 months – or to introduce a permanent TRO
- Permanent TRO – 3-week consultation of notice of intention, then further 6 weeks consultation period for any objections to the process.

Funding

Forum members asked whether CIL funding could be accessed: Cllr Fleming advised that if Town and Parish Councils had included as part of their schemes it could be used for this purpose.

It was emphasised that even if funding was identified it was not automatic that a scheme could go ahead, it would still be subject to the process and criteria outlined.

Forum members emphasised the need to understand the level of costs involved in implementing a scheme as consideration could be given to getting support. It was queried whether estimated costs would be identified at the JTB meeting when findings were reported. GB advised that costs would not be known until a scheme had been designed but would include legal costs of TRO, materials and labour, possibly lane rental.

18 Month Timescale

EG reported that realistically it could take 18 months to process a scheme request including: investigation, feasibility, funding, design, TRO consultation, and contractors putting the scheme into their programme.

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Forum members were frustrated by this timescale given the large influx of school students in the Town; a further delay of 18 months to address serious concerns was considered irresponsible. It was agreed that concerns needed to be forwarded to County Councillors.

Cllr Fleming thanked Emma Green (EG) and Geoff Bineham for attending the meeting and answering members questions. He advised that the notes of the meeting would be sent to KCC and commented that it was time to review the policy regarding 20mph schemes

4. Date of Next Meeting: 14th January 2020.

The meeting closed at 11.50 am

Useful links:

Further to the meeting, Geoff Bineham provided the following links to key documents:

1. Iona.Rogulski@kent.gov.uk Iona is a Transport Planner who works for KCC and part of her role is to assist schools with their active travel plans.
2. <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem> This is a link to our website where any person may report a problem, fault etc on the highway.
3. **Attached** is an electronic copy of the Members information pack which provides guidance on new highway work requests
4. The following link to our website to the KCC 20mph policy:
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s90424/Item%2011%20-%20Report%20-%2020mph%20Policy%20Review.pdf>
5. Link to DfT guidance for Highway Authorities in setting local speed limits:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/63975/circular-01-2013.pdf